HEAVEN & EARTH - TEXTS & TRANSLATIONS

ABENDLIED
Heinrich Heine
When I lie on my pallet,
Shrouded by the night,
A sweet and loving vision
floats before me.
When quiet sleep has hardly
closed my eyes,
This vision slips into my dreams.
And with the morn my dream
does not disappear
Because I carry it in my heart
the whole day long.

ICH HARRETE DES HERRN
Psalm 40, verses 1–3
I waited for the Lord
And he bowed down to me
And heard my supplication
Blessed is the one who places
their hope in the Lord!

LORD, BOW THINE EAR
1 Kings 17:1
The deep affords no water,
And the rivers are exhausted.
The suckling's tongue now
cleaveth for thirst to his mouth;
the infant children ask for bread,
and there is no one breaketh it
to feed them!
Psalm 86:1, Lamentations 1:17
Lord, bow thine ear to our prayer!
Zion spreadeth her hands for aid,
and there is neither help
nor comfort.

LIFT THINE EYES
Psalm 121:1-3
Lift thine eyes to the mountains,
Whence cometh help.
Thy help cometh from the Lord,
the maker of Heaven and Earth.
He hath said thy foot
shall not be moved.
Thy keeper will never slumber.

HE WATCHING OVER ISRAEL
Psalm 121:4
He, watching over Israel,
slumbers not, nor sleeps.
Shouldst thou, walking in grief,
languish, He will quicken thee.

HEXENLIED
Ludwig Heinrich Christoph Hölty
The swallows are flying,
Spring has prevailed,
And is giving us flowers
For our wreaths.
Soon we will flit
Softly out of the door
And fly to the glorious dance!
A black goat,
A broomstick
The oven fork, the distaff,
Snap us along swiftly
Like lightning and wind.
Around Beelzebub
Our coven dances
And kisses him
on his clawed hands.
A bevy of ghosts
seizes us by the arm
Swinging torches in the dance.
And Beelzebub
Promises the coven
of dancers gifts upon gifts:
They will be beautiful
Walking in silk,
And they will dig up pots
full of gold.
A fire-breathing dragon flies
Around the roof
And brings us butter and eggs.
The neighbors see sparks blowing
And they cross themselves
against the fire.
The swallows are flying
Spring has prevailed,
And flowers rival each other
in blooming
Soon we will flit
Softly out of the door;
And leave the men in bed!
Through roaring winds to
Brocken.

VENI DOMINE
Alleluia, 4th Sunday in Advent
Come, Lord, and do not delay!
Forgive the transgressions of your
people, and call back the dispersed
to your land.
Stir up, Lord, your power
and come to save us

LAUDATE PUERI/BEATI OMNES
Psalm 113: vv.1-2
Praise the Lord ye servants:
O praise the Name of the Lord.
Blessed be the Name of the Lord:
from this time forth for evermore.
Psalm 128: v. 1
Blessed are all they that fear
the Lord: and walk in his ways.

SURREXIT PASTOR BONUS
John 10: vv. 11-18
The Good Shepherd has arisen,
who laid down his life for his
sheep, and deigned to die
for his flock, alleluia.
John 20: vv. 13 & 15
They have taken away my Lord,
and I do not know where they
have laid him. If you have carried
him away, tell me, and I will take
him.
From Victimae paschali laudes
Christ my hope has arisen:
he goes before his own
into Galilee. Alleluia!

PHILOMEL WITH MELODY
William Shakespeare
You spotted snakes,
with double-tongue,
Thorny hedgehogs,
be not seen;
Newts, and blind-worms,
do no wrong;
Come not near our
Fairy Queen. Hence away!
Philomel, with melody,
Sing in our sweet lullaby.
Never harm nor spell nor charm
Come our lovely lady nigh.
So goodnight with lullaby.
Weaving spiders come not here,
Hence you long-legged spinners,
hence!
Beetles black, approach not near;
Worm, nor snail, do no offense,
Hence away!
Hence away, now all is well;
One aloof stand sentinel.

THROUGH THE HOUSE GIVE GLIMMERING LIGHT
William Shakespeare
Through the house
give glimmering light,
by the dead and drowsy fire;
every elf and fairy sprite
hop as light as bird from brier;
and this ditty, after me,
Sing and dance it trippingly.
First rehearse your song by rote,
to each word a warbling note:
hand in hand, with fairy grace,
will we sing, and bless this place.

FELIX MENDELSSOHN

Jakob Ludwig Felix Mendelssohn Bartholdy (1809–1847) was a definitive force of the Romantic era, celebrated as a composer, conductor, pianist, and educator. Born into a wealthy and intellectual Jewish family in Hamburg that later converted to Christianity, Mendelssohn was a prodigious musical talent whose early genius rivaled that of Mozart. His style seamlessly bridged the structural clarity and elegance of the Classical period with the emotional intensity and vivid imagery of Romanticism. Unlike many of his contemporaries who struggled for recognition, Mendelssohn enjoyed a highly successful career, famously reviving the music of J.S. Bach with his landmark 1829 performance of the *St. Matthew Passion*. As a conductor of the Leipzig Gewandhaus Orchestra and founder of the Leipzig Conservatory, he shaped European musical standards before his tragically premature death at age 38.

***Abendlied* (Op. 8, No. 9)**: Published in 1828 within Mendelssohn's first major collection of Lieder, this "Evening Song" sets a text by Heinrich Voss. While Felix is the definitive composer of this specific piece, the *Opus 8* collection reflects a unique sibling collaboration; due to the restrictive social conventions of the era, Felix included three songs composed by his equally gifted sister, Fanny Mendelssohn Hensel, under his own name.

Ich harrete des Herrn: This movement originates from Mendelssohn's *Lobgesang* (Hymn of Praise), Op. 52, a monumental "Symphony-Cantata" premiered in June 1840 at the Thomaskirche in Leipzig. The performance was the centerpiece of a grand festival celebrating the 400th anniversary of Johannes Gutenberg's invention of the printing press. The duet captures Mendelssohn's deep devotion to sacred historical texts, specifically setting Luther's translation of Psalm 40.

***Elijah* (Op. 70)**: This pinnacle of Romantic oratorio was commissioned for the Birmingham Triennial Music Festival and premiered there in August 1846. Deeply inspired by the landmark oratorios of Bach and Handel, Mendelssohn scored the angelic, comforting sections explicitly for treble voices, contrasting the fiery, dramatic tension of the Old Testament prophet's narrative with celestial serenity.

***Hexenlied* (Op. 8, No. 8)**: Also published in the 1828 Op. 8 collection, this "Witches' Song" sets a 1770 poem by Ludwig Christoph Heinrich Hölty. It reflects the early German Romantic fascination with the supernatural and folklore. The piece depicts the frantic journey of witches riding brooms and hearth-forks to celebrate Walpurgis Night on the Brocken mountain, capturing the frantic, demonic energy that fascinated nineteenth-century European art.

***Three Motets* (Op. 39)**: These pieces were conceived during Mendelssohn's Italian travels and completed in Rome on December 31, 1830. While visiting the French convent church of Trinità dei Monti (located at the top of the Spanish Steps), Mendelssohn was deeply moved by the singing of the nuns. He wrote these Latin motets specifically for their services, deliberately utilizing an independent treble texture paired with organ to fit the convent's available ensemble.

***A Midsummer Night's Dream* (Op. 61)**: In 1843, King Friedrich Wilhelm IV of Prussia commissioned Mendelssohn to write extensive incidental music for a lavish production of Shakespeare's play at the Potsdam Royal Theater. Seventeen years prior, an 17-year-old Felix had written a brilliant standalone overture to the play. When returning to the work as a mature composer, he integrated two fairy choruses—"You spotted snakes" and the Finale—into the score to bring Shakespeare's magical woodland spirits to life on the nineteenth-century stage.