

Classic Poetry Series

Alexander Sergeyevich Pushkin

- poems -

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Alexander Sergeyevich Pushkin (1799-1837)

Aleksander Pushkin's father was of the nobility. His mother had Abyssinian blood, and was descended from Hannibal, the Negro servant of Peter the Great. He lived in St Petersburg and became an official in the Ministry of Affairs but was effectively banished to the Crimea before he was twenty-one. He eventually returned, and in 1831 married Natalia Goncharova. He was subsequently killed in a duel. Russia's greatest poet, he is, in some respects, Russia's Byron, a great lyric poet whose Eugene Onegin nevertheless fulfils the same role of the 'superfluous' man as the narrator of Byron's Don Juan.

"I loved you..."

I loved you, and I probably still do,
And for a while the feeling may remain...
But let my love no longer trouble you,
I do not wish to cause you any pain.
I loved you; and the hopelessness I knew,
The jealousy, the shyness - though in vain -
Made up a love so tender and so true
As may God grant you to be loved again.

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Alexander Sergeyevich Pushkin

"O sing, fair lady, when with me..."

O sing, fair lady, when with me
Sad songs of Georgia no more:
They bring into my memory
Another life, a distant shore.

Your beautiful, your cruel tune
Brings to my memory, alas,
The steppe, the night - and with the moon
Lines of a far, unhappy lass.

Forgetting at the sight of you
That shadow fateful, shadow dear,
I hear you singing - and anew
I picture it before me, here.

O sing, fair lady, when with me
Sad songs of Georgia no more:
They bring into my memory
Another life, a distant shore.

(A Georgian Romance)

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Alexander Sergeyevich Pushkin

"The wondrous moment of our meeting..."

The wondrous moment of our meeting...
Still I remember you appear
Before me like a vision fleeting,
A beauty's angel pure and clear.

In hopeless ennui surrounding
The worldly bustle, to my ear
For long your tender voice kept sounding,
For long in dreams came features dear.

Time passed. Unruly storms confounded
Old dreams, and I from year to year
Forgot how tender you had sounded,
Your heavenly features once so dear.

My backwoods days dragged slow and quiet --
Dull fence around, dark vault above --
Devoid of God and uninspired,
Devoid of tears, of fire, of love.

Sleep from my soul began retreating,
And here you once again appear
Before me like a vision fleeting,
A beauty's angel pure and clear.

In ecstasy my heart is beating,
Old joys for it anew revive;
Inspired and God-filled, it is greeting
The fire, and tears, and love alive.

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Alexander Sergeyevich Pushkin

A Little Bird

In alien lands I keep the body
Of ancient native rites and things:
I gladly free a little birdie
At celebration of the spring.

I'm now free for consolation,
And thankful to almighty Lord:
At least, to one of his creations
I've given freedom in this world!

Alexander Sergeyevich Pushkin

An Elegy

The senseless years' extinguished mirth and laughter
Oppress me like some hazy morning-after.
But sadness of days past, as alcohol -
The more it age, the stronger grip the soul.
My course is dull. The future's troubled ocean
Forebodes me toil, misfortune and commotion.

But no, my friends, I do not wish to leave;
I'd rather live, to ponder and to grieve -
And I shall have my share of delectation
Amid all care, distress and agitation:
Time and again I'll savor harmony,
Melt into tears about some fantasy,
And on my sad decline, to ease affliction,
May love yet show her smile of valediction.

Alexander Sergeyevich Pushkin

An Invocation

O if it's true that in the night,
When rest the living in their havens
And liquid rays of lunar light
Glide down on tombstones from the heavens,
O if it's true that still and bare
Are then the graves until aurora --
I call the shade, I wait for Laura:
To me, my friend, appear, appear!

Beloved shadow, come to me
As at our parting -- wintry, ashen
In your last minutes' agony;
Emerge in any form or fashion:
A distant star across the sphere,
A gentle sound, a puff of air or
The most appalling wraith of terror,
I care not how: appear, appear!..

I call you -- not to speak my scorn
Of people whose ill-fated malice
Has killed my friend, and not to learn
The secrets of the nether-palace,
And not because a doubt may tear
My heart at times... but as I suffer,
I want to say that still I love her,
That still I'm yours: appear, appear!

Alexander Sergeyevich Pushkin

Arion

A lot of us were on the bark:
Some framed a sail for windy weather,
The others strongly and together
Moved oars. In silence sunk,
Keeping a rudder, strong and clever,
The skipper drove the heavy skiff;
And I -- with careless belief --
I sang for sailors... . But the stiff
Whirl smashed at once the waters' favor...
All dead -- the captain and his guard! --
But I, the enigmatic bard,
Was thrown to the shore alone.
I sing the former anthems, yet,
And dry my mantle, torn and wet,
In beams of sun under a stone.

Alexander Sergeyevich Pushkin

Bound for your distant home

Bound for your distant home
you were leaving alien lands.
In an hour as sad as I've known
I wept over your hands.
My hands were numb and cold,
still trying to restrain
you, whom my hurt told
never to end this pain.

But you snatched your lips away
from our bitterest kiss.
You invoked another place
than the dismal exile of this.
You said, 'When we meet again,
in the shadow of olive-trees,
we shall kiss, in a love without pain,
under cloudless infinities.'

But there, alas, where the sky
shines with blue radiance,
where olive-tree shadows lie
on the waters glittering dance,
your beauty, your suffering,
are lost in eternity.
But the sweet kiss of our meeting
I wait for it: you owe it me

Alexander Sergeyevich Pushkin

Confession (to Alina Osipova, 1826)

I love you - though it makes me beat,
Though vain it seems, and melancholy -
Yet to this shameless, hapless folly
I'll be confessing at your feet.
It ill becomes me: that I'm older,
Time I should be more sensible...
And yet the frivolous disorder
Fills every jitter of my soul.
Say you'll be gone - I'm jaded, yawning;
You're back - I'm sad, I suffer through -
Yet how can I be clear, from owning,
My angel, all my care for you!
When off the stairs your weightless footfall,
Your dress's rustle, reaches me,
Your voice, as maidenly, as youthful -
I lose my senses instantly.
You smile at me - I'm glad, immensely;
Ignore me - and I'm sad, again;
Your pallid hand will recompense me
For the whole day of utter pain.
When you're embroidering, or setting
Your eye on something fair, or letting
Your hair amuse you - I'm beguiled;
In silence, reddening, all forgetting
I watch you like a spellbound child.
But then how wretched my existence,
How desolate my jealous pain,
When you set out into the distance
To wander in the cold and rain;
And then your solitary grievings,
Or, in the corner, twosome talks,
Or twosome piano in the evenings,
Or twosome trips, or twosome walks...
Alina! just a little mercy -
I dare not even mention love:
For sins I have been guilty of,
My angel, of your care unworthy...
But feign it! All can be achieved
By that absorbing gaze, believe me...
Oh, it takes little to deceive me -
I cannot wait to be deceived!

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Alexander Sergeyevich Pushkin

Devils

Storm-clouds hurtle, storm-clouds hover;
Flying snow is set alight
By the moon whose form they cover;
Blurred the heavens, blurred the night.
On and on our coach advances,
Little bell goes din-din-din...
Round are vast, unknown expanses;
Terror, terror is within.

-- Faster, coachman! "Can't, sir, sorry:
Horses, sir, are nearly dead.
I am blinded, all is blurry,
All snowed up; can't see ahead.
Sir, I tell you on the level:
We have strayed, we've lost the trail.
What can WE do, when a devil
Drives us, whirls us round the vale?

"There, look, there he's playing, jolly!
Huffing, puffing in my course;
There, you see, into the gully
Pushing the hysteric horse;
Now in front of me his figure
Looms up as a queer mile-mark --
Coming closer, growing bigger,
Sparking, melting in the dark."

Storm-clouds hurtle, storm-clouds hover;
Flying snow is set alight
By the moon whose form they cover;
Blurred the heavens, blurred the night.
We can't whirl so any longer!
Suddenly, the bell has ceased,
Horses halted... -- Hey, what's wrong there?
"Who can tell! -- a stump? a beast?.."

Blizzard's raging, blizzard's crying,
Horses panting, seized by fear;
Far away his shape is flying;
Still in haze the eyeballs glare;
Horses pull us back in motion,
Little bell goes din-din-din...
I behold a strange commotion:
Evil spirits gather in --

Sundry, ugly devils, whirling
In the moonlight's milky haze:
Swaying, fluttering and swirling
Like the leaves in autumn days...
What a crowd! Where are they carried?
What's the plaintive song I hear?
Is a goblin being buried,

Or a sorceress married there?

Storm-clouds hurtle, storm-clouds hover;
Flying snow is set alight
By the moon whose form they cover;
Blurred the heavens, blurred the night.
Swarms of devils come to rally,
Hurtle in the boundless height;
Howling fills the whitening valley,
Plaintive screeching rends my heart...

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Alexander Sergeyevich Pushkin

Friendship

What's friendship? The hangover's faction,
The gratis talk of outrage,
Exchange by vanity, inaction,
Or bitter shame of patronage.

Alexander Sergeyevich Pushkin

I Loved You

I loved you; even now I must confess,
Some embers of my love their fire retain;
But do not let it cause you more distress,
I do not want to sadden you again.
Hopeless and tonguetied, yet I loved you dearly
With pangs the jealous and the timid know;
So tenderly I love you, so sincerely,
I pray God grant another love you so.

Alexander Sergeyevich Pushkin

I loved you..."

I loved you, and I probably still do,
And for a while the feeling may remain...
But let my love no longer trouble you,
I do not wish to cause you any pain.
I loved you; and the hopelessness I knew,
The jealousy, the shyness - though in vain -
Made up a love so tender and so true
As may God grant you to be loved again.

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Alexander Sergeyevich Pushkin

Imitation

I saw the Death, and she was seating
By quiet entrance at my own home,
I saw the doors were opened in my tomb,
And there, and there my hope was a-flitting
I'll die, and traces of my past
In days of future will be never sighted,
Look of my eyes will never be delighted
By dear look, in my existence last.

Farewell the somber world, where, precipice above,
My gloomy road was a-streaming,
Where life for me was never cheering,
Where I was loving, having not to love!
The dazzling heavens' azure curtain,
Beloved hills, the brook's enchanting dance,
You, mourn -- the inspiration's chance,
You, peaceful shades of wilderness, uncertain,
And all -- farewell, farewell at once.

Alexander Sergeyevich Pushkin

Lyric written in 1830

What means my name to you?...T'will die
As does the melancholy murmur
Of distant waves or, of a summer,
The forest's hushed nocturnal sigh.

Found on a fading album page,
Dim will it seem and enigmatic,
Like words traced on a tomb, a relic
Of some long dead and vanished age.

What's in my name?...Long since forgot,
Erased by new, tempestuous passion,
of tenderness 'twill leave you not
The lingering and sweet impression.

But in an hour of agony,
Pray, speak it, and recall my image,
And say, "He still remembers me,
His heart alone still pays me homage."

Alexander Sergeyevich Pushkin

Morpheus

Oh, Morpheus, give me joy till morning
For my forever painful love:
Just blow out candles' burning
And let my dreams in blessing move.
Let from my soul disappear
The separation's sharp rebuke!
And let me see that dear look,
And let me hear voice that dear.
And when will vanish dark of night
And you will free my eyes at leaving,
Oh, if my heart would have a right
To lose its love till dark of evening!

Alexander Sergeyevich Pushkin

Muse

In my youth's years, she loved me, I am sure.
The flute of seven pipes she gave in my tenure
And harked to me with smile -- without speed,
Along the ringing holes of the reed,
I got to play with my non-artful fingers
The peaceful songs of Phrygian village singers,
And the important hymns, that gods to mortals bade.
>From morn till night in oaks' silent shade
I diligently harked to the mysterious virgin;
Rewarding me, by chance, for any good decision,
And taking locks aside of the enchanting face,
She sometimes took from me the flute, such commonplace.
The reed became alive in consecrated breathing
And filled the heart with holiness unceasing.

Alexander Sergeyevich Pushkin

O Sing, Fair Lady, When With Me

O sing, fair lady, when with me
Sad songs of Georgia no more:
They bring into my memory
Another life, a distant shore.

Your beautiful, your cruel tune
Brings to my memory, alas,
The steppe, the night - and with the moon
Lines of a far, unhappy lass.

Forgetting at the sight of you
That shadow fateful, shadow dear,
I hear you singing - and anew
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Alexander Sergeyevich Pushkin

On Count Voronstov

One half Milord, one half in trade,
One half a sage, one half a dunce,
One half a crook, but here for once
There's every hope he'll make the grade.

Alexander Sergeyevich Pushkin

Remembrance

When the loud day for men who sow and reap
Grows still, and on the silence of the town
The unsubstantial veils of night and sleep,
The meed of the day's labour, settle down,
Then for me in the stillness of the night
The wasting, watchful hours drag on their course,
And in the idle darkness comes the bite
Of all the burning serpents of remorse;
Dreams seethe; and fretful infelicities
Are swarming in my over-burdened soul,
And Memory before my wakeful eyes
With noiseless hand unwinds her lengthy scroll.
Then, as with loathing I peruse the years,
I tremble, and I curse my natal day,
Wail bitterly, and bitterly shed tears,
But cannot wash the woeful script away.

Alexander Sergeyevich Pushkin

Solitude

He's blessed, who lives in peace, that's distant
From the ignorant fobs with calls,
Who can provide his every instance
With dreams, or labors, or recalls;
To whom the fate sends friends in score,
Who hides himself by Savior's back
From bashful fools, which lull and bore,
And from the impudent ones, which wake.

Alexander Sergeyevich Pushkin

Tempest

You saw perched on a cliff a maid,
Her raiment white above the breakers,
When the mad sea reared up and played
Its whips of spray on coastal acres
And now and then the lightnings flush,
And purple gleams upon her hover,
And fluttering up in swirling rush,
The wind rides in her airy cover?
Fair is the sea in gales arrayed,
The heavens drained of blue and flashing,
But fairer on her cliff the maid
Than storms and skies and breakers crashing.

Alexander Sergeyevich Pushkin

The Dream

Not long ago, in a charming dream,
I saw myself -- a king with crown's treasure;
I was in love with you, it seemed,
And heart was beating with a pleasure.
I sang my passion's song by your enchanting knees.
Why, dreams, you didn't prolong my happiness forever?
But gods deprived me not of whole their favor:
I only lost the kingdom of my dreams.

Alexander Sergeyevich Pushkin

The Drowned Man

Children running into izba,
Calling father, dripping sweat:
"Daddy, daddy! come -- there is a
Deadman caught inside our net."
"Fancy, fancy fabrication..."
Grumbled off their weary Pa,
"Have these imps imagination!
Deadman, really! ya-ha-ha..."

"Well... the court may come to bother -
What'll I say before the judge?
Hey you brats, go have your mother
Bring my coat; I better trudge...
Show me, where?" -- "Right there, Dad, farther!"
On the sand where netting ropes
Lay spread out, the peasant father
Saw the veritable corpse.

Badly mangled, ugly, frightening,
Blue and swollen on each side...
Has he fished in storm and lightning,
Or committed suicide?
Could this be a careless drunkard,
Or a mermaid-seeking monk,
Or a merchandizer, conquered
By some bandits, robbed and sunk?

To the peasant, what's it matter!
Quick: he grabs the dead man's hair,
Drags his body to the water,
Looks around: nobody's there:
Good... relieved of the concern he
Shoves his paddle at a loss,
While the stiff resumes his journey
Down the stream for grave and cross.

Long the dead man as one living
Rocked on waves amid the foam...
Surly as he watched him leaving,
Soon our peasant headed home.
"Come you pups! let's go, don't scatter.
Each of you will get his bun.
But remember: just you chatter --
And I'll whip you, every one."

Dark and stormy it was turning.
High the river ran in gloom.
Now the torch has finished burning
In the peasant's smoky room.
Kids asleep, the wife aslumber,
He lies listening to the rain...
Bang! he hears a sudden comer

Knocking on the window-pane.

"What the..." -- "Let me in there, master!"
"Damn, you found the time to roam!
Well, what is it, your disaster?
Let you in? It's dark at home,
Dark and crowded... What a pest you are!
Where'd I put you in my cot..."
Slowly, with a lazy gesture,
He lifts up the pane and - what?

Through the clouds, the moon was showing...
Well? the naked man was there,
Down his hair the water flowing,
Wide his eyes, unmoved the stare;
Numb the dreadful-looking body,
Arms were hanging feeble, thin;
Crabs and cancers, black and bloody,
Sucked into the swollen skin.

As the peasant slammed the shutter
(Recognized his visitant)
Horror-struck he could but mutter
"Blast you!" and began to pant.
He was shuddering, awful chaos
All night through stirred in his brain,
While the knocking shook the house
By the gates and at the pane.

People tell a dreadful rumor:
Every year the peasant, say,
Waiting in the worst of humor
For his visitor that day;
As the rainstorm is increasing,
Nightfall brings a hurricane -
And the drowned man knocks, unceasing,
By the gates and at the pane.

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Alexander Sergeyevich Pushkin

The Flower

A flower - shrivelled, bare of fragrance,
Forgotten on a page - I see,
And instantly my soul awakens,
Filled with an aimless reverie:

When did it bloom? the last spring? earlier?
How long? Where was it plucked? By whom?
By foreign hands? or by familiar?
And why put here, as in a tomb?

To mark a tender meeting by it?
A parting with a precious one?
Or just a walk, alone and quiet,
In forests' shade? in meadows' sun?

Is she alive? Is he still with her?
Where is their haven at this hour?
Or did they both already wither,
Like this unfathomable flower?

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Alexander Sergeyevich Pushkin

The Name

What is my name to you? 'T will die:
a wave that has but rolled to reach
with a lone splash a distant beach;
or in the timbered night a cry ...

'T will leave a lifeless trace among
names on your tablets: the design
of an entangled gravestone line
in an unfathomable tongue.

What is it then? A long-dead past,
lost in the rush of madder dreams,
upon your soul it will not cast
Mnemosyne's pure tender beams.

But if some sorrow comes to you,
utter my name with sighs, and tell
the silence: "Memory is true -
there beats a heart wherein I dwell."

Alexander Sergeyevich Pushkin

The Night

My voice that is for you the languid one, and gentle,
Disturbs the velvet of the dark night's mantle,
By my bedside, a candle, my sad guard,
Burns, and my poems ripple and merge in flood --
And run the streams of love, run, full of you alone,
And in the dark, your eyes shine like the precious stones,
And smile to me, and hear I the voice:
My friend, my sweetest friend... I love... I'm yours... I'm yours!

Alexander Sergeyevich Pushkin

The Prophet

Longing for spiritual springs,
I dragged myself through desert sands ...
An angel with three pairs of wings
Arrived to me at cross of lands;
With fingers so light and slim
He touched my eyes as in a dream:
And opened my prophetic eyes
Like eyes of eagle in surprise.
He touched my ears in movement, single,
And they were filled with noise and jingle:
I heard a shuddering of heavens,
And angels' flight on azure heights
And creatures' crawl in long sea nights,
And rustle of vines in distant valleys.
And he bent down to my chin,
And he tore off my tongue of sin,
In cheat and idle talks aroused,
And with his hand in bloody specks
He put the sting of wizard snakes
Into my deadly stoned mouth.
With his sharp sword he cleaved my breast,
And plucked my quivering heart out,
And coals flamed with God's behest,
Into my gaping breast were ground.
Like dead I lay on desert sands,
And listened to the God's commands:
'Arise, O prophet, hark and see,
Be filled with utter My demands,
And, going over Land and Sea,
Burn with your Word the humane hearts.'

Alexander Sergeyevich Pushkin

The Singer

Did you attend? He sang by grove ripe -
The bard of love, the singer of his mourning.
When fields were silent by the early morning,
To sad and simple sounds of a pipe
Did you attend?

Did you behold in dark of forest leaf
The bard of love, the singer of his sadness?
The trace of tears, the smile, the utter paleness,
The quiet look, full of eternal grief,
Did you behold?

Then did you sigh when hearing how cries
The bard of love, the singer of his dole?
When in the woods you saw the young man, sole,
And met the look of his extinguished eyes,
Then did you sigh?

Alexander Sergeyevich Pushkin

The Talisman

Where the sea forever dances
Over lonely cliff and dune,
Where sweet twilight's vapor glances
In a warmer-glowing moon,
Where with the seraglio's graces
Daylong toys the Mussulman,
An enchantress 'mid embraces
Handed me a talisman.

'Mid embraces I was bidden:
"Guard this talisman of mine:
In it secret power is hidden!
Love himself has made it thine.
Neither death nor ills nor aging,
My beloved, does it ban,
Nor in gales and tempest raging
Can avail my talisman.

Never will it help thee gather
Treasures of the Orient coast,
Neither to thy harness tether
Captives of the Prophet's host;
Nor in sadness will it lead thee
To a friendly bosom, nor
From this alien southland speed thee
To the native northern shore.

"But whenever eyes designing
Cast on thee a sudden spell,
In the darkness lips entwining
Love thee not, but kiss too well:
Shield thee, love, from evil preying,
From new heart-wounds---that it can,
From forgetting, from betraying
Guards thee this my talisman."

Alexander Sergeyevich Pushkin

The Upas Tree

Deep in the desert's misery,
far in the fury of the sand,
there stands the awesome Upas Tree
lone watchman of a lifeless land.

The wilderness, a world of thirst,
in wrath engendered it and filled
its every root, every accursed
grey leafstalk with a sap that killed.

Dissolving in the midday sun
the poison oozes through its bark,
and freezing when the day is done
gleams thick and gem-like in the dark.

No bird flies near, no tiger creeps;
alone the whirlwind, wild and black,
assails the tree of death and sweeps
away with death upon its back.

And though some roving cloud may stain
with glancing drops those leaden leaves,
the dripping of a poisoned rain
is all the burning sand receives.

But man sent man with one proud look
towards the tree, and he was gone,
the humble one, and there he took
the poison and returned at dawn.

He brought the deadly gum; with it
he brought some leaves, a withered bough,
while rivulets of icy sweat
ran slowly down his livid brow.

He came, he fell upon a mat,
and reaping a poor slave's reward,
died near the painted hut where sat
his now unconquerable lord.

The king, he soaked his arrows true
in poison, and beyond the plains
dispatched those messengers and slew
his neighbors in their own domains.

Alexander Sergeyevich Pushkin

The Water-Nymph

In lakeside leafy groves, a friar
Escaped all worries; there he passed
His summer days in constant prayer,
Deep studies and eternal fast.
Already with a humble shovel
The elder dug himself a grave -
As, calling saints to bless his hovel,
Death - nothing other - did he crave.

So once, upon a falling night, he
Was bowing by his wilted shack
With meekest prayer to the Almighty.
The grove was turning slowly black;
Above the lake a mist was lifting;
Through milky clouds across the sky
The ruddy moon was softly drifting,
When water drew the friar's eye...

He's looking puzzled, full of trouble,
Of fear he cannot quite explain,
He sees the waves begin to bubble
And suddenly grow calm again.
Then -- white as first snow in the highlands,
Light-footed as nocturnal shade,
There comes ashore, and sits in silence
Upon the bank, a naked maid.

She eyes the monk and brushes gently
Her hair, and water off her arms.
He shakes with fear and looks intently
At her, and at her lovely charms.
With eager hand she waves and beckons,
Nods quickly, smiles as from afar
And shoots, within two flashing seconds,
Into still water like a star.

The glum old man slept not an instant;
All day, not even once he prayed:
Before his eyes still hung and glistened
The wondrous, the relentless shade...
The grove puts on its gown of nightfall;
The moon walks on the cloudy floor;
And there's the maiden - pale, delightful,
Reclining on the spellbound shore.

She looks at him, her hair she brushes,
Blows airy kisses, gestures wild,
Plays with the waves - caresses, splashes -
Now laughs, now whimpers like a child,
Moans tenderly, calls louder, louder...
"Come, monk, come, monk! To me, to me!.."
Then - disappears in limpid water,

And all is silent instantly...

On the third day the zealous hermit
Was sitting by the shore, in love,
Awaiting the delightful mermaid,
As shade was covering the grove...
Dark ceded to the sun's emergence;
Our monk had wholly disappeared -
Before a crowd of local urchins,
While fishing, found his hoary beard.

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Alexander Sergeyevich Pushkin

The Wish

I shed my tears; my tears – my consolation;
And I am silent; my murmur is dead,
My soul, sunk in a depression's shade,
Hides in its depths the bitter exultation.
I don't deplore my passing dream of life --
Vanish in dark, the empty apparition!
I care only for my love's infliction,
And let me die, but only die in love!

Alexander Sergeyevich Pushkin

The wondrous moment of our meeting...

The wondrous moment of our meeting...
Still I remember you appear
Before me like a vision fleeting,
A beauty's angel pure and clear.

In hopeless ennui surrounding
The worldly bustle, to my ear
For long your tender voice kept sounding,
For long in dreams came features dear.

Time passed. Unruly storms confounded
Old dreams, and I from year to year
Forgot how tender you had sounded,
Your heavenly features once so dear.

My backwoods days dragged slow and quiet --
Dull fence around, dark vault above --
Devoid of God and uninspired,
Devoid of tears, of fire, of love.

Sleep from my soul began retreating,
And here you once again appear
Before me like a vision fleeting,
A beauty's angel pure and clear.

In ecstasy my heart is beating,
Old joys for it anew revive;
Inspired and God-filled, it is greeting
The fire, and tears, and love alive.

Alexander Sergeyevich Pushkin

Thou and You

She substituted, by a chance,
For empty "*you*" -- the gentle "*thou*";
And all my happy dreams, at once,
In loving heart again resound.
In bliss and silence do I stay,
Unable to maintain my role:
"*Oh, how sweet you are!*" I say --
"*How I love thee!*" says my soul.

Alexander Sergeyevich Pushkin

To ----

I remember the marvellous moment
you appeared before me,
like a transient vision,
like pure beauty's spirit.

Lost in hopeless sadness,
lost in the loud world's turmoil,
I heard your voice's echo,
and often dreamed your features.

Years passed. The storm winds scattered,
with turbulent gusts, that dreaming.
I forgot your voice, its tenderness.
I forgot your lovely face.

Remote in my darkened exile,
the days dragged by so slowly,
without grace, without inspiration,
without life, without tears, without love.

Then my spirit woke
and you, you appeared again,
like a transient vision,
like pure beauty's spirit.

And my heart beats with delight,
and ecstasy, inside me,
and grace and inspiration,
and tears, and life, and love.

Alexander Sergeyevich Pushkin

To Gnedich

With Homer you conversed alone for days and nights,
Our waiting hours were passing slowly,
And shining you came down from the mysterious heights
And brought to us your tablets holy -
So? in the wilderness, beneath a tent, you found
Us, feasting mad in empty gaiety,
Singing our savage songs and galloping around
Some newly hand-created deity.
We grew confused, aloof from your good rays hid we.
Then, seized of wrath and desolation,
Have you, O prophet, cursed your mindless family And smashed your tablets in
frustration?
No, you have cursed us not. From heights you disappear
Into the shade of little valleys;
You love the heavens' crash, but also wish to hear
Bees humming over red azaleas.
Such is the honest bard. With passion he laments
At solemn fairs of Melpomena -
To smile upon the crowd's plebeian merriments,
The liberties of coarse arena.
Now Rome is calling him, now majesties of Troy,
Now elder Ossian's craggy gravels -
And in the meantime he will hear with childish joy
Of Czar Sultan's heroic travels.

Alexander Sergeyevich Pushkin

To My Friends

The chain of golden days and nights
Is still your heritage from Deity,
And, still, the languid maidens' eyes
Are turned to you as well intently.
So, play and sing, friends of my years!
Lose very quickly passing evening,
And, at your heedless joy and singing,
I will be smiling through my tears.

Alexander Sergeyevich Pushkin