Das Lied von der Erde

The Drinking Song of the Sorrow of the Earth

Already winks the wine in the golden goblet.
But drink not yet, first sing I you a song!
The song of sorrow shall laughing up into the soul to you ring.

When the sorrow approaches,
lie waste the gardens of the soul,
wilts and dies the delight, the singing.
Obscure is the life, is the death.

Master of this house!
Your cellar contains the abundance of the golden wine!
Here, this lute I call mine!
The lute to play and the cups to empty
These are the things which together fit!

A filled glass of wine at the right time
is more worth, is more worth, is more worth
than all dominions of this earth!
Obscure is the life, is the death.

The sky dome blues eternally
and the earth will for long fast stand
and bloom in the spring.
You, however, man, how long surviveth you?
Not hundred years may you indulge
in all the putrid junk of this earth!

Look there down!
In the moonlight on the graves
cowers a wild-nightmarish figure
An ape 'tis!
Hear you, how its howling out blares
into the sweet perfume of the life?

Now take the wine!
Now it is time, friends!
Empty your golden goblets to the ground!
Obscure is the life, is the death.

The Lonely One in the Autumn

Autumn fogs float bluishly over the lake
With frozen dew covered stand all the grasses.
One reflects, an artist may have dust of jade
over the tender blossoms sprayed.

The sweet smell of the flowers has flown away,
a cold wind bends their stalks down.

Soon will the wilted golden leaves of the lotus blossoms
on the water float.

My heart is tired.
My little lamp went out with a fine crackle,
It reminds me of the sleep.

I come to you, friendly rest place!
Yes, give me rest, I have for resting need!

I weep much in my lonelinesses.
The autumn in my heart lasts too long.

Sun of the love, will you never more shine,
and my bitter tears
mildly dry?

Of the Youth

Midways in the little pond stands a pavillion
of green and of white china.

As the back of a tiger arches the bridge itself of jade
to the pavillion over.

In the houselet sit friends, beautifully dressed,
drink, chat, some write verses down.

Their silken sleeves slip backwards
their silken caps stick cheerfully low on their backs.

On the little, little pond's still, still water surface
shows itself all strangely in the mirror image.

All on the head standing in the pavillion
of green and of white china
like a half-moon stands the bridge
reversed the arc.

Friends, beautifully dressed, drink, chat.
Of the Beauty

Young maidens pluck flowers, pluck lotus flowers
at the lake shore border
Among the bushes and leaves sit they,
collect blossoms, collect blossoms in their lap and
call one another teases to.
Golden sun weaves about the figures,
mirrors them in the polished water against.
Sun mirrors their slim limbs, their sweet eyes against,
and the zephyr lifts with flattering tenderness
the woven web of their sleeves up,
carries the magic of their perfumes through the air.
O look, at play the beautiful boys there at the lake shore
on eager horses far glittering like the sunbeams;
already among the branches of the green willow trees
gallop the young fresh folk hither.
The horse of the one brays cheerfully up, and shies and
races ahead over the flowers, the grasses stagger, the
hooves trample in sudden storm the fallen blossoms, ho!
how flutters in ecstasy its mane, steam hot its nostrils.

Golden sun weaves around the figures, mirrors them in
the polished water against
And the most beautiful of the maidens sends long looks
to him of longing after.
Her proud poise is merely pretense.
In the sparkle of her big eyes, in the darkness of her hot
glance vibrates lamenting still the excitement of her
heart on.

The Drunk One in Spring

If merely a dream the life is,
What for then effort and plague?
I drink until I no more can,
the whole dear day!
And when I no more drink can,
'cause throat and soul full,
so stagger I up to my door
and sleep wonderfully!
What hear I while awakening?
Hark! A bird sings in the tree.
I ask him, whether already spring is—
to me is, to me is as if in a dream.
The bird twitters: Yes! Yes!
The spring, the spring is here, is come over night!
Out of deepest vision listen I up—
The bird sings—and laughs!
I refill me the goblet anew and empty it to the ground
and sing until the moon shimmers at the black sky dome!
And when I no more sing can,
and when I no more sing can,
so asleep I again fall.
What matters to me, indeed, the spring!?
Let me drunk be!

The Farewell

The sun leaves behind the mountains.
Into all valleys climbs the evening down.
With its shadows which full of coolness are.
O look! like a silver boat floats the moon
on the blue sky tent upwards.
I feel a fine wind’s breeze, behind the dark pinetrees!
The brook sings full of consonance across the darkness.
The flowers pale in the twilight-shimmer.
The earth breathes, full of rest and sleep.
All longing wants now to dream.
The tired people turn homeward, for,
in their sleep forgotten happiness and youth,
new to learn!
The birds squat quietly in their branches.
The world falls asleep.

It breezes cool in the shade of my pinetrees.
I stand here and wait for my friend.
I wait for him, for our last farewell.
I long, O friend, at your side,
the beauty of this evening, to enjoy.
Where are you? You leave me long alone!
I wander, to and fro, with my lute, on paths
which of soft grass swell.
Oh beauty! O of eternal loving, living-drunk world!

He climbed from the horse and offered him the drink of
farewell.
He asked him, whither he would travel, and also why,
why it had to be.
He said, and his voice was dark veiled:
You, —my friend,
To me was—in this world—the happiness not granted!
Whither I go?
I go, I wander into the mountains.
I search for rest, restfulness for my lonesome heart!
I walk toward my homestead, my place!
I shall never into the distance roam.
Still is my heart and waits for its hour!
The dear earth, all over everywhere,
blooms in the spring and greens anew
all over everywhere and always, always blueish bright
the distances,
ever, always, always,
ever, always, always,