

### **1. Water Night**

Night with the eyes of a horse that trembles in the night,  
night with eyes of water in the field asleep  
is in your eyes, a horse that trembles,  
is in your eyes of secret water.

Eyes of shadow-water,  
eyes of well-water,  
eyes of dream-water.

Silence and solitude,  
two little animals moon-led,  
drink in your eyes,  
drink in those waters.

If you open your eyes,  
night opens, doors of musk,  
the secret kingdom of the water opens  
flowing from the centre of night.

And if you close your eyes,  
a river fills you from within,  
flows forward, darkens you:  
night brings its wetness to beaches in your soul.

— trans. Muriel Rukeyser

### **2. Evening Prayer**

Watch, O Lord, with those who wake,  
or watch or weep tonight,  
and give your angels charge  
over those who sleep.

Tend your sick ones,  
O Lord Jesus Christ;  
rest your weary ones;  
bless your dying ones;  
soothe your suffering ones;  
pity your afflicted ones;  
shield your joyous ones;  
and all for your love's sake.

Amen.

— St. Augustine

### **5. Abendlied, Op. 92, No. 3**

Friedlich bekämpfen Nacht sich und Tag;  
wie das zu dämpfen, wie das zu lösen vermag.  
Der mich bedrückte, schläfst du schon, Schmerz?  
Was mich beglückte, sage, was war's doch, mein Herz?

Freude wie Kummer, fühl ich, zerrann,  
aber den Schlummer führten sie leise heran.  
Und im Entschweben, immer empor,  
kommt mir das Leben ganz wie ein Schlummerlied vor.

— Friedrich Hebbel

### **3. Stars**

Alone in the night on a dark hill,  
with pines around me spicy and still,  
and heaven full of stars over my head.

White and topaz and misty red;  
Myriads with beating hearts of fire  
Oh the eons cannot vex or tire;

The dome of heaven like a great hill  
and heaven full of stars.  
I know I am honored  
to be witness of so much majesty.

— Sara Teasdale

### **4. Hard Trials**

Been lis'nin all de night long,  
Been lis'nin all de day,  
For to hear some sinner pray.

Now ain't dem hard trials,  
Great tribulation,  
Ain't dem hard trials,  
I'm boun' to leave dis lan',

O, de foxes dey have holes in de groun',  
An' de birds have nests in de air,  
An' ev'rybody has a hidin' place,  
But us poor sinners ain't got nowhere.

Now ain't dem hard trials,  
Great tribulation,  
Ain't dem hard trials,  
I'm boun' to leave dis lan',

O the day dey had her on the auction block,  
She's been poked and pushed and tried,  
Was de day her heart completely broke,  
Was de day her heart done died.

Now ain't dem hard trials,  
Great tribulation,  
Ain't dem hard trials,  
I'm boun' to leave dis lan',

You may go disaway, you may go dataway,  
You may from door to door,  
But if you ain't got de good Lord in yo' soul,  
O de troubles gonna find you sho',  
And de devil's gonna trouble yo' do'  
And there ain't no hidin' place.

### **Abendlied, Op. 92, No. 3**

Peacefully does night struggle with the day;  
how to muffle it, how to dissolve it.  
That which depressed me, are you already asleep, Pain?  
That which made me happy, say, what was it, my heart?

Joy, like anguish, I feel has melted away,  
but they have gently invoked slumber instead.  
And as I float away, ever skyward,  
it occurs to me that life is just like a lullaby.

## **6. Abendlied, Op. 69, No. 3**

Blieb' bei uns, denn es will Abend werden;  
Und der Tag hat sich geneiget.

— Luke 24 v. 29

## **Abendlied, Op. 69, No. 3**

Bide with us, for evening shadows darken,  
And the day will soon be over.

— trans. John Rutter

## **7. Three Nocturnes**

### *i. Ballade to the Moon*

On moonlit night I wander free,  
my mind to roam on thoughts of thee.  
With midnight darkness beckoning  
my heart t'ward mystic fantasy:  
Come and dream in me!  
How beautiful, this night in June!  
And here, upon the velvet dune,  
I weep with joy beneath the moon.

The path lies dark before my sight,  
and yet, my feet with pure delight  
trod onward through the blackened vale,  
beneath the starry sky so bright:  
O share thy light!  
These woods, their weary wanderer soon  
In awe and fearful wonder swoon;  
I weep with joy beneath the moon.

And as the darkened hours flee,  
my heart beats ever rapidly.  
Though heavy hang my eyes with sleep,  
my singing soul, it cries to thee:  
Come and sing with me!  
The twinkling sky casts forth its tune:  
O must I leave thy charms so soon?  
I weep with joy beneath the moon.

### *ii. Star Sonnet*

In stillness high above the slumb'ring shore  
where wistful waves of foam caress the sand,  
a silent watchman o'er the darkened land,  
adrift celestial seas of twilight soars.

She passes softly in the heavens deep—  
her silver skin aglow with radiant hue,  
her enchanting globes of glittering dew,  
through rays of moonlight rich with heavenly sleep.

What dreams have I that she should give them flight,  
enlivened in a momentary flame—  
what fears of hope unfounded could she tame  
to joy, arising toward the hov'ring height!

O, Beaming Star, illumine heaven's floor  
until the sun should bear its light once more.

### *iii. Lullaby*

Lullaby, sing lullaby,  
the day is far behind you.  
The moon sits high atop the sky,  
now let sweet slumber find you.

The day is done, and gone the sun  
that lit the world so brightly.  
The earth's aglow with speckled show  
of twinkling stars so sprightly.

Away, where the sunlight is beaming  
through a deep, cloudless blue,  
and the treetops are gleaming  
with a fresh morning dew;  
where the mountains are shining  
at the meadows below,  
in a brilliant white lining  
of new-fallen snow.

Close your eyes, breathe in the night;  
a softer bed I'll make you.  
The trial is done, all danger gone;  
now let far dreaming take you.

Away, where the ocean is lapping  
at a soft, pearly shore,  
and the swaying palms napping  
as their swinging fronds soar.  
Now the dark night approaches,  
yet so soft and so mild.  
Lullaby, sing lullaby;  
sleep now, my child.

## **8. Nocturnes**

### ***i. Sa Nuit d'Été***

Si je pourrais avec mes mains brûlantes  
fondre ton corps autour ton cœur d'amante,  
ah que la nuit deviendrait transparente  
le prenant pour un astre attardé  
qui toujours dès le premier temps des mondes  
était perdu et qui commence sa ronde  
et tâtonnant de sa lumière blonde  
sa première nuit, sa nuit, sa nuit d'été.

— Rainer Maria Rilke

### ***ii. Soneto de la Noche***

Cuando yo muero quiero tus manos en mis ojos:  
quiero la luz y el trigo de tus manos amadas  
pasar una vez más sobre mí su frescura:  
sentir la suavidad que cambió mi destino.

Quiero que vivas mientras yo, dormido, te espero,  
quiero que tus oídos sigan oyendo el viento,  
que huelas el aroma del mar que amamos juntos  
y que sigas pisando la arena que pisamos.

Quiero que lo que amo siga vivo  
y a ti te amé y canté sobre todas las cosas,  
por eso sigue tú floreciendo, florida,

para que alcances todo lo que mi amor te ordena,  
para que se pasee mi sombra por tu pelo,  
para que así conozcan la razón de mi canto.

— Pablo Neruda

### ***iii. Sure On This Shining Night***

Sure on this shining night  
Of starmade shadows round,  
Kindness must watch for me  
This side the ground.

The late year lies down the north.  
All is healed, all is health.  
High summer holds the earth.  
Hearts all whole.

Sure on this shining night  
I weep for wonder  
Wand'ring far alone  
If shadows on the stars.

— James Agee

### ***i. Its Summer Night***

If, with my burning hands, I could melt  
the body surrounding your lover's heart,  
ah! How the night would become translucent,  
taking it for a late star,  
which, from the first moments of the world,  
was forever lost, and which begins its course  
With its blonde light, trying to reach out towards  
its first night, its night, its summer night.

— trans. Byron Adams

### ***ii. Sonnet of the Night***

When I die, I want your hands upon my eyes:  
I want the light and the wheat of your beloved hands  
to pass their freshness over me one more time:  
I want to feel the gentleness that changed my destiny.

I want you to live while I wait for you, asleep,  
I want your ears to still hear the wind,  
I want you to smell the scent of the sea we both loved,  
and to continue walking on the sand we walked on.

I want all that I love to keep on living,  
and you whom I loved and sang above all things  
to keep flowering into full bloom,

so that you can touch all that my love provides you,  
so that my shadow may pass over your hair,  
so that all may know the reason for my song.

— trans. Nicholas Lauridsen

## **9. Three Winter Songs**

### ***i. A Winter Bluejay***

Crisply the bright snow whisper'd,  
crunching beneath our feet;  
Behind us as we walked the long parkway  
our shadows danced,  
fantastic shapes in vivid blue.

Across the lake the skaters flew to and fro;  
With sharp turns weaving, a frail invisible net;  
In ecstasy the earth drank silver sunlight;  
In ecstasy the skaters drank the wine of speed;  
In ecstasy we laughed drinking the wine of love.

Had not the music sounded its highest note?  
But no, for suddenly with lifted eyes you said,  
"Oh, look! There on the black bough of a show-flecked maple".  
Fearless and gay as our love, bluejay cocked his crest!  
Oh who can tell the range of joy, or set the bounds of beauty?

— Sara Teasdale

### ***ii. A Winter Night***

My window-pane is starred with frost,  
the world is bitter cold tonight.  
The moon is cruel, the wind  
is like a two-edged sword to smite!

God pity all the beggars pacing to and fro.  
God pity all the poor tonight,  
who walk the lamp-lit streets of snow.

My room is like a bit of June,  
warm and close-curtain'd fold on fold.  
But somewhere like a homeless child,  
my heart is crying in the cold.

— Sara Teasdale

### ***iii. Snow Song***

Fairy snow, blowing ev'rywhere;  
Would that I too could fly  
lightly through the air.

Like a wee crystal star  
I should drift, I should blow;  
Near more near, to my dear,  
where he comes through the snow.

I should fly to my love  
like a flake in the storm.  
I should die, I should die  
on his lips that are warm.

— Sara Teasdale

## **10. Great Day**

Oh, great day, the righteous marchin',  
Oh, God's gonna build up Zion's walls.  
This is the day of de Jubilee,  
the Lord has set His people free.

Oh, great day, the righteous marchin',  
Oh, God's gonna build up Zion's walls.  
We want no cowards in our ban',  
we call for valiant hearted men.