

READING EDITION

COMMENT IN MOTION

TRANSLATIONS

October 1968

NUMBER 06

FLUCTUANT SYLLABIC VERSE

COMMENT IN MOTION

A Quarterly of Fluctuant Syllabic Verse

Number VI · October 1968 · Los Angeles

*Set from the scan of the magazine. The poems, their titles, the poets'
names and the figures at the feet of the leaves are the printer's; everything
in this color is this edition's.*

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The printer set his contents page at the BACK of this number, on the leaf after the last translation; it stands at the front here. Three of his lines cover two leaves each — the sonnets of Gaspara Stampa at folios 173–174, the poems from “En las Orillas del Sar” at 186–187, and those from “Lyrisches Intermezzo” at 199–200 — and each leaf takes a line of its own here. On folio 183 he listed “Lola de Valence” above “The Albatross”; the leaf sets them the other way about, and they stand here as he printed them.

Versions of poems by Dante, Petrarch, Michelangelo, Gaspara
Stampa, Ronsard, La Fontaine, Nerval, Verlaine, Baudelaire,
Góngora, Rosalía Castro, Goethe, Hölderlin, Heine. — GROVER
JACOBY, *Translator*

With this sixth issue COMMENT IN MOTION undergoes a slight change in its title. We expect that there will result in most library catalogues a listing or cross-reference card under the heading of the new name: TRANSLATIONS COMMENT IN MOTION. Thereby we hope to make the publication available to a larger circle of interested readers.

The Variegation Publishing Company thanks you herewith for any effort expended in connection with this matter.

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[REACTIONS TO FLUCTUANT SYLLABIC VERSE AND COMMENT IN MOTION]

“. . . Comment in Motion translations of poetry are receiving wide kudos.” The Poetry Society of America Bulletin (October 1967).

“The rhythms have an airy grace and freedom which is quite new, and honourably so, as they are the result of true insights, a wonderful ‘ear’, and honest labour . . . I do hope they are being read aloud somewhere by people who can realize the lovely dolphin-surge and bird-flight effects in them.” Ruth Pitter, author of *A Trophy of Arms* (Preface by James Stephens), *A Mad Lady’s Garland* (Introduction by John Masefield), and other books of poetry.

“Included in the volume are translations of several poems of Friedrich Hölderlin. These have an air of yesteryear which is as restful as a quiet landscape by Corot and one, in particular, in its first part reminds me of Gray’s *Elegy*.

“One of Heinrich Heine’s poems is so well done in rhyme that it is hard to believe it is a translation.” Margaret Cruise in *The San Bernardino Sun-Telegram*.

“In his brief preface, Mr. Jacoby tells us, ‘Translation should be comment in motion; in other words it should set forth or present without becoming static. If the disposition of the host language is properly respected, there is no danger of such congealment. We should not demand from translation that which we do not ask of criticism or the essay in general: a mirror that turns all things to stone’. The second number continues this enterprise in the same spirit.” *Poetry* (Chicago), July 1967.

FOREWORD

A Musical Coincidence

When I first read Hölderlin, it seemed to me that there was a certain similarity of cadence between the eighteenth century poet's verse and the best work of Ezra Pound. Though Mr. Pound in his prose writing talks principally about Heine, Villon, Cavalcanti, Chaucer, and others and never mentions Hölderlin, it seems to me that his use of the line, hiatus, and accent in poetry shows an affinity with what is to be found in Hölderlin's Alcaics and "free rhythm." This curious rhythmic coincidence apparently exists despite the fact that obviously neither poet had a great familiarity with the other's creations.

If such accidental translation of cadence can occur, then it may be assumed that rhythm as well as message and vision can certainly be transferred in some degree from one language to another.

It is my purpose in the first section of this issue to reflect in fluctuant syllabic verse the cadences of French Alexandrines and decasyllables as well as those of Italian and Spanish hendecasyllables.

The Italian hendecasyllable is the lawny avenue of prosodic reconciliation in world literature. Such syllabic verse whenever accented on the fourth and eighth syllables in conformity with the rule may result in a movement not very different from iambic. Therefore, it succeeds time and again in being "all things to all men" and faces North and South for our pleasure. There is an attempt in some of the translations from Italian to reflect this cosmopolitan rhythm. English blank verse and the Spanish hendecasyllable are at times influenced by this

aspect of Italian prosody.

Grover Jacoby

NOTE: It is advisable that the reader of fluctuant syllabic verse be somewhat caesura-conscious; however, this special awareness is not necessary for reading the translations from the poetry of Goethe, Hölderlin, Heine, and Rosalía Castro in this volume.

Translations in Fluctuant Syllabic Verse

Comment in Motion · No. VI · Issue p. 167 · Scan p. 11

THE FIRST POEM APPEARING
IN THE “VITA NUOVA”

Dante Alighieri

To all captive souls, all hearts of gentleness,
Within whose sight these words will once have come,
May all now write to me how this appear to them,
Salute be to their lord, who's namely Love, no less.
Of stars' own time in heaven, one third had come to pass
Before their light would once again be dim,
When it had struck—that thing, the horrifying same—
When Love appeared in all its suddenness.

And Love seemed gay to me as he was holding
In his hand my heart; in his arms he had,
In cloak enfolded here, my lady sleeping;
He then awakened her, and at this heart all burning
She ate thereof, then shrinking back, was sad:
Thereon he left and with apparent weeping.

FROM THE LAST PAGES OF
THE “VITA NUOVA”

Dante Alighieri

(After the death of Beatrice)

Ah! Pilgrims forward moving bound to thought
Perhaps of things that are not present here,
From distant beings parting are you come therefor
To show us with your look: all this to demonstrate
As you unweeping through the city dolent—
Are in the act of passing—through the midst of her—
Like all those persons seeming to appear
As not to comprehend the gravity of it.

If you to hear it are a moment staying,
My heart in sighing is now telling this:
That, from hence tearful, you shall issue forth.
For she, the city, loses Beatrice,
And any word of her that one is saying,
To make all others weep will own the worth.

MADRIGAL

Francesco Petrarca

The newest of angels on a prudent wing
Descended from heaven to this bank all freshness
Whereon I was passing alone through my fate.
She saw me unaccompanied, unguided going,
So in midst of that green way of covering grass
She spread the silk snare of a fastening knot.
Then prisoner I was, and scarcely displeased,
For in light from her eyes a sweetness issued.

SONNET

Francesco Petrarca

Solo e pensoso i piu desrti campi

Thoughtful and lonesome through the abandoned fields
I measuring go with slow withholding pace.
Wherever the sands are printed with man's trace,
My gaze is bent on fleeing such designs—
No other way to screen me from the eyes
Of people plainly staring in whatever place;
Outside myself, my burnt-out happiness
Reveals in acts all my internal fires.

Thus from henceforth, I think that shore and mountain,
Rivers, and forests will know well the nature
My life assumes, from others now concealed.
Yet for harsh savage paths I look in vain
Where love refrains from always coming there
For reasoning with me, and me with him indeed.

SONNET

Michelangelo Buonarroti

Non ha l'ottimo artista alcun concetto

No thought or thought's excess, no artist's excellence
Is not there circumscribed within the marble's self,
And only one there is, which ever may arrive:
The hand that singly serves intelligence.
Lady all pride, divinity, and lightness,
The good self-promised me, and equally my grief,
In you are hid; since I am outside life,
No sought-for end thereof in art may I possess.

The fault is hardly love's, nor of your beauty's share
Nor of your coldness, station, any great disdain;
Fault is my destiny, misfortune, or my fate
If in your heart both death and pity are
Now carried at one time, and my low skills have known
But to draw death therefrom, though I being passionate.

Note: The opening lines of this version take their present form from the supposition that the pronoun of *col suo soverchio* refers to *concetto* and not to *marmo in sé*. The world owes much to the fact that Michelangelo regarded both syntax and anatomy as quarries serving his wonderful creative violence.

IN ME LA MORTE

Michelangelo Buonarroti

In me death only, in you my very life.
You can perceive, concede, apportion time;
In your control how long or briefly I shall live.

Your courtesy to me is happiness enough.
Blest is the soul unvisited by time.
Through you it contemplates the deity above.

NIGHT

Michelangelo Buonarroti

I place value on sleep, on turning to stone
While wrongdoing endures and also shame:
To be sightless, insensate is fortune and welcome.
Ah, but never to wake! Please keep voices down.

SONNET

Gaspara Stampa

Chi vuol conoscer, donne, il mio signore

Who wish a knowledge of my very own lord,
See, ladies, his aspect, gentle and sweet,
Youthful in years and aged in intellect,
Image of glory and also of valor,
With blondness of hair and animate color,
Of commanding figure and spacious breast,
And finally in action the actor perfect
But for being somewhat the inhuman lover.

Who wish a knowledge of me may come
To see one in semblance and all her ends
The image of death and martyrdom,
The lodge of whole faith and constancies,
Whose burnings, tears, sighings all end the same
Without her cruel lover less merciless.

SONNET

Gaspara Stampa

O gran valor d'un cavalier cortese

O great the valor of a courtly cavalier
Who into France is engaged conveying
The heart of a girl whom love was taking
With his eyes' fine splendor therewith a prisoner!
What of your promise? The two lines to temper
Sorrow of mine while, sir, you were making
Ways clear to the honor you were obtaining,
Where to, unveering, you confined your desire.

Nonetheless, I read in the ancient tales
That illustrious heroes felt little disdain
For following equally both Venus and Mars.
Of the king you follow, it is also certain
In highest degree he assumes the two cares;
From lands east to west it is everywhere known.

FROM “SUR LA MORTE DE
MARIE”

Pierre de Ronsard

As aware of the May branch I notice the rose
In its lovely freshness, in the instant aflower,
By the heavens envied for her lovely color
That dawn with her tears at daybreak waters:

What a grace in her petal and a love repose
Enclosing trees, garden, in exquisite odor,
Yet rapped of the rain or overmuch ardor
She languishing dies as each petal uncloses.

Therefore in opening and springtime freshness
When both heaven and earth would honor your charm,
As a victim of fate, as ash you repose.

For graveyard farewells, here are tears and sadness,
One vessel of milk, one whose contents are bloom
So that breathing or not, yourself are all roses.

FROM "THE FIRST BOOK OF
SONNETS FOR HÈLÈNE"

Pierre de Ronsard

XXXVI

With eyes fixed on Montmartre and surrounding fields
You spoke to me, dear, at the window standing:
"The solitary life in a desert passing
Surpasses the court and would certainly please.

In no time my spirit would govern my senses;
The day would go by in prayer and fasting;
Love's flames and arrows would find me defying;
The blood-seeking god would graze other pastures."

So I replied, "You mistake when you claim
That fire's not fire when its cover is ashen.
Through sacred cloisters one sees passing flame;

In both cities and deserts love emerges, is born.
Since any god's stronghold this god can storm,
Both fastings and prayers must prove useless then."

MOLIÈRE'S EPITAPH

Jean de La Fontaine

Under this monument lie Plautus and Terence;
Molière, however, lies there alone.
He made them to live through his perception,
Together their art delighted all France.
The three have departed! I hardly have hopes
To see them again despite our endeavor.
For a very long time, it looks, perhaps,
Like the death of Plautus, Terence, Molière.

EPITAPH FOR AN IDLE PERSON

Jean de La Fontaine

Jean left the world about as he came,
His substance and interest gulped down at one time,
Since fortune itself he could well do without,
Nor was use of his time worth bothering about:
Just divided in two and kept busily going—
One part in sleeping, the other in resting.

EL DESDICHADO

Gérard de Nerval

I am the widower, night-filled, inconsolate,
Am Aquitaine's prince of the cancelled tower.
My one star is dead and my constellate lute
Wears the black sun of despondent care.

You who consoled me in the tomb's night,
Render me Posilipo and Italy's shore,
The flower pleasing my desolate heart,
The trellis where vine and the rose adhere.

Am I Phoebus or Love? Lusignan or Biron?
My forehead is scarlet of a kiss from the queen.
I have dreamed in the grotto where swims the siren,

A time and again won and crossed Acheron:
Shaping in turns on Orpheus' lyre
The sighs of the saint and screams of the fairy.

Note: Biron and Posilipo are both accented on the second syllable.

VERS DORÉS

Gérard de Nerval

Man, you free thinker! You assume that alone
You think among things where life's luster pervades?
Of your forces assembled, you in freedom dispose,
But from all your reflection the cosmos is gone.

Know the motion of spirit throughout brute creation.
For nature's dear sake the flower's soul opens.
A mystery of love in metal reposes.
'Everything feels!' You react to each one.

Now fear in blind walls an observing regard.
Since matter has words among its effects
Never thereof make irreverent use.

In the most obscure being may live a high God,
As eyes come to life beneath eyelid's cover,
Under rock's surface, spirit breathes pure.

EVENING HARMONY

Charles Baudelaire

The hour arrives when each stem is vibrant,
The flower diffuses as does a censer;
Perfumes and sounds plait the evening air,
—Waltz of dejection and circling indolent!

The flower diffuses as does a censer,
A violin quivers like a heart men afflict;
Waltz of dejection and circling indolent!
Skies lovely and sad are a make-shift altar.

A violin quivers like a heart men afflict,
Heart tender but hating the vast nevermore!
Skies lovely and sad are a make-shift altar,
The sun is drowning whose blood will collect.

Heart tender but hating the vast nevermore,
From the luminous past gather all that is left!
The sun is drowning whose blood will collect . . .
I'm a monst'rance a gleam with your souvenir!

CORRESPONDENCES

Charles Baudelaire

From living shafts of the temple of nature
There escape confused words a time and again.
These forests of symbols traveled of man
Observe his movements with familiar stare.

Like the mingling of echoes ever prolonged
Through depth and darkness of some abstruse whole,
Vast as the daylight or spreading nightfall,
There pours the converse of scent, color, sound.

Some perfumes are fresh as small children's bodies,
As sweet as a flute's note or green life of a field;
Rich, prevailing, corrupt remain many others

Owning expansion of what has no end.
Like amber and musk, like benzoin, incense
Which sing the raptures of thought and the senses.

CONTEMPLATION

Charles Baudelaire

Have patience, my sorrow, and stay ever calm.
You ordered the evening; it descends and is here!
As the city envelops in air turning dim,
Some lives obtain peace and others but care.

Among all these mortals in nauseous swarm
Cold pleasure with whip goes after his prey,
Collecting guilt pangs at the fête of shame.
Take my hand, sorrow, and come away,

Away from it all, to where past years may lean
Upon rails of the sky in robes once in fashion;
Where a Smiling Regret whirls up from deep waters;

Where a moribund sun through an arch falls asleep,
Where goes a great shroud, trailing Orient-wards,
Listen, my dear, for the night's soothing step.

THE ALBATROSS

Charles Baudelaire

*(Reprinted from Comment in Motion, No. 2 with a
change in the fourth line)*

Often for pleasure, the crew, gathered on board,
Capture the albatross, vast birds of the sea
Who with indolent flight direct themselves toward
The far acrid chasms ships sweep over free.

These lords of the azure, confined to deck floors,
When suddenly dragged there, must let great white wings
Sadly trail at their sides like some pair of oars.
Their walk is embarrassed—the piteous things.

The great wingéd traveller looks awkward and weak.
The wonder of loveliness turns homely and droll.
One sailor annoys him, a pipe at his beak.
His limping is mimicked by a merciless soul.

The poet compares to this prince from the clouds.
The dweller in tempests laughs at risk in all things,
But exiled on earth among hooting crowds
His movements are fettered by giant-like wings.

LOLA DE VALENCE

Charles Baudelaire

(Inscription for a picture by Edouard Manet)

When so many beauties are seen everywhere,
Desire, my friends, is moveless among them;
But in Lola de Valence a spark leaves one aware
Of the sudden charm of a rose and black gem.

Note: Valence is accented on the last syllable.

TO CORDOBA

Luis de Góngora

O wall lifted up, O towers well-crowned
With majesty, honor, and brave display!
With sands ungilded you are noble always,
O river of grandeur, Andalusia's lord!
O great fertile plain, O sierras high raised
To touch the sky privileged, be gilded of day.
Here the sword and the pen have had equal say,
O country of mine for their glories praised!

If all with the ruins and ancient remains
By Genil enriched and Dauro gushed clean,
No memory of you was sustaining me here,
They would merit nothing, my absent eyes,
—Not your wall, your towers or even your river,
Your plain, your sierra, O flower of Spain!

Other Translated Poetry

Comment in Motion · No. VI · Issue p. 186 · Scan p. 30

FROM “EN LAS ORILLAS DEL SAR”

Rosalía Castro

Quicker than lightning now,
More winged ever than wind,
Restless wanderers unable to curb
Their flights always shifting,
The sky's roof and sea's depth
They scale and descend at will.

If they are impalpable, bodiless,
Varied and multiplied,
Why call them black thoughts
Or again call them white,
If they are the colorless soul-lords,
Eternal, beyond human sight?

FROM "EN LAS ORILLAS DEL
SAR"

Rosalía Castro

60

*(Reprinted from Comment in Motion, No. 4 with
changes in the twenty-fourth line)*

Through the air's incandescence
The fox roams the abandoned ways!
 The clear brook waters
Assume a brackish and unhealthful taste,
 And inconstant lips of the breeze
Leave the pine motionless and waiting.

 An impotent silence
Is draining the strength of space;
 Only humming insects are heard
Among the humid reaches of the shade,
 Monotonous and constant
As from death's throat and with like weight.

Indeed mid-day in such a summer
 Well deserves the name
Of night in which man wearies of his struggle
 Where more than ever irritate
Matter's imposition of its power
And the soul's infinity of pains.

Return, O nights of cold winter,
All our old loves of other days!
Come back with your frost and roughness

To refresh the blood enflamed
By summer sad and insupportable . . .
Sad! with branching vines and grains!
Cold and heat, Autumn or Spring,
Where! Where is all that is gay?
Lovely are all the seasons
For him who in himself has kept joy's ways,
But for the soul orphaned and desolate
There is no season smiling or fortunate.

WISDOM

Paul Verlaine

*(Reprinted from Comment in Motion, No. 1 with
changes in three lines)*

The sky is high above the roof
So blue, so calm.
A tree is up above the roof—
A shifting palm.

The bell is lost within the sky,
Gently ringing.
A bird is lost within the tree,
Singing, singing.

My God, my God, all life is there
This quiet day.
Urban hums come flowing there
From faraway.

What have you done, you who there—
Weep unceasing?
Say what has happened, you there,
With youth's passing?

P A R S I F A L

Paul Verlaine

Parsifal vanquishes feminine youth, its gentle
Babble, and amusement with vice, the fleshly love
A virginal male is likely to have,
The fondness for lightness of breasts and babble.

He vanquishes Woman, her beauty, her subtle
Heart, her arm's freshness, and breast's thrilling wave.
He vanquishes Hell, and his camp will receive
His coming, the trophy held by his puerile

Arm, the lance once piercing the sacred Side!
He restores the king's health, is himself royal lord
And priest of the holy essential Treasure,

In cloth of gold worships the glory and symbol,
True luminous Blood of the chalice, the pure,
—Oh, children's voices that sing in the cupola!

Note: This poem is not included with the other fluctuant
syllabic verse because of the frequency of the enjambments and
the peculiar cadence of the first line.

PROMETHEUS

J. W. von Goethe

Hang over heaven, Zeus,
Your curtain of cloud-haze.
Like the youth
Unheading thistles,
See what can be done
Against great oaks and heights;
But avoid striking down
This earth of mine
And my hut not of your making
And my hearth
And its glow
Envied by you.

I know naught more deprived
Under the sun than you Gods!
You find piteous nourishment
In imposing sacrifice
And prayer-breath
For your majesty
And are starving,
But for children and beggars,
Each realizing the idiot to the full
With his hope.

As a child then
I knew naught of direction,
My eyes in error turned
Sunward as though a farther side there

Held an ear alive to complaints,
A heart like my own
That showed pity toward anguish.
Who helped me
Against the presumption of Titans?
Who saved me from death,
From slavery?
Have you not brought all to its wholeness,
Heart's glowing holiness,
Were you not with your thanks for rescue
In youth and goodness glowing,
Defrauded through the sleeper on high?

On me hangs your honor? Wherefore?
Have you yet allayed the pains
Of the weary?
Have you smoothed away
The tears of the anguished?
Did not the forge of almighty time
And eternal Fate,
Masters of us both;
Make me a man?

Among your conjectures for me
Were perhaps a hatred of life,
An escape to some desolation,
Because little ripening came
To my dreams?

Here I sit and shape man
In my image,
A generation that resembles me
In its pain and weeping,

In its likings and joys,
And as heedless of you,
As I.

TO OUR GREAT POETS

Friedrich Hölderlin

The banks of Ganges waked to his triumph
As the all-conquering god of joy from
Indus proceeded with holy
Wine, from sleep waking the nations.

Poets, awaken! awaken also from slumber,
Who still now are sleeping, give laws, give
Us life, conquer, you heroes! for yours only—
The right to prevail, that of Bacchus.

THE GODS

Friedrich Hölderlin

You etherial stillness! you are always
Fending for my soul among sorrows, and you Helios,
Are lifting toward new valor
My hurt breast with your rays.

Worthy gods! Poor are those not your familiars,
With crude conscience never resting from quarrel,
With their world become night, no joy
Prevailing there, nor traces of song.

Only you with enduring youth
Feed in hearts who love you the child-mind,
Never letting deviation and sorrow
Engulf genius in mourning.

PERSUASION

Friedrich Hölderlin

Exquisite life! you lie sick; and tired from weeping
Is my heart, and fear streaks dawning within me.
Still, still, I can never believe
In your death alongside your love.

TO THE GERMANS

Friedrich Hölderlin

Never laugh down the child on his wooden horse
Making himself out a great one with spurs and whip,
For, you Germans, are you not also
Running over with thought, poor in deeds?

Or does it come—the deed, like lightning
through cloud,
Emerging from thought? Is life drawn from books?
You whom I love, may you take me
As repenting this blasphemy.

Note: This poem was written in 1798 and is informed with a spirit like that of the *De l'Allemagne* of Madame de Staël which appeared some years later. It is appropriate to compare this poem with the lines Heine wrote some time before 1850 about this same child and his nursemaid, the sun. Heine reveals as in a fiery chrysalis the fearful German dynamism that was to make its imperial debut in 1870-71.

The child is still in her mighty care.
The sun is this nursing dame
Who is giving him no quiet milk,
But only the wildest flame.

(From "Deutschland" by Heinrich Heine)

ODE

Friedrich Hölderlin

*(Reprinted from Comment in Motion, No. 1 with four
lines that were omitted through an oversight)*

With my boyhood hours
A God came to the rescue,
As free from harsh voices and whips
I played in sure innocence
With the blooms in the thicket,
And the airs of heaven
Played round me.

And as you rejoice
The heart of plants,
When toward you
Their frail arms are reaching,
You have lifted my heart,
Father Helios! And as Endymion
Was I one favored
Of the unsullied moon.

All of you intimate
True divinities,
You knew all
Of my soul's affection.
Certainly then I called you
Not by name, you too
Never named me, as mortals each other
Assuming acquaintance.
I knew you more fully

Always than man.

I saw into etherial stillness

But never into men's words.

Informed of airs blown

From the rustling grove

I grew, and learned love

Under the blossoms.

In the arms of the Gods was my increase!

THOSE POETS AFFECTING FAITH

Friedrich Hölderlin

You frigid dissemblers, leave out the Gods!
Reason is with you! You have no faith in Helios
And none in the Thunderer nor yet in the Sea-god:
Earth is dead and finds everyone thankless.

Be consoled, you Gods. Still their song's ornament,
Your names are there, though the soul gone out of it,
And when need comes for the word's full expansion,
Nature, our mother! then they think of you.

RETURN TO THE HOMELAND

Friedrich Hölderlin

You mild-flowing airs! Proclaimers of Italy!
And you with your poplars, great endeared stream!
All you mountains in unbroken waves! You sunning
Manifold peaks, all of you here again!

Stillest refuge! How distant in dreams you shone
To the longing one at day's hopeless end,
And you, my house with lively companions,
Those hillside trees, my own best familiars.

How long is it, how very long! Gone is stillness
Of childhood. Youth, love, and delight are all gone;
Yet you, land who fathered me! you rest
In your visible patience and holiness.

To endure as you, to be glad, dear one,
With your gladness, this you instill,
Reproving in dreams when, no longer
Loyal, one wanders astray.

When at last in youth's impetuous heart
The obstinate wishes are stilled,
Before destiny quieted, then only
It, no more resisting, surrenders.

Goodby then! youth, love's rose-path of days,
And all of the paths of the wanderer,
Goodby! and take then and bless
My life, skies over my home again.

FROM "VERSCHIEDENE"
SERAPHINE

Heinrich Heine

1

Wand'ring through the wood of evening
Under branches vague with dreams,
There I meet you, other wanderer,
Form that either is or seems.

Somewhere near a veil moves whitely,
Could it well conceal your face?
Or perhaps it is the moonlight
Breaking through a fir-dark space?

Tears of mine heard lightly running,
Really is it nothing more?
Not your present own dear weeping,
You yourself beside me there?

FROM “LYRISCHES
INTERMEZZO”

Heinrich Heine

64

Through trees run the Autumn's vibrations,
A chilling pervading crowd.
I ride alone through the woodland
Grey-cloaked as in wraps of cloud.

Ahead of me ride thought's phantoms
Adopting my horse's pace.
They are bearing me lightly and gayly
To my heart's dearest fireplace.

The hounds are snapping, the servants
Appear in their candles' glow.
With spurs making sounds of metal,
Up spiraling stairs I go.

Now gained is the light and fragrance,
The tapestried warmth-filled room.
Then into the arms of my dearest
For a lovely awaiting doom.

The wind is a rustle of leafage
Wherein declares the oak:
“Your witless ride, mad horseman,
Is a blend of dream and joke”.

FROM "LYRISCHES
INTERMEZZO"

Heinrich Heine

61

My dream was filled with weeping.
I dreamed of you in the grave.
I wakened; my tears were over
My cheeks in a running wave.

My dream was filled with weeping.
I dreamed you were leaving me quite.
I wakened; my weeping was bitter
And reaching into the night.

My dream was filled with weeping.
We loved each other this dream.
I wakened; the tearful flooding
Continued a wearing stream.

FROM “VERSCHIEDENE”
SERAPHINE

Heinrich Heine

12

Sails parting the ocean's wilderness
Their blackness sails straight through.
You know the sadness deep in me,
A sickness coming from you.

Your anywhere fluttering with the wind
Is showing your heart untrue.
Sails parting the ocean's wilderness
Their blackness sails straight through.