



Peter Seabourne

Sappho Songs

Four songs in French translation by Renée Vivien

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## 1. Tu m'oublies

L'eau trouble reflète, ainsi qu'un vain miroir,  
Mes yeux sans lueurs, mes paupières pâlies.  
J'écoute ton rire et ta voix dans le soir...  
Althis, tu m'oublies.  
Tu n'as point connu la stupeur de l'amour  
L'effroi du baiser et l'orgueil de la haine;  
Tu n'as désiré que les roses d'un jour,  
Amanle incertaine.

The turbid water reflects, as an empty mirror,  
My eyes without light, my eyelids now pale.  
I listen to your laughter and your voice in the evening ...  
Althis, you forget me.  
You knew not at all the stupor of love  
The awe of a kiss and the pride of hatred;  
You desired only the roses of a day,  
Doubtful lover.

## 2. Je serai toujours vierge

Je demeurerai vierge comme la neige  
Sereine, qui dort là-bas d'un blanc sommeil,  
Qui dort pâlement, et que l'hiver protège  
Du brutal soleil.  
Et j'ignorerai la souillure et l'empreinte  
Comme l'eau du fleuve et l'haleine du nord.  
Je fuirai l'horreur sanglante de l'étreinte,  
Du baiser qui mord.  
Je demeurerai vierge comme la lune  
Qui se réfléchit dans le miroir du flot,  
Et que le désir de la mer importune  
De son long sanglot.

I shall remain virgin as the untrodden snow,  
Which sleeps there of a white slumber,  
Which sleeps pallidly, and which the winter protects  
From the brutal sun.  
And I shall not know stain or imprint  
As the water of the river and the breath of the North.  
I shall shun the bloody horror of embrace,  
The kiss which bites.  
I shall remain virgin as the moon  
Which is reflected in the mirror of the stream,  
And which the desire of the sea troubles  
With its long sob.

## 3. Ondine

Ton rire est clair, ta caresse est profonde,  
Tes froids baisers aiment le mal qu'ils font;  
Tes yeux sont bleus comme un lotus sur l'onde,  
Et les lys d'eau sont moins purs que ton front.  
Ta forme fuit, ta démarche est fluide,  
Et tes cheveux sont de légers réseaux;  
Ta voix ruisselle ainsi qu'un flot perfide;  
Tes souples bras sont pareils aux roseaux,  
Aux longs roseaux des fleuves, dont l'étreinte  
Enlace, étouffe, étrangle savamment,  
Au fond des flots, une agonie éteinte  
Dans un nocturne évanouissement.

Your laughter is clear, your caress is profound,  
Your cold kisses love the harm that they do;  
Your eyes are blue like a lotus on the wave,  
And the water lilies are less pure than your brow..  
Your form flees, your parting is fluid,  
And your hair falls in gentle cascades;  
Your voice streams as a treacherous tide;  
Your supple arms are like reeds,  
Like long river reeds, whose embrace  
Entwines, chokes, strangles knowingly,  
In the depths of the waves, an agony extinguished  
In a nocturnal evanescence.

## 4. Roses du Soir

Des roses sur la mer, des roses dans le soir,  
Et toi qui viens de loin, les mains lourdes de roses!  
J'aspire ta beauté. Le couchant fait pleuvoir  
Ses fines cendres d'or et ses poussières roses...  
Des roses sur la mer, des roses dans le soir.  
Un songe évocateur tient mes paupières closes.  
J'attends, ne sachant trop ce que j'attends en vain,  
Devant la mer pareille aux boucliers d'airain,  
Et te voici venue en m'apportant des roses...  
Ô roses dans le ciel et le soir ! Ô mes roses!

Roses on the sea, roses in the evening  
And you, who come from afar, your hands heavy with roses!  
I breathe in your beauty. The setting sun rains  
Its fine cinders of gold and its dusting of roses...  
Roses on the sea, roses in the evening.  
An evocative dream holds my eyelids closed  
I wait, not quite knowing that for which I wait in vain,  
Before the sea, like shields of brass,  
And here you have come bringing me roses...  
Oh roses in the sky and the evening! Ah my roses!

# Sappho Songs

Four Songs in French translation

## 1. Tu m'oublies

Translation Renée Vivien (1903)

Peter Seabourne  
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Bitter, harsh  $\text{♩} = 63$

The first system of the musical score for 'Tu m'oublies' consists of two staves: a vocal line and a piano accompaniment. The vocal line begins with a treble clef, a key signature of one flat (B-flat), and a tempo marking of quarter note = 63. The music is marked *sfz* (sforzando) and features a triplet of eighth notes. The piano accompaniment starts with a bass clef and a key signature of one flat. It includes a triplet of eighth notes and a dynamic marking of *sub. pp* (subito pianissimo). The system concludes with a dynamic marking of *mp* (mezzo-piano) and a final *sfz* (sforzando) marking. A *Ped.* (pedal) marking is present at the bottom of the system.

The second system of the musical score continues the piano accompaniment. It begins with a treble clef, a key signature of one flat, and a tempo marking of quarter note = 84. The music is marked *pp* (pianissimo) and features a triplet of eighth notes. The piano accompaniment continues with a bass clef and a key signature of one flat, also featuring a triplet of eighth notes and a dynamic marking of *pp*. The system concludes with a dynamic marking of *pp* and a triplet of eighth notes.

The third system of the musical score includes the vocal line and piano accompaniment. The vocal line begins with a treble clef, a key signature of one flat, and a dynamic marking of *p* (piano). The lyrics are: "L'eau trou - ble re - flè - te, ain - si qu'un vain mi -". The piano accompaniment starts with a treble clef, a key signature of one flat, and a dynamic marking of *pp* (pianissimo). It features a triplet of eighth notes and a dynamic marking of *pp*. The piano accompaniment continues with a bass clef and a key signature of one flat, featuring a triplet of eighth notes and a dynamic marking of *pp*. The system concludes with a dynamic marking of *pp* and a triplet of eighth notes.

11

*mf* *sub. mf*

- roir, Mes yeux sans lu - eurs, mes pau - pi - ères

*sfz* *mp* *sfz* *mp*

*p* *15<sup>ma</sup>* *sfz*

13

pâ - lies.

*mp* *mf*

*Ped.*

15

*mf* *mf* *f* *sfz*

J'é - cou-le ton rire et ta voix dans le soir...

*mf* *Ped.* *Ped.* *8<sup>va</sup>* *Ped.*

18

Musical score for measures 18-20. The system includes a vocal line and a piano accompaniment. The piano part features triplets and dynamic markings: *f*, *sfz*, *f*, and *ff*. Pedal markings (*Ped.*) are present under the piano accompaniment. A dashed line labeled *8<sup>vb</sup>* indicates an octave below the piano part.

21

Musical score for measures 21-25. The system includes a vocal line with lyrics and a piano accompaniment. The tempo is marked  $\text{♩} = 63$ . The piano part includes dynamic markings: *p*, *sub. pp*, and *p* *tendre*. Octave markings *8<sup>va</sup>* and *8<sup>vb</sup>* are present. The lyrics are: "At - this, tu m'ou - bli - es."

26

Musical score for measures 26-30. The system includes a piano accompaniment. The piano part includes dynamic markings: *mp* *tendre* and *mf*. A triplet is marked in the final measure. An octave marking *8<sup>va</sup>* is present at the beginning of the system.

31 ♩ = 84

*mp*

Tu n'as point con - nu la

Musical score for measures 31-33. The vocal line starts with a rest, then enters with a triplet of eighth notes. The piano accompaniment features a triplet of eighth notes in the right hand and a triplet of eighth notes in the left hand. Dynamic markings include *mp* and *8va*.

34

*f*

stu - peur de l'a mour

L'ef froi du bai - ser et l'or

Musical score for measures 34-36. The vocal line has a five-note phrase followed by a triplet. The piano accompaniment includes a five-note phrase and a triplet. Dynamic markings include *mp*, *mf*, and *f*. Pedal markings are present at the bottom.

37

*ff*

quel de la haine;

Tu n'as dé -

Musical score for measures 37-39. The vocal line has a triplet followed by a five-note phrase. The piano accompaniment features a five-note phrase and a triplet. Dynamic markings include *ff* and *8vb*. Pedal markings are present at the bottom.

40

- si - ré - que les ro - ses d'un jour,

*mf* *molto* *pp*

Ped.

43

$\text{♩} = 63$  *p*

A -

*sub. pp* *poco rit.* *mp*

8va

Ped.

47

man - te in - cer - laine.

(8) *sub. pp* *sfz* *long* *sfz* *long*

Ped.



## 2. Je serai toujours vierge

Transient, suspended  $\text{♩} = 96$ 

*p*

5:6

Je de meu-re-rai vierge com-me la nei-ge Se - rei - - ne,

*pp*

Ped.

5

5:6

quidort là- - bas d'un blanc som - meil, Qui dort pâle - ment,

(8)

*mp*

8

et que l'hi - ver pro - tège Du bru-tal so-leil.

8va

11 rit. - - - - - a tempo *pp*

Et ji - gno - re -

8va

14 *cresc...* *poco...* *a...* *poco...*

rai lasou - il - lure et l'em - prein - te Com-me l'eau du

8va

18 *f*

fleu - ve et l'ha - lei - ne du nord.

20 *f* increasingly impassioned

Je fui - rai l'hor - reur san - gnan - te

22 *ff*

de l'é - trein - te, Du bai - ser qui mord.

24

8va

8va

3

tr<sup>b</sup>

(8)

25

*sub. p*

Je de - meure - rai vier - -

3

8va

*sub. pp*

5:6

5

5:6

27

- ge com-me la lu - ne Qui se ré - flé - chit dans le mi - -

3

5:6

8va

5

31 *p*

roir du flot, Et que le dé-sir de la mer

(8)

*mp*

5:6

3

5

5

3

34 *mp* *mf*

im - por-tu - ne De son long san -

*mp*

*mf*

3

37

- - - - - glot. - - - - -

8va

*p*

*mp*

*mp*

*p*

3

(8)

45

40

*pp*

(8)

41

*pp*

## 3. Ondine

Capricious, cold  $\text{♩} = 88$ 

The musical score is written in 6/8 time and consists of three systems. The piano accompaniment is in the left hand, and the vocal line is in the right hand.

**System 1:** The piano part begins with a *mf* dynamic and features a triplet of eighth notes in the right hand. The vocal line starts with a melodic phrase.

**System 2:** The piano part continues with a triplet of eighth notes in the right hand, marked *sub. p*. The vocal line continues with a melodic phrase.

**System 3:** The piano part continues with a triplet of eighth notes in the right hand, marked *mp*. The vocal line begins with the lyrics "Ton\_ ri - re est clair, ta\_ ca - re -" and features a triplet of eighth notes in the right hand, marked *mf*.

12

- se est pro - fon - de,

sub. *mf*

15<sup>ma</sup>

*p*

16

*p*

Tes\_ froids bai - sers ai - - ment le mal\_ qu'ils

20

*mp*

font; Tes\_ yeux\_ sont bleus\_

sub. *pp*

*mp*



23

com - me un lo - tus sur l'on - de,

27

Et les lys d'eau sont moins purs que ton front.

32

Ta - for - me fu-it,

35 *mf*

ta dé - mar - che est flu - ide

38 *mf*

Et tes che - veux sont de lé - gers ré - seux;

42 *f*

Ta voix ruis - sel - le ain -

45 *sub. mf*

si qu'on flot per - fi - de; tes

48 *poco*

sou - ples bras sont pa - reils aux ro -

50 *f* *cresc. poco a poco*

seaux, Aux longs ro - seaux des

53 *ff*

fleu - ves, - dont l'é - trein - te En - la - - ce,

*8va*

*ff*

3

56

é - touf - fe, é - tran - gle sa - vam-ment,

(8)

*8va*

*sub. p*

3

59 *sub. p*

Au - fond des flots,

*8va*

*sub. ff*

3

*8vb*

62 *sub. p* *poco cresc.*

u-ne a - go - ni - e — é - tein - - - le

*sub. p* *poco cresc.*

8vb

66 *p*

dans un — noc - tur - - - ne é - va -

*p* *trill* 3 3

8vb

69

- nuis - - se - ment.

3 (8)

71

*ppp*

8vb

## 4. Roses du Soir

'Saturated', sultry  $\text{♩} = 72$ 

First system of the musical score. The left hand (bass clef) plays a series of chords in the lower register, marked *mf*. The right hand (bass clef) has a whole rest followed by a half note  $\bar{2}$ , then a quarter note  $\bar{b}$ , a quarter note  $\bar{2}$ , and a quarter note  $\bar{3}$  with a slur. The dynamic is *mp*. A fermata is placed over the final note.

Ped.

Second system of the musical score. The left hand (bass clef) plays a series of chords, marked *mf*, with a fingering of 9. The right hand (treble clef) has a whole rest followed by a half note  $\bar{2}$ , then a quarter note  $\bar{b}$ , a quarter note  $\bar{2}$ , and a quarter note  $\bar{b}$  with a slur. The dynamic is *mp*. A fermata is placed over the final note.

Third system of the musical score. The left hand (bass clef) plays a series of chords, marked *f*, with a fingering of 10. The right hand (treble clef) has a whole rest followed by a half note  $\bar{2}$ , then a quarter note  $\bar{b}$ , a quarter note  $\bar{2}$ , and a quarter note  $\bar{b}$  with a slur. The dynamic is *f*. A fermata is placed over the final note.

Fourth system of the musical score. The left hand (bass clef) plays a series of chords, marked *ff*. The right hand (treble clef) has a whole rest followed by a half note  $\bar{2}$ , then a quarter note  $\bar{b}$ , a quarter note  $\bar{2}$ , and a quarter note  $\bar{b}$  with a slur. The dynamic is *mf*. A fermata is placed over the final note.

7

*mp* *p*

Des ro - ses sur la mer, \_\_\_\_\_ des ro - ses dans le

9

*mf* *sub. p*

soir, \_\_\_\_\_ Et toi qui viens de

11

*ppp*

loin, \_\_\_\_\_ les mains lour - des de ro - ses!

14 *ff*

J'as -

15

pi - - - re - ta

16

beau - - - té. Le



17

cou - chant fait pleu - voir Ses

(L.H.)

18

fi - nes cend - dres d'or

19

— et ses pous - siè - res ro - ses....

8<sup>va</sup>

21 (8)

*pp* 3

*ppp*

*mp* 3

*p*

23

*mp*

Des ro - - ses sur la

*mp*

*mp*

24

*p*

mer, des ro - - ses dans le

*p*

*p* 9

3

25 *mf* *mp*

soir. \_\_\_\_\_ Un\_

27

son-ge é - vo - ca - teur \_\_\_\_\_ tient mes pau-piè res clo - ses.

29 *sub. p*

J'at-tends, ne sa-chant trop ce que j'at - tends \_\_\_\_\_ en vain, De -

31

vant la mer pa -

32

*molto cresc.*

-reil - le aux bou - ciers d'ai - rain,

33

*ff*

Et te voi - ci ve - nue en m'ap - por - tant des

*8va*

*ff*

rehold

*ff*

34

PO - - - - - ses...  $\hat{O}$

*ff intense*

35

PO - - - - -

14:16

36

- ses dans le ciel et le soir!

14:16

38 *f* *molto ten.* *molto*

Ô mes ro - ses!

*poco dim.* *f* *molto* *mp*

41 *p* *molto ten.*

Ô mes ro - ses!

*pp* *p*

44 *len.*

*len.*

*Ped.*