

Karel Hynek Mácha (16 November 1810 – 6 November 1836) was a Czech romantic poet born two hundred years ago in Prague and laid a stamp as a great Czech romantic poet. Karel Hynek Mácha is generous and sensible love poet. Marcela Sulak has translated his few writings.



You, who in your distant courses
embrace the earth with secret arms,
you melted stars, blue shades of sky,
you mourners, saddening yourselves,
dissolving into silent tears,
I choose you now as messengers.
Where in your distant course, you drift,
and there, wherever you find a shore,
in wandering, greet the land for me.
Oh, lovely earth, beloved earth,
my cradle and my grave, my mother,
my only homeland, my given inheritance,
this vast earth, this one and only!

Late evening, on the first of May -
The twilit May - the time of love.
Meltingly called the turtle-dove,
Where rich and sweet pinewoods lay.
Whispered of love the mosses trail,
The flowering tree as sweetly lied,
The rose's fragrant sigh replied
To love-songs of the nightingale.
In shadowy woods the burnished lake
Darkly complained a secret pain,
By circling shores embraced again;
And heaven's clear sun leaned down to take
A road astray in azure deeps,
Like burning tears the lover weeps.

"

Byl pozdní večer - první máj -
večerní máj - byl lásky čas.
Hrdliččin zval ku lásce hlas,
kde borový zaváněl háj.
O lásce šeptal tichý mech;
květoucí strom lhal lásky žel,
svou lásku slavík růži pěl,
růžinu jevil vonný vzdech.
Jezero hladké v křovích stinných
zvučelo temně tajný bol,
břeh objímal je kol a kol;
a slunce jasná světů jiných
bloudila blankytnými pásky,
planoucí tam co slzy lásky."

Late evening, on the first of May —
The twilit May — the time of love.
Meltingly called the turtle-dove,
Where rich and sweet pinewoods lay.
Whispered of love the mosses frail,
The flowering tree as sweetly lied,
The rose's fragrant sigh replied

To love-songs of the nightingale.
In shadowy woods the burnished lake
Darkly complained a secret pain,
By circling shores embraced again;
And heaven's clear sun leaned down to take
A road astray in azure deeps,
Like burning tears the lover weeps.

A haze of stars in heaven hovers —
That church of endless love's communion —
Each jewel blanches and recovers
As blanch and burn long-parted lovers
In the high rapture of reunion.
How clear, to her full beauty grown,
How pale, how clear, the moon above,
Like maiden seeking for her love,
A rosy halo round her thrown!
Her mirrored image she espied,
And of self-love, beholding, died.
Forth from the farms pale shadows strayed,
Lengthening longing to their kind,
Till they embraced, and close entwined,
Coiled low into the lap of shade,
Grown all one twilight unity.
Tree in the shadows writhes to tree.
In the far mountains' dark confine
Pine leans to birch and birch to pine.
Wave baunting wave the streamlets move.
For love's sake — in the time of love —
Anguished goes every living thing.

A fair girl at the rim of land
Watches the evening's rosy phases;
Under the oak-tree by the strand
Far out across the lakes she gazes.
Blue to her feet it coils and glimmers,
And green beyond, and greener, sleeps,
Till in the distances and deeps

In clear, pale light all melts and shimmers.

Over the wide and watery plain
The girl has fixed her weary gaze;
Over the wide and watery plain
Only the glint of starlight plays.

A lovely girl, an angel ravaged,
A bud that April winds have savaged,
In her pale cheeks doomed beauty hastens.
One hour has swallowed up her morrow,
One hour her promise chills and chastens,
Marries her May to grief and sorrow.

Of twenty days the last has died;
Still dreams the quiet countryside.

The last light hastens to its close,
And heaven, like a great, clear rose,
Over the deep blue mountains flushes.
"He comes not! Ah, such anguish takes me!

Another spoiled, and he forsakes me!"

A heavy sigh her sad voice bushes,
Her aching heart burns in her breast,
And with the water's plaint unsleeping
Mingles the note of bitter weeping.

Snared in her tears the stars find rest,
Down her pale cheeks like bright sparks flowing
Till like quenched stars they burn to shades there,
On her cold countenance briefly glowing.
And where they fall, the blossom fades there.

At the rock's rim she glimmers whitely;

A silken standard flies her gown,
In evening zephyrs fluttering lightly.
Her eyes on distance fix and frown—
In haste she dries her blinding tears,
Beneath her shading hand she peers,
And on the distant shore she fastens,
Where in the hills the lake creeps hiding;

Over the waves live sparks go gliding,
Star after watery starlet bastens.

Even as snow-white virgin doves
Against dark wastes of cloud in flight,
On water-lily flowering white
On deepest blue – so something moves –
Where in the hills the lake creeps hiding –
Over the dark waves nearer gliding,
Nearer in haste. A moment proves
Now as the stork's grave flight it looms,
No dove so flies nor lily blooms,
But a white sail rocked by hasting breezes.
A slender oar the blue wave teases,
With flaming furrows the surface bazing.
The golden rose of heaven's hold,
High in the mountain oakwoods blazing,
Gilds the ripples with rosy gold.
“Swift little boat! Near, nearer bounding!
'Tis be! 'Tis be! Those plumes bright beaming,
The hat, the eyes beneath it gleaming –
His cloak –” The boat in the beach is grounding.

Over the rocks his light step rings,
By a known path he climbs and closes.
The girl's pale face flowers into roses;
From the tree's shade in wild hope flying
She runs, high-calling, runs and springs,
And on the rower's breast she's lying-
“Alas, my heart!: The moonlight shows
In its full flood a face she knows.
Her pounding blood to terror knells her.
Where is Vilem?”

“See, by the lake,”
In low grim tone the boatman tells her,
“Above the night the forests make
Rises a tower, its image white

Deep in the lake's heart drowned from sight;
But deeper, see, at the water's rim,
From a little window a lantern's gleam;
This night to vigil Vilem is giving:
Tomorrow sets him free from living.
His heavy guilt and yours he carries:
Deep your seducer's blood has stained him,
That stroke a parricide arraigned him.
Still, still revenge the avenger carries!
A felon's death! Peace to him bring,
Lord, when that face, the rose outshining,
In its high place stands withering,
And in the wheel his limbs are twining!
So dies the dreaded Forest King!
Bear for his guilt, and your own shame,
My bitter curse, and the world's blame!"

He turns. His voice to silence falls;
Down he climbs through the rocky walls,
Outward his boat goes gliding.
Swift as the stork's flight, beating fast,
Dwindling, dwindling, a lily at last,
Over the lake in the mountains hiding.

Hushed are the waters, dark, forlorn,
In deep dusk all things crouch to cover.
A white dress gleams on the waves that mourn
Over her: "Jarmila!" like a lover,
And the woods sigh: "Jarmila!" over and over.

Late evening, on the first of May —
The twilit May—the time of love.
To dalliance woos the turtle-dove:
"Jarmila! Jarmila!! Jarmila!!!"

2

Out of heaven a star falls questing,
Dying through the wastes of space,

Endlessly it falls unresting
Through its endless resting-place;
From the unbounded grave wild crying
Beats at heaven with bitter breath.
“Is there then no end of dying?”
Nowhere – never an end of death.
Around the white tower breezes shiver,
Beneath, the whispering wavelets quiver.
On the blanched walls in silver glance
The argent moon sheds radiance.
But deep within the tower is darkness only,
For the clear moon's pale wealth of light
Through narrow window into the cell gropes lonely,
And dims into the assault of night.
Column by column the sombre vault's recesses
Melt into darkness. The entering wind sighing
Circles the cell like murdered felons crying,
And stirs the prisoner's tresses.
Beside a table hewn of stone,
His head upon his hands inclining
Half-sits, half-kneels this wretched one,
To deeps of thought his soul resigning.
As clouds the moon's face veil and cover,
He draws their web his spirit over;
Thought into thought flows undesigning.
“Deep night, now in your veiling hold
My native village you enfold,
And friends weep for my end there.
Weep? – and for me? A dream outworn!
Long since I have no friend there.
The first gleam of tommorow's morn
Over her forest breaking,
Will send me to my death forlorn,
And gild, as when her child was born,
Her merry, mild awaking.”

Silent he falls; but through the night,
About the high vault flying,
Far, far his voice goes sighing,
Till as with horror frozen in flight
At the cell's end it chills there,
And into darkness stills there.

The silence in the darkness grieving
Calls back to heart the days departed;
Again in waking dreams he's living
The long-lost life of a boy light-hearted.
Remembrance of green years and kind
Brings back a young man's dreams to mind;
The prisoner's eyes with tears are flowing,
And in his heart a great pain growing –
A lost world how shall the seeker find?

Mountain on mountain westward presses
Beyond the lake high-piled
And there in the pinewoods' sweet recesses,
He dreams himself once more a child.
Early thrust from his father's care,
Bred up by brigands in strifes and stresses,
Last to their leader fallen heir,
Gallant and daring they acclaim him.
Known to all men, thus all men name him,
Lord of the Woods, a name of fear.
Till the love of a broken rose inflames him;
His hand, to bitter vengeance straying,
Seeks the seducer, strikes him, claims him,
His stranger father strangely slaying.
Wherefore a prisoner he lies,
Doomed to the wheel's embrace that kills;
Lord of the Woods, at dawn he dies,
At the first kindling of the hills.

Now at a table hewn of stone,
His head upon his hands reposing,

Half-sits, half-kneels this wretched one,
The abyss of thought his soul enclosing:
As clouds the moon's face veil and cover,
He draws their web his spirit over,
Thought evermore new thought disclosing.

“He, sire and foe!-I, death and seed!
And he my love's betrayer!
I knew him not! My fearful deed
recoiled and slew the slayer.
Why was I banished from his sight
The lawless woods to barry?
Whose crime does the dawn's death requite?
Whose guilt is this I carry?
Not mine! ah, surely I was bent
A mute, unwitting instrument
God's judgment to deliver.
Not mine the deed! Why, then, ah, why
Out to this hideous death go I
So soon-and, ah, for ever?
Soon, and for ever! Endless – death –”
For horror fails the prisoner's breath,
Echoing from the dungeon wall;
The voiceless shadow of the night
In iron grip shuts sound and sight.
A new dream holds his mind in thrall.

“Ah, she, my saint, my rose embowered!
Why lost ere ever she was found?
Why at my father's hands deflowered?
Accursed I! –” Deep anguish drowned
The struggling words. With sudden sound
Of clamorous chains he springs upright,
And from the little window strains
Over the waves his tortured sight.
Cloud veils the moon, and shadow reigns
Over the earth, but no shade mars
The zenith glittering with stars;

With points of fire the lake they stain,
That flash and fade in waters hollow.
Their glimmering flight his fixed eyes follow,
And all his heart is wrenched with pain.
"How fair the world! How rich the night!
Silver and shade agreeing!
Ah, tomorrow shuts my dying sight
On all the bliss of seeing!
And as grey cloud across the skies
Far, far and wide goes flying,
So—" Down he sinks, his hungering eyes
Torn from the scene, his chains' harsh cries
Soon into silence dying.

Best LOVE Poems of Karel Hynek Macha

A monstrous bird's extended wing,
From peak to peak the cloud is driven,
Under one vast pall gathering
In blackest marriage earth and heaven.
Hark! from the high hills lost to sight
A poignant voice is trilling,
A forest piper of the night,
The song of heaven distilling.
To all things which bave wakeful lain
It charms down sleep's completeness;
The prisoner in his mortal pain
Finds Lethe in its sweetness.

"How beautiful, dear voice, the song
On the night's breast you're flinging!
But one more night-ah, God, not long!-
And deaf to your enchanted tongue,
No more I'll hear such singing."
Again he sings-the clank of chains
Rings through the cell, despairing-
Deep silence. Once again the pains
Of death his heart are tearing,
And fading far the voice complains

An anguish beyond bearing.
"Time yet to come? Tomorrow's day?
Still, still some dream will time repay,
Or sleep too deep for dreaming?
Perhaps this life which here I live
Is but a sleep, and dawn will give
Only another seeming?
Or that best rose, long longed-for here,
That fruit the wide earth did not bear,
Will dawn and death disclose?
Who knows? – Ah, no one knows!"

Silence again. The hush of night
On all the earth is draped there.
Quenched is the moon's benignant light,
Quenched are the stars, and all around
Is purest darkness, black, profound,
As if the grave's mouth gaped there.
No winds blow more, nor waves complain,
Nor even the far, sweet pipe of pain,
And in the bosom in the cell
Dead silence, utter darkness dwell.
"How deep the night-how dark the night!
On me a darker closes –
Away, thought!" Panic shuts from sight
The grave his thought discloses.

Deep silence. From the streaming wall
Flows down a small, slow river,
And echoing drops the silence fret;
Through the long cell their hollow fall,
Measuring night's moments of regret,
Chimes – ceases – chimes and ceases ever,
Chimes – ceases – chimes and ceases yet.

"How long the night – how long the night!
On me a longer closes –
Away, thought!" Horror shuts from sight

The grave his thought discloses.
Deep silence. Once again the chime
Of slow drops falling metes out time.

“A darker night! Here in the womb
Of veriest midnight shines some beam
Of moon or star – there – hideous gloom,
There never – never – never a gleam,
Only the dark for ever.

All's one there, without part-they send
no hours, no moments to befriend,
Night fails not, never dawns the day,
For there time passes never.

There never – never – never an end!
From death that passes not away
Who shall my soul deliver?

“There utter emptiness, beneath,
Around, above, the void of death,
Quenching all live's endeavour.

Unending silence – never a sound –
Unending space, night, time, surround
The dead mind dreaming on decay –
Mere nothingness – for ever!

And I to nothing – but one more day,
And I to nothing am cast away –”
He faints, he falls aquiver.

Lightly the waves at play come springing
Under the tower, their small spray flying,
Ever a gentle murmur bringing,
A cradle-song for captive singing,
Who in a deep half-death is lying.

The fearful clash of chains awakes
The guard, who with his lamp comes hastening;
So light a step, it scarcely breaks
The prisoner's trance of dread unresting.
Pillar to pillar the lantern bright

Puts forth its little gleaming:
Still paler, paler grows its light,
Till fails at last the exhausted spark,
And absolute and moveless dark
On all beyond lies dreaming.
But still the prisoner's eyes, adaze
As if night shrouded still their gaze,
Strain forward, nothing seeing,
Although the lantern's reddening ray
Lights his wan face, and drives away
The timid shadows fleeing.
Beside the table hewn of stone,
His head upon his hands inclining,
Half-sits, half-kneels the wretched one,
To sick despair his soul resigning;
And the faint whispering of his breath
Tells forth tormenting dreams of death.

“Alas, my soul-Alas, my love-”
Single and slow the sad words move
Out of his shut lips sighing.
Scarcely they reach the straining ear
When, newly born in pain and fear,
Already they are dying.

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The gaoler's light before him goes,
And on the prisoner's face it glows.
The prisoner's face — ah, dread and pain! —
His fixed eyes glare in wild distress
After an end of endlessness,
Tears, sweat and blood his pallor stain,
For speech his lips contend in vain.

The frightened gaoler stoops to snare
The thread of utterance from the air,
Lighter than lightest breeze he hears
The prisoner's tale of blood and tears.
Lower he leans, and closer yet
To the wan mouth his ear is set,
Hard on the labouring lips now leaning,
Till fainting, fainting, they forget
Speech, as if sleep came unawares.

Still stands the guard in dreadful dreaming,
Like bees in swarm his tears come teeming,
Sorrow his heart within him sears.
Long he stands frozen there aghast,
Till thrusting off his helpless fears,
Out of the cell he flies in haste.
Long as he lived, he told no word
Of what his ears this night had heard:
Rather his whole life through thereafter
His pale lips said farewell to laughter.

The guard is fled, fast-closed the door.
Deep darkness shrouds the cell once more;
And through the night once more the chime
Of slow drops falling metes out time.

Beside the table hewn of stone
Half-sits, half-kneels Vilem alone;
His face a sight for fear and pain,
With fixed eyes staring in distress

After an end of endlessness –
Tears, sweat and blood his pallor stain.

Incessantly the watery chime
Of slow drops falling metes out time,
And wind and waves as one complain;
To Vilem's ear of death they tell.
He faints beneath the thought appalling.
Far through the night an owl is calling,
And louder beats the midnight bell.

Intermezzo I

Midnight

(a lonely place in the countryside)

In the wide plains sleeps sound the pale moon's argent light,
Darkness is on the hills, the lake with stars is bright.

A hillock by the lake-shore rises,
A stake thereon, a wheel raised lightly,
Whereon a bleached skull glistens whitely,
While ghostly rout a dance devises,
About the high wheel revelling rightly.

Romantic LOVE Poems & Songs

Chorus of Phantoms

“Silent the midnight graveyard lies;
Through the graves the marshlight flies,
Its dead blue radiance lights the head
Of the newly-buried dead,
Who, while his fellows sleep, stands guard,
Last of the sepulchred, dead today,
Beside his own cross keeping ward.
A grey cloud in the zenith stays,
No moon beneath it but the ray
Of the dead man's glassy gaze,
And through half-open lips beneath
The glitter of his gnashing teeth.”

A Voice

“This is the hour! The place prepare!
Lord of the Woods, the lord of fear,
Is one with us at dawn of day.”

Chorus of Phantoms (lifting down the skull)

“From death's dim threshold come away,
Inherit life - a voice receive.
Be one among us, know us well,
No more be doomed alone to dwell.
Another must your place achieve.”

The Skull (joining in their dance)

“How my limbs long to join again
In one whole creature, only one!
What is this rout of terror and pain?
My newest dream - I still dream on!”

Voice

“His place of honour ready see!
When tomorrow's course is o'er
The storm shall bear us here once more.
Glorious may his burial be!”

Chorus of Phantoms

“His place of honour ready see!
When tomorrow's course is o'er
The storm shall bear us here once more.
Glorious may his burial be!”

Voice

Fly, voice, across the fields with power!
At midnight is the funeral hour.
His votive gift let each make known!

The Stake and Wheel

"I'll be the coffin to his repose."

Frogs in the Marsh

"The burial anthem we'll intone."

Storm over the Lake

"The gale funeral music knows."

The Moon in the Zenith

"I'll cover him with snow-white pall."

Mist on the Mountains

"With veils I'll drape his funeral."

Night

"I'll give black weeds to mourn the dead."

The Hills Standing Round

"Give veils and garments to us all."

The Falling Dew

"And I will give you tears to shed."

The Barren Soil

"I'll incense with sweet smoke his head."

The Sinking Cloud

"With rain will I asperge his bed."

The Falling Blossom

"I will weave garlands for his bier."

Light Breezes

"We'll bear them to the coffin lightly."

St John's Fireflies

"Our tiny candles shall burn up brightly."

Thunder out of the Depths

"I'll wake the great bell's hollow tone."

The Mole under the Earth

"I'll dig his grave, I, lowly here."

Time

"Over his bones a tomb I'll rear."

Flocks of Night-Birds Crossing the Moon

"We'll make the funeral feast our own."

Voice

"All honour to his grave we pay!
The moon pales in the heaven's heart,
The gates of morning draw apart –
It is day! It is day!"

Chorus of Phantoms (as they vanish)

"It is day! It is Day!"

Romantic LOVE Poems of Karel Hynek Macha

Over the dark hills rosy day
Arises, the May valley wakes;
Above the woods, as morning breaks,
Like mist lies long the dream of May.
Out of the forests bluey lifting
Faint vapours climb the rose-flushed sky,
And on the lake more bluey drifting
In delicate colours melt and die;
And on the shore, and in the shadow
Of hills and valleys flowering,
Shine out white courts through wood and meadow,
Waking; till like a mighty king –
Colossal as the shade of night

Against the heaven's rosy light —
The highest peak stands towering.

But now the sun his first red blessing gives
Over the blue, dark hills, and by that token
Suddenly all the spell of dreams is broken,
And joy possesses everything that lives.

Whitely the lake's green glass the flight of birds receives,
And fleets of little craft, and small, swift-rowing shallops,
Pattern the dim blue waves with glancing, fiery scallops.

Murmurous by the shore the pinewoods greet the day,
Sweet with the song of birds, the thrush's shower of pearls,
And mingling with their psalm the mirth of straying girls,
As all that lives draws breath to praise the youthful May.

The morning wind, like song, through the green valley blowing,
Bears on its incensed breath a sweet white foam of flowers,
And wild geese ride its flight above the forest bowers,
And to its touch young trees unfold their eager growing.

One scene, and only one, the fair young morn defaces,
Where to the wide lake's heart a narrow isle goes straying,
Bearing the little town, and the white tower, whose shade
Deep in the waters green in quiveringly laid.

Here wakes a clamorous cry, babel of human baying,
As from the gates of the town the hungry man-pack races.
From far the people haste, a swift stream rushing by,
And ever swells the food, a river strongly rolling,
A mighty multitude, its voice to thunder tolling;
The unhappy felon comes, led forth at dawn to die.

Now from the little town a troop of guards comes swinging,
In slow and sombre march the hapless prisoner bringing,
Whose old, proud habit soon the eager watchers spy.

The clamour stills around — a hush falls on the crowd —
Till babel bursts anew, with many a cry and loud:

“Tis he! The flowers, the plumes he's wearing,
The hat, the eye beneath it glaring —

His very cloak — 'Tis he, 'tis he! The dreaded Forest King!”
About him beats the cry, his old name echoing;

And louder still it rings, as thundering waters clear,
As with a heavy step the criminal draws near.
Round him darkens the throng – like heavy clouds in heaven –
A sword flames from the dark – as heaven's lightnings flare;
Slowly the doomed man goes, his gaze to earth is given.
The town bell tolls; the crowd pities and falls to prayer.

There stahd a little mound, on the lake-shore leaning lightly,
A long stake raised thereon, a wheel above it rearing,
A steep hill looms above, twin peaks its summit sharing,
And on the higher point a chapel gleaming whitely.
In sombre march thereto company is come;
Now all men move aside – the felon stands alone.
A last time led forth here, still he beholds his own,
The dark, deep-breasted hills which were his early home,
Where the lost coin was spent, the golden childhood days.
Yet once more, only once, in the rosy dawning light,
Let forth to the hills, a shade before the chapel white,
To the lord of heaven and earth his reverence he pays.
And deep compassion folds its hands on every heart.
His grief their grief inflames, they suffer his despair,
Fixing their eyes through tears on the summit where he stands
Adoring the fair earth well-fashioned at God's hands,
A murderer praising God in the humbled hush of prayer.

Romantic LOVE Poems

The rising sun with ruddy grace
Flushes the prisoner's pallid face;
His eyes, through mists of weeping,
A last love-tryst are keeping.
Beneath him deep the lovely vale
Dreams in its rugged mountain pale,
By forests circled greenly.
The lucid lake serenely
Nursed in the flowering valley drowns.
Blue to the shore it coils and glimmers,
And green beyond, and greener, sleeps,

Till in the distances and deeps
In clear, pale light all melts and shimmers.
About the wheel the white farmhouses
Dimpling the sunlit lake-shore lie.
Across the mirroring waters fast
Flocks of white birds and small boats fly,
Till bluey hides the lake at last,
Far in the hills retreating.

And white craft in the scalloped beaches –
The tower-the town-the white birds' flight –
Hillocks and shadowy mountain reaches –
Gaze on that mirror with delight,
Their deep-drowned beauty greeting.
Rocks are piled heavy on that far shore
Where flowering land and lake are meeting,
And there an oak-tree old and hoar
Roots in the rocks-once, once the dove
Called there deliciously to love –
Oh, fair lost hour and fleeting!
Never again! The mound is nearing,
The column an the wheel appearing.
Beyond the hill there slips away
A young wood, murmuring mournfully;
Radiant the sun on vale and lea –
The morning dew – the morning May.

Beauty once more the felon's eyes receive,
Beauty which now for ever he must leave,
And passionate regret his heart possesses:
Deeply he sighs – tear after tear flows over –
One last long look, lingering as looks the lover,
Then to the sky his tear-dimmed eyes he raises.
In the azure vault of heaven the blanching mists are dancing,
In light dissolving zephyrs tattered,
And on the far horizon scattered
White cloudlets over the placid sky go glancing.
The grieving prisoner greets them as they race:

“You clouds, whou in your wandering course embrace
Like secret circling arm the earth her own course keeping,
You dissolutions of stars, shades in the blue of heaven,
 You mourners ever to mutual sorrow given,
 Who know so well the ways of silent weeping –
 Bear you my charge, of all things that have birth.
Where you pass from me on your long, wide way
 To the distant shore, there for a moment stay,
 There, pilgrim clouds, greet reverently the earth.
 Ah, well-beloved earth, beautiful earth,
My cradle and grave, the womb that gave me birth,
 My sweet, sole land, left to my spirit's keeping,
 Ah, vast and single of beauty as of worth!-
Seek there that rock, and when your swift sails gain it –
 If you shall see – by the shore – a woman weeping –”
There fails his voice, the strangling tears have slain it.
Down from the height the guards their prisoner lead
By a wide pathway through young pinewoods threading,
Down and still down; now on the mound they're treading;
 And now the multitude is hushed indeed.
The executioner with his sword stands ready.
 Yet one more time the prisoner lifts his eyes,
 Worships the sweet, encircling world-once sighs-
And on the approaching death his soul makes steady.
His breast and throat he bares, kneeling to earth he leaves it;
Back steps the headsman-an age the frozen mind believes it! –
 The sword flashes; a rapid forward stride –
 The sword circles; the bent white neck receives it –
 The head falls – a tremor – and yet a tremor beside –
And falls the body after, one with the grieved earth growing.
 Into the earth, so beautiful, so beloved.
His cradle and grave, the womb that gave him birth,
 His sweet, sole land, his heritage approved,
 In the generous earth, the single, holy earth,
Into the mother's heart the blood of her son is flowing.

The prisoner's shattered shell, limb after long limb broken,
Twined in the wheel's embrace is raised, a terrible token,
And over the wheel his head, a blind, oblivious thing.
So died the lord of the woods, the dreaded Forest King.

On the dead countenance the last dream lingers still.

Gazing upon his face, mute round the little hill
The unquiet multitude awaits the long day's ending,
Till the declining sun draws to the west once more,
Into the head's blind eyes its gay last laughter sending.
Hushed is the broad lake-hushed is the evening shore.

Above the far dark hills the last radiance blazed.
The pale, dead face of the head is softly silvered o'er,
Silvered the silent mound, hushed by the lake-shore,
As in the evening hush the moon's fair face is raised.

Distant are grown the towns, far as a cloud in air,
Beyond to the edge of seeing the dead eyes steadily stare,
To the edge of sight, to his youth-Oh, brief, bright childhood day!

Time in its headlong flight has carried that Spring away.

Far fled is his dream, a shadow no more found,
Like visions of white towns, deep in the waters drowned,
The last indignant thoughts of the defeated dead,
Their unremembered names, the clamour of old fights,
The worn-out northern lights, after their gleam is fled,
The untuned harp, whose strings distil no more delights,
The deeds of time gone by, quenched starlight overhead,
Heresy's pilgrimage, the loving, lovely dead,
The deep forgotten grave, eternal board and bed;
As the smoke of burned-out fires, as the shattered bell's chime,
Are the dead years of the dead, their beautiful childhood time!

Late eve – the second eve of May –

The twilit May – the time of love –

Meltingly calls the turtle-dove:

Vilem! Vilem! Vilem!!

Intermezzo II

Close the hills lean to each other,
Underneath a dark cloud hiding,
Like a vaulted ceiling riding
Taut from one peak to his brother.
Dark this place by evening gloom is,
Dark and silent as the tomb is.

In the portal deeply-shaded,
Where the hills shrink back dividing,
Sharp rocks in the opening spaces
Steeply rear their frowning faces,
Lower, narrower, blackly bidding;
Underneath the cloud dark-braided
Shuts this gate of rocks and boulders.

In the valley's heart deep-gladed,
Darkly red a camp-fire smoulders,
Broken from the west bright-beaming,
A long sliver of the sunset;
Round its red nocturnal gleaming
Circle night-birds, wheeling, plaining,
In a red and restless onset,
Till the blue of night they borrow.
Sinks the fire, still waning-waning,
Till the broad and bounteous heaven
Melts in nightly dews of sorrow,
And the earth to grief is given.

Oaks a hundred years a-growing,
Darkness within darkness throwing,
Hide a company of friends there.
Cloaked in white, as in the bright time,
Sit the comrades of the night-time.
Each before him groundward bends there,
Wordless, motionless, his vision,
As if terror's chill transition
Into stone their flesh had stricken.
Through the valley seems to quicken
Whispered breath of lamentation

Round the moveless men who plain him,
Secretly, without cessation:
“Lost, our leader! – they have slain him!”

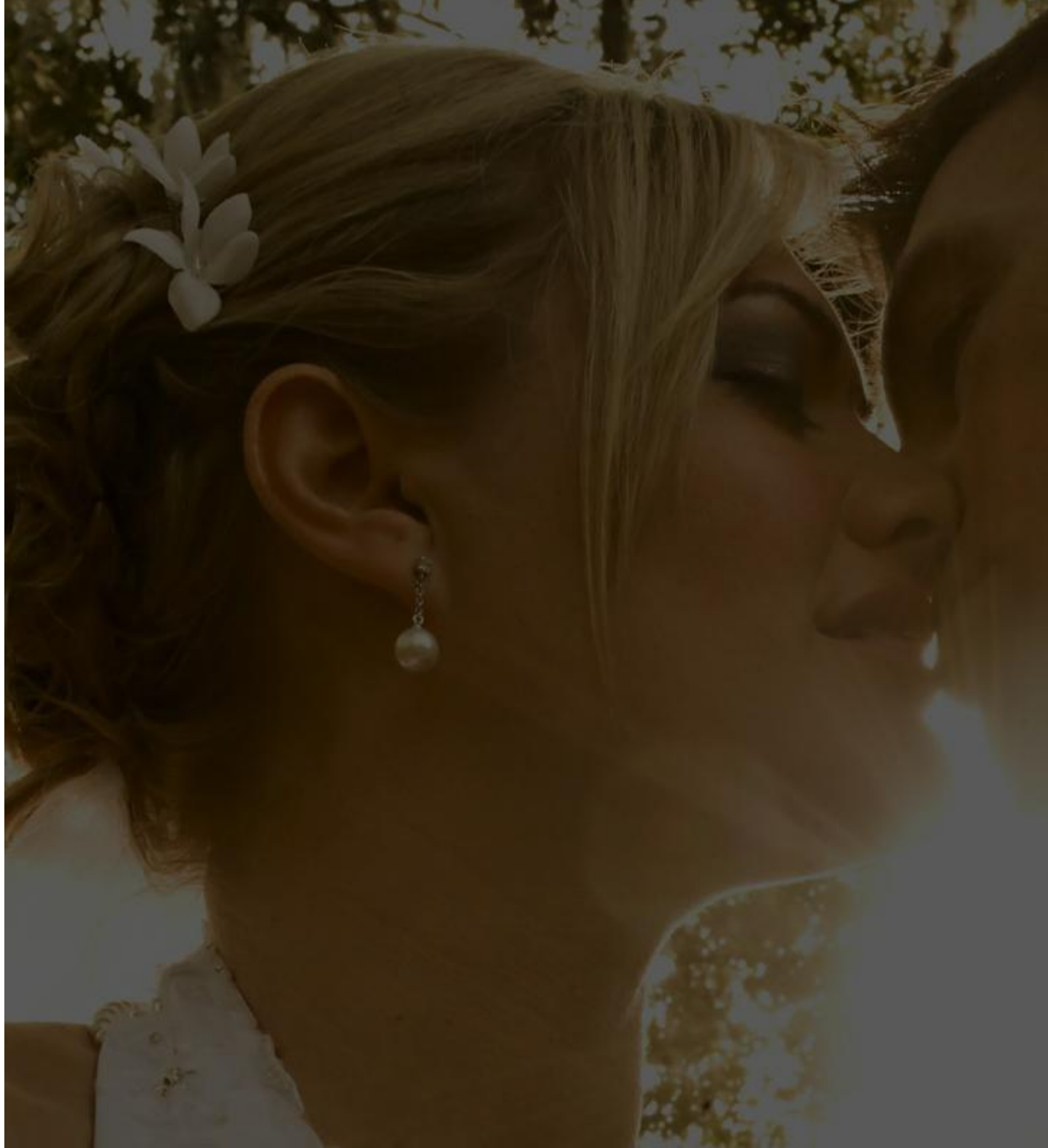
And the wind, the smoke-wreaths plying,
To the moveless men is crying:
“Lost, our leader!-they have slain him!”

And the restless leaves aquiver
Underneath the cold cliff-faces,
Trembling, murmuring, utter ever
These insistent, changeless phrases:
“Lost, our leader!-they have slain him!”

All the forests in their station
Sound the great, sad accusation:
“They have slain him – slain him!! – slain him – !!!”

[CLICK HERE FULL](#)

HOTLINK PROTECTION ACTIVATED - NOTE: Empty o



Beautiful May is passed, withered the bloom of Spring;
 The summer fire burns high, wanes, and as soon is gone,
 Autumn, and winter after; another Spring comes on,
 As time bears off the years on its unresting wing.

The seventh year it was, the seventh year's last day;
 Deep on it lay the night, and with the midnight chime
 A new year would be born. The cold earth dreaming lay.
 Lone hoof-beats by the lake troubled the silent time.

I was that wayfarer, bound for the town by night,
 Led by chance to the mound, where, long ago at rest,
 The dreaded Forest King lingered a quiet guest;
 There first I saw Vilem- a bare skull glistening white.
 There in the midnight land, far as the eye's reach ranging,
 Through valleys, over hills, by forest, lake and meadow,
 A wide, white pall of snow lay level and unchanging,
 Over the skull and wheel-all white without a shadow.

Deep clouds hemmed in the moon, which seemed to droop and sicken;
 Sometimes the weird owl cried, ever the sad wind's shaking
 Plucked at the wheel above, and set the loud bones quaking,
 So that my horse and I with panic dread were stricken.

Forward I spurred in fear, there where the safe town hailed me,
 And asked what wheel, what bones were these which grimly grew there,
 The old innkeeper told the story all men knew there-
 The story I have told-and on that wheel impaled me.

Far I went through the world-and the world has enough of pain,
 Many a storm of heart blew over me and bled me;
 But still this old, worn woe beckoned me back again,
 Till in a young Spring season home to the mound it led me.
 Under the stake I sat, just as the sun descended,
 Under the wheel which bore the skeleton and skull there,
 Gazing sad-eyed on Spring, whose cup was fair and full there,
 Even to the misty rim where earth and heaven blended.

Evening once more, the first of May-
 The twilit May-the time of love.

Meltingly called the turtle-dove,
Where rich and sweet the pinewoods lay.
Whispered of love the mosses frail,
The flowering tree as sweetly lied
The rose's fragrant sigh replied
To love-songs of the nightingale.
The lake within the dark woods straying
Softly complained a secret pain,
By circling shores embraced again
As brother sister in their playing.
About the head the sunset bright
Lay like a wreath of roses growing,
Gilding the bony face with light,
On fretted skin and white jaw glowing.
In the hollow skull the breezes sped
As if grim laughter mocked the dead,
and lifted lightly here and there
What time had left of his long hair;
Beneath his brows the dewdrops borrow
The sunset light, as if, discerning
The evening beauty of May's returning,
His dead eyes brim with tears of sorrow.

There I sat on, until the young moon's light
Blanched both my face and his with rays as pale as bright;
Now like a snowy pall its whiteness spreads before him
Over the vales and woods to the distant hills that bore him.
Sometimes from far away the cuckoo's greeting sounds here,
Flung from the flowering vale, sometimes the owl's grave warning;
From many a farmyard near the bark of dogs rebounds here;
Out of the dust arises a sweet incense of mourning,
The little tears of the Virgin upon the hill are flowering,
Deep in the heart of the lake a secret light is burning;
And the fireflies, shooting stars, about the wheel are showering,
Glittering in their play, touching the pale skull brightly,
Lighting to launch again, and launch again ac lightly,
Like fiery falling tears, all his spent tears embowering.

And in my grieving eyes two hot tears rise and break,
Glittering down my cheeks as sparks play in the lake;
For my young years, mine too, my childhood golden-gay,
Time in its headlong flight has seized and borne away.
Far is that lost dream now, a shadow no more found,
Like visions of white towns, deep in the waters drowned,
The last indignant thoughts of the defeated dead,
Their unremembered names, the clamour of old fights,
The worn-out northern lights after their gleam is fled,
The untuned harp, whose strings distil no more delights,
The deeds of time gone by, quenched starlight overhead,
Heresy's pilgrimage, the loving, lovely dead,
The deep, forgotten grave, eternal board and bed,
The smoke of burned-out fires, the scattered bell's chime –
Like the song of dead swam, like Eden snatched away,
So is my childhood time –
But what of following time?
My youth, alas, my youth! My season and song are May!
An eventide of May on a rocky, desolate shore:
Light laughter on the lips, deep grief in the heart's core.
See you the pilgrim there, hastening on his quest
Through the long, sunset fields, beneath the dimming west?
Strain your eyes as you will, the end you cannot see,
As over the edge of vision he falters and finds no rest.
Never-ah, never! And this is all life offers me!
Comfort? Who comforts me? What charm this heart can move?
Love is without an end! – And bitter is my love!

Late evening, on the first of May –
The twilit May-the time of love –
Meltingly calls the turtle-dove:
“Hynek! Vilem! Ah, Jarmila!!!”
Karel Hynek Macha