Nikolai Karlovich Medtner’s Settings of Fyodor Ivanovich Tutchev’s Poems: A Performance and Pronunciation Guide

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NIKOLAI KARLOVICH MEDTNER´S SETTINGS
OF FYODOR IVANOVICH TUTCHEV´S POEMS:
A PERFORMANCE AND PRONUNCIATION GUIDE

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ABSTRACT

Students of vocal performance are commonly instructed in the rules of diction for singing French, German, and Italian vocal literature, making it an easy task to select songs for performance from among this literature. There are also many beautiful, unique, interesting, and moving songs from the body of Russian vocal works.

In an effort to make Russian song more accessible to those not familiar with the language, this treatise will provide a reference regarding one of the composers, Nikolai Karlovich Medtner (1880-1951), and his settings of Fyodor Ivanovich Tutchev (1803-1873) poems. The singer will find herein biographical information on the composer and poet; descriptions of Medtner’s musical style; and transliterations, transcriptions, and translations of the texts.

Medtner was a prolific song composer, having published 106 songs, sixty of which are settings of Russian texts. He chose poems from five Russian poets of the Romantic era as source material: Aleksander Sergeyevich Pushkin (1799-1837), Mikhail Yuryevich Lermontov (1814-1841), Afanasy Afanasyevich Fet (1820-1892), Valery Brussov (1873-1924), and Fyodor Ivanovic Tutchev.

Medtner’s music is highly chromatic with complex rhythms, but with soaring lyric melodies, and always a clear tonal center. He was critical of his contemporaries’ use of atonality and polytonality, which he called cacophony. He published a book in the Russian language in France in 1935, The Muse and the Fashion. This was then translated into English by his friend, musicologist Alfred Swan (1890-1970), and published in 1951. This book sets forth Medtner’s philosophical views on music and denounces the practices of atonality and polytonality.

Medtner’s settings of Fet poems and many of the Pushkin poems are discussed by Terence Kelly in his dissertation, The Songs of Nikolai Medtner, published in 1988. This treatise will focus on all of Medtner’s settings of Tutchev poems.

Tutchev is often referred to as one of three great Russian poets of the Romantic era, along with Pushkin and Lermontov. He was not a poet by profession, but spent his life as a government official in the Russian legation. Many of his poems are philosophical in nature, and many express deep and profound emotion.
Singers who are unfamiliar with the Russian language will find a valuable resource in the translations, transcriptions, and transliterations of the fifteen Tutchev poems that Medtner chose for song compositions.

A glossary of musical terms found in the music and throughout the paper is included as an appendix.
INTRODUCTION

Students of vocal performance are commonly instructed in the rules of diction for singing French, German, and Italian vocal literature, making it an easy task to select songs for performance from among this literature. There are also many beautiful, unique, interesting, and moving songs from the body of Russian vocal works.

In an effort to make Russian song more accessible to those not familiar with the language, this treatise will provide a reference regarding one of the composers, Nikolai Karlovich Medtner, and his settings of Fyodor Ivanovich Tutchev poems. The singer will find herein biographical information on the composer and poet; descriptions of Medtner’s musical style; and transliterations, transcriptions, and translations of the texts.
CHAPTER ONE

NIKOLAI KARLOVICH MEDTNER

(January 5, 1880 – November 13, 1951)

His Life

Early Life and Musical Tutelage

Nikolai Karlovich Medtner was born in Moscow on January 5, 1880, to Karl Petrovich Medtner and Aleksandra Karlovna Goedicke. Karl Petrovich was the managing director of a lace factory and enjoyed a comfortable income. He and Aleksandra Karlovna were able to raise their children in comfort and provide them with educational opportunities afforded by his position.

The Goedicke family had immigrated to Russia from northern Germany and were well-known as a musical family. Medtner’s grandmother, Polina Gebhard Goedicke, was a coloratura soprano, and his uncle, Fyodor Goedicke, taught piano at the Moscow Conservatory. Aleksandra Karlovna subscribed to the Russian Musical Society and frequently attended concerts with her children.

Medtner began his musical training at the age of six with piano lessons taught by his mother. He also learned to play the violin at a young age and participated in a sixty-piece children’s orchestra. After a few years of training with his mother, Nikolai’s uncle Fyodor assumed this responsibility.

When Medtner was twelve years old, he was admitted to the Moscow Conservatory. There he studied composition with Nikolay Kashkin and Arseny Koreshchenko. He began a course in counterpoint with Sergei Taneyev, but quit the course halfway through the year. Taneyev was impressed by his abilities and encouraged him to continue to submit compositions for his review. He studied piano with Pavel Pabst, a virtuoso pianist who was a student of Franz Liszt. Upon Pabst’s unexpected death in 1897, Medtner studied with Vasily Sapelnikov for one year and spent his final year at the conservatory with Vasily Safonov, who was his most

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1 Information on Medtner’s life is extracted from Barrie Martyn, Nicolas Medtner, His Life and Music. (Brookfield, Vermont: Ashgate Publishing Company, 1995).
influential teacher.\textsuperscript{2} He graduated in 1900 with honors, and his name was inscribed among the distinguished alumni on a marble plaque in the entrance hall of the conservatory, joining other well-known composers such as Scriabin and Rachmaninoff.

**Concert Career**

After leaving the conservatory, Medtner did not want to begin a life as a traveling pianist, and cancelled a contract for an upcoming concert. He avoided performing for two years. During this time, he taught at a girls’ academy; he did not return to the stage until the end of 1902.

On December 6, 1902, he began a lifelong friendship when he met Sergei Rachmaninoff for the first time. Rachmaninoff had heard of Medtner through a mutual acquaintance, Josef Hofmann (1876-1957), a virtuoso pianist who had played Medtner’s piano sonata in F minor. Rachmaninoff was so impressed that he invited Medtner to his home to play the sonata for him. Rachmaninoff regarded Medtner as “the most talented of all contemporary composers”\textsuperscript{3} and promoted Medtner’s career and compositions for the remainder of his life.

Medtner spent three years in Germany from 1906 to 1909. Upon his return to Russia, he was offered a teaching position at the St. Petersburg Conservatory, which he declined, and he accepted a position at the Moscow Conservatory. In 1914 he was called up for military service, as Russia was at war, but he was declared unfit for service. During this time, he continued to appear in concerts in Moscow and throughout Europe.

The year 1921 marked the end of Medtner’s life in Russia. At this time, he emigrated to Germany, and then on to France in 1925. He began concert tours in the United States with the assistance of Rachmaninoff. He also toured in England. In the United States, he met and befriended Alfred Swan, who was a musicologist teaching at Haverford College in Pennsylvania. Swan and his wife both had ties to Russia, and both spoke Russian and English fluently. They were therefore of great assistance to Medtner, as he spoke no English when he began his tours.

Medtner returned to Russia for a concert tour and to visit with family and friends in 1927, but was later denied a visa without explanation when he tried to return in 1933. He was never to return to his homeland. During this time, Medtner kept his home in Paris, but continued concert tours to the United States and England. In 1935 he returned to England for the sixth time when

\textsuperscript{2} Martyn, *Nicolas Medtner, His Life and Music*, 7.

\textsuperscript{3} Ibid., 92.
he met Mikhail Braikevitch, property developer in London and a Russian expatriate who had been the Mayor of Odessa in 1917. This friendship would prove valuable to Medtner and his family when later that year, upon experiencing financial hardship, Braikevitch offered them a home in London with low rent, which Medtner accepted.

In letters to his friends and family, it is clear the Medtner was dissatisfied with the music of his contemporaries. He published a book in Russian in 1935, *The Muse and the Fashion*, which was translated into English by Swan and published in English only two days before Medtner’s death in 1951. Medtner never saw the English publication. This book outlines Medtner’s musical philosophy and denounces the practices of atonality and polytonality. Further detail will follow in Chapter Three.

**Medtner’s Death**

On November 13, 1951, Medtner died at his home in London at the age of seventy-one. He is buried at Hendon Cemetery in London. He left behind an extensive body of music including three piano concertos (orchestrated by the composer); a piano quintet; five opuses for strings and piano, including three sonatas for violin and piano; over forty opuses for solo piano; and 106 songs, sixty of which feature Russian texts, and the remainder use German. With the exception of Opus 61, all of the songs were published in his lifetime.
CHAPTER TWO

FYODOR IVANOVICH TUTCHEV

(December 5, 1803 – July 27, 1873)

His Life

Fyodor Ivanovich Tutchev was born on December 5, 1803, near Bryansk, Russia, to aristocratic parents, Ivan Nikolayevich and Ekaterina Lvovna Tutchev. The Tutchev family had owned land in that area for generations.

In 1812 the family fled to Yaroslavl (a city located 155 miles northeast of Moscow), and from there to Moscow to escape of the invasion of Napoleon’s armies into central Russia.

The language spoken among the Tutchev family was not Russian, but primarily French, and all familial conversation and correspondence was conducted in French. Russian was the official language, and Tutchev had formal Russian language lessons from childhood, but French was the language spoken in noble households in the time surrounding the reign of Catherine the Great.

Tutchev had several influential tutors in his youth, including Semion Egorovich Raich and Alexei Fedorovich Merzliakov, who were both poets. At the age of fourteen, Tutchev was enrolled at the Moscow University Faculty of Belles-Lettres, from which he graduated in 1821, having received outstanding marks, even though he was a less-than-model student.

Tutchev was not a poet by profession, but rather held a position in the government. In 1822 he began his service in the Office of Foreign Affairs in St. Petersburg, but took a position in the Russian legation (a diplomatic representative office ranking below an embassy) in Munich three months later. Tutchev spent over twenty years living abroad.

In 1826 Tutchev married the widow of a Russian diplomat, Eleanor “Nelly” Peterson, who was the mother of three young children.

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4 The information on Tutchev’s life and poetry has been extracted from Richard A. Gregg, Fedor Tiutchev, The Evolution of a Poet. (New York and London: Columbia University Press, 1965).
5 Ibid., 4.
Poetic Style

Tutchev’s poetry deals primarily with three topics: nature, love, and politics. Many of his poems are philosophical, and there are many instances of symbolism. For example, water is representative of feminine love, and night is representative of chaos. The form of his poems evolved little over his lifetime, but the same cannot be said for the themes. His poems are almost exclusively short lyrics, many divided into a few stanzas.

While living in Munich, Tutchev wrote poetry that reveals the influence of German Romanticism with its focus on nature, mysticism, and the nature of being. His love poems are lighthearted, innocent, and idealistic. Upon returning to Russia, he identified profoundly with Slavophilism and abandoned the Western European schools of thought. Love was no longer innocent and lighthearted, but was depicted as suffering, and the object of his affection and attention was nearly always in pain. The poems emphasize sensual pleasure rather than innocent love, and they express a strong sense of guilt. Having left the inspiring mountains of Western Europe for the horizontal landscapes of city dwelling in Russia, Tutchev depicted a single scene or image that evokes intense emotion in his nature poems of this period, as opposed to impersonal views of grand backdrops.

The poems specific to the Medtner songs are discussed in detail in the next chapter.

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CHAPTER THREE

MEDTNER’S MUSICAL STYLE

The Muse and the Fashion

Medtner held strong opinions regarding composition styles, which he outlined in his book, *The Muse and the Fashion*. He extolled the homophony and polyphony of his predecessors, especially Bach (1685-1750), Mozart (1756-1791), and Beethoven (1770-1827), and condemned his contemporaries’ use of atonality and polytonality. One paragraph in his book clearly states the impetus behind writing it:

But in our turbulent days – when school boys leaving the schools they have hated, and motivated by the sole desire to impress others with their originality, deliberately distort the musical language, and by this distortion so to say, put out their tongues at the whole school – in these days one involuntarily wakes up from blissful oblivion; the put out tongues compel one to defend the musical tongue.7

“Simple” Cacophony

“What should we call the contemporary collective style of modernists other than counter-harmony, or cacophony?”8

Medtner viewed atonality and polytonality as a corruption of the laws governing musical theory. He described his reaction upon hearing these compositions as bewilderment and mistrust.9 He made frequent reference to musical progressiveness as being lifeless or dead, and called this music haphazard and absurd. He felt that the progressive musical movement should be exorcised or held in check. He believed that dissonance should gravitate toward consonance:

The simplicity of TONALITY and the harmonic constructions based upon it, opened the way to complex polyphony. Whereas the complexity of “POLYTONALITY,” as a basis, precludes any sensible polyphony, turning its coordination into an arbitrary “simple” cacophony.10

Dissonance as the symbol of movement, as a temporary disturbance of repose, is justified and rendered sensible only by its gravitation towards the consonance. But the dissonance

8 Ibid., 65.
9 Ibid., 86.
10 Ibid., 16.
that has isolated itself from consonance, even though it represents movement, is in any case only a movement towards the chaos of musical absurdity.\textsuperscript{11}

He also believed that all music should be centered on well-established modes, and particularly the Ionian and Aeolian modes (major and minor, respectively):

All the attempts of past “innovators” to alter the very foundation of the mode (whether by substituting for it the whole tone scale, or by proclaiming the principle of atonality) have turned the musical language into some sort of jargon which in its extreme poverty showed no capacity whatsoever for life.\textsuperscript{12}

He never criticized any composer by name in his book, but rather, condemned all music that was not homophonic or polyphonic. In his correspondence, however, he specifically condemned the music of Dmitri Shostakovich, Igor Stravinsky, and Sergei Prokofiev.

\textbf{Homophony and Polyphony}

Medtner was very fond of the music of Bach, Mozart, and Beethoven. He respected their compositional styles, and their “discipline of the fundamental laws of harmony.”\textsuperscript{13} He even went so far as to call Mozart’s music perfect and infallible.\textsuperscript{14} He believed that the “new [should arise] from the old naturally and imperceptibly, without shattering any foundations.”\textsuperscript{15} He defends this opinion by stating, “If they should seem to many to be ‘old and familiar truths,’ I shall consider myself particularly happy, as it stands to reason that the older the truth, the more undoubted it is and in need of constant reminder.”\textsuperscript{16}

To Medtner, the theme was of utmost importance: “The most primary, fundamental, supreme ‘sense’ of music [is] the theme, which is the kernel of form, its principal contents; and the development of the theme which is, as it were, the opening up of the kernel, the form of the whole composition.”\textsuperscript{17} This theme should never take the form of rhythm, but can take the form of harmony, and most often melody. Regarding melody, he states, “Infinitely right are the music lovers in demanding clarity from every work; they want to look music straight in the face. But

\begin{flushright}
\textsuperscript{11} Medtner, \textit{The Muse and the Fashion}, 24.
\textsuperscript{12} Ibid., 38.
\textsuperscript{13} Ibid., 69.
\textsuperscript{14} Ibid., 72-3.
\textsuperscript{15} Ibid., 64.
\textsuperscript{16} Ibid., 4.
\textsuperscript{17} Ibid., 43.
\end{flushright}
Unfortunately they often turn away from melodies that do NOT form into a sugary stereotyped smile.”  

Medtner’s melodies are by no means those “sugary stereotyped smiles.” His melodies are highly chromatic and depend heavily upon the harmonies in the accompaniment to make any musical sense. Medtner did not view chromaticism as a corruption or deviation from the homophony and polyphony of his predecessors. His interpretation follows:

Chromaticism…is justified in so far as it surrounds the mode and gravitates towards it in the same manner as the other notes of the mode gravitate towards the tonic. Chromaticism, as an encirclement of the diatonic mode, is also one of the fundamental senses of the musical language. But a chromaticism that has detached itself from the mode, turns into a swamp that cannot serve as a foundation for any musical construction.  

Medtner’s musical philosophy as described in The Muse and the Fashion is evident upon careful examination of his Tutchev songs.

The Tutchev Songs

Medtner’s facility as a pianist is apparent in his Tutchev songs. With few exceptions, the accompaniments are dense. Rhythms are complex with prevalent cross rhythms and syncopation, as well as some use of hemiolas and mixed meters. The harmonies are highly chromatic, as are the melodies. Although several of the songs feature short vocalises.

Opus 24 (1911)

Opus 24 is the first of Medtner’s song publications to include poems by Tutchev. It consists of eight songs: four settings of Tutchev and four of Afanasy Afanasyevich Fet. The range of all eight songs covers nearly two octaves (A♯3 to A5), with tessitura appropriate for medium to high voices.

День и Ночь (Day and Night), Op. 24, No. 1

This song is made up of two sections, representing day and night, with a contrasting transition between. The vocal range is an octave and a fourth (C4 to F♯5). The melodic phrases are short, between two and a half and three and a half bars each. The melodic line involves mostly stepwise motion with a few small leaps within the phrase. The vocal line is in a constant

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18 Medtner, The Muse and the Fashion, 49.
19 Ibid., 24.
cross rhythm pattern of duplets against the triplets in the piano (see example 3.1). The text setting is entirely syllabic.

Tutchev’s first wife, Nelly died in 1838. In 1839, the year this poem was written, Tutchev abandoned his post in Turin to marry his mistress, Ernestine Dörnberg, and returned to Munich. The poem is one of his metaphysical nature poems, wherein day is something to be revered, something which heals and soothes the soul. It is an excellent example of the duality often found in Tutchev’s writings, as in the second stanza day succumbs to night, which opposes the day in every aspect – night is something to be feared, something which torments the soul. (See the full translation on page 35.)

The poem begins with day, a “revival for those born on earth, the healing of an ailing soul, friend of men and of gods.” In Medtner’s setting, day is set in E-flat major. The tempo is largamente, sereno (see Appendix for translation of foreign terms), and the harmonies are consonant, with block chords of triplets on both staves of the accompaniment, setting a peaceful scene.

Example 3.1. “День и Ночь” (Day and Night), mm. 1-5

This changes with the beginning of the second stanza of poetry, “But the day fades – night has fallen.” Dissonance creeps into the accompaniment, the rhythm accelerates with sextuplets in the bass clef against triplets in the treble clef, and then as the shroud of day is discarded and the misty depths of night are exposed, a thin, chromatic accompaniment supports an ascending chromatic melody. The tempo through this transition is poco a poco più mosso to allegro affanato. Finally, when nothing remains “between [the abyss] and us,” the tonality moves to the parallel minor and the tempo returns to largamente, only this time, lugubre instead
of the *sereno* of the beginning, contrasting the serenity of day against the anguish of night. The song ends with a return of the block chord triplets in the bass clef, but against duplets in the treble clef, repeating a reminiscence of the melody from the beginning.

Performance time for this song is approximately 2:45.

**Что ты клонишь над водами (Willow, why do you bend your crown), Op. 24, No. 2**

This is a short song, only eighteen bars, with a performance time of about 1:10. An exact date for the text is not known, but it was written sometime in the early 1830s when Tutchev was a young man living in Germany. It is another nature poem, but revealing the lightheartedness of youth. The outward appearance is of simplicity; a willow tries in vain to stop the flow of a stream. Upon deeper contemplation, the willow might represent man and the stream life. With the knowledge that in later years Tutchev would utilize water to represent women, it is also possible that this stream is symbolic of feminine beauty and perhaps even betrays some guilt. He was, after all, married to one woman but in love with another. (The full translation can be found on page 36.)

Medtner’s interpretation is lighthearted. The accompaniment illustrates the text. Through downward cascades the accompaniment depicts the willow leaning over the stream. The accompaniment is chordal, with descending figures, painting a picture of the bending branches. The key is F-sharp minor, suggesting the sadness of the weeping willow. When what was just simple “водами” (water) before becomes “беглую струю” (a fluid stream), the accompaniment represents the stream with sixteenth-note triplets and a *leggierissimo* instruction. This reminds the listener of water trickling and tumbling over pebbles as it flows downstream. When the stream laughs at the willow (“смеётся над тобой” – laughs at you) the triplets turn into straight sixteenth notes with staccato marks, portraying the laughter. From this point to the end of the song, the tempo is marked *affrettando* and *poco accelerando*, and the stream gathers momentum as it runs downhill. (See example 3.2.)

There are rhythmic figures repeated throughout the vocal line, and a clear theme that begins three of the four phrases in this song. Each of the four phrases is shaped the same, with two peaks and stepwise motion between. The song begins in F-sharp minor, but the final chord is an open fifth.
Example 3.2. “Что ты клонишь над водами” (Willow, why do you bend your crown), mm. 14-18

Дума за думой, волна за волной (Thought after thought, wave after wave),

Op. 24, No. 3

Written in 1851, this poem expresses the duality and opposition that is found in many of Tutchev’s poems: here and there, prison and freedom, high and low tide. He was living in Russia at the time and had recently begun an affair with Elena Alexandrovna Denisieva. The water that is referenced is representative of feminine love, and probably in this case, Tutchev’s love for Denisieva. All that is “here in the heart” is imprisoned, “anxious and empty,” most likely indicative of his feelings towards his current marriage. All that is “there in the vast sea” is free. Tutchev felt a sense of freedom in his love for Denisieva that he did not feel in his marriage to Ernestine Dörnberg. (See the full translation on page 37.)

In Medtner’s setting, when the text refers to what is “here,” there is a descending line. When it refers to what is “there,” there is a higher note, and the peak of the phrase. The word
“море” (sea) receives the second highest note in the melody, an F₅, illustrating how desirable that which one does not have can be.

Example 3.3 shows the theme introduced with the entrance of the voice, and then repeated throughout the accompaniment and melody.

Example 3.3. “Дума за думой, волна за волной” (Thought after thought, wave after wave), mm. 1-7

Medtner used the Picardy third in several of these compositions, and this song is one of those. It is in the key of D minor, but ending with the raised third, thus a D-major chord. The song is only seventeen bars, with a tempo marking of largo, dolente. Within those seventeen bars, there are two bars of introduction and one bar of postlude; the voice sings in every other measure. Performance time is just over 1:30. The range of the song is C₄ to G₅.
Сумерки (Twilight), Op. 24, No. 4

The poem was written in the 1930s (an exact date is not known) during the time when Tutchev was living in Munich. This is another example of his feelings towards night. Night is anguish, chaos, and destruction, but he desires to be merged with this destruction, this melancholy, this torment.

Medtner’s song gives the listener a sense of unevenness. This is created by the mixed meter. Medtner uses a repeating palindromic pattern of time signatures throughout this song: 4/8, 5/8, 6/8, 5/8, and then back to 4/8, as seen in example 3.4. The tempo of the eighth note remains the same through all of these time signatures.

In the flow of the song, the uneven 5/8 time signature is not obvious to the listener, except in two measures where the vocal line is divided into a dotted quarter note descending to a quarter note. The melodic motion is mostly stepwise throughout the song, with a few larger leaps, up to an octave. The range of the song is from C₄ to F♯₅. (The full translation can be found on page 40.)

The key is F minor. The piano begins with a descending melody, which the voice then repeats upon its entrance. The tempo is marked quietissimo, pieghevole, sempre sordamente. This marking along with the gently descending line gives the impression of drowsiness, as the text speaks of blue-gray shadows and all sound falling asleep. The accompaniment is chordal, but at times there is also a sixteenth-note triplet line meandering among the chords. This is heard when the text refers to the fluttering flight of a moth in the night. The accompaniment texture changes when referring to “the hour of unspeakable anguish.” There are no block chords, now
just the triplet figures, now paralleled in thirds with sixteenth-note triplet arpeggiations in the left hand, starting in the treble clef. This texture results in a delicate sound, more so than one would expect for “unspeakable anguish,” leaving it up to the singer to express the intensity of the anguish. The accompaniment then returns to the original chordal texture for the remainder of the song, ending in a final measure of delicate pianistic virtuosity.

Performance time for this song is about 3:40. Given the delicacy of the accompaniment, the singer must be able to sing a piano dynamic throughout the range of the song. With the constantly changing meter, the singer must also have good rhythmic skills.

**Opus 28 (1913-1914)**

Opus 28 consists of three settings of Fet, one setting of Brussov, and three settings of Tutchev. These songs would be most appropriate for a medium-high voice, as the majority of the songs extend below C₄, and none goes above G♯₅. These songs were premiered on January 19, 1914, by Medtner and Maria Olenina-d’Alheim (1869-1970), a well-known mezzo-soprano of the day and an advocate of Russian vocal compositions.

**Весеннее Успокоение (Spring Tranquility), Op. 28, No. 5**

The poem was written in 1832, when Tutchev was living in Munich. It is one of his nature poems, expressing a desire for a final resting place in a peaceful locale, beneath gentle breezes blowing through long grasses, and reeds sounding in the distance. For Tutchev at this time, there was deeper meaning to this text. He loved the natural landscape that surrounded him in Western Europe while the landscape of his childhood home depressed him. Here, the poet expresses a fear of remaining in a harsh setting for eternity, and yearns for a more peaceful slumber. (Refer to the full translation on page 41.)

The song is a representation of Medtner’s ability to illustrate text. He paints Tutchev’s serene scene by using a sparse harmonic texture and a sixteenth-note rhythmic figure that evokes the breeze twisting the grass. (See example 3.5.)

The song includes a long introduction and a long postlude, the postlude containing the same texture and rhythmic figures as the introduction. The rhythm speeds up in the middle of the song, when the text refers to the grass in the breeze for the first time. This is also the point of maximum intensity, with a dynamic of forte for a single bar, which then gradually diminishes to a pianissimo in the final two bars.
Example 3.5. “Весеннее Успокоение” (Spring Tranquility), mm. 1-5

The key signature indicates E-flat major, but with many flatted Ds and Gs and a final cadence in B-flat, one hears this as being in the key of B-flat minor. The demands on the singer are not great, with a range of B♭₄ to F₅, the majority of the song sitting between B♭₄ and D♭₅, with comfortable three- to five-bar phrases and medium dynamics. The performance time for this song is 1:15.

Сижу задумчив и один (I sit pensive and alone), Op. 28, No. 6

This is one of Tutchev’s love poems. His love poems are by no means in keeping with traditional romanticism. Written in 1836 while Tutchev was in Germany, the poem depicts the poet sitting alone, ruminating on the passage of time and the inevitability of death. He expresses profound guilt towards the woman whom he has seduced and tarnished, the “flower” torn by his hand that will never bloom again. (The full translation can be found on page 45.)

Medtner’s setting begins and ends in the key of E-flat minor. He uses what he calls a passing modulation, one “that glides over the various tonalities. It is important principally as a harmonic colouring of melody.”

It is interesting to note that the accompaniment begins with a melodic figure that is developed more in “Безсонница” (Insomnia), Op. 37, No. 1. See examples 3.10 and 3.11 in the discussion of “Безсонница” on page 20.

The tempo is andante, meditativo. The melody has a range of B♭₄ to D♭₅, and is very chromatic. In large part, it is built of stepwise motion, but with many diminished sevenths and

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The accompaniment alternates between offset block chords and arpeggiation. Performance time is approximately 5:10.

**Пошли, Господь, свою отраду (Lord, send your joy), Op. 28, No. 7**

This poem has a religious theme with an expression of profound guilt. It speaks of a man who is like a poor beggar who passes a green and misty fountain on a scorching hot day, but is not able to partake of the shade and coolness to satiate his thirst. He begs for the Lord to send His quenching joy.
The poem was written no later than the beginning of 1850. Tutchev met Denisieva “sometime around 1850,” and began his affair with her that same year. The guilt expressed in this poem can be attributed to his feelings for her when the attraction was new.

The poem is five stanzas, each stanza comprising four lines. The first two stanzas are accompanied by block chords, all on the beat, with no dotted rhythms and no syncopation. This is in the style of a religious chorale with full, deep chords. (See example 3.7.) In the third stanza, this pattern is replaced by sixteenth-note triplets and then thirty-second note sextuplets as the beggar passes the mists of the fountain. With the fourth stanza, the block chords return. When the text refers to the fountain a second time, Medtner gives the performers a choice: block chords or arpeggiated chords. (See example 3.8.) The mist from the fountain will not refresh the beggar’s head, and so one must decide whether or not to illustrate this mist.

The initial melody of the vocal line is repeated in the final twelve bars. The melody is identical, though the words are slightly different. The fifth stanza interprets the symbolic scene described in the first stanza. Note the subtle differences below:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Stanza 1</th>
<th>Stanza 5</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Пошли, Господь, свою отраду</td>
<td>Пошли, Господь, свою отраду</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Тому, кто в летний жар и зной</td>
<td>Тому, кто жизненной тропой</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Как бедный нищий мимо саду</td>
<td>Как бедный нищий мимо саду</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Бредёт по жаркой мостовой;</td>
<td>Бредёт по знойной мостовой.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lord, send your Joy</td>
<td>Lord, send your Joy</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>To him who in intense summer heat</td>
<td>To him who in life’s path</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Walks on hot pavement</td>
<td>Walks on the scorching pavement</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>As a poor beggar passing a garden;</td>
<td>As a poor beggar passing a garden.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

There is no introduction. There is a six-bar interlude between the fourth and fifth stanzas. There is only one final chord to resolve the phrase after the voice cuts off on the dominant chord at the end of the piece. The song seems to be in the key of C-dorian at the beginning, but concludes in G minor. The tempo is pesante. The range is from D₄ to G₅, making it appropriate for medium to high voices. Performance time is 3:00. (A full translation of the text can be found on page 48.)

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21 Gregg, Fedor Tiutchev, The Evolution of a Poet, 18.
Example 3.7. “Пошли, Господь, свою отраду” (Lord, send your joy), mm. 1-8

Example 3.8. “Пошли, Господь, свою отраду” (Lord, send your joy), mm. 36-38
Opus 37 (1918-1919)

This opus consists of five songs: three settings of Tutchev and two of Fet. Before the completion and publication of the opus in 1919, several of the songs were premiered by the composer in two recitals on December 24 and 28, 1918. The singer is unknown by the author at present. This opus is appropriate for high voices with the ability to sing prolonged high phrases.

Безсонница (Insomnia), Op. 37, No. 1

Tutchev wrote this poem no later than 1829. Already, as this poem expresses, Tutchev was contemplating the passage of time, a topic that did not permeate his works until his later years. It is another of his night poems. On a sleepless night, the character is filled with melancholy and sorrow as he realizes that his people and his time will fade into oblivion and will only occasionally be remembered and mourned, as a “new young tribe” replaces them. (Refer to the full translation on page 51.)

This is the second longest of these fifteen poems, comprising six four-line stanzas, and thus it is one of the longest of these songs. It has a short introduction, a few short interludes, and a short postlude. The introduction begins with an unrelenting eighth-note figure that reminds the listener of the “monotonous striking of the clock.” (See example 3.9). This figure continues through the first two stanzas of poetry, is absent for one stanza, and then returns in inversion in the fourth stanza. In the fifth stanza, when the text refers to the “new young tribe” that replaces “us, our friends, and our time,” there is a new accompaniment figure: flowing eighth-note triplets in a sparse texture. For the final stanza, the original figure returns, though in a deeper bass with larger leaps.

Example 3.9. “Безсонница” (Insomnia), mm. 1-2

The vocal line concludes with nine and a half bars of a haunting vocalise, the “metallic funereal voice” that “only occasionally… mourns us.”

The interlude between the third and fourth stanzas develops a theme that was introduced in the accompaniment of Сижу задумчив и один (I sit pensive and alone), Op. 28, No. 6, seen...
in example 3.10. The same six-note melodic figure is utilized again in example 3.11 from Op. 37, No. 1, in a different key, with a slightly different rhythm, and further developed.

In E-flat minor with a tempo marking of *andantino con moto, ma sempre lugubre*, this is a melancholy melody. With a range of $A_3$ to $A^b_5$, this would suit a medium to high voice. Performance time is approximately 5:40.

Example 3.10. “Сижу задумчив и один” (I sit pensive and alone), m. 1

Example 3.11. “Безсонница” (Insomnia), mm. 24-29
Слёзы (Tears), Op. 37, No. 2

This poem was written in the autumn of 1849, dictated to Tutchev’s daughter upon returning home by coach on a rainy evening. He was in St. Petersburg at the time and had reached a maturity in his poetic style, having abandoned the Germanic influence evident in earlier poems. The text evokes gloom and despondency. (The full translation can be found on page 53.)

Medtner’s melody is an intensely chromatic theme that repeats at a progressively higher range until it finally slithers down a full chromatic scale, the accompaniment doubled a minor third below the voice with offset rhythms. The many descending chromatic lines illustrate tears falling like rain. (See example 3.12.)

Example 3.12. “Слёзы” (Tears), mm. 24-29

The key is E-flat minor. The tempo begins at *lamentoso* while the piano plays a descending chromatic E-flat minor scale, which continues for three octaves. The dynamic begins at forte, with a continuous decrescendo until the voice enters. At this point, the tempo changes to
languido, and the descending line moves to the voice, while the piano now adds more texture with arpeggiation and block chords together. This continues until the melody reaches its highest peak, at which point the accompaniment is strictly chordal, until the final descending chromatic scale, again covering three octaves. The dynamic in the voice is almost always soft, with a few small crescendos, until reaching a forte on the final ten bars.

This song presents a challenge for the singer with both its chromaticism and sustained high range. The range is D₄ to B₅. It requires a singer who has the stamina and strength to sing long phrases in a high range. Performance time is approximately 2:10.

О чём ты воешь, ветр ночной (About what do you howl, night wind), Op. 37, No. 5

Tutchev’s poetry of 1830 marked an end of the innocence he expressed in the previous decade. There were several references to a “night soul” which paralleled fearful and turbulent “chaos.” “О чём ты воешь, ветр ночной” (About what do you howl, night wind) and “Песни Ночи” (Night Songs), Op. 45, No. 3, were two of the early “night/chaos” poems, written that year. It is one of the best examples of what night meant to Tutchev. Night is incomprehensible anguish, frenzied chaos, which the “conscious self fears.”

In his book, *The Muse and the Fashion*, Medtner writes: “But a song must always remain a song, even when ‘chaos roars underneath it.’” Thus, Medtner takes inspiration from the last line of Tutchev’s poem. The theme of this song is featured in the accompaniment. The left hand has a meandering, chromatic melody that conjures the image and sound of a night wind swiftly blowing through cold branches. This melody is repeated in sequential pattern throughout the entire song. It consists of a steady eighth-note rhythm in the left hand, with flowing sixteenth-note septuplets in the right. When the poetry speaks of the language of the heart, the rhythm in the right hand changes to sixteenth-note triplets with a rest at the beginning of each set, evoking breathlessness. (See example 3.13.)

The vocal line consists of many leaps, some of them large, up to an octave. The tessitura is most comfortable for a high voice. The word “хаос” (chaos) gets the highest note of the song, a B♭₅, crescendoing from a forte, as the speaker begs the night wind not to awaken the sleeping storms and the chaos that stirs beneath them. The night wind becomes the storm in the final bars

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of the song with *tempestoso* instructed in the accompaniment and a dynamic marking of fortissimo. Performance time is about 2:40.

Example 3.13. “О чём ты воешь, ветр ночной” (About what do you howl, night wind), mm. 11-14

**Opus 45 (1924)**

This is a grouping of four songs: two settings of Pushkin and two of Tutchev. It was completed when the composer was living in Erquy, France. These songs are most appropriate for high voices, with every song reaching above the staff, and with many sustained high phrases.

**Песни Ночи (Night Songs), Op. 45, No. 3**

This poem portrays the night/chaos theme as night smothering the world like the ocean, the souls enveloped by the fiery abyss of the starry heavens. This poem also has the element of the water/woman symbolism, wherein the ocean and tide are symbolic of feminine love, which transports the soul to the fiery abyss. (The full translation is found on page 57.)
This setting requires a singer with great stamina and strength. The tempo is *largamente*. It begins with a heavily chordal accompaniment which introduces the main theme of the song. The piano continues its block chordal accompaniment for five bars. At points where it is marked *più mosso*, the accompaniment changes to a lightly arpeggiated figure, but returns to the block chordal accompaniment when the tempo is *largamente*.

The theme is introduced in the accompaniment in the opening phrase, and then repeated in the voice. This theme is repeated in part throughout the song, with slight variations in intervals or rhythms. The theme is introduced in example 3.14. The theme is then repeated in example 3.15.

The vocal phrases are long and cover a large range. At one point, the singer must sustain a G₃ for twenty-eight and a half beats, though the accompaniment through this section is marked *molto accelerando* to *triplo movimento*, in 3/4 time.
The text speaks repeatedly of circles, and of being enveloped and embraced. Medtner illustrates this by repeating the original melody at the beginning of the final stanza of the song (“Небесный свод горящий славой звездный таинственно глядит из глубины” - The firmament is ablaze with starry glory, mysteriously gazing from the depths), though the rhythm has slowed considerably, and as “we sail into the fiery abyss, enveloped on all sides,” the melody climbs and reaches its highest point, allargando, ending on A₅ at fortissimo dynamic.

Performance time is approximately 3:10.

**Наш Век (Our Time), Op. 45, No. 4**

This poem deals with a religious theme. To Tutchev, religion and politics were inextricably linked. If one supported the State, one also supported the Orthodox Church and vice versa. This poem was written in the middle of his Slavophil heyday. It gives a glimpse of his soul, and shows the duality to which he was drawn, for even as he supported the orthodoxy, he could not profess faith. He was as the man depicted, who thirsted for faith, but would not ask for it.

Medtner’s setting requires a powerful singing and playing. It begins with block chords at a forte dynamic, and then the voice enters with a single E₄ sung for twenty-one beats while the piano continues a block chord harmonic progression, decrescendoing to a pianissimo. This note should be hummed, with the indication “с закрытым ртом” (with mouth closed) given as a footnote in the urtet edition. The piano then has an interlude in which it sets the new accompaniment pattern that consists of cross rhythms of two against three. The triplets begin in the left hand, but then alternate back and forth between hands. This pattern continues until the final fourteen bars of the song, which are almost identical to the first fourteen bars with the exception of the voice, which now has text: “Впусти меня!” (Allow me in!). The dynamic for this is fortissimo. The voice again sustains the E₄ while the piano moves through the same chord progression as the beginning, twenty-four beats this time.

Some of the challenges presented for the voice in this song are the range, the high range of some phrases, and the chromaticism of the vocal line. The range of the song is almost two octaves, C♯₄ to A₅.

When the text refers to the question which the faithless man will not ask, the music reaches its climax. For five bars, the melody meanders between E₅ and A₅, from a piano dynamic rising to fortissimo. “Впусти меня! – Я верю, Боже мой! Приди на помощь моему
nevreyo.” (“Allow me in! – I believe, my God! Come to my aid, in my disbelief.”) (See example 3.16.)

The middle of the song is highly chromatic. For example, in one phrase (“Он к свету рвется из ночной тени и, свет обретши ропщет и бунтует” – He breaks into light from night’s shadows, And having gained the light, he murmurs and rebels) the peak of every other measure outlines an ascending chromatic five-note scale from D to F♯.

Performance time for this song is about 3:10. (See the translation on page 59.)

Example 3.16. “Наш Век” (Our Time), mm. 84-89

Opus 59 (1930s)

This opus presents some confusion. Medtner originally labeled “Полдень” (Noon) as Op. 59, No. 1, when it was written in the 1930s. It held this opus number when it was published in 1946 by G. Schirmer in Twenty-Six Selected Songs, but Medtner later reassigned this opus number to two piano elegies. He did not assign a new opus number to this song. In the collected works edition, “Полдень” is grouped with Op. 61 as No. 6, with “О, вещая душа моя” (Oh, my prophetic soul) becoming No. 7, and “Успокоение” (Tranquility) becoming No. 8. These numbers were assigned by the publisher. “Полдень” is not included in the M.P. Belaieff publication of Opus 61, but is included in the complete works edition published by Muzgiz in 1961.

Полдень (Noon), Op. 59, No. 1 (Also Op. 61, No. 6)

This poem was written at the end of the 1820s when Tutchev was living in Munich and influenced by German Romanticism. He was surrounded by beautiful landscapes and expressed
a fascination with nature and mysticism in his lyrics. This poem depicts Pan, the Greek god of nature, dozing lazily on a dewy afternoon. (Refer to the full translation on page 60.)

The accompaniment to this particular song is very light in comparison to Medtner’s other settings. This song is also the least chromatic of the Tutchev songs with few dissonant melodic intervals. It is full of slow, lazy arpeggiations in both the piano and voice. (See example 3.17.) The song ends with a seven-bar vocalise. It requires neither great vocal strength nor great stamina of the singer. In a program, this song would be an excellent choice to place between two more demanding songs. The range is from $B^4$ to $F^5$. The performance time is approximately 2:15.

![Example 3.17. “Полдень” ( Noon), mm. 1-2](image)

**Opus 61 (1954, published posthumously)**

This opus was first published in 1954 by M.P. Belaieff. (See the discussion of Opus 59 on page 27 for further information on the songs and numbers included in Opus 61.) The original M.P. Belaieff publication contained two poems by Joseph von Eichendorff, two by Pushkin, one by Lermontov and two by Tutchev. The two Tutchev songs were written towards the end of Medtner’s life, the latter of the two, Успокоение (Tranquility), completed only two months before his death in November of 1951. He knew he was nearing the end of his life. In a letter to his friend Alfred Swan on November 1, 1951, he referred to the time as the “eve of [his]
death.” Around the time the two Tutchev songs were written, he was in the process of putting his works and affairs in order. He was certainly consumed with thoughts of death when he selected the Tutchev poems as the texts for two of these seven songs. These songs are appropriate for medium to high voices.

О, вещая душа моя (Oh, my prophetic soul), Op. 61, No. 6 (Also Op. 61, No. 7. See notes about Opus 59 on page 27.)

Tutchev wrote this poem in 1855. At the time, he was consumed with thoughts of death and the passage of time. This was also in the middle of his fourteen-year affair with Denisieva, and the poem is tinged with guilt. It depicts a man with a tortured soul, struggling with both worldly and religious desires, “as if a double existence.” This is exemplary of the duality that is common in Tutchev poems.

It is not surprising that in his final years, Medtner chose this poem. He suffered from heart disease and was in poor health. The poem speaks of being “sickly,” and having a soul that is “ready… to cleave unto the feet of Christ forever.” (See the full translation on page 62.)

The song is in the key of D minor, but ending with the Picardy third, raising the third scale degree in the final chord. (See example 3.18.) The accompaniment begins with both hands in the bass clef, but the right hand switches to the treble clef on the second vocal phrase. The right hand switches back and forth between clefs for the remainder of the song, ending in the treble clef. This alternation between bass and treble can be an illustration of the struggle between worldly and religious desires of which the text speaks.

Example 3.18. “О, вещая душа моя” (Oh, my prophetic soul), mm. 33-38

24 Martyn, Nicolas Medtner, His Life and Music, 258.
The vocal range is not wide, from B₄ to G₅. The phrases are not long, and there is no sustained high range that is found in some of the other songs. The melody also has more of a sense of direction than some of the previous, more chromatic melodies. The tempo is *andante con moto sostenuto*. Performance time is approximately 1:40.

**Успокоение (Tranquility), Op. 61, No. 7** *(Also Op. 61, No. 8. See notes on Opus 59 on page 27.)*

Tutchev lived in Munich for nearly two decades of his early adulthood, and had many associates who subscribed to the German Romantic school of thought. He wrote some translations of their work into Russian and also wrote original poetry based on their works. When this poem was written in 1858, Tutchev had long since left Western Europe, and his work had become well-known in Russian literary circles. During these years he was obsessed with thoughts of change, death, the passage of time, and the beauties of autumn. It was in this mindset that he found inspiration from a work by his friend, Nikolaus Lenau (1802-1850). He wrote of life passing by and rushing away as a river flows away and will not return. He expressed longing for the past, but excitement for the inevitability of tranquil unconsciousness in death. *(Refer to the full translation on page 64.)*

Medtner illustrated this river of life with a running sixteenth-note triplet figure through the entire twelve-bar introduction. Note, the marking “*allegretto*” appears over bar 11 in the M.P. Belaieff edition. This marking is not indicated in the collected works edition. Upon the entrance of the voice, the triplet figure is replaced by sparse chords, which gradually thicken until the triplets return as soon as the voice says the word “реки” (river). *(See example 3.19.)* When the text speaks of being able to breathe more easily, all accompaniment ceases for two and a half beats, then returns to the block chordal accompaniment. When the “tears pour from our eyes,” the rhythm accelerates to a sixteenth-note figure, until finally we have the return of the sixteenth-note triplet for an interlude of ten bars. When the voice enters for the final three lines of text, the accompaniment returns to the block chordal texture at a walking tempo, but upon the utterance of the last word, “волна” (wave), the river/triplet figure returns in the accompaniment with an ascending line from F₂ to B♭₇ and then an ascending arpeggio as the river rushes off to oblivion. It ends with a *maestoso* chordal figure over three bars, repeating a melody heard previously in the voice.
The melody at the end of the song is almost identical to the melody at the beginning. The two pages between, however, are highly chromatic. The accompaniment helps to give a sense of direction, but there are times when the melody precedes the harmonic change of the accompaniment. This chromaticism will present a challenge for the singer. The song is in the key of F minor with a vocal range of $E^\flat_4$ to $G_5$. The singer must be able to sing the highest notes at a piano dynamic. Performance time is about 3 minutes.

Example 3.19. “Успокоение” (Tranquility), mm. 10-18
CHAPTER FOUR
TRANSLATIONS, TRANSCRIPTIONS, AND TRANSLITERATIONS

Explanation of Symbols

It is assumed that users of this guide will have a working knowledge of the International Phonetic Alphabet. This pronunciation guide will be familiar to singers of French, German, and Italian literature. The uncommon symbols are explained below. This was done in an effort to make these songs more accessible to singers who lack experience with the Cyrillic alphabet and the Russian language. It does not include the diacritical marks found in the Belov guide, typically used in publications by Leyerle. Refer to a diction guide, such as Joan Wall’s *International Phonetics Alphabet for Singers* for more information on common IPA symbols.

[i]: A short, palatalized glide, similar to [j] but higher and further forward in the mouth, and very short in duration.

[i]: The IPA symbol for “ы.” It is similar to [i], but produced slightly further back in the mouth, and with a lower tongue. One can find this position by slowly voicing back and forth between [i] and [ə] and then stopping tongue movement halfway between. One must be cautious of letting this vowel fall too far back in the mouth.

[ʃʧ]: The IPA symbol for “щ.” It is similar to [ʃ], but produced much further forward.

“Ѣ”: This letter is obsolete, but it is still sometimes found in printed music. It has been replaced by the letter “е” in modern Cyrillic and in the texts below.

Texts

Below are the texts as found in the musical settings. Text that differs from Tutchev’s original poems is marked with an asterisk. All translations are by the author.

A transliteration from Cyrillic to Latin alphabet is included in this section. The method in the transliteration to Latin letters is referred to as Romanization and has been in use for nearly 100 years. This system is used by librarians in cataloguing Russian literature. One will observe
differences in pronunciation when the vowel is in a stressed or unstressed position. These spellings are consistent with the method used by the Library of Congress, and Russian songs can be found Romanicized.

День и Ночь (Day and Night), Op. 24, No. 1
Den' i Noch'
[dʲen i nɐʧ]
Day and Night

На мир таинственный духов,
Na mir tainstvennyi dukhov,
[na mir ta 'in stfɐ nʲɪj ˈdu xɐv]
Onto the world mysterious of spirits,

Над этой бездной безымянной,
Nad etoi bezdnoi bezymiannoi,
[nad ˈɛ tɔj ˈbʲɛ zdnɔj ˈbʲɛ zɪ ˈmɐ nɐj]
Above this chasm nameless,

Покров наброшен златотканый
Pokrov nabroshen zlatotkanyi
[paˈkrov naˈbroʃen zla tɑˈtɕɑnʲɪ]
Shroud is thrown golden clothed

Высокой волею богов.
Vysokoi voleiu bogov.
[viˈso kɐj ˈvo lʲe ju baˈgov]
By the high will of the gods.

День – сей блистательный покров
Den’ sei blistatel’n yi pokrov
[dʲen sej bliˈsta tʲel nʲɪj paˈkrov]
Day is this brilliant shroud

День, земнородных оживление,
Den’, zemnorodnykh ozhivlen’e,
[dɐn zɐm ˈro dɲɪx ɐ zʲɪvˈlʲen jɐ]
Day, for those born on earth revival,

Души болеющей исцеленье,
Dushi boliashchei istselen’e,
[duˈʃi baˈliəʃʧʲɐʃʲɛj ɪs tʃʲɛˈlʲen jɐ]
For soul ailing healing,
Друг людей и богов!

Drug chelovekov i bogov!

[drug ʧɛ la ˈvʲɛ kav i ba ˈgov]

Friend of men and of gods!

Но меркнет день – настала ночь;

No merknet den’ nastala noch’;

[no ˈmʲerk nʲet dʲen na ˈsta la nof]

But fades the day has fallen night;

Пришла, и с мира рокового

Prishla, i s mira rokovogo

[pri ʧlɑ i ˈsmi rɑ rɑ ka ˈvo va]

Came, and from the world fateful

Ткань благодатную покрова

Tkan’ blagodatnuiu pokrova

[tkɑn blɑ ɡɑ ˈdɑt nu ju ɡɑ ˈkro va]

Fabric fertile of the shroud

Собрав*, отбрасывает прочь . . .

Sobrav, otbrasyvaet proch’ . . .

[sɑ ˈbrɑv at ˈbra si vɑ ʲet prʊʃ]

Gathering, throws away . . .

И бездна нам обнажена

I bezdna nam obnazhena

[i ˈbʲezd na nam əb na ʒʲe ˈna]

And the abyss to us exposed

С своими страхами и мглами,

S svoimi strakhami i mglam,

[s ˈsvɑ i mi ˈstrɑ xa mi i ˈmɡlɑ mi]

With its fears and mists,

И нет преград меж ей и нами –

I net pregrad mezh ei i nami

[i nʲet prʲeɡ ˈɡrad mʲeʒ ʲeʃ i ˈna mi]

And (there are) not barriers between her and us

Вот отчего нам ночь страшна!

Vot otchego nam noch’ strashna!

[vot øt ʧɛ ˈvo nam noʃ strɑʃna]

That (is) why to us the night (is) frightening!
Onto the mysterious world of spirits,
Above this nameless chasm,
A golden-clothed shroud is thrown
By the high will of the gods.
Day is this brilliant shroud,
This day is revival for those born on earth,
The healing of an ailing soul,
Friend of men and of gods!

But the day fades – night has fallen;
Night came, and from the fateful world
The fertile fabric of the shroud
Gathering, throws it away . . .
And the abyss is exposed to us
With its fears and mists,
And there are no barriers between it and us –
That is why we fear the night!

* The word «Сорвав», meaning “having been torn,” in the original poetry, has been replaced with «собрав», meaning “gathering.”

Что ты клонишь над водами, (Willow, why do you bend your crown), Op. 24, No. 2
Chto ty klonish’ nad vodami
[ʃto ti ‘klo niʃ’ nad va ‘da mi]
Willow, why do you bend your crown

Что ты клонишь над водами,
Shto ty klonish’ nad vodami,
[ʃto ti ‘klo niʃ’ nad va ‘da mi]
Why you bend to on the waters,

Ива, макушку свою?
Iva, makushku svoiu?
[ˈi va ‘ma kuʃ ku sva ‘u]
Willow, the crown yours?

И дрожащими листами,
I drozhashchimi listami,
[ˈi dra ‘ʒaʃ fi mi li ’sta mi]
And with trembling leaves,

Словно жадными устами,
Slovno zhadnymi ustami,
[ˈsl oʊ na ‘ʒad ni mi u ’sta mi]
Like thirsty lips,
Why do you bend your crown, Willow, to the waters?
And with your trembling leaves, Like thirsty lips, Catch a running stream?

Though, over the stream, Every leaf of yours languishes and trembles . . .
But the stream runs and splashes, And basking in the sun, it shines And laughs at you . . .
Thought after thought, wave after wave –
These are two manifestations of the same element:
Whether here in the heart, or there in the vast sea,
Here they are in imprisonment, or there they are free,
The same is everlasting high and low tide,
The same is the anxious and empty phantom.
Сумерки (Twilight), Op. 24, No. 4
Sumerki
['su mɛr ki]
Twilight

Тени сизья смесились,
Teni sizya smesilis',
['tʲe ni 'si zi ʲə smʲe 'si lis]
Shadows blue-gray mixed together,

Цвет поблекнул, звук уснул –
Tsvet pobleknul, zvuk usnyl
[tsfʲet pa 'blek nul zvuk us 'nul]
Color grew pale, sound fell asleep

Жизнь, движенье разрешились
Zhizn', dvizhen'e razreshilis'
[zʲi n dvi 'ʒʲen ʲɛ rɑz rʲɛ ʃɨ]
Life, (and) motion settled

В сумрак зыбкий, в дальний гул.
V sumrak zybkii, v dal'nii gul.
['fsum rɑk 'zib ki 'vdal nj ɡul]
In the twilight fragile, in the distant rumble.

Мотылька полёт незримый
Motyl'ka polet nezrimyi
[ma til 'kə pa 'lot nʲə 'zri mij]
Of the moth flight unseen

Слышен в воздухе ночном . . .
Slyshen v vozdukhе nochnom . . .
[ˈslɪʃɛn ˈv:voz du ʃɛ naʧˈnom]
Is heard in air of the night . . .

Час тоски невыразимой!
Chas toski nevyrazimoi!
[ʃas ta 'ski nʲə vi ra 'zi məj]
Hour of anguish unspeakable!

Всё во мне, и я во всём!
Vse vo mne, i iа vo vsem!
[fsʲo va mnʲə i ʲə vo fsʲom]
All in me, and I in everything!

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Сумрак тихий, сумрак сонный,
Sumrak tikhii, sumrak sonnyi,
['sum rak 'ti xi 'sum rak 'so ni]
Twilight quiet, twilight drowsy.

Лейся в глубь моей души,
Leisia v glub’ moei du'shi,
['lʲej s/a vglup ma 'lej du 'ʃi]
Pours into the depths of my soul,

Тихий, томный, благовонный,
Tikhii, tommi, blagovonnyi,
['ti xi 'tom nij bla ga 'vo ni]
Quiet, languid, fragrant,

Всё залей и утиши,
Vse zalei i utishi,
[fsʲo za 'lej i u ti 'ʃi]
Everything (is) extinguished and still,

Чувства мглой – самозабвенья
Chuvstva mgloi samozabven’ia
['ʧufst va mgloj sa ma zab 'vʲen ʲa]
Feelings through mist (of) self-oblivion

Переполни через край!
Perepolni cherez krai!
[pʲɛ rʲɛ 'pol ni 'ʧʲɛ rʲɛz kraj]
Overflow over the edge!

Дай вкусить уничтоженья,
Dai vkusit’ unichtozhen’ia,
[dɑj fku 'sit u nif'ta 'ʃ'en ʃa]
Let (me) taste the destruction,

С миром дремлющим смешай!
S mirom dremluushchim smeshai!
['smi ram 'dřɛm lu ʃim smʲɛ 'ʃaj]
With the world slumbering merge (me)!
The blue-gray shadows merged together,  
The color grew pale, sound fell asleep,  
Life and motion settled  
In the fragile twilight, in the distant rumble . . .  
The unseen flight of the moth  
Is heard in the night air . . .  
The hour of unspeakable anguish!  
Everything is in me, and I am in everything . . .

Quiet twilight, and drowsy twilight,  
Pours into the depths of my soul,  
Quiet, languid, and fragrant,  
Extinguish everything and make it still,  
Through the mist, feelings of self-oblivion  
Flow over the edge!  
Let me taste the destruction,  
Merge me with the slumbering world!

Весеннее Успокоение (Spring Tranquility), Op. 28, No. 5  
Vesennее uspokoeние  
[вʲе ьсɛ нʲе ьк ьу спα ькα ьл нʲе ьɛ]  
Spring Tranquility

O, не кладите меня  
O, ne kladite menia  
[о нʲэ kla ьdi ьtэ мʲэ 'нα]  
Oh, not do put me

В землю сырую –  
V zemliu syriyu  
[в'зээм ь UserModel]  
In the ground harsh.

Скройте, заройте меня  
Skroite, zaroite menia  
['skroj tэ za ьroj tэ мʲэ 'нα]  
Conceal, bury me

В траву густую!  
V travu gustuiu!  
[в'фра ьв UserModel]  
In the grass thick!
Пускай дыханье ветерка
Let the breath of the breeze

Шевелит травою,
Shevelit travoiu,

Свирель поёт издалека,
Svirel’ poet uzdaleka,

Светло и тихо облака
Svetlo i tikho oblaka

Плывут надо мною!
Plyvut nado mnoiu!

Oh, do not put me
In the harsh ground.
Conceal me, bury me
Beneath the thick grass.

Let the breath of the breeze
Stir the grass,
Let reeds sing from afar,
And let pale, soft clouds
Drift above me!

Сижу задумчив и один (I sit pensive and alone), Op. 28, No. 6
Sizhu zadumchiv i odin
[si 'zu za'dum tʃiv i a 'din]
I sit pensive and alone

Сижу задумчив и один,
Sizhu zadumchiv i odin,
[si 'zu za'dum tʃiv i a 'din]
I sit pensive and alone,
На потухающий кamin
Na potukhaiushchii kamin
[na pa tu 'xa lu jfi] ka 'min]
At the smoldering fireplace

Сквозь слёз гляжу . . .
Skvoz' slez gliazhu . . .
[skvoz sləz glə 'ʒu]
Through tears I gaze . . .

С тоскою мыслю о былом
S toskoiu mysliu o bylom
[sta 'sko iu 'mi sl u o bi 'lom]
With sorrow I think about the past

И слов в унынии моём
I slov v unynii moem
[i slov vu 'ni ni i ma 'om]
And words in gloom mine

Не нахожу.
Ne nakhozhu.
[nʲɛ na xa 'ʒu]
Not I find.

Былое – было ли когда?
Byloe bylo li kogda?
[bi 'lo ɛ 'bi la li kog 'da]
Past was whether when?
(Whether or not the past ever was)

Что ныне – будет ли всегда?
Chto nyne budet li vsegda?
[ʃto 'ni nʲɛ 'bu dɛt li fseg 'da]
What now is will be always?

Оно пройдёт –
Ono proidet
[a 'no pra j'dot]
It will pass

Пройдёт оно, как всё прошло,
Proidet ono kak vse proshlo,
[pra j'dot a 'no kak fs/o pra ʃlo]
Will pass it as everything passed,
И канет в тёмное жерло
And sink into the dark mouth

За годом год.
After year year.
(Year after year)

Что ж негодует человек,
Why is indignant man,

Сей злак земной!
This seed of the earth!

И лист иной.
And leaf different (new).

И снова будет всё, что есть,
And again will be all, that it is,
И снова розы будут цветь,
I snova rozy budut tsvest',
[и 'сно ва 'ро зи 'бу дут тсвест]  
And again roses will bloom,

И терны тож . . .
I terny tozh . . .
[и 'тɛр нɪ тo3]  
And thorns also . . .

Но ты, мой бедный, бледный цвет,
No ty, moi bednyi, blednyi tsvet,
[но ти мој 'бɛд нɪј 'блɛд нɪј тsvɛt]  
But you, my poor, pale flower,

Тебе уж возрожденья нет,
Tebe uzh vozrozhden'ia net,
[тɛ 'бɛ уʒ вɑз рɑʒ 'дɛ нɛт]  
(There will be no more rebirth for you,)

Не расцветешь!
Ne rastsvetesh'!
[nɛ rɑс tsfɛ 'тoʃ]  
(You will not bloom!)

Ты сорван был моей рукой,
Ty sorvan byl moei rukoi,
[ти 'сор ван бıl ма 'ɛј рu 'кoј]  
You torn were with my hand,

С каким блаженством и тоской,
S kakim blazhenstvom i toskoi,
[скɛ 'кɪм bla 'ʒɛnst vɑм и тa 'skoј]  
With what bliss and sorrow,

То знает бог!
To znaet bog!
[to 'zna іɛт bog]  
(Only God knows!)
Останься на груди моей,
Stay at chest mine,
Пока любви не замер в ней
While of love not will stand still in its

I sit pensive and alone.
Through tears, I gaze
At the smoldering fireplace . . .
I think about the past with sorrow
And in my despondency,
I find no words.

The past – whether or not there was a past
What is now, will it always be . . .
It will pass . . .
It will pass as everything passed,
And will sink into the dark abyss
Year after year.

Year after year, century after century . . .
Why is man so indignant,
This seed of the earth!
It quickly fades – so quickly,
But with the new summer comes new seed,
And new leaves.

And all that is, will be anew,
And roses will bloom again,
As will the thorns . . .
But you, my poor, pale flower,
For you there is no rebirth,
You will not bloom!
You were torn by my hand,
With such bliss and sorrow
As only God knows! –
Stay on my chest,
While the last breath of love
Will not stand still.

Посли, господь, свою отраду (Lord, send your joy), Op. 28, No. 7
Poshli, gospod’, svoiu otradu
[па 'фли гас ’под сва ’бу а ’тра ду]
Send me, Lord, your joy

Пошли, Господь, свою отраду
Poshli, gospod’, svoiu otradu
[па ’фли гас ’под сва ’бу а ’тра ду]
Send, Lord, your joy

Тому, кто в летний жар и зной
Tomu, kto v letnii zhar i znoi
[та ’му kto ’влет ний зар и знои]
To him, that in summer heat and intense heat

Тому, кто в летний жар и зной
Tomu, kto v letnii zhar i znoi
[та ’му kto ’влет ний зар и знои]
To him, that in summer heat and intense heat

Как бедный нищий мимо саду
Kak bednyi nishchii mimo sadu
[как ’бɛд нɨй ’ни ʃʧij ’мɨ ма ’сա ду]
Like (a) poor beggar passing (a) garden

Бредёт по жаркой мостовой;
Bredet po zharkoi mostovoi;
[бɾɛ ’дот па ’ʒар ɛ kj ma sta ’voj]
Walks on hot pavement;

Кто смотрит всkolь через ограду
Kto smotrit vskol’z’ cherez ogradu
[кто ’sмо трит фskolzɬ ’ʃɛ rɛz а ’gra du]
Who looks in passing over (the) fence

На тень деревьев, злак долин,
Na ten’ derev’ev, zlak dolin,
[на тɛн дɛ ’ре виɛв злак да ’лин]
At the shadow of trees, grains in valleys,
На недоступную прохладу
At inaccessible coolness

Роскошных, светлых луговин.
Magnificent, bright meadows.

Не для него гостеприимной
Not for him (the) welcoming

Деревья сенью разрослись,
Of trees (the) shade had grown,

Не для него, как облак дымный,
Not for him, like clouds smoky,

Лазурный грот, как из тумана,
Azure grotto, like out of the mist,

Напрасно взор его манит,
In vain eyes his beckons,

И пыль росистая фонтана
And the dust of the dewy fountain
Head his not will refresh.

Poшли, Господь, свою отраду
Send me, Lord, your joy

To him, that (in) life’s path
Like (a) poor beggar is passing (a) garden
Walks on the scorching pavement.

Lord, send your joy
To him who in intense summer heat
Walks on hot pavement
As a poor beggar passing a garden;

And in passing looks over the fence
At the shade of the trees, the valley of grains,
And the inaccessible coolness
Of the magnificent, bright meadows.

Not for him
The welcoming shade of the mature trees had grown,
Not for him
The smoky clouds from the fountain hung in the air

The azure grotto, as from the mist
Beckons his eyes in vain,
And the dust of the dewy fountain
Will not refresh his head.
Lord, send your joy
To him who in life’s path
Walks on the scorching pavement
As a poor beggar passing a garden.

Безсонница (Insomnia), Op. 37, No. 1
Bezsonnitsa
[бɛʒˈsonːnit sɑ]
Insomnia

Часов однообразный бой,
Chasov odnoobraznyi boi.
[ʧɑ 'sov əd nɑ ə 'braz nʲɪj boj]
Of the clock monotonous strike (dying),

Томительная ночи повесть.
Tomitel’naia nochi povest’.
[ʦɐ 'mi ʲɛl na ˈɑ 'no ʧi ˈpo vʲest]  
Tormenting of night story.

Язык для всех равно чужой,
Iazyk dlia vsekh ravno chuzhoi,
[ʲɑˈzɨk dlʲɑ vsʲɛx ˈrɑ vno ʃu ˈʒoj]
Language to all equally foreign,

И внятный каждому, как совесть.
I vniatnyi kazhdomu kak sovest’.
[i ˈvnʲat nʲɪj ˈkɐʂ dɐ mʊ ˈkak ˈso vʲest]
And clear to each like/as conscience.

Кто без тоски внимал из нас,
Kto bez toski bnimal iz nas,
[kto bʲɛz taˈski vniˈmal ɪz nas]
Who without sorrow heeded from us,

Среди всемирного молчанья,
Sredi vsemirnogo molchan’ia,
[srʲɛˈdi fʃɘˈmir na vɐ ma lʃɐ nɐ]
Amidst worldwide silence,

Глухия времени стенанья,
Glukhiia vremenî stenan’ia,
[ɡluˈxi ˈa vɾɐˈmʲɛ ni stʲɐˈnan ˈɕa]
To the muffled of time groaning,
Пророческий – прощальный глас.

To the prophetic parting voice.

Нам мnisится: мир осиротелый

To us it seems: (the) world orphaned

Неотразимый рок настиг.

Powerful fate is overtaken by.

И мы, в борьбе с природой целой

And we, in fight/struggle with nature entire/whole

Покинуты на нас самих.

Abandoned to us ourselves.

И наша жизнь стоит пред нами,

And our life stands before us,

Как призрак на краю земли,

like/as ghost at the edge (of the) earth,

И с нашим веком и друзьями

And with our century/time and friends

Бледнеет в сумрачной дали.

Growing pale in (the) gloomy distance.
И новое младое племя
And new young tribe

Меж тем на солнце расцвело,
Under that to sun blossomed,

A нас, друзья, и наше время
But us, friends, and our time

Давно забвением занесло.
A long time ago oblivion covered.

Лишь изредка обряд печальный
Only occasionally in rite sorrowful

Свершая в полуночный час,
Accomplished in the midnight hour,

Металла голос погребальный
Metallic voice funeral

Порой оплакивает нас.
From time to time mourns us.

* Not in original poetry.

Monotonous striking of the clock,
Night’s tormenting story.
The language equally foreign to all
And clear to all as conscience.
Who among us heeded without sorrow,
Amidst the worldwide silence
The muffled groaning of time,
The prophetic parting voice.

To us, it seems the orphaned world
Is overtaken by powerful fate
And we ourselves are abandoned
To struggle against all nature.

And our life stands before us
As a ghost at the edge of the earth,
With our time and friends
Growing pale in the gloomy distance.

And a new young tribe
Has blossomed under the sun,
But long ago, oblivion has covered
Us, our friends, and our time.

Only occasionally in the midnight hour
Accomplished in a sorrowful rite
The metallic funereal voice
Mourns us.

Слёзы (Tears), Op. 37, No. 2
Slezь
[Tears]

Слёзы льются ранней и поздней порой,
Pour you early and late from time to time,

Льётесь безвестныя, льётесь незримыя,
Human tears, oh human tears,
From time to time you fall early and late,
You pour in obscurity, you pour in hiding,
Inexhaustible, innumerable,
You pour as rainy streams
Pour from time to time, muffled, on autumn nights.

* The plural adjectival endings “-не” and “-ье” have been changed to “-ния” and “-ыя” in the
music. The “-ия” and “-ыя” endings are the common forms of the 19th century Russian
language.
То глухо жалобный, то шумный?
Понятным сердцу языком
Твердишь о непонятной муке,
И неешь, и взрываешь в нём
Про древний хаос, про родимой!
Как жадно мир души ночной
Внимает повести любимой!

To glukho zhalobnyi, to shumnyi?
Poniatnym cerdtsu iazykom
Tverdish’ o neponiatnoi muke,
I noesh’, i vzryvaesh’ v nem
Pro drevnii khaos, pro rodimoi!
Kak zhadno mir dushi nochnoi
Vnimaat povesti liubimoi!

Sometimes muffled plaintive, then loud?
Intelligible of the heart language
You go on about incomprehensible anguish,
And you moan, and you explode in it
Occasionally frenzied sounds!
Oh, terrible song this not (do) sing
About ancient chaos, about native land!
How greedily the world of soul night (night soul)
Из смертной рвётся он груди
Iz smertnoi rvetsia on grudi
From mortal bursts he chest

И * с безпредельным жаждет слиться . . .
I s bezpredel’nym zhazhet slit’sia . . .
And with immeasureable longing pours out . . .

О, бурь заснувших не буди –
O, bur’ zasnuvshikh ne budi
Oh, storm sleeping not (do) awaken

Под ними хаос шевелится!
Pod nimi khaos shevelitsia!
Beneath them chaos stirs!

* он (he) in the poem.

About what do you howl, night wind?
About what do you complain so madly?
What does your strange voice mean;
Sometimes muffled and plaintive, then loud?
Intelligible language of the heart,
You tell of incomprehensible anguish,
And from time to time you moan and explode
In frenzied sounds!

Do not sing this terrible song
Of ancient chaos, of the native land!
How greedily the world of the night soul
Heeds those beloved stories!
He bursts from the mortal breast
And pours out with immeasurable longing . . .
Oh, do not awaken the sleeping storms:
Chaos stirs beneath them!
Песни Ночи (Night Songs), Op. 45, No. 3
Pesni nochi
[pʲes ni 'no tʃi]
Night Songs

Как океан объемлет шар земной,
Kak okean ob”emlet shar zemnoi,
[ʃɑ ˈkʲe ˈoʊk eɪn ˈoʊb ˈɛm ˈleɪt ʃɑr zəm ˈnoɪ]
As (the) ocean encompasses sphere of the earth (the globe),

Земная жизнь кругом объятия снами
Zemnaia zhizn’ krugom obiata snami
[zʲemˈnaː ʒɨz’n kruɡəm əbiəta ˈsnə mi]
Earthly life circle embraced (by) dreams

Настанет ночь – и звучными волнами
Nastanet noch’ i zvuchnymi volnami
[nʌˈstæ nə tʃ oʃ tʃ i v ʌ l ˈθjuː ɲi vəl nə mi]
Comes night and with sonorous waves

Стихия бьёт о берег свой
Stikhiia b’ et o bereg svoi
[stiˈxi ˈbɛt o ˈbɛr əɡ ˈsvoɪ]
Element brings about the shore his

Уж в пристани волшебный ожил чёлн
Uzh v pristani volshebnyi ozhil cheln
[ʔuʃ ˈvrɪstəni ˈvɒlʃɪbniːi ˈoʒɪl tʃɛlŋ]
Already at the pier magical revived the skiff

Прилив растёт и быстро нас уносит
Priliv rastet i bystro nas unosit
[prɪˈlɪv rʌst ɛt i ˈbɪstro nɑs ˈʌnəsɨt]
The tide grows and quickly us carries

В неизмеримость тёмных волн.
V neizmerimost’ temnykh voln.
[ vənɪz mərɪzməst ˈtɛm nɨ kʰvən]
On immeasurable dark waves.
As the ocean encompasses the earth’s sphere,
Life’s earthly circle is embraced by dreams.
Night comes – and with sonorous waves
Brings his element to the shore.

His voice to her: He compels us and pleads…
The magical skiff is already revived at the pier,
The tide grows and quickly carries us
On dark, immeasurable waves.

The firmament is ablaze with starry glory,
Mysteriously gazing from the depths –
And we sail into the fiery abyss,
Enveloped on all sides.

Наш Век (Our Time), Op. 45, No. 4
Nash vek
[naʃˈ vʲek]  
Our Time

Not the flesh, but the spirit was defiled in our days,
И человек отчаянно тоскует...

And man desperately is longing . . .

Он к свету рвётся из ночной тени

He to light breaks from night shadows

И свет обретши ропщет и бунтует.

And, light gained (he) murmurs and rebels.

Безверием палим и изсушён

With faithlessness scorching and dryness

Невыноси моё он днесь выносит . . .

Intolerance mine he today bears . . .

И сознаёт свою погибель он.

and acknowledges his destruction he.

И жаждет веры — но о ней не просит . . .

And (he) thirsts for faith but for it not does ask . . .

Не скажет век с молитвой и слезой,

Not he will say time with prayer and tears,

Как ни скорбит пред замкнутою дверью:

Like not (no matter how) he grieves before closed door:
“Впусти меня! – Я верю, Боже мой!

“Vpusti menia! Ia veriu Bozhe moi!

“Allow in me! I believe God my!

Приди на помощь моему неверью.”

Pridi na pomoshch’ moemu never’iu.”

Come to help in my disbelief.”

Not the flesh, but the spirit was defiled in our day,
And man is desperately longing . . .
He breaks into light from night’s shadows,
And having gained the light, he murmurs and rebels.

With faithlessness, with scorching and dryness,
He bears intolerance . . .
And acknowledges his destruction,
And he thirsts for faith, but for it he asks not . . .

In time, he will not say, through prayer and tears,
No matter how he grieves before the closed door:
“Allow me in! – I believe, my God!
Come to my aid, in my disbelief.”

Полдень (Noon), Op. 59, No. 1
Polden’
[pal'den]
Noon

Лениво дышит полдень мглистый,
Lenivo dyshit polden’ mglistyi,
[le 'ni va 'di fit 'pol d'en 'mgli stij]
Lazily breathing the afternoon hazy,

Лениво катится река,
Lenivo katitsia reka,
[le 'ni va 'ka tit s'a ri 'ka]
Lazily rolls the river,

И в тверди пламенной и чистой
I v tverdi plamennoi i chistoi
[iv 'tv'er di 'pla m'en:noj i 'ʃi staj]
And in firmament burning and clear/pure
The hazy afternoon lazily breathes,
The river lazily rolls,
And in the clear and burning firmament,
The clouds lazily melt away.

And all of nature, like a mist,
Embraces hot somnolence;
And now the great Pan himself
Calmly dozes in the cave of the nymphs.

О, вещая душа моя (Oh, my prophetic soul), Op. 61, No. 6
Oh, my prophetic soul

О, вещая душа моя!
Oh, prophetic soul mine!
О, сердце, полное тревоги,
O, serdtse, polnoe trevogi,
[о 's/erd ts/е 'pol nа 'trev o gi]
Oh, heart, full of unease,

O, как ты бьёшься на пороге
O, kak ty b'esh'sia na poroge
[о kak ti 'boj s'a na 'po rо g'е]
Oh, how you struggle on the threshold

Как бы двойного бытия!
Kak by dvoinogo bytiia!
[kak bi dvоj 'no va bi ti 'u]
As if a double existence!

Так, ты – жилище двух миров,
Tak, ty zhilishche dvux mirov,
[tak ti ʒi liʃʧʲɛ dvux miov]
So, you (are) the dwelling place of two worlds,

Твой день – болезненный и страстный,
Tvoi den' boleznennyi i strastnyi,
[tvoj dʲen bɑ 'lʲɛz nʲɛ nɨj i 'strast nɨj]
Your day (is) sickly and passionate,

Твой сон – пророчески-неясный,
Tvoi son prorecheski-neiasnyi,
[tvoj son pra 'ro ʧʲe ski nʲe 'nas nɨj]
Your dream (is) prophetically vague,

Как откровение духов . . .
Kak otkrovenie dukhov . . .
[kak at kra 've ni consts 'du xav]
As the revelation of spirits . . .

Пускай страдальческую грудь
Puskai stradal’cheskuju grud'
[pu 'skaj stra dal'ʃɛ sku ʤu grud]
Let the anguished breast

Волнуют страсти роковые –
Volnuuiut strasti rokovyie
[val 'nu ʤut 'strɑ sti rɑ ka 'vi ʃɛ]
Excite passions fateful
The soul (is) ready, as Mary,

To the feet of Christ forever to cleave.

Oh, my prophetic soul!
Oh heart, full of unease,
Oh, how you struggle on the threshold
As if a double existence!

So, you are the home of two worlds,
Your day is sickly and passionate,
Your dream is prophetically vague,
As is the revelation of the spirits . . .

Let the fateful passions
Ignite the extinguished breast –
The soul is ready, as Mary,
To cleave unto the feet of Christ forever.

Успокоение (Tranquility), Op. 61, No. 7

Когда, что звали мы своим,

Навек от нас ушло

И, как под камнем гробовым,
Нам станет тяжело,
To us stands heavily/gravely,

Пойдем и взглянем вдоль реки,
Let us come and look along the river,

Туда, по склону вод,
There, on inclined water,

Куда стремглав бегут струи,
Where headlong run the streams,

Неодолим, неудержим,
Insuperable, irrepressible,

И не вернётся вспять . . .
And not will return back . . .

И чем мы далее глядим,
And what we longer look at,

Тем легче нам дышать . . .
Then the better (for) us to breathe . . .
И слёзы льются из очей,
And tears pour from eyes.

И видим мы сквозь слёз,
And see we through tears,

Как всё сильнее и сильней
As all stronger and strong

Волненье понеслось . . .
Excitement rushed off . . .

Душа впадает в забытьё –
Soul flows to oblivion

И чувствует она,
And feels she (the soul),

Что вот помчала и еë
That there carried and it

Великая волна.
Great wave.

When that which we called our own
Left us forever,
And as beneath the gravestone,
Stands heavily before us, –
Let us come and look along the river,
There, on the inclined water,
To where the streams run headlong,
To where the stream bears away –

Insuperable, irrepressible,
And it will not come back . . .
And the longer we watch it,
Then the easier it is for us to breathe . . .

And tears pour from our eyes,
And we see through the tears,
As all rushed off stronger and stronger
To excitement . . .

The soul flows to oblivion –
And it feels that the great wave
Carried it as well.
CHAPTER FIVE

AVAILABLE PUBLICATIONS

Printed Music

The following publication information was obtained from Music In Print Online, an online searchable database of published music, including information on publisher and print status. All opuses but Opus 59 can be ordered from Classical Vocal Reprints.

Opus 24: Currently published by Classical Vocal Reprints.
Opus 28: Currently published by Classical Vocal Reprints.
Opus 37: Published by Oscar Zimmermann Publications.
Opus 45: Published by Oscar Zimmermann Publications.
Opus 61: Published posthumously by M.P. Belaieff. Numbers 1-7 only. Does not include “Полдень” (Noon).

Recordings

The following publication information was obtained from The Alexander Street Press, Music Online: Classical Music Library. This information pertains only to the Tutchev settings.


Opus 45: No recordings available.


Opus 61: No recordings available.
APPENDIX

GLOSSARY OF MUSICAL TERMS

The following terms are found in Medtner’s settings of Tutchev and are used throughout this document.

Addolcito, Sweet, softened
Affanato, Anxious, anguished, breathless
Affrettando, Hurrying, accelerating
Agitato, Agitated
Allargando, Broadening
Allegro, Cheerful, lively
Andante con moto sostenuto, Walking with sustained motion
Andante, meditative, Walking, meditative
Andantino con moto, ma sempre lugubre, Walking with motion, but always grim/gloomy
Appassionato, Passionate
Calmando, Calming
Concentrandone, Concentrating
Con molto tenerezza, With much tenderness
Con moto, With motion
Dolce, Sweetly
Dolente, Sorrowful
Espressivo, Expressive
Grazioso, Graceful
Lamento, Mournful
Languido, Languid
Largamente, Broadly
Largo, dolente, Broad, sorrowful
Leggerissimo, Very light
Lento, Slow
Lugubre, Gloomy
Maestoso, Majestic
Mancando, Failing, dying away
Molto accelerando, Much acceleration
Pesante, Heavy
Più mosso, More motion
Pieno, Full
Poco a poco, Little by little
Poco accelerando, A little acceleration
Poco calando, Calming a little
Quietissimo, pieghevole, sempre sordamente, Extremely calm, pliable, always muffled
Risoluto, Resolved, resolute
Ritenuto, Held back
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<th>Description</th>
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<tr>
<td>Sereno</td>
<td>Serene</td>
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<tr>
<td>Slargando</td>
<td>Gradually slowing</td>
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<tr>
<td>Sordamente</td>
<td>Muted, veiled, muffled, gentle</td>
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<tr>
<td>Sostenuto</td>
<td>Sustained</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Stentato</td>
<td>Hard, forced, emphasized</td>
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<tr>
<td>Svegliato</td>
<td>Awakened, brisk, alert</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tempestoso</td>
<td>Tempestuous, stormy</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tranquillo</td>
<td>Tranquil</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Triplo movimento</td>
<td>Triple movement</td>
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<tr>
<td>Vocalizzare</td>
<td>Vocalise</td>
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BIOGRAPHICAL SKETCH

Lara Billings hails from Salt Lake City, Utah. One of her greatest musical accomplishments was her performance of the role of La madre in Luigi Dallapiccola’s twelve-tone opera, *Il prigioniero*, which was described in the *Tallahassee Democrat* as “a heartbreaking performance.” She has sung Micaëla in *La tragédie de Carmen*, Alice Ford in *Falstaff*, and the title role in *Suor Angelica*.

As an orchestral soloist, Ms. Billings has sung the soprano solos in Rossini’s *Stabat Mater*, Mozart's *Coronation Mass*, and Vivaldi’s *Gloria*. She worked with composer Harold Schiffman at the world premiere performance of *Alma*, as a cover for the title role.

Ms. Billings received a Bachelor of Music degree from the University of Utah and a Master of Music degree from Florida State University, both with emphasis in vocal performance. She has studied Spanish extensively, as well as French, German, Italian, and Russian. She is completing her Doctor of Music in Vocal Performance at Florida State University, where she specialized in Russian language and literature by performing numerous works in the Russian language, including but not limited to Shostakovich’s *Seven Poems of Aleksandr Blok* and Prokofiev’s *The Ugly Duckling*. She has also done songs of Tchaikovsky, Glinka, Taneyev, Sviridov, Shaporin, and Rachmaninoff. She currently teaches at Snow College in Ephraim, Utah, and has previously taught at Troy University in Troy, Alabama, and was a teaching assistant at Florida State University.