

Lyrics

1

Time Stands Still

(anonymous)

Time stands still with gazing on her face,
Stand still and gaze, for minutes, hours
and years, to her give place:
All other things shall change, but she
remains the same,
Till heavens changed have their course
and Time hath lost his name.
Cupid doth hover up and down blinded
with her fair eyes.
And Fortune captive at her feet
contemn'd and conquer'd lies.

When Fortune, Love, and Time attend on,
Her with my fortune, love and time I
honour will alone.
If bloodless Envy say: Duty hath no desert,
Duty replies that Envy knows herself his
faithful heart.
My settled vows and spotless faith no fortune
can remove.
Courage shall show my inward faith, and
faith shall try my love.

Dalla porta d'oriente

(text by Maria Menadori)

Dalla porta d'oriente
Lampeggiando in ciel usciva
E le nubi coloriva
L' alba candida e lucente,
E per l'aure rugiadose
Apria gigli e spargea rose.

Ch'a sgombrar l'oscuro velo
Più soave e vezzosetta,
Una vaga giovinetta
Accendea le rose in cielo,
E di fiamme porporine
Feria l'aure matutine.

Era il crine a l'aria sparso
Onde l'oro apria suo riso,
E la neve del bel viso
Dolce porpora havea sparso,
E su'l collo alabastrino
Biancheggiava il gelsomino.

From the gateway to the East
she rose shimmering in the sky,
colouring the clouds,
the shining and pure dawn;
and with her dewy breezes
she opened lilies, scattered roses.

To clear the veil of darkness
a beautiful young maiden,
she was so delicate, so lovely,
kindled roses in heaven;
and with purple flames
she pierced the morning air.

It was with her hair flowing in the air
Where the gold opened her laughter,
And on the snow the pretty face
Sweet purple shed,
And the neck of alabaster
Whitened with jasmine.

Da le labbra innamorate,
Muov' Amor con novi strali,
E di perle orientali
Se ne gian l'alme fregiate,
Et ardeva i cor meschini
Dolce foco di rubini.

Di due splendide facelle
Tanta fiamma discendea,
Che la terra intorno ardea
Et ardeva in ciel le stelle;
E se'l sole usciva fuora,
Havrebb'arso il sole ancora.

L'alba in ciel s'adira e vede
Che le toglie il suo splendore
Questa nova alba d'amore,
E già volge in dietro il piede,
E stillar d'amaro pianto
Già comincia il roseo manto.

From the lover's lips,
Love moved with new darts,
and all souls went adorned
with oriental pearls;
and in every miserable heart
burned a sweet fire of rubies.

Of two splendid faces
So much flame descended,
That the earth around was burning
And the stars burned in the sky;
And if the sun came out,
The sun would have burned again.

The dawn in heaven sees with rage
how this new dawning of love
robs her of her splendour;
she turns her steps away
and her rosy mantle starts
to drip with bitter tears.

Sì dolce è'l tormento

(text by Carlo Milanuzzi)

Sì dolce è'l tormento
 Ch'in seno mi sta,
 Ch'io vivo contento
 Per cruda beltà.
 Nel ciel di bellezza
 S'accreschi fierezza
 Et manchi pietà:
 Che sempre qual scoglio
 All'onda d'orgoglio
 Mia fede sarà.

La speme fallace
 Rivolgami il piè,
 Diletto ne pace
 Non scendano a me,
 E l'empia ch'adoro
 Mi nieghi ristoro
 Di buona mercè:
 Tra doglia infinita,
 Tra speme tradita
 Vivrà la me fè.

So sweet is the torment
 that fills my heart
 I can gladly live
 with her cruel beauty.
 In beauty's heaven
 vanity increases
 and pity gets lost;
 but always my faith
 will be a rock against
 the wave of pride.

False hope
 leads me onward,
 neither pleasure nor peace
 descends on me
 and the cruel woman
 I adore denies me
 the relief of her favour:
 amid infinite pain
 amid betrayed hopes,
 my faith stays alive.

Se fiamma d'amore
 Già mai non senti
 Quel rigido core
 Ch'il cor mi rapì,
 Se nega pietate
 La cruda beltate
 Che l'alma invaghì:
 Ben fia che dolente,
 Pentita e languente
 Sosprimi un di.

If the fire of love
 Has never been felt
 By the hard heart
 That's stolen mine,
 If I'm denied mercy
 By the cruel beauty
 That's charmed my soul -
 So let her suffer,
 Repenting and forlorn,
 And sigh for me one day.

La mia turca

(text by Carlo Milanuzzi)

La mia turca che d'amor
 non ha fè, torce il piè
 s'io le narro il mio dolor,
 ond'al doppio mio martoro,
 languendo, moro.

Poi rornita se ne sta
 e non vol che del sol
 goda di sua pur beltà,

My Turkish girl,
 who has no faith in love, walks away
 if I tell her of my pain,
 so, my suffering doubled,
 languishing, I die.

Then she stands alone,
 refusing even the sun
 the enjoyment of her beauty,

ond' al doppio mio martoro,
languendo, moro.

Prendi l'arco invitto Amor,
per pietà in lei fa
che non sia tanto rigor,
ond' al doppio mio martoro,
io più non moro.

so, my suffering doubled,
languishing, I die.

Take the mighty bow, Love,
for pity's sake,
make her less cruel,
so, my suffering doubled,
no longer I die.

La prima vez

(anonymous)

La prima vez ke ti vidí
De tus ojos me enamorí
Da kel momento te ami
Fina la tumba te amaré.

Aserkate mi kerida
Salvadora de mi vida
Deskubrite y hablame
Sekretos de la tu vida.

The first time I saw you
I fell in love with your eyes
from that moment, I loved you
and will love you to my tomb.

Come closer, my beloved,
savior of my life.
Discover yourself and tell me
secrets of your life.

El helwa di

(text by Badea Khairy)

الحلوة دي قامت تعجن في البدريه
والديك بيدن كوكو، كوكو في الفجرية
يلا بنا على باب الله يا صناعية
 يجعل صباحك صباح الخير يا اسطى عطية

صبح الصباح فتح يا عليم
والحبيب ما فيه شي ولا مليم
بس المزاج رايق وسليم
باب الأمل بابك يا رحيم
الصبر طيب عال، إيه غير الأحوال
يا اللي معاك المال
برضه الفقير له رب كريم

إيدي بابيك يا أبو صلاح
ما دام معنا الله تعيش مرتاح
خلبي اتكلاك على الفتاح
باليه بنا ياله الوقت أهو راح

The beautiful one goes to make bread in the morning
And the rooster cries "kukukuku" at dawn.
Let's go, with the grace of God, oh workers;
May your morning be beautiful, oh Master Ateya

Our morning is lovely; God permits it.
Our pockets are empty — not even one penny —
But our mood is peaceful and serene.
We put our hope in the hands of God;
If we are patient, all will change for the better.
Oh, you who have wealth,
Even the poor man has a generous God.

My hand is in yours, oh Abu Salah;
As long as you rely on God, From my heart you'll
live in comfort.
Leave it all to the powerful one.
Let's go to work, time is running out!

لبيروت
من قلبي سلام لبيروت
و قلب للبحر والبيوت
لصخرة كأنها وجه يحار قديم
هي من روح الشعب خمر
هي من عرقه خير و ياسمين
فكيف صار طعمها طعم نار و دخان

For Beirut
From my heart, a greeting to Beirut
And kisses to the sea and the houses,
To a rock shaped like the face of an old fisherman.
She is wine from the spirit of the people,
Made from their sweat, she is bread and jasmine.
How then has it come to taste like fire and smoke?

لبيروت
مجده من رماد لبيروت
من دم لولد حمل فوق يدها
أطفأت مدينتي قنديلها
أغلقت بابها
أصبحت في السماء وحدها...
وحدها و ليل
أنت لي أنت لي
أه عانقيني أنت لي
رأيتني و حجر الغدو موج سفري
أزهرت جراح شعبي
أزهرت دمعة الأمهات..
أنت ببروت لي

For Beirut
Glory from the ashes for Beirut
From the blood of a boy carried on her hand
My city has extinguished her lamp
She has closed her door
She is in the sky alone ...
Alone with the night
You are mine, you are mine.
Ah! Embrace me!
My banner, the stone of tomorrow,
And the waves of my travel.
The wounds of my people have blossomed
The tears of mothers have blossomed ...

أنت لي You, Beirut, are mine.
أه عانقيني Ah! Embrace me.

A Butterfly in New York

(text by Sinan Antoon)

I chased it so often
in our Baghdad garden
But it would always fly away
Today
Three decades later
In another continent
It perched on my shoulder
Blue
Like the sea's thoughts
Or the tears of a dying angel
Its wings two leaves
falling from heaven
Why now?
Does it know
that I no longer run
after butterflies?
Just watch them in silence
That I live
Like a broken branch

(Translated from Arabic by the author)



Songs from the Chinese

(Translations by Arthur Waley)

12

No. 1 The Big Chariot

(The Book of Songs)

Don't help-on the big chariot;
You will only make yourself dusty.
Don't think about the sorrows of the world;
You will only make yourself wretched.

Don't help-on the big chariot;
You won't be able to see for dust.
Don't think about the sorrows of the world;
Or you will never escape from your despair.

Don't help-on the big chariot;
You'll be stifled with dust.
Don't think about the sorrows of the world;
You will only load yourself with care.

13

No. 2 The Old Lute

(Bai Juyi)

Of cord and cassia-wood is the lute
compounded;
Within it lie ancient melodies.
Ancient melodies weak and savourless,
Not appealing to present men's taste.
Light and colour are faded from the jade stops;
Dust has covered the rose-red strings.
Decay and ruin came to it long ago,
But the sound that is left is still cold and clear.
I do not refuse to play it if you want me to;
But even if I play people will not listen.
How did it come to be neglected so?
Because of the Ch'iang flute and the zither
of Ch'in.

No. 3 The Autumn Wind

(Wu-ti, Emperor Wu of the Han Dynasty)

Autumn wind rises; white clouds fly,
 Grass and trees whither; geese go south.
 Orchids all in bloom; chrysanthemums
 smell sweet.

I think of my lovely lady; I never can forget.
 Floating pagoda boat crosses Fen river.
 Across the mid-stream white waves rise.
 Flute and drum keep time to sound of rower's
 song;
 Amidst revel and feasting sad thoughts
 come.
 Youth's years how few, age how sure.

No. 4 The Herd-Boy

(Lu Yu)

In the southern village the boy who minds
 the ox
 With his naked feet stands on the ox's back.
 Through the hole in his coat the river wind blows;

Through is broken hat the mountain rain pours.
 On the long dyke he seemed to be far away;
 In the narrow lane suddenly we were face to face.
 The boy is home and the ox is back in its stall,
 And a dark smoke oozes through the
 thatched roof.

No. 5 Depression
(Bai Juyi)

Turned to jade are the boy's rosy cheeks;
 To his sick temples the frost of winter clings.
 Do not wonder that my body sinks to decay;
 Though my limbs are old, my heart is older yet.

No. 6 Dance Song

(Book of Songs)

The unicorn's hoofs!
 The duke's sons throng.
 Alas for the unicorn!

The unicorn's brow!
 The duke's kinsmen throng.
 Alas for the unicorn!

The unicorn's horn!
 The duke's clans-men throng.
 Alas for the unicorn!