

TRANSLATIONS:

**“Alone am I, yes, all alone”**

poetry by Taras Shevchenko (1814-1861)

Alone am I, yes, all alone,  
A blade of grass forlorn,  
For neither happiness nor luck  
God gave when I was born;  
He gave me only sparkling eyes  
In beauty fair and good,  
But even these I've wept away  
In lonely maidenhood.  
No brother and no sister dear  
Have been my strength and stay;  
Up among strangers was I reared,  
Among them waste away...  
Where may I find a helpmate true?  
Where gentle friends uprouse?  
They can't be found... I am alone...  
I'll never find a spouse!....

**“Hetmans”**

poetry by Taras Shevchenko (1814-1861)

Hetmans, O haughty hetmans, if you were to rise again,  
If you were to rise and look at your ancient Chyhyryn,  
The town that you once erected, the seat of your former reign,  
You would burst into bitter tears, for you would not see therein  
The old-time Cossack glory but ruins upon the plain!  
The squares where the troops you marshaled once flowed like a mighty sea,  
Where they blazed at the wave of the bunchuks, red legions ripe for spoil,  
And the great chief on his jet-black steed would rise in rapture free,  
And wave his mace to the mighty waves and the sea would begin to boil,  
To boil and overflow its ranks,  
Over the steppes and up the banks,  
Calamity itself felt fear...  
But not a Cossack now is here.  
Why dwell on that? Their fate is clear.  
And when a thing has met its end,  
Let us not now recall it, friend...

**“The Muscovite Hussar Has Not Returned”**

poetry by Taras Shevchenko (1814-1861)

The Muscovite hussar has not returned  
From his campaigning. Why has my heart burned  
In pity for him, and in longing too?  
Because he wore a tunic, fine an dnev,  
And had a dark moustache, that friendly chap  
Who used to call me Molly? No such slap  
Of fate afflicts me. It is that I see  
My beauty fate till none would marry me;  
And girls along the street give jeers inhuman  
And cursed ones cry out: “Ah, trooper's woman!...”

poetry by Yakiv Schchokoliv (1824-1898)

**“To the Island of Khortytsia”**

Dull roars the Dnieper to its cliffs  
And sobs against the stones:  
“Children, where are you?” still it asks,  
“Where are you, hapless ones?”  
Dull roars the Dnieper from its falls  
As towards the Isle it rushes:  
“Where, Bayda, is your fortress now?  
Where glow your standard’s blushes?  
Where is the Sitch that, like the sea,  
Her boiled in ardours fell,  
The freedom that across the plain  
Flowed seething, fierce as hell?”  
The battlements have crumbled down,  
The moats lie overgrown,  
On ditch and counterscarp alike  
Thick grasses have been sown.  
Within the boundaries of the Sitch  
The plains, stone-scattered, sleep:  
The earth that once knew glory’s pride  
Is trampled now by sheep.  
Where the Cossacks lived in opulence  
The German builds his house;  
The sacred soil he rends and tears,  
And furrows it with ploughs.

*This verse will not be performed today:*

*[Now Liberty’s beset with chains]*

*[And lies among the reeds;]*

*[And only Glory roams the earth]*

*[To stir man’s blood to deeds.]*

While Dnieper rushes to the sea  
And still his question runs:  
“Where is that Sitch? That Bayda, where?  
Where are his flags and guns?”

**“The Sailboat”**

The blue sea is starting to stagger and roar,  
The boisterous winds are a-toss on its foam;  
The billows are rising in mountains before  
That, one on another, incessantly roam;  
Like darkening midnights, the thunderclouds glower  
And rumble out trumpets of judgement and power  
Unceasing from heaven’s high dome.

*This verse will not be performed today:*

*[The blue sea continues to seethe and to bellow;]*

*[Some soul has let loose a small bark on that sea;]*

*[It tilts with the waves in a careless duello]*

*[And drifts ever farther away to the lea.]*

*[Not even an oar keeps the poor thing from tossing.]*

*[My heart feels a pang for the bark in that crossing—]*

*[Ah, why towards the storm must it flee?]*

poetry by Yevhen Hrebinka (1812-1848)

The sea has subsided, the billows have settled;  
The sea-nymphs are gamboling glad in the spray;  
Again on the deep move the vessels high-mettled,  
A hundred white sails show in gallant array.  
But what of my bark? Is my darling afloat?  
Alas, in the distance my glances can note  
Its whitening wreckage astray.  
As the sea to the bark is the world to my spirit:  
Since childhood it frights me with perils unknown.  
But where to escape? I am forced to come near it,  
Nor live out my life in a desert alone.  
Farewell, O my peace, I embark on a sea,  
It may be, of fate and misfortune for me,  
Wherever my bark may be blown.

**“Ukrainian Melody”**

**poetry by Yevhen Hrebinka (1812-1848)**

No, Mother, I can't love him, I don't love,  
It's doom to live with one you don't love.  
It's hard, it's so hard to conduct conversation,  
It's better I spend my life as a maid.  
But can you not see that I'm getting old?  
I'll soon find eternal rest in a grave.  
When my eyes close forever, who will watch over you?  
You'll be left, my daughter, an orphan, alone.  
Oh Mother, my dear, don't weep, please don't cry.  
Prepare the kerchief and embroidered cloths.  
I will lose my life with one I don't love  
But you'll be happy, I alone will shed tears.  
Away in the valley a cross stands by the road,  
Beneath it, all day, a mother sobs and wails,  
Dear God, my dear Savior, what have I done?  
My daughter I've doomed, her life I've forsaken

**“Behind the grove the sun is setting”**

poetry by Taras Shevchenko (1814-1861)

Behind the grove the sun mounts up,  
It sets there in the gloaming,  
At evening, in the valley's shade,  
A Cossack sad is roaming.  
An hour he roams, another yet,  
And yet his black-browed beauty  
From the dark meadow does not come  
And thus reward his duty.  
The treacherous one does not appear...  
Out of the gloom abhorred,  
With kennel-keepers and with hounds  
Now comes the rakish lord.  
The dogs are set upon the lad,  
His hands with ropes are tied;  
The fiercest tortures for his flesh  
His captors then provide;  
Into a dungeon he is cast,  
The lord now locks him there;  
Then rapes the girl and turns her out  
To wander in despair ...

**“My captive thought has remained silent for too long” poetry by Lesia Ukrainka (1871-1913)**

My captive thought has remained silent for too long  
Like a bird in a cage, shut out from the world,  
My song has not flown for a long time,  
Tamed by grief, pierced by sorrow.  
It is time my song walked into the world.  
To straighten my wings, to shed my grief,  
Time for my song to soar, to listen,  
How the wind plays upon the sea,  
Flow, my song, like an unsteady wave,  
She does not ask whither she flows,  
Fly, my **song**, like a **swift** seagull,  
**She is not afraid that she will die in the sea.**  
Play, my **song**, like the **wind** plays!  
Howl, like that roar of the **swirling** around the boat! It does **not** matter that the wind does **not** reply,  
The sound of the waves charms the future!

**”No, do not sing happy songs”**

poetry by Oleksandr Oles' (1878-1944)

No, do **not** sing happy songs  
Of flowers, of a paradise of love,  
With a picture of happiness **enchanting**,  
Do **not** cut the heart.  
**Look- unhappiness and misery** are all over,  
**Boredom and grief** live everywhere,  
Do you hear that **unending** groan,  
That, **weeping**, the heart tears with **pity**.  
Do you see **those burning** tears,  
Do you hear the **clanging** of chains?  
O, do not sing carefree songs,  
Do not lull asleep your brothers.

**"Unto the Mountains"**

To the tall mountains, to the silver snows!  
To the most distant peak! earlier than winged eagles,  
Greeting the morning I will meet...  
Behind the clouds, where the shining sun lives,  
Not tiring, shining brightly  
Where the light is, I would collect it into my heart,  
And shine myself.

poetry by Oleksandr Oles (1878-1944)

**"I would like to become a song"**

I would like to become a song  
In this glorious moment,  
To fly freely across the world,  
To have the winds carry the echo.  
To fly to the very heavens  
With the ringing sound of song,  
To fall on the clear waves,  
To soar across the raging sea.  
My dreams would then echo  
And my secret happiness too,  
Brighter than the shining night sky  
Louder than the roar of the sea.

poetry by Lesia Ukrainka (1871-1913)

**"A Winding Path"**

A path winds through the rye,  
The grass has almost covered it.  
At one time on every summer evening  
I walked there with you.

*This verse will not be performed today:  
[The wind plays in the stalks,]  
[Bending them down to the ground.]  
[I have come here with tears]  
[Of great misfortune.]*

I'll start kissing the ground,  
On which you once walked,  
I'll start crying and wailing  
For you, my dear.

*[A path winds through the rye,]  
[The grass has almost covered it.]  
[I wander and walk, going nowhere,]  
[And long for you.]*

poetry by Maksym Slavynsky

**“Old King Cole”** poetry adapted & translated by Volodymyr Samiilenko (1864–1925)

Old King Cole was a merry old soul  
Thought history knew not his role,  
Without great fame he held his nation’s helm  
And slept as peacefully as any in his realm.

He had no crown and only wore  
The hat in which he lay down to snore.  
Ah, ah, ah, ah, oh, oh, oh, oh!

King Cole was merry—oh!

*This verse will not be performed today:*

*[His palace was a hut of clay]*

*[Where he gorged himself five times a day,]*

*[Each day his kingdom he surveyed,]*

*[Which left his horse exhausted and dismayed.]*

*[He didn’t keep a standing army]*

*[But loved two hounds, and that’s no blarney.]*

*[Ah, ah...]*

He liked to quench his mighty thirst—  
And not with water— till he burst  
But all his life, he’d truly boast,  
He praised his subjects in each toast.

On wine he levied a small tax  
One jug per barrel, for his snacks.  
Ah, ah...

No other man had his success  
With ladies, whom he did impress.  
No doubt with cause did lass and lad  
Throughout his kingdom call him dad.  
Each year a couple of times at least  
He practiced battle drills with feast.  
Ah, ah...

He had no with to conquer land,  
Neighbours he met with outstretched hand.  
There was but one rule he’d employ,  
The goal of life was to enjoy!  
His subjects never shed a tear,  
Until his death brought cries sincere.  
Ah, ah...

*A portrait of this man, we know,*

*Live on today, joy to bestow,*

*It hangs amid the other stars*

*In all the nation’s finest bars.*

*When thirsty folk, driven by drought,*

*Perceive his merry visage they shout:*

*Ah, ah...*