

THE HEINE SONGS
FROM “SCHWANENGESANG”
(Translations by Henry S. Drinker)

The Fisherm maiden (Das Fischermädchen)

You lovely fisherm maiden,
Bring your boat to land;
Come ashore and sit here beside me,
We'll cuddle, hand in hand.

Oh lay your head on my heart here,
And be not afraid of me;
All day you venture fearless
Out on the stormy sea.

My heart is like the ocean,
With storm and ebb and flow,
And many a fair pearl resting
Beneath it far below.

By the Sea (Am Meer)

Beyond the lonely fishing shed,
Far out upon the heather,
The sea all aglow with the evening red,
We sat in silence together.

The sea-mist rose, the breakers roared,
The sea gulls flew here and thither;
And from your eyes the sweet tears poured,
Flowing you knew now whither.

I saw them falling upon your hand,
And down I knelt beside you;
I drank the tears from off your hand,
The tears that glorified you.

And since that moment my being is dead,
My soul consumed, tho sweetly; –
Your tears of love, oh wretched maid,
Have poisoned my heart completely.

The City (Die Stadt)

Upon the far horizon
Appears, like a misty scene,
The city with its towers,
In ev'ning twilight serene.

A muggy wind-gust ruffles
The gray expanse of sea;
With desolate beat of oarlocks,
The boatman rows on with me.

The sun now rises in splendor,
Shining on tower and wall,
To show me where I lost her;
She was the dearest of all.

The Phantom Double (Der Doppelgänger)

Still is the night, the streets all are silent,
In that house yonder she is no more;
She long has gone, by most forgotten,
The house still is standing where it stood before.

I see there a man who stares at her window,
And wrings his hands, with anguish awry;
I shudder, as now I see him clearly, –
The moonlight shows me the man there is I!

You phantom double! You ghostly companion!
Why ape you thus the frenzied craze
That wracked my soul before this window,
So many a night, in bygone days?

Her Picture (Ihr Bild)

I stand in dismal dreaming,
And watch your picture long,
And your beloved features
Once more seem rosy and strong.

And round your lips there gathers
That matchless, wondrous smile,
With tears of sadness filling

Your eyes that could know no guile.

And my own tears are flowing,
To think how happy were we –
For O! I cannot stand it,
To believe you lost to me!

Atlas (Der Atlas)

Ah me! Unlucky Atlas!
I must bear alone the world of sorrow,
I must bear it,
The world of woe,
I must bear it,
I bear what is unbearable;
My heart within me is nigh to breaking.

You stubborn heart,
You wished it so to be!
You wished for happiness,
Forever happy,
Or for unending anguish,
Stubborn heart,
And now you have your anguish!