

Classic Poetry Series

# **Fyodor Ivanovich Tyutchev**

## **- poems -**

**Publication Date:**

2012

**Publisher:**

Poemhunter.com - The World's Poetry Archive

# Fyodor Ivanovich Tyutchev(5 December 1803 – 27 July 1873)

Fyodor Ivanovich Tyutchev is generally considered the last of three great Romantic poets of Russia, following [Alexander Sergeyevich Pushkin](http://www.poemhunter.com/alexander-sergeyevich-pushkin/) and [Mikhail Lermontov](http://www.poemhunter.com/mikhail-yuryevich-lermontov/)

## **Life**

Tyutchev was born into an old noble family in Ovstug near Bryansk. Most of his childhood years were spent in Moscow, where he joined the literary circle of Professor Merzlyakov at the age of 13. His first printed work was a translation of Horace's epistle to Maecenas, published when he was still 15. From that time on, his poetic language was distinguished from that of Pushkin and other contemporaries by its liberal use of majestic, solemn Slavonic archaisms.

His family tutor was Semyon Raich, a minor poet and translator under whose guidance Tyutchev undertook his first poetic steps. From 1819 to 1821 Tyutchev studied at the Philological Faculty of Moscow University. After graduating he joined the Foreign Office and in 1822 accompanied his relative, Count Ostermann-Tolstoy, to Munich to take up a post as trainee diplomat at the Russian legation. He was to remain abroad for 22 years.

In Munich he fell in love with Amalie von Lerchenfeld, the illegitimate half-sister of a young Bavarian diplomat, Count Maximilian Joseph von Lerchenfeld. Tyutchev's poem Tears or Slyozy (Liubliu, druz'ya, laskat' ochami...) coincides with one of their meetings, and is most likely dedicated to Amalie (or Amélie, as she was usually known). Among other poems inspired by her are K N., and Ia pomniu vremia zolotoe... Published extracts from the letters and diaries of Maximilian von Lerchenfeld illuminate the first years of Tyutchev as a diplomat in Munich (1822–26), giving details of his frustrated love affair for Amélie, nearly involving a duel (probably with his colleague, Baron Alexander von Krüdener), in January 1825. Amélie was coerced by her relatives into marrying the much older Krüdener, but she and Tyutchev continued to be friends and frequented the same diplomatic society in Munich. A late poem of 1870 with the title K.B. (Ia vstretil vas - i vsio biloe), long accepted on dubious evidence as addressed to Amélie, is now thought much more likely to refer to Tyutchev's sister-in-law Clotilde (or Klothilde) von Bothmer. Tyutchev's last meeting with Amélie took place on March

31, 1873 (OS) when she visited him on his deathbed. Next day, Tyutchev wrote to his daughter Daria:<i>

Yesterday I felt a moment of burning emotion due to my meeting with [...] my dear Amalie Krüdener who wished to see me for the last time in this world and came to take her leave of me. In her person my past and the best years of my life came to give me a farewell kiss.</i>

In Munich Tyutchev came under the influence of the German Romantic movement, and this is reflected in his poetry. Among the figures he knew personally were the poet <a href="http://www.poemhunter.com/heinrich-heine/">Heinrich Heine</a> and the philosopher Friedrich von Schelling. In 1826 he married the Bavarian widow of a Russian diplomat Eleonore Peterson, née Countess von Bothmer Following her death in 1838, Tyutchev married another aristocratic young German widow, Baroness Ernestine von Dörnberg, née von Pfeffel, who had become his mistress and had a child by him while Eleonore was still alive. Neither of his wives understood Russian to begin with (Ernestine made efforts to learn the language only much later). This is hardly surprising, given that Tyutchev spoke French better than Russian and that nearly all his private correspondence was Francophone.

In 1836 a young former colleague at the Munich legation, Prince Ivan Gagarin, obtained Tyutchev's permission to publish his selected poems in *Sovremennik*, a literary journal edited by Pushkin. Although appreciated by the great Russian poet, these superb lyrics failed to spark off any public interest. The death of Eleonore in 1838 hit Tyutchev hard and appears to have silenced him as a poet for some considerable time: for ten years afterwards he wrote hardly any lyric verse. Instead he turned his attention to publishing political articles in Western periodicals such as the *Revue des Deux Mondes* outlining his strongly held views on Russia's role in the world.

In 1837, Tyutchev was transferred from Munich to the Russian legation in Turin. He found his new place of residence uncongenial to his disposition and after marrying Ernestine resigned from his position there to settle in Munich. It was later discovered that Tyutchev had in fact abandoned his post as chargé d'affaires in Turin without official permission in order to marry in Switzerland, and he was dismissed from the Foreign Service as a result. He continued to live in Germany for five more years without position before returning to Russia. Upon his eventual return to St Petersburg in 1844, the poet was much lionized in the highest society. His daughter Kitty caused a sensation, and the novelist Leo Tolstoy wooed her, "almost prepared to marry her impassively, without love, but she received me with studied coldness", as he remarked in a diary. Kitty would later become influential at Pobedonostsev's circle at the Russian court. Not long

after his return to Russia Tyutchev was reinstated in government service as a censor, rising eventually to become Chairman of the Foreign Censorship Committee and a Privy Councillor.

Tyutchev loved to travel, often volunteering for diplomatic courier missions as a way of combining business with pleasure. One of his lengthiest and most significant missions was to newly independent Greece in the autumn of 1833. During his years abroad there were visits home on leave, and after settling in Russia in 1844 he would sometimes spend short periods on the family estate at Ovsug. Tours undertaken in a private capacity took him to many parts of continental Europe, including Italy, France, Germany, Austria and Switzerland. He was particularly drawn to the Swiss lakes and mountains. Many of his best poems were inspired by such journeys.

As a poet, Tyutchev was little known during his lifetime. His 400 or so short poems are the only pieces he ever wrote in Russian. Tyutchev regarded his poems as bagatelles, not worthy of publication. He generally didn't care to write them down and, if he did, he would often lose papers they were scribbled upon. Nikolay Nekrasov, when listing Russian poets in 1850, praised Tyutchev as one of the most talented among "minor poets". It was only in 1854 that his first volume of verse was printed, and that was prepared by Ivan Turgenev and others without any help from the author.

In 1850 Tyutchev began an illicit affair with Elena Denisyeva, over twenty years his junior. She remained his mistress until her death from tuberculosis in 1864, during which time she bore him three children. The affair produced a body of lyrics rightly considered among the finest love poems in the language. Permeated with a sublime feeling of subdued despair, the so-called "Denisyeva Cycle" has been variously described by critics as "a novel in verse", "a human document, shattering in the force of its emotion", and "a few songs without comparison in Russian, perhaps even in world poetry". One of the poems, Last Love, is often cited as emblematic of the whole cycle.

In the early 1870s, the deaths of his brother, son, and daughter left Tyutchev deeply depressed. (Depression was something he suffered from at intervals throughout his life.) Following a series of strokes, he died in Tsarskoe Selo in 1873 and was interred at Novodevichy Monastery in St Petersburg. His wife Ernestine survived him by 21 years.

**<b>Political views</b>**

With regard to foreign affairs he was a militant Panslavist, who never needed a

particular reason to berate the Western powers, Vatican, Ottoman Empire, or Poland, the latter perceived by him as a Judas in the Slavic fold. The failure of the Crimean War made him look critically at the Russian government, too.

On other political matters he held broadly liberal views. He warmly welcomed most of the reforms of Tsar Alexander II, in particular the Emancipation reform of 1861. Both in his work as a censor and in his writings he promoted the ideal of freedom of expression, frequently incurring the wrath of his superiors as a result even under the more relaxed regime of Alexander II.

His fairly sizeable output of verse on political subjects is largely forgotten. One exception is a short poem which has become something of a popular maxim in Russia:

*Who would grasp Russia with the mind?  
For her no yardstick was created:  
Her soul is of a special kind,  
By faith alone appreciated.*

**Poetry**

Tyutchev is one of the most memorized and quoted Russian poets. Occasional pieces, translations and political poems constitute about a half of his overall poetical output.

The 200 or so lyric pieces which represent the core of his poetic genius, whether describing a scene of nature or passions of love, put a premium on metaphysics. Tyutchev's world is bipolar. He commonly operates with such categories as night and day, north and south, dream and reality, cosmos and chaos, still world of winter and spring teeming with life. Each of these images is imbued with specific meaning. Tyutchev's idea of night, for example, was defined by critics as "the poetic image often covering economically and simply the vast notions of time and space as they affect man in his struggle through life". In the chaotic and fathomless world of "night", "winter", or "north" man feels himself tragically abandoned and lonely. Hence, a modernist sense of frightening anxiety permeates his poetry. Unsurprisingly, it was not until the late 19th and early 20th century that Tyutchev was rediscovered and hailed as a great poet by the Russian Symbolists such as Vladimir Solovyov, [Andrei Belyi](http://www.poemhunter.com/andrei-belyi/) and [Aleksander Blok](http://www.poemhunter.com/aleksandr-aleksandrovich-blok/).

**Sample of Tyutchev's verse**

Silentium! is an archetypal poem by Tyutchev. Written in 1830, it is remarkable for its rhythm crafted so as to make reading in silence easier than aloud. Like so many of his poems, its images are anthropomorphic and pulsing with pantheism. As one Russian critic put it, "the temporal epochs of human life, its past and its present fluctuate and vacillate in equal measure: the unstoppable current of time erodes the outline of the present."

*Portrait by Levitsky, 1856.*

Speak not, lie hidden, and conceal  
the way you dream, the things you feel.  
Deep in your spirit let them rise  
akin to stars in crystal skies  
that set before the night is blurred:  
delight in them and speak no word.  
How can a heart expression find?  
How should another know your mind?  
Will he discern what quickens you?  
A thought, once uttered, is untrue.  
Dimmed is the fountainhead when stirred:  
drink at the source and speak no word.  
Live in your inner self alone  
within your soul a world has grown,  
the magic of veiled thoughts that might  
be blinded by the outer light,  
drowned in the noise of day, unheard...  
take in their song and speak no word.

Incidentally, this poem inspired an early-20th century composer, Georgi Catoire (the setting of the poem in the song *Silentium*), while another one of Tyutchev's poems, "O chem ty voesh' vetr nochnoy...", was the inspiration for Nikolai Medtner's *Night Wind* piano sonata (#7) of 1911. There is a well-known setting by Rakhmaninov of Tyutchev's poem *Spring Waters*. While the title of Nikolai Myaskovsky's 1910 tone poem, "Silence", may have been borrowed from Tyutchev, the inspiration is credited to one of Edgar Allan Poe's tales. The same poem was also set to music by the 20th century Russian composer, Boris Tchaikovsky (1925-1996), in his 1974 cantata "Signs of the Zodiac". At the end of Andrey Tarkovsky's film *Stalker*, a character recites a Tyutchev poem. In 2007, Icelandic musician Björk used this same Tyutchev poem for the lyrics to "The Dull Flame Of Desire" from her album *Volcano* song was later released as a single in 2008. The 2011 contemporary classical album *Troika* includes a setting of Tyutchev's French-language poem "Nous avons pu tous deux..." by the composer Isabelle

Aboulker.

# A Vision

There is an hour at night full of an awesome wonder,  
When universal silence o'er the whole world lies  
And when the cosmic chariot rolls, wakening no thunder,  
Into the sanctuary of the skies.

The dark of chaos comes, land, sky and water merging;  
Sleep Atlas-like treads earth, its weight like lead;  
The gods with dreams prophetic fire the virgin  
Soul of the Muse; all else is dead.

Fyodor Ivanovich Tyutchev



# All Day She Quiet Lay

All day she quiet lay, lost in a trance,  
The closing shadows all of her embracing...  
The madcap rain of summer frisked and pranced,  
At leaves it drummed, down garden paths went racing.

And slowly, slowly she revived and sought  
To hear its voice, its warm and merry patter.  
Withdrawn she lay, plunged deep in conscious thought,  
And listened to the rushing, singing water.

Then suddenly she sighed and spoke; I heard...  
(I was alive, alive through force of habit)  
The softly whispered, simple, broken words:  
"O how I loved it all, O how I loved it!"

You loved... To love so well none ever durst...  
Then, even such love fades, to be it ceases...  
To watch you die, and live! How did my heart not burst,  
Not break, O God, into a thousand pieces!

Fyodor Ivanovich Tyutchev

# As In The Globe Embraced By Ocean

As is the globe embraced by ocean, so  
Embraced is earthly life by dreams and fancies.  
Night comes unsought, and at the shore's defences  
The breakers strike blow after blow.

Their call is loud: they plead and onward urge us...  
A magic boat waits in the harbour - we  
Are by the tide borne off that round us surges  
Into the seas' infinity.

From out the depths the sky stares, strange and boundless,  
By blazing stars in all their glory lit,  
And we sail on, the vastness all around us  
A fathomless and fiery pit.

Fyodor Ivanovich Tyutchev

# Autumn Evening

There is a wistful charm, a tenderness,  
Mysterious and soft, in autumn's even:  
The trees in weird and brilliant garments dress,  
The gory leaves to whispered talk are given;  
Above the sad and orphaned earth the skies  
Lie veiled and bleak, the sun's departure mourning,  
And gusty winds with sudden anger rise,  
Of pending storms the grim and chilly warning...  
Fatigue, decline, and - over all - the worn  
And wasting spirit's smile, doomed soon to vanish,  
That lights a sufferer's face and that is born  
Of modesty, the godlike pride of anguish.

Fyodor Ivanovich Tyutchev

# Cicero

The Roman orator spoke out  
'midst civil war and strife:  
'Too long I slumbered, and Rome's night  
Has overtaken me upon my journey!  
True! But in parting with Rom's glory  
From the Capitoline heights  
You watched in all its grandeur  
The setting of her bloody sun! . . .  
Blessed are they who sojourned here  
In this world's fateful hours-  
For they were summoned by the angels  
As guests to a great feast;  
They witnessed spectacles majestic,  
Were brought into the inner circle,  
And, while there, drank immortal life  
From heav'n's own chalice!

Fyodor Ivanovich Tyutchev

# Columbus, Take Your Laurel Wreath!

Columbus, take your laurel wreath!  
You've done the map of whole Earth and Nations  
And finished to the end the list  
Of deals, unfinished in the word's creation.

You cut the curtain off with your majestic sword -  
And a new world, the sudden one and nameless,  
From space, mysterious and endless,  
Was brought by you into the light of God.

Thus, for the ages, they are bound  
By sacred bonds of kinship's blood -  
The humane genius, that astounds,  
And animated nature flood.

If he says just a word, that's saintly,  
The nature, with a great new world,  
Would send its answer - always gladly -  
To this immortal, sacred word.

Fyodor Ivanovich Tyutchev

## Don'T Say He Loves Me As Before...

Don't say he loves me as before,  
That, as before, he treasures me...  
no! He callously destroys my life,  
Although I see the knife shake in his hand.

In anger, weeping, yearning, indignation,  
Obsessed and wounded in my soul,  
I have no life - I struggle...for him alone I live -  
But what a life!.. O, what a bitter life it is!

How stingily he measures out the air for me...  
Less generous than to a mortal foe...  
Oh, drawing breath is difficult and painful,  
I can still breathe, but I can live no more.

Fyodor Ivanovich Tyutchev

# Elysium Of Shades

Elysium of shades this soul of mine,  
Shades silent, luminous, and wholly severed  
From this tempestuous age, these restless times,  
Their joys and griefs, their aims and their endeavours.

Speak, O my soul, Elysium of shades!  
What bonds have you with life? Speak, phantoms summoned  
From out a day whose very memory fades -  
What have you with this heartless mob in common?

Fyodor Ivanovich Tyutchev

# Gum Is The Sky

Glum is the sky, by night imprisoned,  
As over it the dark clouds creep,  
Not menacing or wistful is it,  
But plunged in dreary, torpid sleep.  
Alone the streaks of lightning, bursting  
Through cloud and shadow, seem to be,  
As they flare up and blaze, conversing  
Like deaf-mute demons soundlessly.

As at a signal, for an instant  
A strip of sky is lit, and Lo! -  
From out the murk the forests distant  
Emerge, set suddenly aglow.  
But the light dies, the darkness fleeing  
That cloaks the startled, wakeful sky,  
And all is still... Is a plot being  
Hatched in the silent wastes on high?..

Fyodor Ivanovich Tyutchev



## Here, At A Meagre Earth

Here, at a meagre earth, despondent  
And listless stare the dull grey skies,  
And, as if plunged in leaden slumber,  
A eary nature moveless lies.

Alone the few pale birches, gleaming  
Mid greyish moss and stubby brush,  
Like visions born of fevered dreaming  
Disrupt the lifeless, eerie hush.

Fyodor Ivanovich Tyutchev

# How Tuneful Is The Voice Of Sea

How tuneful is the voice of sea,  
What true accord in ocean's murmur,  
And in the reed's light, rhythmic tremour  
What tender musicality!

In nature all is harmony,  
A consonance fore'er agreed on,  
And 'tis alone our phantom freedom  
That is disturbingly off-key.

Whence comes this breach? How to explain  
Why with the sea its song sonorous  
The soul declines to sing in chorus?  
Why does the thinking reed complain?

Fyodor Ivanovich Tyutchev

# I Love The Tsarskoselsky Gardens

I love the Tsarskoselsky Gardens  
Late in the fall when, in soft haze  
Enfolded, as in sleep's embrace  
They lie... The cold's breath slowly hardens,  
And on the dull glass of the lake,  
Clad in that same fine haze, white-winged  
And strangely languid visions linger  
And seem bemused, but half-awake.

The skies are grey, by not a star lit...  
The evening's shadows onward press  
And softly lick the steps dark scarlet  
Of Catherine's lofty palaces.  
Then dark the gardens grow and dreamy,  
The stars appear and turn a dome,  
Outlined by them, into a gleam of  
A golden past, its symbol lone...

Fyodor Ivanovich Tyutchev

# I Love Your Dear Eyes

I love your dear eyes, my friend,  
With their play so bright and wondrous,  
When you promptly rise them, and,  
Like with a lightning in the wildness,  
Embrace at once the whole land.

But there's more fabulous attraction:  
The eyes directed to the floor  
During the crazy osculation,  
And through the lashes, set before,  
The dusk and gloomy flame of passion.

Fyodor Ivanovich Tyutchev

# In Ocean Waves There's Melody...

Est in arundineis modulatio musica ripis

In ocean waves there's melody  
There's harmony within the clash of elements,  
And a harmonious tuneful whisper  
Streams through the rippling rushes.  
There's unperturbable order everywhere,  
Full consonance in nature,  
And only our illusory freedom  
Is out of tune with her.  
Whence, how did this dischord arise?  
And why, amidst the universal chorus,  
Do human souls not sing as does the sea,  
Why does the sentient reed sigh?  
And from the earth unto the highest stars  
Unanswered to this very day  
A voice lamenting in the wilderness,  
The soul protests despairingly?

Fyodor Ivanovich Tyutchev

## It's There, Still There

It's there, still there, a past love's madness,  
Dull pain and longing my heart fill.  
Your image, hid amid the shadows  
Of memory, lives in me still.  
I think of it with endless yearning,  
'Tis e'er with me though from me far,  
Unreachable, unchanged, bright-burning  
As in the sky of night a star...

Fyodor Ivanovich Tyutchev

# Just As The Ocean Cradles Our Earth's Orb...

Just as the ocean cradles our earth's orb,  
This earthly life's by dreams surrounded;  
Night falls, against the shore  
The waters beat in roaring waves.

This is its voice: it beckons us and calls . . .  
The magic bark is stirring in its mooring;  
The tide swells up and sweeps us rapidly away  
Into the fathomless dark waves.

The heavenly vault, ablaze with glorious stars,  
Gazes inscrutably out of the depths  
And we sail on, surrounded on all sides  
By the abyss in flames.

Fyodor Ivanovich Tyutchev

# Last Love

O, how in our waning days  
We love more tenderly and more obsessively. . .  
Shine on, shine on, the parting rays  
Of our last love, our setting sun!  
Shadow's embraced the heavens,  
A glow still wanders in the West,-  
Hold back, hold back, o dying day,  
Prolong, prolong enchantment.  
The blood may thin within our veins,  
But in our hearts some tenderness still reigns. . .  
O you, our final love!  
You are both paradise and bane.

Fyodor Ivanovich Tyutchev



# My Love For You, Sweet Earth

My love for you, sweet Earth, my mother,  
I cannot hide - I do not crave  
The phantom pleasures of that other,  
That spectral world beyond the grave.  
O spring, the blessedness of Eden  
Compared to yours as nothing is!  
Love's joys you bring us all unbidden,  
And golden dreams, and light, and bliss.

What rapture to drink in the balmy,  
Warm air of spring, to languor wed,  
And watch the clouds drift slowly, calmly  
High in the blueness overhead;  
To wander happily and idly  
Across a field and past a stream,  
To catch the scent of blooming lilac  
Or chance upon a radiant dream!..

Fyodor Ivanovich Tyutchev

# My Soul, My Prophetic Pain

My soul, my prophetic pain!  
My heart, forever filled with bother,  
O how throb you on a border,  
Of two realities, in vain!...

You are a realm of my two worlds,  
Your day is fervid and pathetic,  
Your sleep unclear and prophetic,  
Like scripture of the spirit's thoughts...

And let my breast is in a fit  
Of passion, fatal one and scary,  
My heart is ready, like saint Mary,  
To cling forever to Christ's feet.

Fyodor Ivanovich Tyutchev

## Nature Is A Sphinx...

Nature's a Sphinx. And her ordeal  
Is all the more destructive to mankind  
Because, perhaps, she has no riddle.  
Nor did she ever have one.

Fyodor Ivanovich Tyutchev

# Nature Is Not As You Imagine Her...

Nature is not as you imagine her:  
She's not a mold, nor yet a soulless mask-  
She is made up of soul and freedom  
She is made up of love and speech . . .

.....  
Observe the leaves and flowers on a tree:  
Was it some gardener glued them there?  
And is a growing child in the womb  
The work of alien, external forces? . . .

.....  
They do not see and do not hear  
They live in this world as if in darkness,  
For them, it seems, the stars don't breathe  
And ocean waves are not alive.  
The sun's rays have not reached their soul,  
Spring's never bloomed within their breast,  
The forest does not speak to them  
And starry nights are always mute!  
And, roiling woods and rivers  
With unearthly speech,  
No storm's engaged them in the night  
In friendly conversation!  
They're not to blame: how can the deaf  
Perceive an organ's sound!  
Alas, their souls can not be touched  
Not even by a mother's voice!

Fyodor Ivanovich Tyutchev

# O Those Eyes! I Have Them Known!

Oh, those eyes! I have them known!  
How I loved them - knows God!  
From their night of charm and throe,  
I couldn't tear away my heart.

Her gaze, so fathomless and endless,  
Which bared life to whole base,  
Reflected such enduring sadness,  
Such terrifying passion's depth!

It quivered, gloomy and retired  
To her eye-lashes' thickest shade,  
Like love's enjoyment, fully tired,  
Like suffering, induced by fate.

And in this moments of sensation,  
I never could be able to cease  
Meeting it, void of agitation,  
And marveling - without tears.

Fyodor Ivanovich Tyutchev

# O, How Our Love Is Murderous

O, how our love is murderous,  
The dearer something is to us  
The surer are we to destroy it  
In passion's savage blindness!  
Was it so long ago you said,  
Proud of your victory: she's mine . . .  
Barely a year gone - stop and think,  
What has remained of her?  
Where are the roses in her cheeks,  
Her smiling lips and shining eyes?  
Rivers of scalding tears  
Have scorched and burned them all.  
Do you remember how you met,  
Your very first, your fateful t?te-?-t?te;  
Her gaze enchanting and her words,  
Her laughter --lively, child-like?  
What have you now? Where is it all?  
Was it a lasting dream?  
Alas, like northern summers,  
It was a fleeting guest!  
For her your love was naught but  
Fate's awful judgment.  
It weighed upon her life,  
With undeserved shame.  
A life of sacrifice, a life of trials!  
Deep in her soul  
She cherished memories . . .  
Yet even they've betrayed her.  
And earthly life has turned against her,  
Its charms have disappeared. . .  
The surging crowd's ground in the dirt  
All that had flourished in her heart.  
And what like ashes has she gathered  
After her long torment?  
Pain, the cruel pain of bitterness,  
Pain without cease and without tears!  
O, how our love is murderous,  
The dearer something is to us  
The surer are we to destroy it

In passion's savage blindness!

Fyodor Ivanovich Tyutchev

# Poetry

Among storms, among fires,  
Among burning passions,  
In elemental, flaming strife,  
It flies to us from the heavens-  
A heavenly creature to earth's son  
With gaze of clearest azure-  
And on the rebellious sea  
It pours a soothing balm.

Fyodor Ivanovich Tyutchev



# Problème

Having rolled down a mountain, a rock lies in a valley. -  
Why did it fall? Nowadays no one knows -  
Did it break off from the heights of its own accord,  
Or was it hurled down by an external will?  
Century after century has gone by:  
Still no one has resolved this question!

Fyodor Ivanovich Tyutchev

# Reproach Me Not

Reproach me not e'en if I earn your indignation;  
Know: of us two you are to be more envied far.  
Unlike my love for you, yours is sincere, unmarred  
By jealousy's mistrust, its rancour and vexation.

A wretched sorcerer, who doubts himself and stifles  
Faith in the magic world by his own efforts wrought  
I know myself to be... I am - O bitter thought!-  
Of your warm, living soul the idol cold and lifeless.

Fyodor Ivanovich Tyutchev

# Say Not He Loves Me

Say not he loves me as before, as truly, dearly  
As once he did... Oh no! My life  
He would destroy, he does destroy - though see I clearly  
The trembling of the hand that holds the knife.

Resentment, anger, tears, a pain now fierce, now muffled -  
I'm wounded, stung, and yet I love... He is  
All of my life, but I... I do not live - I suffer...  
How bitter is existence such as this!

As to a mortal foe, in dozes scant and meagre  
The air I breathe he measures out.. Each breath  
I take is painful, yet... I breathe, for fresh air eager...  
But life ... life slowly ebbs... I cannot ward off death.

Fyodor Ivanovich Tyutchev

## She Sat Upon The Floor...

She sat upon the floor  
Looking through a pile of letters,  
She took them up and tossed them  
Like so many cold ashes.  
She took the familiar pages  
And gazed at them strangely,  
The way souls look from above  
At their discarded bodies . . .  
O, how much life was in them,  
Life irrevocably lived!  
O, how many bitter moments,  
How much love and joy now dead! . . .  
I stood silently aside  
Ready to fall on my knees,  
And I grew terribly sad,  
As if in the presence of a dear ghost.

Fyodor Ivanovich Tyutchev

# Silentium

Speak not, lie hidden, and conceal  
the way you dream, the things you feel.  
Deep in your spirit let them rise  
akin to stars in crystal skies  
that set before the night is blurred:  
delight in them and speak no word.  
How can a heart expression find?  
How should another know your mind?  
Will he discern what quickens you?  
A thought once uttered is untrue.  
Dimmed is the fountainhead when stirred:  
drink at the source and speak no word.  
Live in your inner self alone  
within your soul a world has grown,  
the magic of veiled thoughts that might  
be blinded by the outer light,  
drowned in the noise of day, unheard...  
take in their song and speak no word.

Fyodor Ivanovich Tyutchev

# Spring Storm

I love a storm in early May  
When springtime's boisterous, firstborn thunder  
Over the sky will gaily wander  
And growl and roar as though in play.

A peal, another - gleeful, cheering...  
Rain, raindust... On the trees, behold!-  
The drops hang, each a long pearl earring;  
Bright sunshine paints the thin threads gold.

A stream downhill goes rushing reckless,  
And in the woods the birds rejoice.  
Din. Clamour. Noise. All nature echoes  
The thunder's youthful, merry voice.

You'll say: 'Tis laughing, carefree Hebe -  
She fed her father's eagle, and  
The Storm Cup brimming with a seething  
And bubbling wine dropped from her hand.

Fyodor Ivanovich Tyutchev

# The Earth A Cheerless Look Still Wears

The earth a cheerless look still wears,  
But spring's breath is already swaying  
The dead stalks in the field and playing  
With boughs as yet of leafage bare.  
Though nature sleeps, through its dull slumber,  
Through dreams that slowly fade away,  
It hears spring's airy step and gay,  
And, happy, smiles at the newcomer...

O soul, my soul, you slumbered too...  
What is it that, your sleep disturbing,  
Fills you with warmth and tender yearning  
And gilds your tarnished dreams anew?

The thawing snows lie sparkling under  
The sparkling sky: no clouds above.  
My hot blood plays... Is it the languor  
Of springtime or - a woman's love?..

Fyodor Ivanovich Tyutchev

## The Glare! The Heat!

The glare! The heat! O Nice, you blind me!  
A dull unease upon me settles...  
Life, like a bird shot down, strains wildly  
To fly - In vain! Its wings are fetters,  
Its broken wings... As in a fever  
It struggles on, yet is it vanquished:  
Pressed to the dust it lies and shivers  
In fear and impotence and anguish...

Fyodor Ivanovich Tyutchev



# The Heart Would Like To Be

The heart would like to be a star -  
Not in a night, when from the darkened skies  
These heaven's bodies, like the living eyes,  
Look at the sleepy earth so far -

But in a day, when screened, as by a smoke  
Of the ever scorching sunny rods,  
They burn just brighter - like the gods -  
In the ether, crystalline and stoic.

Fyodor Ivanovich Tyutchev

# The Last Love

Oh, how, in the ending years  
Is love more tender and superstitious -  
O shine! O shine, my parting rays  
Of the evening sun, of the last heart wishes!

The darkness cuts half of the sky;  
And only the West has the roving glow,  
Oh, time of evening, do not fly!  
Enchantment, be prolonged and slow!

Let blood in veins has a thinner staff,  
But a heart preserves the gentle passion -  
O you, my last and tender love,  
You are my bliss and desperation.

Fyodor Ivanovich Tyutchev

# The Sadness Grippped My Heart

The sadness gripped my heart - and dimly  
Came the remembrance of the old,  
When all was going well and simply,  
And life - a dream of the real world.

But here the world is lost and fired:  
All's topsy-turvy, run and felled, -  
In Heaven, Holly God expired,  
And Satan croaked in the Hell.

They live, lost any life's intentions,  
Elsewhere is grumbling, fight and fraud,  
If a bit of love weren't in the question,  
Long time ago, I'd leave the world.

Fyodor Ivanovich Tyutchev

# There Is A Song

There is a song in the sea waves,  
A concord - in the spats of nature,  
And a reed, by a tune of rustle captured,  
In the flood of music gently sways.

Here all obtains a vital bid,  
A full accordance reigns in nature,  
Just in the pseudo-freedom's rapture  
We feel at large discord with it.

From where did this disorder fling?  
And why, O Lord, in a strain that's common,  
Has soul a difference its own,  
With a tune that a reed and a sea a-sing.

Why, on the earth and the farthest star,  
The voices crying in the barrens -  
The souls' desperate rebellions -  
Have no answers so far?

Fyodor Ivanovich Tyutchev

# There Is A Spell In Autumn

There is a spell in autumn early,  
One all too brief, of an enchantment rare:  
The nights are radiant and pearly,  
The days, pellucid, crystal-clear.

Where played the sickle and fell the corn, a mellow,  
A warm and breathless stillness reigns supreme;  
Spanning the brown and idle furrow,  
A dainty thread of cobweb gleams.

The birds have flown, we hear no more their clamour,  
But winter's angry winds not soon will start to blow -  
Upon the empty fields there pours the azure glow  
Of skies that have not lost the warmth of summer.

Fyodor Ivanovich Tyutchev

## To K.B.

You're here again - and of a sudden  
A warmth long gone floods my dead heart,  
And all I thought forgot, unbidden  
Returns, of me becomes a part.

Just as spring's breath may soft come stealing  
Upon the air on late fall's day  
And rouse in us a vanished feeling  
Of life, of something young and gay -

So of past years do I recover  
The richness, and on your sweet face  
With all the ardour of a lover  
In reawakened rapture gaze.

Too long apart, drawn are we nearer  
Once more - you're here, 'tis not a dream!  
Sounds, ne'er within me stilled, the clearer  
At sight of you and louder seem.

Remembrance?- No! The rustling pages  
Of life turn fast - life's full again.  
Your loveliness stays ever changeless,  
My love for you unchanged remains.

Fyodor Ivanovich Tyutchev

# Vision

In nights, there is the time of the generic dumbness,  
And in this hour of vision and surprise,  
The living chariot of the creation's vastness  
Is shown, rolling through the shrine of skies.

The night gets thicker then, like Chaos on the floods;  
Like Atlas, the oblivion grips the earth;  
And just the Muse's virgin soul, else,  
Is touched, in her prophetic dreams, by gods.

Fyodor Ivanovich Tyutchev

# When Life Is But A Round Of Crushing Care

When life is but a round of crushing care  
And, a great heap of stones, lies heavy on us,  
There suddenly, God knows how, why, upon us  
A joyous mood descends... Of balmy air  
A breath comes from the past and, o'er us drifting,  
Invades the heart, its fearful burden lifting.

At times with autumn's coming is it so,  
When empty lie the fields, when bare the groves are,  
And paler turn the skies - and of a sudden, over  
The darkened earth a damp wind starts to blow.  
A fallen leaf it chases with elation  
And to our hearts of spring brings a sensation.

Fyodor Ivanovich Tyutchev



# When The Sequence Of The Earthly Years

When the sequence of the earthly years is over -  
The earthly structure is, at last, destroyed -  
All that was seen will vanish under water,  
Which will reflect the image of the God.

Fyodor Ivanovich Tyutchev

# Why Moan, Why Wail You, Wind Of Night

Why moan, why wail you, wind of night,  
With such despair, such frenzied madness?  
Why is your voice now full of might,  
Now piteous and tinged with sadness?  
In tongue known to the heart, of pain  
Unknown to it for ever chanting,  
At times within it well-nigh frantic  
Sounds you awaken and insane.

Sing not, O wind, your fearful song  
Of chaos, for the hungry spirit,  
Into night's world of shadows flung,  
Exults in it and strains to hear it.  
The bounds of mortal flesh 'twould fly  
And merge with boundless ocean sweeping.  
Take heed! Let slumbering tempests lie:  
Beneath them chaos stirs unsleeping.

Fyodor Ivanovich Tyutchev

## You Often Watched Him

You often watched him on the high life's level, -  
The gaily-selfish or with gloomy sight,  
Or full of thoughts, or scatted one and wild,  
As poets are - and you've scorned him forever!

- Look at the crescent: like a slim white cloud,  
In daily skies, he's almost lost his might,  
But a night had come, and, God of holly light,  
He, shines, the single, on the sleeping ground!

Fyodor Ivanovich Tyutchev