

CHANDOS

# SPARKS FROM ASHES

Nicky Spence *tenor*

Dylan Perez *piano*

Songs  
by  
Dvořák  
Kaprálková  
Bartók  
Křička







AKG Images, London

*Antonín Leopold Dvořák*  
*1868 28/1*

Antonín Dvořák, c. 1868, with his own signature

## Sparks from Ashes

Vítězslava Kaprálová (1915 – 1940)

- |   |   |
|---|---|
| <div style="border: 1px solid black; width: 15px; height: 15px; display: flex; align-items: center; justify-content: center; margin: 0 auto;">1</div> | <p><b>Waving Farewell, Op. 14</b> (1937) <span style="float: right;">6:08</span><br/><i>(Sbohem a šáteček)</i><br/><i>Na rozloučenou nejkrásnějšímu městu Praze</i><br/>(On separation from the most beautiful city of Prague)<br/>Song for Voice and Piano<br/>Edited by Timothy Check<br/>Klidně, misty vzrušeně [Calmly, sometimes excitedly] –<br/>Exaltando – Tempo rubato –<br/>Tempo I – Meno mosso – Tranquillo</p> |
|---|---|

Antonín Dvořák (1841 – 1904)

- |   |   |
|---|---|
|   | <p><b>Cypresses, B 11</b> (1865) <span style="float: right;">37:43</span><br/><i>(Cypřiše)</i><br/>for Voice and Piano<br/>Karl Bendlov</p> |
| <div style="border: 1px solid black; width: 15px; height: 15px; display: flex; align-items: center; justify-content: center;">2</div> | <p>I Vy, vroucí písně, pějte (You ardent songs, sing). Moderato 2:31</p>  |
| <div style="border: 1px solid black; width: 15px; height: 15px; display: flex; align-items: center; justify-content: center;">3</div> | <p>II V té sladké moci očí Tvých (In that sweet power of your eyes).<br/>Andante con moto 1:59</p>  |
| <div style="border: 1px solid black; width: 15px; height: 15px; display: flex; align-items: center; justify-content: center;">4</div> | <p>III V tak mnohém srdci mrtvo jest (So many a heart is as though dead).<br/>Allegretto 1:43</p>   |
| <div style="border: 1px solid black; width: 15px; height: 15px; display: flex; align-items: center; justify-content: center;">5</div> | <p>IV Ó, duše drahá, jedinká (Oh, dear soul, the only one). Moderato 1:18</p>   |
| <div style="border: 1px solid black; width: 15px; height: 15px; display: flex; align-items: center; justify-content: center;">6</div> | <p>V Ó, byl to krásný, zlatý sen (Oh, it was a lovely, golden dream).<br/>Andante 2:49</p>  |

[7]	VI	Já vím, že v sladké naději (I know that in sweet hope). Allegretto – Meno	1:52
[8]	VII	Ó, zlatá růže, spanilá (Oh, golden rose, fair). Andantino	2:07
[9]	VIII	Ó, naši lásce nekvěte (Oh, that longed-for happiness). Con anima (velmi bolestně)	2:06
[10]	IX	Kol domu se teď potácím (Around the house now I stagger). Moderato – Più mosso	1:32
[11]	X	Mě často týrá pochyba (Doubt often torments me). Moderato	2:06
[12]	XI	Mé srdce často v neštěstí (My heart often broods in unhappiness). Andantino – Più allegro (radostně)	1:32
[13]	XII	Zde hledím na ten drahý list (Here I look upon this dear letter). Allegro	1:35
[14]	XIII	Na horách ticho a v údolí ticho (On the mountains quiet and in the valley quiet). Allegro – Più mosso – Meno allegro – Meno	1:37
[15]	XIV	Zde v lese u potoka (Here in the forest by a brook). Andante – Meno	3:17
[16]	XV	Mou celou duší zádumně (Pensively through my whole soul). Allegro	2:12
[17]	XVI	Tam stojí stará skála (There stands an old crag). Andante maestoso	2:06
[18]	XVII	Nad krajem vévodí lehký spánek (Over the countryside reigns a light sleep). Allegretto	1:57
[19]	XVIII	Ty se ptáš, proč moje zpěvy bouří (You ask why my songs rage). Allegro animato – Andante – Più allegro – Più mosso – Meno allegro – Più allegro	3:23

**Béla Bartók** (1881 – 1945)

**Village Scenes, BB 87a, Sz 78** (1924)

12:52

(*Dedinské scény*)

Slovakian Folksongs for Female [High] Voice and Piano

Dedicated to Ditta Pásztory

- |      |     |  |      |
|------|-----|--|------|
| [20] | I   | Pri hrabaní (Haymaking). Largo   | 1:16 |
| [21] | II  | Pri neveste (At the Bride's). Lento  | 1:38 |
| [22] | III | Svatba (Wedding). Vivacissimo – Grave –<br>Tempo I – Allegretto – Più mosso –<br>Tempo I – Grave –<br>Tempo I – Allegretto – Più mosso –<br>Sostenuto – Allegretto – Più mosso – Tempo I | 3:05 |
| [23] | IV  | Ukoliebavka (Lullaby). Andante – Più tranquillo –<br>Tempo I – Più tranquillo – Più andante – Andante –<br>Tempo I – Più tranquillo  | 4:38 |
| [24] | V   | Tanec mládencov (Lads' Dance). Comodo – Allegro –<br>Pesante – Più mosso –<br>Tempo I – Allegro – Meno mosso – Pesante – Più mosso –<br>Tempo I – Allegro – Sostenuto                    | 2:15 |

## Vítězslava Kaprálová

### Sparks from Ashes, Op. 5 (1932 – 33)

12:58

(*Jiskry z popele*)

Songs for Voice and Piano

*Mě jediné lásce Otáčkovi*

(To my one and only love, Ota)

Edited by Timothy Check

- |    |  |      |
|----|--|------|
| 25 | I Ty staré písně v duši zní mi (Those old songs echo in my soul).<br>Andante amoroso | 2:57 |
| 26 | II Jak na hedvábný mech (As though on silken moss). Lento                            | 2:23 |
| 27 | III Ó zůstaň ještě, moje dívko drahá (Oh, stay a while longer, my beloved). Agitato  | 3:04 |
| 28 | IV A táhnou myšlenky teskné (And melancholy thoughts drift).<br>Andante mesto        | 4:34 |

## Jaroslav Křička (1882 – 1969)

### Three Fables, Op. 21 (1912 – 17)

15:54

(*Tři bajky*)

for Soprano [High Voice] and Piano

Marii Krbové

- |    |  |
|----|--|
| 29 | 1 O neposlušných kozlatech (The tale of the disobedient kid goats).<br>A piacere – Tranquillo –<br>Andante sostenuto – Poco più mosso, risoluto –<br>A piacere – Tranquillo – Più mosso – Allegro (molto) –<br>A piacere – Quietto – Più mosso – Allegro – |
|----|--|

- A piacere – Come sopra – Più mosso – Allegro –  
 A piacere – Sostenuto – A piacere – Allegro –  
 Allegro di molto, stringendo sin al presto 4:48
- [30] 2 Pohádka o kohoutkovi a slepičce (The tale of the rooster and the hen).  
 Con moto moderato – Sostenuto assai – Andante –  
 Tempo I – Sostenuto – Andante –  
 Quasi tempo I – Sostenuto – Allegretto grazioso – Come sopra –  
 Tempo I (poco più) – Sostenuto – Allegretto elegante –  
 Moderato – Sostenuto – Allegretto, molto ritmico e staccato –  
 Moderato – Andante patetico – Sostenuto – Andantino – Allegro –  
 Largamente 4:29
- [31] 3 Jeřáb a volavka (The crane and the heron).  
 Ze sbírky Afanasjevovy v překladu Jeronyma Holečka  
 (From the collection of Afanasyev, translated by Jeronym Holeček).  
 Allegretto – Meno, giusto – Come sopra –  
 Recitativo, a piacere – Andante – Allegro – Andante – Poco mosso –  
 Rychle [Quickly] – Allegro agitato –  
 Recitativo lento – Mosso moderato – Andante –  
 Mosso moderato – Allegro agitato –  
 Recitativo lento – Andante – Allegro – Allegro agitato –  
 Mosso moderato – Andante – Mosso moderato –  
 Recitativo lento – Vivo possibile 6:38  
 TT 85:35

**Nicky Spence** tenor  
**Dylan Perez** piano



© Ki Price

Nicky Spence



## Sparks from Ashes

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### Dvořák: Cypresses

The 1860s are hidden years in the career of Antonín Dvořák (1841 – 1904). After graduating from the Prague Organ School, in 1859, he took the courageous decision not to follow the path of security, as an organist and choirmaster somewhere in the Bohemian provinces, but instead pursued a precarious freelance career as a viola player and, later, music teacher. While he achieved a small degree of financial stability playing in the orchestra of the new Prague Provisional Theatre, which opened its doors in November 1862, his finances were always tight. As no letters by Dvořák survive from these years, we have to rely on reminiscences from the composer himself and others close to him, all inevitably coloured by his spectacularly successful later career.

Notwithstanding financial privation, as a composer in the 1860s Dvořák was nothing if not bold. At a time when interest in the abstract symphony across Europe had waned in favour of works based on programmes, Dvořák composed, in quick succession in 1865, two symphonies, each lasting nearly an hour. In

fact, 1865 proved something of an *annus mirabilis* as, in between the two symphonies, he completed in piano score a substantial cello concerto and the equally ambitious song cycle *Cypřiše* (Cypresses). The eighteen songs of *Cypřiše* constitute the longest such cycle in the Czech tradition up to this time. Fine native poetry was not abundant, but why he chose the rather weak, sentimental verse of Gustav Pflieger-Moravský (1833 – 1875) inevitably raises questions of motivation.

In 1865, Dvořák began to give lessons to Josefina Čermáková at the home of her parents. Josefina, an attractive and increasingly glamorous figure, had made her début as an actress at the Provisional Theatre in 1864 and within two years was taking on more significant parts, such as Perdita, in *A Winter's Tale*, in 1867. Most commentators agree that Dvořák fell in love with Josefina at this time. However, his cousin Anna Dušková recounts that the young composer was decidedly reticent where women were concerned. Whether Josefina was aware of his feelings for her is uncertain, but nothing came of his infatuation (he was later happily

married to her younger sister, Anna). Dvořák may well have poured his feelings of frustration into the settings of *Cypřiše*. A suggestion that this may have been true is the fact that years later, in 1888, he proposed a revision of six of the songs to his publisher Simrock, describing them as 'love songs' and adding, 'Think of a youth in love – that is their content'.

Pfleger-Moravský's verse was well-suited to Dvořák's lovelorn mood at the time. The first twelve poems are full of images of bliss briefly enjoyed, rejection, and parting. The last six pursue a more meditative vein, the disappointed lover attempting to find a fragile consolation in the natural world (thirteen, fourteen, sixteen, and seventeen) and by identifying his suffering with that of the nation (fifteen and eighteen).

The songs were written in a burst of compositional enthusiasm, at the rate of almost one a day, between 10 and 27 July 1865. In some cases, Dvořák even gave an indication of the time of day when they were written; No. 12, for instance, was composed by moonlight at 11 pm on 16 July! All the songs, including the broad-ranging No. 18, either fall into a clear tripartite form or incorporate some element of return to the opening material. Generally, Dvořák

is successful at providing an expressive equivalent to the words. The only serious miscalculation comes in No. 4 in which jaunty, march-like rhythms seem curiously at odds with Pfleger-Moravský's image of the lover as a swan longing to sing of his feelings. At the other end of the scale, Dvořák shows himself capable of heights of eloquence: in the fifth song ('Oh, it was a lovely, golden dream') he embeds a rapturous vocal line, worthy of mature Janáček, in a harmonic setting that looks forward to Debussy and certainly goes well beyond anything to be found in Prague in the mid-1860s. Throughout the cycle there is clear evidence of Dvořák's developing melodic imagination, an unflinching elegance being apparent from the very first song ('You ardent songs, sing') as well as an expressive approach to the piano accompaniment. There is a compelling sense of urgency in the third song ('So many a heart is as though dead') and touching, ardent lyricism in the almost dream-like, gently reflective setting of the words in numbers seven, 'Oh, golden rose, fair', and twelve, 'Here I look upon this dear letter'. Occasionally, the treatment of the verse can seem a touch four-square, but throughout, Dvořák shows himself responsive to the essence of the sentiment underlying Pfleger-Moravský's poems.

The completion of the cycle was by no means the end of the story. The sophistication and maturity of much of the melodic writing meant that Dvořák returned to it on a number of occasions. In many ways he seems to have viewed the original setting of *Cypřiše* as a kind of musical quarry, inserting one of the songs into two operas from the 1870s, arranging twelve for string quartet, and, perhaps most successfully, revising eight of them as the *Písně milostné* (Love Songs), Op. 83 (B 160) as late as 1888. This last version gave Dvořák the chance to revise the word setting which, as his friend Karel Bendl had pointed out soon after they were composed, was often at variance with the natural accent of Czech which always falls on the first syllable of a word. But even in their early, unrevised form the eighteen songs of *Cypřiše* not only provide an insight into Dvořák's early style, but offer rich rewards both for performers and listeners.

#### **Křička: Three Fables**

Musical talent fostered across generations of families was common in Bohemia and Moravia in the eighteenth century and continued through into the twentieth. A prime beneficiary was Jaroslav Křička (1882 – 1969). In a pattern familiar

throughout the Czech lands, his father, František, was both headmaster and music teacher in the small eastern Moravian town of Kelč. While his brother and sister became well known as writers, his own talents, fostered by his father, were musical, which led to studies at the Prague Conservatory and in Germany. After a fruitful period teaching and composing in Russia, Křička returned to Prague, in 1911, where he became a central figure in Czech musical life as a director of choirs, including that of the Czech Philharmonic, and a teacher of distinction as professor of composition at the Prague Conservatory from 1919.

His compositional output was both large and wide ranging, and included film music and, in later life, operetta. The *Tři bajky* (Three Fables, or Myths), Op. 21 were completed in 1917 and dedicated to Marie Krbová whom he married a year later. The first two are settings of folk-inspired poems by Božena Němcová (1820 – 1864) and the third is from a similar collection by the Russian writer and ethnographer Alexander Afanasyev (1826 – 1871). Němcová was one of the most popular Czech writers of the nineteenth century, her novel *Babička* (The Grandmother), a tale of country life in large part based on her own childhood, holding a

place in every literate Czech household. The first two Fables, 'O neposlušných kozlatech' (The disobedient kid goats) and 'Pohádka o kohoutkovi a slepičce' (The tale of the cockerel and the hen), are cautionary tales taken respectively from a seventh book of fairytales, published in 1847, and from a later collection, of the mid-1850s. 'Jeřáb a volavka' (The crane and the heron) is a translation by Jeronym Holeček of a poem from Afanasyev's vast collection of Russian folk tales.

All three of Křička's settings have a striking immediacy that matches the simplicity of the verse. In the first, the narrator sets the scene in speech-like tones before the mother goat warns her kids not to open the gate to anyone unless they hear 'my voice', with 'my' set as a long bleating trill. The characterisation of the deceitful vixen who disguises herself as the mother goat is superb, as is the inevitable tragic denouement. The two remaining songs maintain this lively sense of storytelling, responding to the poetry with a captivating and unashamedly dramatic approach to the word setting.

#### **Kaprálová: Sparks from Ashes**

The tragically short career of Vítězslava Kaprálová (1915 – 1940) was one of the most remarkable in Czech music in the

1930s. Moravian by birth, she possessed musical abilities that were recognised from her teenage years onwards and her teachers were some of the finest of the day, including Václav Talich in conducting and Vítězslav Novák in composition, before she moved to Paris where she was taught by Bohuslav Martinů. Kaprálová also became involved with the journalist and writer Jiří Mucha – son of the great Art Nouveau artist Alphonse Mucha – whom she married in the spring of 1940, shortly before her death, from tuberculosis, in June of that year. She had already been recognised as a composer of promise with a performance of her *Vojenská symfonietta* (Military Sinfonietta) by the Czech Philharmonic Orchestra in 1937, followed by another, the same year, in London.

The sheer brilliance of the *Military Sinfonietta*, demonstrating a bracing, occasionally brash inventiveness, clearly made a strong impression and did much for Kaprálová's burgeoning reputation. Kaprálová was, however, an avid collector of contemporary Czech verse and, on her own admission, her heart was drawn continuously to the composition of song. The four songs entitled *Jiskry z popele* (Sparks from Ashes), Op. 5, completed in 1933, were however set

to verse by the short-lived nineteenth-century poet Bohdan Jelínek (1851 – 1874). They were dedicated to her fellow student Otakar Vach in fulsome terms: ‘My only love’. The sentiment expressed in the first song is very much a memory of love lost – not unlike that found in Dvořák’s *Cypřiše*. The musical language is certainly shaded by Debussy, but also incorporates some warmer pentatonic writing. The graceful melody of the first gives way to more telegraphic, beautifully observed word setting in the second. Kaprálová employs a more complex harmonic palette to set Jelínek’s more erotically charged language in the third. In the final song the piano provides an expressive, ominous introduction to a poem full of images of winter and frost, reflecting the loss of the lover, before a magically expressive final cadence.

#### **Kaprálová: Waving Farewell**

*Sbobem a Šáteček* (Waving Farewell), Op. 14, composed four years later, in 1937, is a heartfelt farewell to Prague as Kaprálová, in response to the composer’s advice, moved to Paris to study with Martinů. The poem is by the contemporary *avant-garde* poet Vítězslav Nezval (1900 – 1958), to which Kaprálová added the highly personal subtitle ‘On separation from the most beautiful city of

Prague’. The song is an extended leave-taking – as if to a lover – to the city. The falling motif of the opening not only underpins the musical substance of the song but appears as a symbol of waving farewell. In a magnificently sustained setting, Kaprálová encompasses both the sweetest regret and the heights of eloquence on the words ‘my destiny is song’. The piano accompaniment not only amplifies the meaning of the words but has an almost symphonic quality, uniting the whole.

#### **Bartók: Village Scenes**

The profound enthusiasm of Béla Bartók (1881 – 1945) for folksong dates from his hearing a nursemaid singing a simple melody while he was on holiday in Slovakia in 1904. From then on, folksong in all its rich profusion ran through nearly every aspect of his mature creative life. As well as his activities as an indefatigable collector and meticulous transcriber of folk melodies from all parts of the Hungarian diaspora, he attempted, not always successfully, to engage the Hungarian public with volumes of simple, ear-catching arrangements of folksongs.

*Village Scenes*, published in 1924, comprise five settings taken from a large collection of Slovakian folksongs made in 1915. The focus in the middle three songs, on a folk wedding



and a lullaby for a new-born son, clearly parallels the composer's life at the time: Bartók dedicated the collection to his second wife, Ditta Pásztory, whom he had married in the summer of 1923; a year later their son, Péter, was born.

For all the artfulness of these arrangements, Bartók captures the uninhibited qualities of the originals, particularly in the celebratory final 'Lads' Dance'. While the piano accompaniment always adds an expressive edge, it never compromises the authenticity of the originals. The first song is an enthusiastic encouragement to the haymakers to rake up the new-mown hay, including full-throated, written-out ornaments that add pungency to the vocal line. By contrast, 'At the Bride's' is almost soulful, its free, sweetly melodic vocal line gently shaded by simple piano chords. The wedding itself is a heady mixture in which a description of the bride on her way to the groom is followed by uproarious excitement at the end of each verse. The haunting melody of the lullaby, built around a raised, Lydian fourth, has a wistful quality reflecting the intimacy of mother and child; its gentle, inward quality is swept away by the raucous introduction to the final song. In this 'Lads' Dance' the mood is boisterous throughout,

the piano taking on the role of a village band, egged on in the concluding bars by the singer.

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Hailed by *The Daily Telegraph* as 'a voice of real distinction', **Nicky Spence** OBE possesses unique skills as a singing actor and a rare honesty of musicianship, all of which have earned him a place at the top of the classical music profession. The magazine *BBC Music* named him Personality of the Year in 2022, he was appointed an OBE in the King's Birthday Honours in 2023, and in 2024 received the Singer Award of the Royal Philharmonic Society. Admired in particular for his interpretation of the music of Janáček, he has appeared worldwide in the composer's operas, notably as Laca (*Jenůfa*) at The Royal Opera, Covent Garden, Boris (*Kát'a Kabanová*) at Glyndebourne Festival Opera, Albert Gregor (*The Makropulos Case*) at Staatsoper Unter den Linden, Berlin, and in the title role in *The Excursion of Mr Brouček to the Moon* and *The Excursion of Mr Brouček to the 15th Century* at the Janáček Brno International Opera and Music Festival. In 2024 he was awarded the Leoš Janáček Memorial Medal at Janáček Brno for his contribution to the performance

and promotion of Janáček's works on the international opera and concert stages.

Elsewhere, he has sung Siegmund (*The Valkyrie*) at English National Opera, Loge (*Das Rheingold*) at Théâtre royal de la Monnaie, Edmundo, Marqués de Nobile (Adès's *The Exterminating Angel*) at Opéra national de Paris, and the title role in *Peter Grimes* at Welsh National Opera. He gives recitals internationally, and has curated a residency at Wigmore Hall. His extensive discography includes recordings of Lieder by Strauss with Roger Vignoles, Brahms's *Liebeslieder-Walzer* with Joseph Middleton and Dylan Perez, the title role in *La clemenza di Tito*, Handel's Brockes Passion with the Academy of Ancient Music under Richard Egarr, and works by Britten, Jonathan Dove, Pavel Haas, Alun Hoddinott, Buxton Orr, Schumann, Mark-Anthony Turnage, Vaughan Williams, Wagner, and Wolf. In 2020, Nicky Spence won the *BBC Music Magazine* Award in the Vocal category and the *Gramophone* Award in the Solo Vocal category for his critically acclaimed recording of Janáček's *The Diary of One Who Disappeared*.

Described by *The Sunday Times* as 'sublime and completely intuitive', and in high

demand across the UK, the pianist **Dylan Perez** is a recitalist, chamber musician, and coach specialising in vocal repertoire. He has received the Gerald Moore Award for accompanists, Paul Hamburger Prize for Accompaniment, and Accompanist's Prize at the Young Singers Competition of Bampton Classical Opera, and participated in numerous international competitions, including the Kathleen Ferrier Awards, Wigmore Hall / Bollinger International Opera Competition, and international song competition Das Lied. He has been an Oxford International Song Festival Young Artist (with the contralto Jess Dandy) and a Britten Pears Young Artist, and is an alumnus of the Franz-Schubert-Institut, in Baden bei Wien, Austria, and a laureate of the Académie Orsay-Royaumont, in Paris. He made his Wigmore Hall recital début with the mezzo-soprano Ema Nikolovska, and has since performed at such major London venues as the Barbican, Milton Court Concert Hall, St Martin-in-the-Fields, Cadogan Hall, and Victoria and Albert Museum.

He is frequently heard on BBC Radio 3, whether in Proms Extra concerts, Total Immersion performances, or live on *In Tune*, and his performances have also taken him to Opéra de Lille, Musée d'Orsay, and Théâtre

royal de la Monnaie / De Munt, in Brussels. Together with Julien Van Mellaerts, he runs Opera in Song at Opera Holland Park, a series that illuminates operatic characters and plots through the art song format and continues to grow in scope and reach. Teaching being a vital part of his musical life, Dylan Perez is a member of the Vocal Coach faculty at the Royal Conservatoire of Scotland and Royal Birmingham Conservatoire and has been on

the faculty at Trinity Laban Conservatoire of Music and Drama, in London, as well as a guest coach at the Royal Academy of Music. He has led song projects at the RBC and Guildhall School of Music and Drama and is sought after for private coaching. His recording of the complete songs of Samuel Barber received critical acclaim, chosen as Recording of the Month by *BBC Music* and awarded five stars by *The Sunday Times*.



Christa Holka

Dylan Perez

### **1 Sbohem a šáteček**

Sbohem, a kdybychom se nikdy nesetkali,  
bylo to překrásné a bylo toho dost.  
Sbohem, a kdybychom si spolu schůzku dali,  
možná že nepřijdem, že přijde jiný host.

Bylo to překrásné, žel, všechno má svůj konec.  
Mlč, umíráčku, mlč, smutek ten já už znám.  
Polibek, kapesník, siréna, lodní zvonec,  
tři, čtyři, úsměvy, a potom zůstat sám.

Sbohem, a kdybychom si neřekli už více,  
ať po nás zůstane maličká památka,  
vzdušná jak kapesník, prostší než pohlednice  
a trochu mámivá jak vůně pozlátka.

A jestli viděl jsem, co neviděli jiní,  
tím lépe, vlaštovko, jež hledáš rodný chlév.  
Ukázalas mi jih, kde máš své hnízdo v skříni.  
Tvým osudem je let, mým osudem je zpěv.

Sbohem, a byli to všechno naposledy,  
tím hůř, mé naděje, nic už vám nezbude.  
Chcemli se setkat, nelučme se radš tedy.  
Sbohem a šáteček. Vyplň se, osude!

Vítězslav Nezval (1900 – 1958)

### **Waving Farewell**

Farewell, and if we never meet again,  
it was beautiful, and it was enough.  
Farewell, and if we arrange another meeting,  
perhaps we won't come, perhaps another guest  
will.

It was beautiful, but alas, everything has its end.  
Hush, little death knell, hush, I know this sorrow.  
A kiss, a kerchief, a siren, a ship's bell,  
three, four smiles, and then to remain alone.

Farewell, and if we never speak again,  
let a small memory remain of us,  
as light as a kerchief, simpler than a postcard,  
and a little intoxicating, like the scent of gilt.

And if I saw what others did not,  
so much the better, swallow, you who seek your  
native roost.  
You showed me the south, where you have your  
nest in a cupboard.  
Your destiny is flight, my destiny is song.

Farewell, and if this was the last of it all,  
so much the worse, my hopes, nothing will  
remain for you.  
If we wish to meet, then let us not part.  
Waving farewell. Fate, do as you will!

Translation: Lucie Spickova



## Cypřiše

**2** I

Vy, vroucí písně, pějte  
tou nocí v mživou dál;  
všem pozdravení dejte,  
jež tíží tichý žal!

Tam spějte přes padoly,  
kde moje mlka dlí,  
a rcete, co mne bolí,  
a proč letíte k ní!

A zapláče-li s vámi,  
povězte mi to zas:  
jinak at' dolinami  
zavane vítr vás!

**3** II

V té sladké moci očí Tvých  
jak rád bych zahynul,  
kdyby mně k životu jen smích  
rtů krásných nekynul.

Však tu smrt sladkou zvolím hned  
s tou láskou ve hrudi:  
když mě jen ten Tvůj smavý ret  
k životu probudí.

**4** III

V tak mnohém srdci mrtvo jest  
jak v temné pustině;  
v něm na žalost a na bolest  
ba místa jedině.

## Cypresses

I

You ardent songs, sing  
through the night into the misty space;  
give greetings to all  
who are burdened by silent woe!

Go thither across the dales  
where my beloved dwells,  
and tell her what pains me,  
and why you fly to her!

And if she weeps with you,  
bring me back those tidings;  
otherwise, may the wind  
blow you about the valleys!

II

In that sweet power of your eyes  
how gladly would I die,  
if only the laughter of lovely  
lips did not beckon me to life.

But I'll choose that sweet death at once  
with that love in my breast,  
if only those smiling lips of yours  
will awaken me to life.

III

So many a heart is as though dead,  
as in a dark wasteland;  
yea, only for grief and for pain  
does it have room.

Tu klam i lásky horoucí  
v to srdce vstupuje  
a srdce žalem práhneoucí  
to mní, že miluje.

A v tomto sladkém domnění  
se ještě jednou v ráj  
to srdce mrtvé promění  
a zpívá starou báj!

**5 IV**

Ó, duše drahá, jedinká,  
jež v srdci žiješ dosud:  
má oblétá Tě myšlenka,  
ač dělí nás zlý osud.

Ó kéž jsem zpěvnou labutí,  
já zaletěl bych k Tobě:  
a v posledním bych vzdechnutí  
Ti vypěl srdce v mdlobě.

**6 V**

Ó, byl to krásný, zlatý sen,  
jejž spolu jsme tam snili!  
Ach škoda, že tak krátký jen  
byl sen ten přespanilý!

Tak sladká touha v bytosti  
se celé uhostila  
a při loučení žalosti  
se slza dostavila.

Then delusions of burning love  
enter into that heart,  
and the heart, yearning in misery,  
believes that it loves.

And in this sweet belief  
the dead heart once again  
transforms itself into a paradise  
and sings the old tale!

**IV**

Oh, dear soul, the only one  
that still lives in my heart:  
my thought hovers about you,  
though evil fate separates us.

Oh, were I a singing swan,  
I'd fly to you  
and in my final sighing would  
sing out my heart to you, swooning.

**V**

Oh, it was a lovely, golden dream  
that we dreamed there together!  
What a shame, that gracious dream  
was only so short!

Such sweet longing took root  
in my whole being,  
until upon parting  
a tear of woe arrived.

A často chodím na horu  
a za Tebou se dívám:  
však po dalekém obzoru  
jen žal svůj rozesívám.

**7 VI**

Já vím, že v sladké naději  
Tě smím přec milovat:  
a že chceš tím horoucněji  
mou lásku pěstovat.

A přec, když nazřím očí Tvých  
v tu přerokošnou noc;  
a zvím, jak lásky nebe z nich  
na mne snáší moc:

tu moje oko slzami  
se náhle obstírá,  
neb v štěstí naše za námi  
zlý osud pozírá!

**8 VII**

Ó, zlatá růže, spanilá  
jak jara zjevy ranní,  
Tys bol mi sladký vkouzila  
v mé celé žití, zdání.

Ta všecka Tvoje spanilost  
se v hrud' mi zakotvila,  
že jsem se dal Ti na milost,  
bys rány vyhojila.

And often I go up the mountain  
and look for you,  
but all along the far horizon  
only my woe do I sow.

**VI**

I know that in sweet hope  
I may love you after all,  
and that you want to nurture  
my love all the more fervently.

And still, when I look into your eyes,  
into that blissful night,  
and learn how love's heaven  
brings down its power from them upon me,

then my eye suddenly  
clouds with tears,  
for in our happiness, behind us  
evil fate is watching!

**VII**

Oh, golden rose, fair,  
like morning visions of spring,  
you conjured up sweet pain  
into my whole life and yearning.

All that graciousness of yours  
so anchored in my breast  
that I placed myself at your mercy,  
for you to heal my wounds.

A Ty v své lásce horoucí  
mě jak sfinx objala jsi:  
a v moje srdce práhnoucí  
trn nový vrazila jsi.

**9 VIII**

Ó, naši lásce nekvěte  
to vytoužené štěstí:  
a kdyby květlo, na světě  
nebude dlouho kvěsti.

Proč by se slza v ohnivé  
polibky vekrádala?  
Proč by mne v plné lásce své  
ouzkostně objímala?

Ó, trpké je to loučení,  
kde naděj nezakyne:  
tu srdce cítí ve chvění,  
že brzo bídě zhyne.

**10 IX**

Kol domu se ted' potácím,  
kdes bydlívala dříve,  
a z lásky rány krvácím,  
té lásky sladké, živé!

A smutným okem nazírám,  
zdaž ke mně vedeš kroku:  
a vstříc Ti náruč otvírám,  
však slzu cítím v oku!

And you in your fervent love  
embraced me like a sphinx,  
and into my pining heart  
thrust a new thorn.

**VIII**

Oh, that longed-for happiness  
does not bloom for our love;  
and if it would bloom, in this world  
it would not bloom for long.

Why would a tear steal  
into fiery kisses?  
Why would she embrace me in her full love  
with anxiety?

Oh, bitter is that parting  
where hope does not beckon:  
the heart then feels, trembling,  
that soon in misery it will die.

**IX**

Around the house now I stagger  
where you used to live,  
and from the wound of love I bleed,  
of that love sweet, deceitful!

And with a sad eye I watch  
whether you step toward me:  
and toward you my arms I open,  
but a tear I feel in my eye!

Ó, kde jsi, drahá, kde jsi dnes,  
což nepřijdeš mi vstříc?  
Což nemám, v srdci slast a ples,  
Tě užít nikde více?

**[11] X**

Mě často týrá pochyba,  
zdaž láska Tvá je stálá:  
a zas mě naděj kolíbá,  
žes věrně milovala.

A znova doufám v lásku Tvou  
a vroucněj tisknu Tebe,  
Tvé vzdechy k sladké víře zvou  
a k blahu očí nebe.

Tu hlavu skloním, srdce mé  
zní tajemnými hlasy:  
my sotva šťastní budeme  
a rozvedou nás časy!

**[12] XI**

Mé srdce často v neštěstí  
se teskně zadumá:  
ó, že ta láska bolestí  
a tolik trnů má?

Ta láska přejde jako sen,  
tak krásná, spanilá,  
a za kratinko upne jen  
se na ní mohyla!

Oh, where are you, dear one, where are you today?  
Won't you come toward me?  
Am I not, with delight and joy in my heart,  
to behold you anywhere again?

**X**

Doubt often torments me,  
whether your love is constant;  
and again, the hope cradles me  
that you have loved faithfully.

And anew I hope in your love  
and more warmly embrace you;  
your sighs entice me to sweet faith  
and the heaven of your eyes to bliss.

Then my head I bend, my heart  
resounds with mysterious voices:  
we shall scarcely be happy,  
and time will part us!

**XI**

My heart often broods in unhappiness,  
gloomily:  
Oh, that this love has so much pain  
and so many thorns?

This love passes like a dream,  
so beautiful, gracious,  
and in but a moment  
the grave mound will bury it!



A na mohylu kámen dán,  
nad nímž tam lípa bdí;  
a na kameni nápis psán:  
zde srdce puklé spí!

**13 XII**

Zde hledím na ten drahý list  
ve knížce uložený  
a Tvého srdce chci zas číst  
ty sladké polo-zvěny.

Tu milým slovem povídáš,  
že věčně budeš mojí  
a že mě zase uhlídáš,  
že nic nás nerozdvojí,

a my se opět viděli,  
já poznal světa změny:  
mně nezbyl leč list zpuchřelý  
ve knížce uložený.

**14 XIII**

Na horách ticho a v údolí ticho,  
příroda dřímá sladký sen;  
a vzduchem táhne tajemné vání,  
ke kmenu v lese šepce kmen.

A lesy šumí v modravou dál,  
když dechne vání na lupen,  
šumí a šumí dále a dále,  
s šuměním táhne tak mnohý sen!

And on the grave a stone placed,  
above which a linden keeps watch.  
And on the stone the inscription written:  
Here a broken heart sleeps!

**XII**

Here I look upon this dear letter  
placed in a little book,  
and I want to read again  
those sweet half-echoes of your heart.

With a dear word you say  
that you'll be mine forever,  
and that you'll see me again,  
that nothing will part us!

And we saw each other again, and  
I recognised the changes of the world:  
all that remained for me is the crumbling letter  
placed in a little book.

**XIII**

On the mountains quiet and in the valley quiet:  
nature dozes with a sweet dream.  
And through the air floats a mysterious breeze;  
in the forest the tree trunks whisper to each other.

And the forests murmur into the bluish space,  
when breathes a breeze upon a leaf,  
murmur and murmur on and on;  
with the murmuring comes so many a dream!

15 XIV

Zde v lese u potoka  
já stojím sám a sám  
a ve potoka vlny  
v myšlenkách pozírám.

Tu vidím starý kámen,  
nad nímž se vlny dmou;  
ten kámen vstoupá, padá  
bez klidu pod vlnou.

A proud se oň opírá,  
až kámen zvrhne se:  
kdy vlna života mne  
se světa odnese?

16 XV

Mou celou duší zádumně  
bolestné dchnutí táhne,  
a když i radost v srdci vše:  
hned žalů mráz v ně sáhne.

A vše, co drahé, odpadlo  
tož s mého srdce stromu,  
jen Tys mi zůstal, národe,  
a Tvoje strastě k tomu.

Tvým celým dlouhým životem  
se táhne utrpení,  
ve věčném boji zoufalém  
Tvé osudy se mění.

XIV

Here in the forest by a brook  
I stand alone, all alone,  
and into the brook's waves  
in thoughts I gaze.

Then I see an old stone,  
over which the waves rage;  
that stone rises and falls  
without rest under a wave.

And the current presses on it  
until the stone overturns.  
When will the wave of life  
carry me away from the world?

XV

Pensively through my whole soul  
the aching mood penetrates,  
and even when joy gushes up in my heart,  
at once the chill of woes steps in.

And everything that's dear has fallen,  
yea, from my heart's tree;  
all I have left is you, nation,  
and your hardships as well.

Through your whole long life  
stretches suffering;  
in eternal, desperate struggle  
your fates fluctuate.

Já k Tobě přilnul. Nad Tebe  
mi dražšího nic není:  
vždyť oba velkou žertvou jsme  
věčného utrpení!

**17 XVI**

Tam stojí stará skála  
u vchodu údolí,  
tak opuštěná, pustá,  
až srdce zabolí.

K té staré skále často  
zabloudí noha má;  
já vzhůru k ní požívám  
vlhkýma zrakoma.

A u té tvrdé skály  
já dlouhé chvíle dlím  
a všechny své bolesti  
tu v srdci pouspím...

Až umru, v tuto skálu  
uložte tělo mé:  
tam na věčnost se uspí  
to všecko hoře mé!

**18 XVII**

Nad krajem vévodí lehký spánek,  
jasná se rozpjala májová noc;  
nesmělý krade se do listí vánek,  
s nebes se schýlila míru moc.

I have clung to you;  
nothing is dearer to me than you –  
after all, we are both a great sacrifice  
of eternal suffering!

**XVI**

There stands an old crag  
at the entrance to the valley,  
so deserted, desolate,  
that the heart aches.

To that old crag  
my steps often wander;  
I gaze up at it  
with moist eyes.

And by that hard crag  
I tarry long,  
and all the pains  
in my heart I numb there.

When I die, in this crag  
lay my body;  
there will be numbed forever  
all that sorrow of mine!

**XVII**

Over the countryside reigns a light sleep;  
clear has stretched out the May night.  
A shy breeze steals into the leaves;  
from heaven has bent down the realm of peace.

Zadřimlo kvítí, potokem šumá,  
příroda v rozkoši blaženě dumá,  
neklidných živlů však utichl vzpor.

Hvězdy se sešly co naděje světla,  
země se mění na nebeský kruh:  
mým srdcem, v němžto kdys blaženost květla,  
mým srdcem táhne jen bolestí ruch!

**XVIII**

Ty se ptáš, proč moje zpěvy  
bouří zvukem zoufalým?  
Proč tak teskně, proč tak divě  
jako řeka ouskalím?

Neptej se, družko milá,  
upřímnou tou řečí svou,  
nesmím Ti to pověditi,  
jaké trýzně srdce rvou.

Ani lásky ani slávy  
věnce dávno strhané,  
ani říší pranebeských  
krásky časem zmítané:

ani štěstí uvadlého  
omešené svaliny  
ani cizí vůkol zjevy  
a ty světa pustiny:

The flowers have dozed; the brook murmurs;  
nature, in delight, blissfully meditates;  
but the squabble of restless elements has fallen  
silent.

The stars have come together like lights of hope;  
earth is changing into a celestial sphere.  
Through my heart, in which once bliss bloomed,  
through my heart spreads only the turmoil of pains!

**XVIII**

You ask why my songs  
rage with a sound despairing?  
Why so mournfully, why so wildly,  
like a river over rocks?

Don't ask, dear companion,  
with that sincere speech of yours;  
I dare not tell you  
what torments rend my heart.

Neither love's nor glory's  
garlands long torn down,  
nor celestial empires'  
beauties tossed about by time;

neither the mouldy ruins  
of faded happiness,  
nor strange apparitions all about,  
nor the world's wastelands;

ani vztek a rozruch vášní  
v neukojném bouření  
nebudí těch mojih zpěvův  
divoteskné proudění.

Avšak jeden bol tak mocný,  
že duch můj jím zvrácen jest,  
užírám mi žití kořen,  
že nemůže bujně kvést!

A ten bol, jenž bez ustání  
vrývá v srdce velkou strast,  
jenž ty divě písni budi:  
ten bol mocný je má vlast.

(published 1861)  
Gustav Pflieger-Moravský  
(1833 – 1875)

### **Dedinské scény**

#### **[20] I. Pri hrabaní**

– Ej! Hrabaj žclen, hrabaj  
To zelenô seno!  
– Ej! Ja by ho hrabala,  
Nemám nakoseno.

Ej! Hrabala, hrabala,  
Čerta nahrabala;  
Ej! Od vel'kého spania  
Hrabale dolámala.

#### **[21] II. Pri neveste**

Letia pávy, letia, ej,  
Drobnô peria tratia,

nor is it the rage and agitation of passions  
in ceaseless storming  
that awaken the wild, dark torrent of these  
songs of mine;

but one pain, so powerful  
that it ruins my spirit,  
consumes my life's root,  
that it cannot flourish and bloom!

And that pain, which incessantly  
etches great distress into my heart,  
which provokes these wild songs:  
that powerful pain is my homeland.

Translation © 2016 David R. Beveridge

### **Village Scenes**

#### **I. Haymaking**

– Hey! Rake eagerly, rake  
That freshly mown hay!  
– Hey! I'd gladly rake it,  
But I haven't mowed it yet.

Hey! She raked and raked,  
And raked up nothing but trouble;  
Hey! From too much sleepiness,  
She broke the rake.

#### **II. At the Bride's**

The peacocks are flying, flying, hey,  
Dropping their fine feathers,

Devča si ho zbiera  
Mesto svojho peria.  
Sbieraj siho, sbieraj, ej,  
Ved'ti treba bude,  
Janikovo líčko  
Na ňom líhat' bude.

**22 III. Svatba**

A ty Anča krásna,  
Už vo voze kasňa,  
Na kasni periny:  
Už ta vyplatili.

Hijijijiji!

A z tejto dediny  
Na druhú dedinu  
Ideme opáčiť'  
Novotnú rodinu.

Kasňa je z javora,  
Perina z pápera,  
A to švarnô devča  
Už nemá frajera.

Eijajajaja!

Keď nemá frajera,  
Ale bude muža,  
Nebude prekvitat',  
Ako v poli ruža.

Ruža som ja, ruža,  
Pokým nemám muža;

The girl gathers them up  
Instead of her own feathers.  
Gather them, gather them, hey,  
For you'll need them,  
Your lover Janik's head  
Will rest upon them.

**III. Wedding**

Oh, beautiful Annie,  
Your dowry chest is stowed in the wagon,  
Your feather quilts are piled on it,  
And your dowry has already been paid.

Hijijijiji!

From this village  
To the next village,  
We go to greet  
Your new family.

The chest is made of maple,  
The feather quilts stuffed with feathers,  
And that pretty girl  
No longer has a lover.

Eijajajaja!

If she has no lover,  
But will have a husband,  
She won't fade and wither away  
Like a rose in the field.

I am a rose, a rose,  
But only when I'm single.

Ked' budem mat' muža,  
Spadne so mňa ruža.

Teraz sa ty, Anča,  
Teraz sa oklameš:  
My pôjdeme domov  
A ty tu ostaneš.

Hoj že hoja hoj, heja hoja hoj že hoj...

**23 IV. Ukolicbavka**

– Beli že mi, beli  
Moj syn premilený!  
Číma budeš chovať,  
Ej, na moje starie dni?

– Budem, manko, budem,  
Kým sa neožením;  
Aked' sa ožením,  
Ej, potom vás oddelím.

– M, Búvaj že mi, búvaj,  
Len ma neunúvaj!  
Čo ma viac unúvaš,  
M, Menej sa nabúvaš.

M, Belej že sa, belej,  
Na hori zelenej,  
Na hori zelenej,  
M, V košielki bielenej.

M, Košelôčka biela,  
Šíla ju Mariška,

When I have a husband,  
My petals will fall, I'll be a rose no more.

Now, Annie,  
Now you'll be fooled:  
We'll go home,  
And you'll stay here.

Hey hoya hoy, hoya hoya hoy...

**IV. Lullaby**

– Sleep, darling, sleep,  
My beloved son!  
When I grow old,  
will you take care of me?

– I will, mother, I will,  
Until I marry;  
But when I am married,  
then I'll leave you.

– Slumber, darling, slumber,  
Just don't exhaust me!  
The more you tire me,  
the less you'll sleep.

Shine, darling, shine,  
In the green woods.  
In the green woods,  
in a little white shirt.

That little white shirt,  
Marisa sewed it.



Šila ju hodbábom  
M, Pod zeleným hájom.

Beli že mi, beli  
Moj andelík biely,  
Len mi neuletej,  
Ej, do tej čiernej zemi!

**[24] V. Tanec mládencov**  
Poza búčky, poza peň,  
Pod'že bratu, pod'že sem!  
Poza búčky a klady,  
Tancuj šuhaj za mlady!

Štyri kozy, piaty cap,  
Kto vyskočí, bude chlap!  
Ja by som bol vyskočil,  
Ale som sa potočil.

Hojže, hojže, od zeme!  
Kto mi kozy zaženie?  
A ja by ich bol zahnal,  
Ale som sa vlka bál.

Hej hej hej hej hej hej!

Slovakian folksongs

**Jiskry z popele**  
**[25] I. Ty staré písně v duši zní mi**  
Ty staré písně v duši zní mi.  
A jejich matku obraznost mi kreslí;

She embroidered it with silk,  
in the green grove.

Sleep, darling, sleep,  
My little white angel,  
Just don't fly away,  
down into that black earth!

**V. Lads' Dance**  
Behind the oak tree, tall and strong,  
Come here, brother, come along!  
Behind the oak tree, tall and strong,  
Dance, young lad, while life is long.

Four goats, the fifth a billy goat,  
Whoever jumps the highest will be a man!  
I tried jumping while I could,  
But I stumbled, it was no good.

Hoya, hoy, the time has come!  
Who will drive my goats back home?  
I would have gladly driven them,  
But I was afraid of the wolf.

Hej hej hej hej hej hej!

Translation: Lucie Spickova

**Sparks from Ashes**  
**I. Those old songs echo in my soul**  
Those old songs echo in my soul.  
In my mind I picture their creator;

a doby večera se loudí s nimi  
a svaté sny, co boží děcko z jeslí.

Jsem zemdlen, zpitý jakýms květem milým,  
jenž rozhodil v mých nádrech kořen planě;  
a hlavu mlčky zvolna k prsoum chýlím  
a zbožně zvedám ku modlitbě dlaně.

Jdou doby večera, sny moje s nimi.  
Ty staré písně v duši zní mi.

**26] II. Jak na hedvábný mech**

Jak na hedvábný mech jsem hlavu kladl  
na bílá ňadra tvá.

Tu z hvězdnatého nebe sen se snesl  
a unavený letem tiše klesl  
na bílá ňadra tvá.

I uletěla touha ze srdce ti  
a s chvěním padla jemu do obětí  
na bílá ňadra tvá.

Má víčka vlhla v obou vlahém dechu,  
a slza skápla k hedvábnému mechu  
na bílá ňadra tvá.

**27] III. Ó zůstaň ještě, moje dívko drahá**

Ó zůstaň ještě, moje dívko drahá,  
ó zůstaň, poupě moje, v obalu!  
Necht' v plnou růži srdce mé se zdráhá,  
tě rozdechnouti pomalu!

the evening lingers in their company,  
and sacred dreams, like the child of God from  
the manger.

I am weary, intoxicated by a dear flower,  
which has wildly rooted itself in my chest;  
and I slowly, silently bow my head to my breast,  
and devoutly fold my hands in prayer.

The evening slowly passes, my dreams hold pace.  
Those old songs echo in my soul.

**II. As though on silken moss**

As though on silken moss, I laid my head  
upon your white bosom.

Then from the starry sky, a dream descended,  
and, weary from its flight, it softly landed  
upon your white bosom.

Desire flew from your heart,  
and tremulously fell into its open arms  
upon your white bosom.

My eyelids grew damp in our warm breath,  
and a tear dropped onto the silken moss  
upon your white bosom.

**III. Oh, stay a while longer, my beloved**

Oh, stay a while longer, my beloved,  
oh, stay as a bud, my tender flower!  
For my heart hesitates to animate you slowly  
into the full bloom of a rose!

Vím, drahé dítě, tvá jen láska,  
tvá jen láska může  
mou duši rozohniti do zpěvu.  
A přece, moje uzavřená růže  
mně líto tvého úsměvu!

Ó, drahé dítě, když ten měsíc bílý  
se v páry lesů stápí v soumraku,  
tu známy ti jen některé z mých chvílí,  
jen mlhy dumna táhnou po zraku.

Mé vášně v tmu jdou. Vzpomínky mé už  
se tulí k žhavému jich oděvu.  
Ó, nechtěj rozvít mnou, má drahá růže,  
mně líto tvého úsměvu!

**28 IV. A táhnou myšlenky teskné**

A táhnou myšlenky teskné  
okolo hlavy mi.  
Venku kraj mrazem se leskne  
a táhnou myšlenky teskné,  
již blízko do zimy.

Ten přijde na tvrdé lůžce,  
kdo přijde do země.  
Jde měsíc, sněhová růže,  
a svítí dojemně.

I know, dear child, that only your love,  
only your love can  
ignite my soul into song.  
And yet, my tightly closed rose,  
I pity your smile!

Oh, dear child, when the white moon  
melts into the mists of the forests at dusk,  
then only some of my moments are known to you,  
only the mists of thought drift across your gaze.

My passions fade into darkness. My memories  
cling  
ever closer to their fiery garments.  
Oh, do not wish to bloom through me, my  
beloved rose,  
I pity your smile!

**IV. And melancholy thoughts drift**

And melancholy thoughts drift  
around me.  
Outside, the landscape glistens with frost,  
and melancholy thoughts drift by,  
for winter is near.

He who dies will find a hard bed  
made of earth.  
The moon, a snow rose,  
shines tenderly.

Těch plný písní mých světe,  
můj sen tě pochová!  
Nad námi ve mrazu kvete  
ta růže sněhová.

Bohdan Jelínek (1851 – 1874)

Oh world, full of my songs,  
my dream will bury you!  
Above us, in the frost, blooms  
that snow rose.

Translation: Lucie Spickova

### Tři bajky

#### 29 1. O neposlušných kozlatch

Byla jedna koza a ta koza měla čtyři kozlátka.  
Jedenkrát se stalo, že musela sama někam odejít,  
snad na pastvu  
i shromáždila kozlátka okolo sebe a povídala:  
“Já musím, milé děti, někam odejít  
a nechám vás na chvíli samotné.  
Vrátka zandám, ale to vám povídám:  
nikomu neotvírejte,  
dokud mého hlasu neuslyšíte.”

Kozlátka příslibila poslušnost,  
matka zandala pevně vrátka a s pokojem odešla.

Netrvalo dlouho, přijde liška a začne volat:  
“Kozlátka, má děťátka,  
otevírejte vrátka, nesu vám mlíčko!”

Kozlátka, poslouchala, poslouchala,  
ale potom odpověděla:  
“Neotevírejte,  
to není naší maminky hlas,  
naše maminka má tenčí hlásek.”

### Three Fables

#### 1. The tale of the disobedient kid goats

Once there was a goat, and this goat had four  
little kids.

One day, it so happened that she had to go off  
alone, perhaps to graze.

She gathered the little kids around her and said:

‘My dear children, I must go away for a while,  
and I will leave you alone for a bit.

I will lock the gate, but I tell you this:  
do not open the door to anyone,  
until you hear my voice.’

The little goats promised to obey,  
so their mother firmly locked the gate and left,  
easy in her mind.

Before long, a vixen came and began to call:  
‘Little goats, my dear children,  
open the gate, I’ve brought you some milk!’

The little goats listened and listened,  
but then they replied:  
‘We will not open,  
that’s not our mother’s voice,  
our mother has a softer voice.’

Ale liška se tím odbýt nedala.  
Za chvíli přišla zase a volala tenčím hlasem:  
"Kozlátka, má dětátka, otevřte vrátka, nesu vám  
mlíčko!"

Kozlátka poslouchala, poslouchala,  
ale potom odpovéděla:  
"I neotevřeme,  
to není naší maminky hlas,  
naše maminka má ještě tenčí hlasek!"  
Liška podešla,  
ale za chvíli volala zase hlasem comožná  
nejtenčím:  
"Kozlátka, má dět'átka,  
otevřte vrátka,  
nesu vám mlíčko!"

Kozlátka poslouchala,  
ale nemohla tenkrát hlas matky roze znat. Jedno  
řeklo:  
"Je to hlas naší maminky.  
Druhý: "Není."  
Třetí řeklo: "Otevřeme."  
Čtvrtý: "Neotevřeme."  
I nemohla se nikterak shodnout co by měla dělat,  
až to přišlo posléz ku pranic.  
Začala se notně trkat  
a v samé horlivosti otevřela vrátka.  
Tu liška mezi ně vběhla  
a všechna čtyry roztrhala.

Božena Němcová (1820 – 1864)

But the vixen wouldn't give up.  
A little while later, she came back and called in a  
softer voice:  
'Little goats, my dear children, open the gate, I've  
brought you some milk!'

The little goats listened and listened,  
but then they replied:  
'No, we will not open,  
that's not our mother's voice,  
our mother has an even softer voice!'  
The vixen walked away,  
but soon she returned, calling in the softest voice  
she could manage:  
'Little goats, my dear children,  
open the gate,  
I've brought you some milk!'

The little goats listened,  
but this time they couldn't tell the voice apart  
from their mother's. One said:  
'That's our mother's voice.'  
Another said: 'It's not.'  
The third said: 'Let's open the gate.'  
The fourth said: 'Let's not.'  
They couldn't agree on what to do,  
And eventually this led to a fight.  
They began to push and shove,  
and in the tumult, they opened the gate.  
The vixen rushed in  
and tore all four of them apart.

Translation: Lucie Spicková

<sup>30</sup> 2. Pohádka o kohoutkovi a slepičce

“Studánko, studánko!  
Dej mi krůpěj vody  
mému kohoutkovi,  
on se na kopečku dává,  
zdvihá vzhůru nohy!”

Studánka odpoví:

“Vody ti nedám, až mně přineseš s lípy lísteček.”  
Slepička lípě dí:  
“Lípo, lípo, dej lístek studánce,  
studánka dá vody mému kohoutkovi.”

Lípa slípce praví:

“Nedám ti lísteček,  
až mi od švadleny přineseš šáteček.”  
Slípka běží, švadlenu prosí:  
“Švadleno, švadleno!  
Dej lípě šáteček,  
ona dá lísteček,  
studánka vodičky.”

Švadlena opět dí:

2. The tale of the cockerel and the hen

‘Little well, oh my dear little well!  
Give me a drop of water  
for my cockerel,  
he’s choking on the hill,  
and is at death’s door!’

The well replied:

‘I won’t give you any water until you bring me a  
leaf from the linden tree.’  
The hen said to the linden tree:  
‘Linden tree, linden tree, give me a leaf for the well,  
the well will give water to my cockerel.’

The linden tree said to the hen:

‘I won’t give you a leaf,  
until you bring me a kerchief from the seamstress.’  
The hen ran to the seamstress and begged:  
‘Seamstress, seamstress!  
Give the linden tree a kerchief,  
The tree will give a leaf,  
the well will give water.’

The seamstress replied:

“Nedám ti šáteček,  
až přineseš hedbáví od královny Saby.”  
Slepička běží, žádá:  
“Králičko, Sábičko!  
Dej mi hedvábičko, at je dám švadleně,  
švadlena šáteček, lípa lísteček,  
studánka vodičky.”

Králička slípce praví:

“Nedám hedvábičko,  
až mi dáš od ševce překrásné střevice.”  
Slípka běží k ševci, praví:  
“Ševče, ševče!  
Dej této králičce  
překrásné střevice:  
ona dá mi hedvábičko, hedvábí  
šáteček, šáteček lísteček, lísteček  
studánce a studánka dá vody.”

Švec slípce praví:

“Nedám ti střevice,  
pokud nepřineseš štětiny odsvině.”  
Slípka běží, prosí:  
“Svině, svině!  
Dej ševci štětiny,  
on mi dá střevice,  
dám je té králičce,  
králička dá hedvábí,  
hedvábí šáteček, šáteček lísteček,

‘I won’t give you a kerchief,  
until you bring me some silk from the Queen  
of Sheba.’  
The hen ran and pleaded:  
‘Dear Queen Sheba!  
Give me some silk, so I can give it to the seamstress,  
the seamstress will give a kerchief, the linden tree  
will give a leaf,  
the well will give water.’

The queen said to the hen:

‘I won’t give you any silk,  
until you bring me beautiful shoes from the  
cobbler.’  
The hen ran to the cobbler and said:  
‘Cobbler, cobbler!  
Give this queen  
a pair of beautiful shoes:  
she will give me silk, the silk  
a kerchief, the kerchief a leaf, the leaf will please  
the well, and the well will give me some water.

The cobbler said to the hen:

‘I won’t give you shoes,  
unless you bring me bristles from a pig.’  
The hen ran and begged:  
‘Pig, pig!  
Give the cobbler some bristles,  
he will give me shoes,  
I will give them to the queen,  
the queen will give me silk,  
the silk a kerchief, the kerchief a leaf,

lísteček studánce,  
a studánka dá vody  
vody kohoutkovi,  
který zdvíhá nohy.”

Svině slípce dí:

“Nedám ti štrětiny,  
až mi dáš od mlaticů vydrobené zrní.”  
Než to všecko slepička sběhala a snesla  
a nazpět k ubohému kohoutkovi  
od studánky drobet vody přinesla,  
nalezla jej již mrtvého.

Božena Němcová

### **31 3. Jeřáb a volavka**

Lítala sova, veselá vdova;  
lítala ona lítala,  
dokud se neposadila,  
ocáskem nezavrtěla,  
na všechny strany se nepodívala  
a zase dále letěla;  
lítala, lítala,  
posadila se, ocáskem zavrtěla,  
na všechny strany se podívala...

To je říkání,  
celá pohádka však následuje:  
Žili jednou jeřáb a volavka.  
Na různých koncích blat  
vystavěli si po chaloupce.

the leaf will please the well,  
and the well will give me water  
for my cockerel,  
who is at death's door.’

The pig said to the hen:

‘I won't give you any bristles,  
until you bring me some threshed grain from the  
threshers.’  
By the time the hen had gathered and brought  
everything  
and returned to the poor cockerel  
with a drop of water from the well,  
she found him already dead.

Translation: Lucie Spickova

### **3. The crane and the heron**

An owl flew around, a merry widow;  
she flew and flew,  
until she perched,  
wagged her tail,  
looked around in all directions,  
and flew off again;  
she flew and flew,  
perched, wagged her tail,  
looked around in all directions and flew off again...

That's the refrain,  
but the whole tale is as follows:  
Once, there lived a crane and a heron.  
Each of them built a little cottage  
at opposite ends of the marsh.



Jeřábu zdálo samotnému živobytí nudné  
i pomyslel si, aby se oženil.  
“Tor’ půjdu, půjdu  
a namluvím si volavku.”  
Jeřáb kráčel t’ap, t’ap,  
sedum mil bažinou se brouzдал.  
Když došel, povídal:  
“Domali volavka?” “Doma.”

“Vem si mne za muže!”  
“Ne, jeřábe, nevezmu si tě,  
máš příliš dlouhé nohy a šaty krátké,  
jsi špatný letoun  
a nebudeš ani mítí, čím bys mne nakrmil.  
Jdi pryč, blátošlape!”

Jeřáb, jako by se byl najedl neslaného,  
odešel domů.

Volavka se potom rozmyslila  
a pravila:  
“K čemu mám žítí samojediná,  
lépe bude, vdámli se za jeřába.”  
Přišla k jeřábovi a pravila:  
“Jeřábe, ožeň se se mnou!”  
“Ne volavko, nepotřebuji tě,  
nechci se ženiti, nevezmu si tě.  
Jdi si!”

Volavka dala se studem do pláče  
a vrátila se zpět.  
Jeřáb se rozmyslil a řekl si:

The crane found living alone rather dull,  
so he thought to himself,  
‘I’ll get married.  
I’ll go and woo the heron.’  
The crane went tap, tap,  
wading through the swamp for seven miles.  
When he arrived, he said:  
‘Is the heron at home?’ ‘She is.’

‘Marry me!’  
‘No, crane, I won’t marry you,  
your legs are too long and your clothes are too short,  
you’re no good at flying,  
and you won’t even have enough to feed me.  
Be off with you, you mud-stomper!’

The crane, with a face like thunder,  
went home.

Later, the heron reconsidered  
and said to herself:  
‘Why should I live alone?  
It would be better to marry the crane.’  
She went to the crane and said:  
‘Crane, marry me!’  
‘No, heron, I don’t need you,  
I don’t want to marry, I won’t take you to be  
my wife.  
Go away!’

The heron wept with shame  
and returned home.  
The crane reconsidered and said to himself:

“Proč jsem já si ji jen nevezl za ženu,  
vždyť samotnému  
je tak smutno.  
Půjdu nyní a ožením se.”  
Když k volavce dešel, pravil:  
“Volavko, usmyslil jsem si  
s tebou se oženit,  
vem si mne!”  
“Ne, jeřábe, nevezmu si tě za muže.  
Jdi si domů, jeřábe!”

Jeřáb šel domů.  
Tuse volavka rozmyslila:  
“Proč jsem jej odmítla?  
Což samotné žítí?  
Lépe bude, vdámli se za jeřába.”

Lítala ona, lítala,  
dokud se neposadila,  
ocáskem nezavrtěla,  
na všechny strany se nepodívala...

To je říkání,  
celá pohádka však následuje.

Alexander Nikolayevich Afanasyev  
(1826 – 1871)

Czech translation: Jeronym Holeček  
(1891 – 1941)

‘Why didn’t I take her as my wife?  
After all, it’s so lonely  
living alone.  
I’ll go now and marry her.’  
When he came to the heron, he said:  
‘Heron, I’ve decided  
to marry you,  
take me as your husband!’  
“No, crane, I won’t marry you.  
Go off home, crane!’

The crane went home.  
Then the heron thought again:  
‘Why did I reject him?  
What’s the point of living alone?  
It would be better to marry the crane.’

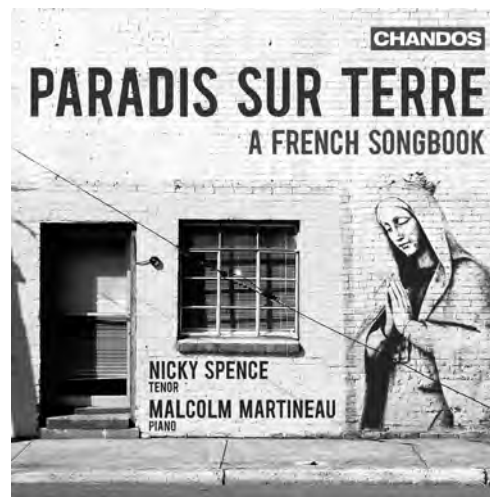
She flew and flew,  
until she perched,  
wagged her tail,  
looked around in all directions...

That’s the refrain,  
but the whole tale is as follows.

Translation: Lucie Spickova

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Steinway Model D Concert Grand Piano (serial no. 592 087) courtesy of Pottton Hall  
Piano technician: Alexander Warcaba-Wood, Alex Wood Piano Services

Czech and Slovak vocal coaches: Petra Milarová and Zuzana Pavlicová

**Recording producer** Peter Newble

**Sound engineer** Alexander James

**Assistant engineer** Jonathan Cooper

**Editor** Peter Newble

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SPARKS FROM ASHES – Spence/Perez

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VÍTĚZSLAVA KAPRÁLOVÁ (1915 – 1940)

- 1 Waving Farewell, Op. 14 (1937) 6:08  
(*Sbohem a šáteček*)  
Na rozloučenou nejkrásnějšímu městu Praze  
(On separation from the most beautiful city of Prague)  
Song for Voice and Piano

ANTONÍN DVOŘÁK (1841 – 1904)

- 2-19 Cypresses, B 11 (1865) 37:43  
(*Cypřiše*)  
for Voice and Piano

BELA BARTÓK (1881 – 1945)

- 20-24 Village Scenes, BB 87a, Sz 78 (1924) 12:52  
(*Dedinské scény*)  
Slovakian Folksongs for Female [High] Voice and Piano

VÍTĚZSLAVA KAPRÁLOVÁ

- 25-28 Sparks from Ashes, Op. 5 (1932 – 33) 12:58  
(*Jiskry z popele*)  
Songs for Voice and Piano

JAROSLAV KŘÍČKA (1882 – 1969)

- 29-31 Three Fables, Op. 21 (1912 – 17) 15:54  
(*Tři bajky*)  
for Soprano [High Voice] and Piano

TT 85:35

Nicky Spence *tenor*

Dylan Perez *piano*

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