

Gjest Baardsen's



ACHROSTICHON

A twenty-six verse autobiographical ballad

and other poems

In English and Norwegian

TRANSLATION AND COPYRIGHT OF IAN HARKNESS.

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Poems
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Norwegian
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INTRODUCTION

POEMS:

Achrostichon eller: Gjest Baardsen Sogndalsfjærns Levnet
Achrostichon or: Gjest Baardsen's The Life Story of a
Sogndalsfjærn

Kjærlighetsvise
A Love Poem

Min Fader kom Hjem
Father, Come Home!

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Gaol and Freedom

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Introduction

In his own time, Gjest Baardsen was known as the “master-thief”, the “king of escape”, or, in his own words, “Norway’s most famous and dangerous criminal.”

Born in 1791, Baardsen was jailed for the first time in his early twenties for burglary, and sentenced to two years in the workhouse. It took him fifteen years to escape from the vicious ring of burglaries, arrests, imprisonment and escapes in which he soon became enmeshed. It seems likely that he gradually became aware that complete freedom and a new life beyond bars could only be had by serving his sentence out.

In the winter of 1826, while he was under arrest and awaiting sentencing from the Supreme Court, he started work on his autobiographical novel, *Gjest Baardsen: My Life (1835)*, and continued writing when he was moved to Akershus Fortress in Oslo. His new life as a writer seems to have opened up a new world of possibilities for him. It certainly gave meaning to his life within the prison walls, and was probably a decisive factor in his battle to serve the eighteen years of his sentence at Akershus.

It took Baardsen almost ten years to finish his autobiography. Published in 1835, it was the first autobiographical novel to appear in Norway, and was widely read, with numerous editions appearing over the last two centuries. A man of many talents, the self-taught Baardsen was also a linguist, who, in collaboration with Eilert Sundt, wrote *A Collection of the Most Common Words in the so-called Wanderers’ or Vagabond Language*. Or more specifically, Sundt wrote: *Beretning Om Fante- eller Landstrygerfolket i Norge (1850)* (English: *An account of the gypsies and vagabonds in Norway*). Baardsen had learnt the Romany language on the road and in prison.

Nowadays those who know of Baardsen think of him as a master escapist or as the author of his autobiography, but few are aware of his career as a poet and songwriter. Upon his release from prison he continued to write, and had published more than fifty broadside ballads from which he made a considerable amount of money. A selection of these ballads are published here in both Norwegian and English for the first time, more than 150 years after his death.

The songs and ballads - the “Achrostichon”

His songs and ballads provide an insight into his life, and a summary version of his voluminous 500-page autobiography. They recount his life in prison, his escapes, and his loves. They also shed light on the life of the poor and the destitute in nineteenth century Norway, through the depiction of the lives of thieves such as Ole Høiland, of murderers such as Birgithe Aslesdatter, of social

ills such as alcoholism in “The evils of drinking” and of disease, as in “The cholera ballad”.

The first song presented in this collection is the ballad, “Achrostichon” (1848); an achrostichon is a poem or song in which the first letter of each verse spells out the author’s full name, in this case GJEST BAARDBSEN SOGNDALSFJÆRN (26 verses). It is autobiographical, and as such provides a kind of thumbnail sketch of his autobiographical novel.

The reader of either the ballads or the autobiography is presented with a Janus-faced Gjest. On one face, we meet the Christian Gjest, who ‘repents’ his life of crime. His role as penitent made possible his release from jail; the style of the ‘repentant sinner’ became a way of life, and it colours all his writing. And in the manner of the unconvincing penitent Gjest always has an ‘excuse’ for straying from the narrow path of virtue, usually ‘fate’, rarely admitting guilt through any fault of his own. The other face of Gjest shows him as the ingenious master-thief, who masterminds his own escapes and who uses women not only to satisfy his own lusts, but also as tools in executing his escapes. The Janus-faced aspect of Gjest’s character identifies him as a picaresque hero in both his ballads and his autobiography. A picaresque narrative relates the adventures of a wily trickster - a rough and dishonest but appealing hero, who eventually repents his ways.

Gjest the ‘Don Juan’

In the “Achrostichon”, Gjest, the narrator-hero, tells us of his loves, his escapes from prison, his life on the run and his difficult childhood. In the first four lines of verse twenty, Baardsen portrays himself as the archetypal picaresque hero, boasting in the manner of a ‘Don Juan’ about “many a pretty girl I did enthrall”, under the unconvincing moral cover of the self-criticism of the first two lines:

Loving no one truly, yet flattering all,
I was reckless both in spirit and speech,
And many a pretty girl I did enthrall;
And constancy my heart and mind would breach.
Yet, Tine! When first my eye beheld you,
So highly did I hold you in esteem;
And thought nought could threaten a love so true;
Tender was our love and sweetly did we dream.

Baardsen was adept in publicizing this portrayal of himself as a womaniser, which in turn contributed to the shaping of his own myth. His autobiography is filled with tales of numerous women who help him to escape

from the authorities by providing him with food and shelter, and who also offer their favours to him. Yet in the last four lines of the above verse he switches from the role of unconvincing penitent and womaniser, to that of lover and romantic, with his mention of his second “great love of his life”, Tine. He met Tine for the first time in prison, so both she and Gjest were outcasts who fought against society together: “And thought nought could threaten a love so true” (verse 20, line 7).

Gjest the penitent hero

His persona as a ‘penitent’ coincides with the interests of his middle class Christian benefactors and patrons. Part of Gjest’s act of repentance consists in explaining why he strayed from his initial virtuous path. Gjest blames ‘fate’ in its various forms. In the “Achrostichon”, we are told how fate was unkind to him already at an early age:

Even though, so early died my father,
So I never could call his name,
(verse 4)

This same detail is also related in his autobiography:

Fate was not kind to me even in my earliest childhood, when I was left fatherless shortly after my birth [1793]. On one of his trips out on the fjord, my father was caught in a raging storm, and his boat capsized over 3 miles from home.

Although life must have been hard for a poor family with four children and no father, Gjest, in his role of the gallant hero, has only words of endearment for his mother:

She raised us well, and did not seek another,
And by her hard work both parents became.
(verse 4)

In the ballad, Gjest implies that he spent his childhood in a rural idyll:

So glad did I spend my first years and days,
In childish innocence, and without care;
(verse 4)

In reality he lived in what might be called a rural slum, Sogndalsfjæra, from which his name – Sogndalsfjærn – is derived. Life was hard enough with a

father providing for the family; without one it must have been unbearable, and Gjest left home while still a child, to start the hard life of a tailor's apprentice in Bergen, hundreds of miles away from home. The ballad does not explain his reason for leaving, but a sense of picaresque adventure is implied. Gjest was still a child, however, and his apprenticeship in Bergen probably involved forced evacuation from his home village, and subsequent forced labour in a sweatshop-like environment.

The Christian penitent aspect of Baardsen's writing is already evident in the first two lines of the ballad:

God help me, who wastes away in slave chains,
In dungeons drear, must sigh his life away;

The word 'God' occurs more than fifty times in the collection of songs; the word 'Jesus' is used eleven times. Gjest employs the same ingenuity in his writing, as that which he used to trick the jailers and sheriffs in his fifty-seven escapes from jail. But instead of hoodwinking jailers and the like, Gjest used his 'penitent style' of writing to hoodwink his Christian benefactors and patrons. It was as if he had finally intuitively realised that the fetters which held the lower social classes captive in nineteenth century Norwegian society were not so much the physical iron bars of the prison system, but rather the prevailing ideology that demanded a compliant and subservient workforce. It was first when he played his oppressors' ideological game on their terms that he was allowed to participate in their world. In this case the 'game' which would provide the key to unlock his manacles once and for all was that of a Christian 'penitent'.

Gjest was successful in his mission, as he was both pardoned from jail and had his novel and ballads published. The popularity of his writings, however, was not due to the moralising verbiage of the penitent, but rather to his portrayal of himself as a kind of Norwegian Robin Hood, Don Juan and Houdini rolled into one.

Despite its veneer of Christian moralising, the "Achrostichon" concentrates on Gjest's picaresque adventures, his loves and fifty-seven escapes from jail. His two 'great loves', Constance and Tine, are the focus of ten of the ballad's twenty-six verses. His 'repentance', on the other hand, is mainly restricted to the four-verse framework of the ballad, made up of the first and last two verses.

His 'repentance' unconvincing at best is not only due to the repetition of Christian clichés, but also because Gjest never actually admits to responsibility for his own 'sinning', but only to being a victim of 'fate', mentioned twenty six times in the songs, and more specifically the fate of being born poor. In his autobiography he first mentions 'fate' in the context of the loss of his father. In the "Achrostichon", 'fate' results in the failure of his relationship with Constance and her eventual death:

Alas! Sorrow is constant, joy is brief;
The storms of fate, can sweep us far away;
New seasons do come but bring no relief;
And life's light is soon tempered by grey.
(verse 7)

In verse nine 'fate' is rooted in social class and poverty (Constance was from a higher social class):

Rich I was not! Indeed that was my downfall!
Denied by family, that we should ever wed,
Our tender romance her parents did appal.
"Our daughter is for him too good," they said.
(verse 9)

It is but a short step to explain that Gjest's grief over the loss of Constance, led him into his life of crime:

But in the end, I learned to drown my sorrow,
With drink and revel amid fools' din.
But alas! This only ruined the 'morrow,
When willingly I walked in lust and sin.
(verse 11)

The ballad glosses over his early life in Bergen:

To the towns and distant parts I flew,
My home and birthplace I soon did forsake.
For a while was fortune to me true,
Luck smiled on me and gallant did me make.
O love was kindled in my young heart early,
And bright and strongly shone its limpid light,
A lovely girl did capture my heart surely,
She became my all, my joy and delight.
(verse 5)

We know from his autobiography, and from historical sources, that Gjest met his 'first love' Constance when he was nineteen years old. Gjest met Constance when docked in a port near Kristiansand, having left Bergen some time before, thus placing their meeting several years after his original departure from his native village of Sogndal. He implies in the ballad that his life up until

that point had been a good one: “For a while was **fortune** to me true,” (line 3). This contradicts the version of his life given in his autobiography, where he relates that while living in Bergen, and before meeting Constance, he had been subjected to physical abuse by one of his employers, changed employers several times, and been reported to the police for breaking his apprenticeship contract. His life after leaving home had been a difficult one, and was most likely significantly worse than he admits in his autobiography.

In his writing, ‘fate’ or ‘fortune’ become a convenient device for assigning motives to the narrator, and creating cohesion in the narrative. ‘Fate’ also conveniently appears as a causal factor in his explanation of his journey from innocence to guilt, and is one that would presumably have satisfied his Christian patrons. Much better to explain his life of crime as a result of ‘fate’ and then repent, than to blame it on the poverty of his social class, or on the brutal living and working conditions of apprentices and workers imposed by the class of his patrons.

In the “Achrostichon” Baardsen constructs the following apocryphal chain of events to explain his descent to a life of crime: fate - lower social class - unsuccessful love - lover’s death - depression - life of crime (“And far from virtue’s path I soon strayed;” - verse 12). This provided narrative cohesion and satisfied the expectations of his Christian patrons, but did not reflect historical fact. His hard and difficult life, and his straying from the path of virtue had already begun in Bergen, before he first met Constance, and indeed may have begun when he was still a boy in the village of his birth, Sogndal.

Of course, the factual ‘truth’ of Baardsen’s writings is not the only aspect of his work on which he should be judged. It might even be said that the skill of a writer is demonstrated by his ability to ‘lie’, as all fiction involves ‘the telling of lies’. Baardsen’s writings are truthful and unique in the sense that they paint an authentic picture of life among the poor of the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries, more so than other so-called picaresque narratives such as *Moll Flanders* (1722) and *Tom Jones* (1749), whose authors were not from the class that they portrayed. This was also the case with most of the other eighteenth- and nineteenth-century authors of picaresque novels. Baardsen was one of the few writers who wrote about the lower social classes who had actually been born into that class.

Some of the ballads presented in this collection have also been published together with some editions of his autobiography, among them “In honour of my unhappy Tine”, “Prison and freedom”, “A love song”, “Ole Høiland’s death”, “The evils of drinking”, “A sad song”, “Achrostichon” and “She betrayed me”. Various libraries in Norway also hold printed copies of some of his ballads.

GJEST BAARDSSEN

NORWAY'S ROBIN HOOD

SOGNDAL'S MOST FAMOUS SON, AND NORWAY'S MOST INFAMOUS THIEF, MASTER-ESCAPIST, AUTHOR AND ROMANTIC.

IN THIS EDITION, GJEST BAARDSSEN'S ACHROSTICHON, A TWENTY-SIX VERSE AUTOBIOGRAPHICAL BALLAD IS TRANSLATED INTO ENGLISH FOR THE FIRST TIME, MORE THAN 150 YEARS AFTER ITS FIRST PUBLICATION.

AN ACHROSTICHON IS A POEM IN WHICH THE FIRST LETTER OF EACH VERSE SPELLS OUT THE AUTHOR'S FULL NAME, IN THIS CASE: GJEST BAARDSSEN SOGNDALSFJÆRN¹.

THE BALLAD DESCRIBES HIS WORLD RECORD-BREAKING 57 ESCAPES FROM PRISON! HIS LOVES AND HIS ADVENTURES.

IN THE BALLAD, GJEST BAARDSSEN SYMBOLISES HIS OWN PERSON, AS AN INDOMITABLE LIFE SPIRIT; DESPITE THE REPRESSIVE SHACKLES AND MANACLES OF 19TH CENTURY NORWEGIAN SOCIETY, HE REMAINED EVER-OPTIMISTIC AND VIBRANT, OUTWITTING HIS PLODDING AND OBTUSE OPPRESSORS AND PURSUERS: THE ACQUISITIVE FARMERS, JAILERS, SHERIFFS AND JUDGES, WHO WERE THE BOGEYMAN AND SCOURGE OF THE NORWEGIAN RURAL AND URBAN PROLETARIAT.

GJEST BAARDSSEN REMAINED A SYMBOL OF HOPE AND OPTIMISM FOR THE UNDERCLASS INTO WHICH HE WAS BORN. HIS LIFE AND ADVENTURES PROVIDED THEM WITH THE IDEA THAT IT WAS POSSIBLE TO FIGHT BACK, MAKING IT EASIER FOR THEM TO SURVIVE THE EVERYDAY DRUDGERY OF THEIR LIVES.

¹ SOGNDALSFJÆRN: An inhabitant of Sogndal.

**ACHROSTICHON ELLER
GJEST BAARDSEN SOGDALSFJÆRNS
LEVNETSLØB**

I SEX OG TYVE VERS,
HVIS FORBOGSTAVER UDGJØRE
HANS FULDE NAVN
BERGEN 1848.
MELODI:
DIG ELSKTE FRANKRIG! MIT FARVEL
JEG BYDER ETC.

Gud trøste mig, som maa i Slavekjæder
Og skumle Fængsel sukke Livet hen;
Forsilde jeg begangne Feil begræder,
Forsilde vil jeg vende om igjen.
Kun Græmmelse, kun glædesløse Dage,
Og bittert Nag mit Hjerte føle maa,
Mig hjælper ei klynke, ei at klage,
Kun Taus jeg sukker i min gamle Vraa.

Jeg ønsker dog min Sang man vilde høre,
Og af min tunge Skjæbne vorde viis.
Gid En og Hver her maa i Hjertet røre,
Og vække Frygt for Lovens tunge Riis,
Som haardt har snærtet mig og mange flere
Ulykkens Sønner, Døtre ligesaa;
Man skulde ei saa flux vort Tal formere,
Ei Lastens Vei saa let henføres paa.

Ei blev jeg meer end Andre føde Misdæder,
Engang jeg og var fro og hjerteglad,
Den Moder, som min Skjæbne nu begræder,
Engang saa haabfuld ved min Vugge sad.
Jeg voxte frem i Kundskab som i Alder,
Min Lærers Gunst og Roes jeg daglig nød,
Ak! Ingen, Ingen da i Tanken falder,
Hvad Skjæbnen siden mig at prøve bød.

Saa svandt da mine første Aar og Dage
I Sorgløshed og barnlig Uskyld hen;
Min Moder from jeg stræbte at behage,
Og blev af hende elsket ømt igjen,
Og skjøndt saa tidlig faderløs jeg bliver,
At ei jeg kunde nævne Fadernavn,
En god Opdragelse hun mig dog giver
Og ved sin Flid erstatted' Faders Savn.

Til By og fjerne Egne bort jeg ilte,
Mit Hjem og Fødested jeg snart forlod,
En Tid mig Skjæbnen saare blidt tilsmilte,
Og Lykken gunstig var og gav mig Mod.
O Kjærlighed! Sin hulde klare Kjerte,
Antændtes tidlig i mit unge Hjerte,
En yndig Pige fængslede mit Hjerte,
Hun blev mit Alt, hun var min Fryd og Lyst.

**ACHROSTICHON OR
GJEST BAARDSEN'S THE LIFE STORY OF A
SOGDALSFJÆRN**

IN SIX AND TWENTY VERSES —
THE FIRST LETTER OF EACH SPELLS OUT THE
AUTHOR'S FULL NAME.

MELODY: DIG ELSKTE FRANKRIG! MIT FARVEL
JEG BYDER ETC.

God help me, who wastes away in slavechains,
In dungeons drear, must sigh his life away;
Too late to make right my ill-got gains,
Too late for me to start a new day.
But only dread, each cheerless empty hour,
And only bitter pain does my heart cry.
It is in vain, that I should cry or cower;
So in my cell I sit silently and sigh.

Joy and happiness of once I was able,
Yet more than others was born to misdeeds.
My mother once so hopeful sat by my cradle,
Yet now how sadly her poor heart bleeds.
Years of growth, a wider knowledge brought,
My teacher did commend my clever trait.
Oh, my destiny, no one would have thought,
What fate for me the future had in wait.

Every man to my song must listen,
And if only some are touched in their heart,
And do something learn from my narration,
And find therein a dread of law's cruel smart,
Which often cruelly lashes others with me,
Sons of misery, daughters heed me well,
I pray my speech might help to keep you free,
So you not pursue the path of vice to hell.

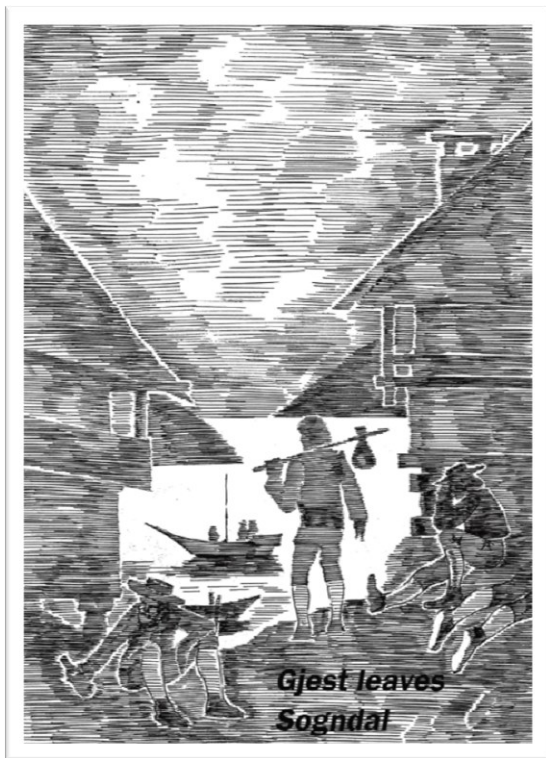
So glad did I spend my first years and days,
In childish innocence, and without care;
From my mother sought and earned her praise,
And in return was gently loved by her.
Even though, so early died my father,
So I never would call his name,
She raised us well, and sought no other,
And by hard work she both parents became.

To the towns and distant parts I flew,
My home and birthplace I soon did forsake.
For a while was fortune to me true,
Luck smiled on me and gallant did me make.
O love was kindled in my young heart early,
And bright and strongly shone its limpid light,
A lovely girl did capture my heart surely,
She became my all, my joy and delight.

Besjelet af de rene, kjære Tanker,
 At snart min Pige vorde skal min Brud,
 Paa havets Bølger uforsagt jeg vanker,
 Jeg trodser Farer, trodser Storm og Slud,
 Af reen, af salig Glæde slog mit Hjerte
 Hvergang jeg nærmed' mig den kjære Havn,
 Hvor min Constance ømt mig elske lærte,
 Hvor først jeg stammed' dette hulde Navn,

Ak! Verdens Glæder er' som oftest korte
 Os Skjebnens Storme tumle grumt afsted,
 De lyse Dage ofte blive sorte,
 Og Honning blandes tidt med Bitterhed.
 Saa uformærkt neddaler Lykkens Stjerne
 Og Haabets Fakkell vorder bleg og mat,
 Vort Ønskes Maal sig taber i det Fjerne
 Og Modgangs Taage os omhyller brat.

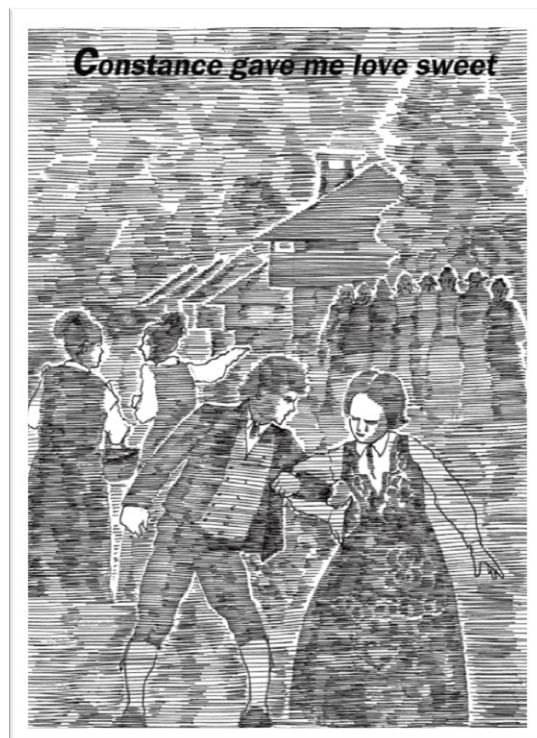
Af Glædens Drøm til bitter Sorg vaktes;
 Mit skønne Haab og al min Fryd forsvandt,
 Af Niddings-Haand jeg Smertens Bæger rakes
 Og onde Tunger Løgne sammenspandt.
 Den, jeg i Verden over Alt mon skatte,
 Der i min Barm først tændte Elskovs Gnist,
 Hvis Tab mig Intet kunde meer erstatte,
 Mig røvet blev ved Rænker, Svig og List



Bright and noble, pure were my emotions,
 And before long my love would be my bride,
 But first I must boldly sail the oceans,
 Spurn danger and face storm and tide.
 With glorious joy, oh wildly did my heart beat,
 Each time I to my dearest's haven came,
 Where my Constance warmly gave me love sweet,
 Where first I spoke her dear and lovely name.

Alas! sorrow is constant, joy is brief;
 The storms of fate, can sweep us far away;
 New seasons do come but bring no relief;
 And life's light is soon tempered by grey.
 Unseen does our star of happiness fall,
 The torch of hope often burns pale and dim,
 And so our dreams are lost in despair's hall,
 And so are we engulfed by adversity's hymn.

Alas! joy's dream to bitter grief descends;
 And my sweet hope and happiness has fled;
 Now the cup of pain the villain's hand extends,
 Slanderous lies by evil tongues were spread.
 On this earth she was my greatest treasure,
 In my embrace she kindled our love's flame,
 And yet her loss is far too great to measure,
 From me robbed by the liar's sly game.



Rig var jeg ei, o! Det var min Ulykke,
Forældrene sig satte derimod,
De vilde ei vor Kjærlighed samtykke,
"Min Datter" sagde de "er ham forgod"
Constance! Ak! Forsilde du opdaged
Det skjulte Næt, hvori man fanged Dig;
Du saae forsilde, at du var bedraget,
Som jeg, Du var og er utrøstelig.

Dybt saaret var Constances troe Hjerte,
Sig Sukke snege fra beklemt Barm,
I eget Bryst hun dølge vil sin Smerte,
Men ak! Hun blegned snart af Sorg og Harm.
Ei Roser pryded' meer de smukke Kinder,
Men tunge Taarer tit fra Øiet gled;
I Livet meer hun ingen Glæde finder,
For skuffet Haab hun sank i Graven ned.

Saa hjerteklemt, saa sorrigfuld isinde,
Jeg nu fra Sted til andet tumled' om;
Mit Haab var flukt og ingen Trøst at finde,
Hver Plet mig syntes glædesløs og tom.
Omsider Sorgen jeg vil undertrykke
I Svir og Sværm blant Daarers vilde Larm,
Men ak! Det kun forøged' min Ulykke,
Og tændte onde Lyster i min Barm.

En last en anden efter sig mon drage,
Alt meer og meer fra Dydens Vei jeg gik,
Og da i Lommen Intet var tilbage,
Jeg pønsed' paa og snart isinde fik,
Ved Andres Tab mit eget at oprette,
Men blev opdaget og for Retten ført;
Og Lovens Bud man kunde ei forgjætte,
Ei Bønne hjalp, Undskyldning blev ei hørt.

Du blev jeg fængslet, dømt og som Misdæder
Til Straffens Bolig flux jeg vandre maa.
Min Frihed tabt med alle livets Glæder!
Her, hvad jeg nu med Skræk imødesaae.
Her Timerne saa langsomt monne glide,
Og mørke Tanker gjorde Kinden bleg;
Her gjaldt det kun at tie og at lide,
Mens tusind' Ønsker sig fra Hjertet sneg.

Som Fuglen i sit snævre Gitterfængsel
Urolig stirrer hen mod frie Lund,
Saa skued' jeg og ventede med Længsel;
At finde snart en god beleilig Stund
For mig igjen i Friheds Stund at sætte
Og fly til fjerne Land og Stæder bort,
Og da min Hensigt ingen kunde gjætte,
I Nattens Mulm det mig gelinged' sort.

Rich I was not! Indeed that was my downfall!
Denied by family, that we should ever wed,
Our tender romance her parents did appal.
"Our daughter is for him too good," they said.
My Constance! Alas! Too late you discovered
The false spinner's web, to which you were prey;
When too late, you saw you were betrayed,
And like me, disconsolate you stay.

Deep the hurt in Constance's faithful heart,
And anxious the sighs from her bosom true.
Alas from grief and sorrow she did smart,
But too soon, alas, she paled from grief and rue.
In her lovely cheeks the roses untwined,
And heavy tears from her eye oft fell;
And in this life no more happiness could she find,
From lost hope she sank into death's lonely cell.

So pained my heart, and sorrowful my mind,
From place to place I lurched in despair.
My hope was flight, no comfort could I find,
Every place it seemed to me sad and bare.
But in the end, I learned to drown my sorrow,
With drink and revel amid fools' din.
But alas! This only ruined the 'morrow,
When willingly I walked in lust and sin.

Each new vice did lead me to another,
And far from virtue's path I soon strayed;
And when into poverty I sank further,
Soon a plot in my mind was clearly laid.
Through other's loss, my fortune I would gain,
But I was captured, and to the court was brought;
To slip law's arm could only be in vain,
Regrets declined, my pleas they came to nought.

Now I was gaoled, a doer of misdeeds,
And to the house of correction did go,
And from the arrest only misery proceeds!
And in this dismal place I came to know,
How the hours and days slowly drag on,
And from dark thoughts my cheek turns pale.
I had to endure now my fate was forgone,
While a thousand wishes from my heart did wail.

Sullenly captive perches the caged dove,
Staring out through bars at the free sky,
So sat I also with a longing to rove,
Awaiting for the right moment to fly;
So once again I in freedom would be;
So when my purpose nobody could guess,
To lands and places far away would flee,
Steal away under cover of night's darkness.

Frihed kjær! Hvor er du blid at nyde,
Hvo dig har tabt, hans Barm er glædetom;
Dog ene Den du Fryd og Fred kan yde,
Som øver Ret og Dyd og lever from.
Ei Frygtningen sig deriblandt kan regne,
Han venneløs og frygtsom vandre maa;
Ham Nag og Mismod følger allevegne,
Paa ingen Plet han troer sig tryg at staa.

Gjort Gjerning kan, som gammelt Ordsprog siger,
Ei gjøres om og ikke ændres meer;
Man flygter vel, men Skjæbnen ei undviger,
Den følger, vore Planer kun beleer.
Forøvet Brøde vist sin Straf indhenter,
Hvis Andet ei, Samvittighedens Nag;
Gjeldbunden Mand betale maa med Renter,
Det feiler ei, det er en sikker Sag.

Du tumled' jeg i Skove, Bjerge, Dale,
Saa vide om fra Sted til andet drog,
I Skjul jeg gik og frygtede for Alle,
For hver, jeg saae, af Angest Hjertet slog.
Jeg mangled' Alt, og Nøden snart mig tvinger
At søge Bytte, finde Skjul og Ly,
Men snart en talrig Skare mig omringer,
Jeg greben blev og fængsledes paany.

Der laa jeg da i tunge Baand og Lænker,
Og Bolt og Bøiler trykked' Haand og Fod,
Dog snart igjen ved Snedighed og Rænker
Jeg Fængslet brød, paany i Frihed stod.
Jeg skyndte mig i Nattens Mulm at flygte,
Som fredløs Mand jeg atter vanked' om,
Men overalt man kjendte mig af Rygte,
Usikker var jeg, hvor jeg gik og kom.

At flygte og paany at vorde Fange,
Det varede i meer end tretten Aar,
Og mer end halvtredisindstve Gange,
Jeg fængsles og i Frihed atter staa;
Jeg streifed' om i Norges hele Rige,
Af Landet ud, jeg ogsaa kom iblandt;
Dog kunde jeg min Skjæbne ei undvige,
Den overalt i hver en Krog mig fandt.

Letsindig var min Idræt som min Tale,
Ustadig var mit Hjerte og mit Sind,
Jeg elsked' Ingen, smigred' næsten Alle.
Og drillede saamangen Pige fiin.
Men, Tine! Da mit Øie dig fik Skue,
Udeelt mit Hjerte snart tilhørte Dig,
Vi agted' ei de Farer os mon true,
Vi elsked' ømt, og drømte lykkelig.

Fh freedom dear! You make it a joy to live!
You I have lost, my bosom is drained of joy;
Only you can joy and peace give,
For he who virtue and piety does employ.
Yet a fugitive must keep on running,
Friendless and frightened he must wander the land;
He, low in spirit, and despite his cunning,
There is no place that he feels safe to stand.

Gaol you may flee, but fate you cannot evade;
What's done, can't be undone the old proverb says;
There's no starting over again your debt paid;
Fate only laughs at our plans and vain ways.
Stolen bread will have its punishment's day,
If not, then the call of conscience instead;
The debtor with interest surely must pay,
It is as certain as death, it is said.

Now it was through the hills and dales I ran,
And far and wide and from place to place did go.
In hiding I was and feared every man,
Who by some acquaintance might me know.
In need of everything, want would soon force me
To plunder and take shelter in a den;
But soon hounded by a crowd who did agree,
To hold me fast, and cast me in gaol again.

Damned again, I lay in bonds and chains,
And bolts and hoops my hand and foot did clasp.
Yet soon again by cunning, plot and brains,
I fled the gaol and freedom did grasp.
In the darkness of the night I had flown,
As an outlaw, once more wandered around;
But everywhere I was by reputation known,
And felt unsafe wherever I was bound.

And to flee and be imprisoned again,
Yet I held out for more than thirteen year;
And more than seven and fifty times then,
Gaoled I was, yet again would disappear.
I wandered far and wide the land of Norway,
And abroad I sometimes ventured too.
Yet my fate awaited in each doorway,
And everywhere would find me anew.

Loving no one truly, yet flattering all,
I was reckless both in spirit and speech,
And many a pretty girl I did enthrall;
And constancy my heart and mind would breach.
Yet, Tine! When first my eye beheld you,
So highly did I hold you in esteem;
And thought nought could threaten a love so true;
Tender was our love and sweetly did we dream.

Saa tit og ofte ved min Piges Side,
Jeg dybt i Lundens stille Skygger sad,
Vi Troskab svoer, vi haabed' Dage blide,
Og ønsked' aldrig meer at skilles ad.
Tidt sagde hun med blid og kjærlig Stemme:
Min Ven! O var vi hist paa frie Kyst;
Du skulde i min Favn hver Sorg forglemme,
Og finde Fryd og Fred ved dette Bryst.

Frivillig Fængsel selv Du gik imøde,
O elskte Tine! For at redde mig;
Du Skjæbnen hefte tro men ei min Brøde,
Din unge Barm var urokkelig,
Du kunde ei din første Elsker glemme,
Ei være troløs mod din faldne Ven,
Mit Minde dybt i Hjertet Du mon gjemme,
Naar Skjæbnens Storme rev mig fra dig hen.

Jeg maatte bort fra Dig, min Pige, drage
At dvæle stod ei i min egen Magt,
Ei fik Dig se, ei Afsled med Dig tage,
Som Fange jeg til fjerne Stad blev bragt.
Mig Lænkens tunge Vægt vel haardt mon trykke
Men tunged' ei som Skilsmis' bragte Kval,
Og hvad mig saaret mest af min Ulykke
Var Tanken: Dig jeg mer ei finde skal.

Ørkjendtlig jeg min varme Tak fremsender,
Til Dig som var mig tro i Vee og Vel,
Og end i denne Time Hjertet brænder
Af Ønsker om din Lykke og dit Held,
O! Kunde jeg for Øiet evigt lukkes,
Dog vide, Du var glad og lykkelig,
Da rolig saa jeg Livets Lampe slukkes;
I Haabet, Tine, hisset ser jeg dig.

Retfærdig Gud, som ene Hjertet kjender,
For dig hver lønlig Tanke ligger klar,
I Ydmyghed min Ven til dig jeg sender:
Tilgiv af Naade, hvad jeg syndet har!
Og skal min Friheds Sol ei mer oprinde,
Skal Fængslet være Livets Maal og Med,
Saa lad min Sjæl i Dødens Time finde,
Den Frihed, som for evig varer ved!

Du maa jeg lide og med Taalmod drage,
Den Straf, som egen Daarskab mig paadrog,
O! Vilde man heraf Exempel tage!
Og af min ringe Skjæbne vorde klog.
Selv den, som tidlig Dydens Vei betræde,
Og paa sin Vandring altid følger den!
Hans Haab er skjønt, hans Løn er rene Glæder,
Hans Dage svinde blidt og roligt hen.

So once again, I lay down by my love's side,
Deep in the grove where quiet shadows lie.
We faithfulness to each other did confide,
And hoped no more I would be forced to fly.
She would often say with glad and dear voice:
"My friend! On the free coast, troubles left behind,
Sorrow would we forget, and in embrace rejoice,
And joy and peace on my bosom you would find."

Fate you could hinder, but guilt would not flee,
Voluntarily to gaol you did go;
O beloved Tine! In order to save me;
Your young bosom was immovable though.
You could not forget first love, strong and deep,
Nor be faithless towards your fallen soul mate.
Memory of me in your heart you did keep,
When you were torn from me by the storm of fate.

Failed I had to leave for my cold cell,
It was not in my power to stay;
I didn't get to see you, nor say farewell,
As a prisoner I was dragged far away.
My chains heavy on my body did weigh,
Yet separation's burden was harder to bear;
But what pained me most on ill fate's day,
That no more love's moment would we share.

Øns pass, my heart-felt thanks I send you,
Who was so true, in thick and thin my friend;
And in my heart, I only wish you knew,
I wish you joy and luck right to the end.
O! Could I just my eyes forever close,
Yet still know, you happy and glad to be,
Then in peace could I life's lamp extinguish.
In hope, that Tine, once again I'd see.

Righteous God, who alone doth the heart know,
For only thee, every secret thought is revealed.
In humbleness I my friend send this to you:
Forgive from mercy, for what I have sinned!
And if my freedom's sun should rise no more,
And gaol's penance cannot outweigh my past,
Then let my soul discover in death's hour
That freedom, which eternally doth last!

Now I must suffer and with patience endure,
The punishment I have by foolishness earned,
O! Would my example provide crime's cure!
And by my poor fate be discouraged.
He who early the road of virtue walks along,
And on his wandering always follows it,
His reward is life's beauteous song,
His days by the flame of peace will be lit.

Kjærlighetsvise

Jeg beiled engang til en Pige saa skjøn,
Hun var mig saa god, og hun hørte min Bøn,
Vi loved' gjensidig med Haand og med Mund
Hinanden at elske til sildigste Stund.

Da blev jeg saa glad udi Hjerte og Hu,
De salige Timer jeg mindes endnu;
De salige Timer jeg mindes i Evighedsstrøm,
Og jeg er opvaagnet af yndige Drøm.

Hun var i Livets den fagreste Vaar,
Var nylig indtraadt i sit attende Aar,
Saa blid som en Engel, saa frisk som en Hind
Med Roser og Liljer paa blomstrende kind.

Som venlige Stjerner paa Himmelen blaa,
Saa var hendes Øine naar til mig hun saa.
I Ord og i Tale, i hvert hendes Blik
Forsikring jeg om hendes Kjærlighed fik,

Ja, elskede Tina, da var du saa huld,
Dit Hjerte var rent som det lutrede Guld,
Da var du saa kjærlig, saa øm og saa tro;
Kun Døden, du sagde, kan skille os to.

Og naar ved din Side saa ofte jeg sad,
Og Timerne svandt saa fornøiet og glad,
Henrevet af Kjærligheds tryllende Magt
Fornøiet vi knytter vor Kjærligheds Pagt.

Naar Skjæbnen da skildte os ad mangan Gang,
Og Skilsmissen stundom blev temmelig lang,
Jeg ønskede mig Vinger at flyve igjen,
Tilbage til dig, min bedrøvede Ven.

Da var som enlig Fugel paa Kvist,
Som sørgende Due sin Mage har mist'
Dit elskede Hjerte forglemte mig ei.
Hvor længst jeg var fjernet paa vildsomme Vei.

Nu gaar jeg mismodig bedragen og glemt,
Mit Sind og min Harpe vemodig er stemt,
Mindst havde jeg ventet mig saadant af dig.
Dog aldrig, nei aldrig du glemmes af mig.

Men alting forandres ved Tid og ved Aar,
Og Kjærlighed kjølnes og Skjønhed forgaar;
Men dybt i mit Hjerte jeg føler et Saar,
Som neppe kan læges ved Tid og ved Aar.

Men jeg din Utroskab tilgive dig vil,
Forført er du bleven af andre dertil.
Du hørte Bagvaskelsens Tunge saa slem.
Og du var da svag nok at agte paa dem.

Farvel, o Farvel, uforglem'lige Ven,
Vi skilles nu her, men vi findes igjen.
Vi samles hist oppe i Evigheds Land,
Hvor Løgnen og Falskhed mer skade ei kan.

A Love Poem

I once courted a maiden so sweet and so fair,
She gave me her heart and she answered my prayer.
We promised each other with mouth and with heart
To love one another till death would us part.

I was so content in my heart and my mind,
Those hours of bliss to my memory I bind;
Those hours of bliss in eternity's stream,
But then I awakened from love's sweetest dream.

In the spring of her life she to me did unfold,
A girl fresh and fair, only eighteen years old.
As soft as an angel and quick as a hind,
While roses and lilies in her cheeks were entwined.

When she looked at me with her clear shining eyes,
They seemed friendly stars in the blue northern Skies.
In word and in speech and in her gentle gaze,
She promised me love in a hundredfold ways.

Yes, Tina my loved one, then true was your soul,
Your Love as untainted as purified Gold.
So faithful and loving and soft was your heart,
Death only, you said, could us two tear apart.

And often when I sat there close by your side,
Then blithely and merry the hours would glide.
By love's magic power our hearts were enrapt,
With Pleasure we made there our love's solemn pact.

When fate did us part, and I often was gone,
The time spent apart would be painful and long.
I wished I could fly on a strong, speedy wing,
Which back to my sorrowing friend would me bring.

You were like a bird on a twig all alone,
A sorrowing dove whose true mate's lost and gone.
Your heart, my beloved, from me did not stray,
Though I wandered far on my prodigal way.

Betrayed and forgotten, grief fills my mind,
My soul and my harp only sad tones can find.
I never had thought you would act in this way,
Yet you I'll remember till my dying day.

But all things will alter as time and years pass,
Both beauty and love fade like leaves and like grass.
But deep in my heart I can still feel the pain,
Which time cannot heal and which years pass in vain.

Yet will I forgive you for being untrue,
T'was others who led you this low deed to do:
You listened to calumny's treacherous tongue,
And could not resist, being weak and so young.

Farewell, oh Farewell, unforgettable friend,
We go separate ways, but we shall meet again.
We'll meet once again, in a world fair and new,
Where slander and falseness can no more harm do.

Min Fader kom Hjem!

Mel.: Du Land, som har baaret min Vugge

O, Fader, o Fader kom hjem med mig nu
Hør Klokken i Taarnet slaar et!
Du loved at komme saasnart du blev fri,
Og den gang var alting beredt,
Men Ilden er slukt og Stuen er mørk,
Og Mama med Broder i Favn.
Har ventet saa saart, for den Lille er syg,
Han raaber med Graad paa dit Navn,
Kom hjem, kom hjem, kom hjem,
O Fader, min Fader, kom Hjem!

O, Fader, o Fader kom hjem med mig nu,
Hør Klokken i Taarnet slaar to,
Og Broder er værre, nys bad han saa mat:
Aa lad mig dog komme til Ro.
Men Mama tror sikkert Broder vil dø,
Maaske inden Morgenens gryr.
Og her er det Budskab hun sender dig nu,
Kom snart inden Aanden bortflyr!
Kom hjem, kom hjem, kom hjem,
O Fader, min Fader, kom Hjem!

O, Fader, o Fader kom hjem med mig nu
Hør Klokken i Taarnet slaar tre.
Vort Hjem er saa ensomt og Tiden saa lang
Med Graad vil den høre og se.
Vi spørge og længes, min Broder er død,
I Himlen er nu vor Skat.
Det sidste vi hørte, det var dise Ord:
Kom Papa, sig Albin godnat.
Kom hjem, kom hjem, kom hjem!
O Fader, min Fader, kom Hjem!

Father, Come Home

Oh father, oh father, come home with me now!
The clock in the steeple strikes one.
You promised to come when you first were set free,
In readiness all had been done.
Our fire has died out, our house is dark,
And brother lies on mother's arm,
She's waited so long, for the little one's sick,
But for brother there is no balm.
Come home! come home! come home!
Oh father, my father, come home!

Oh father, oh father, come home with me now!
The clock in the steeple strikes two,
And brother is worse, just now he did sigh:
"Oh please let me be at peace, do."
Mamma is certain that brother will die,
Perhaps before morning shall dawn,
And this is the message she sent me to bring:
"Come quickly, or he will be gone.
Come home! come home! come home!
Oh father, my father, come home!"

Oh father, oh father, come home with me now!
The clock in the steeple strikes three!
Our home is so lonely, the hours so long
For poor weeping mother and me.
We plea and we yearn, my brother is dead,
To heaven his soul took its flight.
And these were the very last words that he said:
"I want to kiss pappa goodnight."
Come home! come home! come home!
Oh father, oh father, come home!

Den næsvisse Flue

Lystige Væsen, Sylphide du smaa,
Næsvise Flue, Hvad tænker du paa,
Trods en Helt af saa tapper en Slægt,
Flue, det kalder jeg temmelig frækt.

Snart jeg hos dig min Revanse skal faa,
Ja, du vil trække det korteste Straa;
Flue, du skjænder, o frygt ei, thi der
Har du din Frihed - den har ei Enhver.

Brug dine Vinger og sving dig afsted;
Heller end gjerne saa fulgte jeg med,
Fulgte dig ud i din luftige Flugt,
Flue, saa flyv da, men brug din Fornuft.

Seer du da ei, hvor jeg sidder forladt,
Flue, saa skjænk mig dit Selskab i Nat;
Du var mig kjær, Utaknem'lige du
Søgte mig før, ak, hvi flyr du mig nu?

Kom dog, see Tiden mig falder saa lang,
Dæmp mine Suk med din summende Sang;
Før jeg begreb ei, hvorfor du var skabt,
Ak ja, man skatter først hvad man har tabt.

The Saucy Fly

Jovial creature, Sylphide so small,
You saucy fly, you do have some gall!
Defy a hero of race most unmeek,
Fly, I call that a bit of a cheek!

Soon though I'll have my revenge on you,
Nay, you'll draw the short straw 'fore we're
through.
Fly, you despoil, yet you have no fear,
You have your freedom, which few have here.

Use your wings, you can fly far away;
Gladly would I follow you on your way,
Follow you away on your airy flight,
Fly away! Yet think again little mite!

Do you not see, how I sit here forlorn,
Please honour me with your comp'ny till morn.
Ungrateful bug, once dear to me I avow,
You sought me before, why fly from me now?

Come yet, you see the time runs so dreary,
Hearten me with your humming so cheery.
Once I thought flies were of no use,
Alas, we only value the things we lose.

Fængsel og Frihed

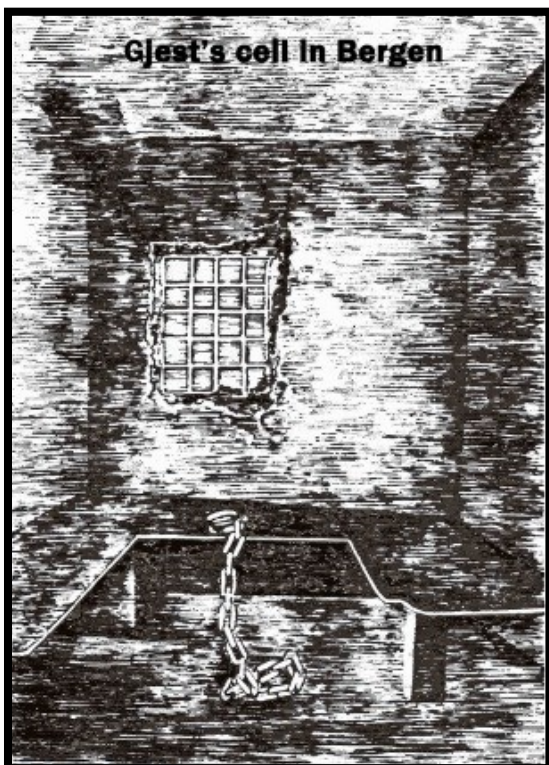
Melodi: Du Lille Ø paa Havets blanke Vove

Velkommen Dag, som nu paa østlig Himmel
Udfolder dig i yndig Rosenskjær,
Og Lys og klar fordunkler Stjernevrimmel;
Dig hilser jeg, du er mit Hjerte kjær.

Glad ser jeg dig, min hulde Friheds Morgen,
O længe har jeg sukket efter dig!
Nu er min Barm da engang fri for Sorgen,
Nu er jeg atter fri og lykkelig.

I atten Aar bad disse skumle Mure
Min Manddomsalder glædesløs hensvandt.
O, hvor mig Dagene var ofte sure,
Og mangan Taare fra mit Øie randt.

Mit hjerte svulmer nu af Fryd og Glæde;
I varm og ydmyg Tak jeg bryder du;
Til ham som lod mig Friheds Vei betræde,
Ham signe du, al Naadens gode Gud!



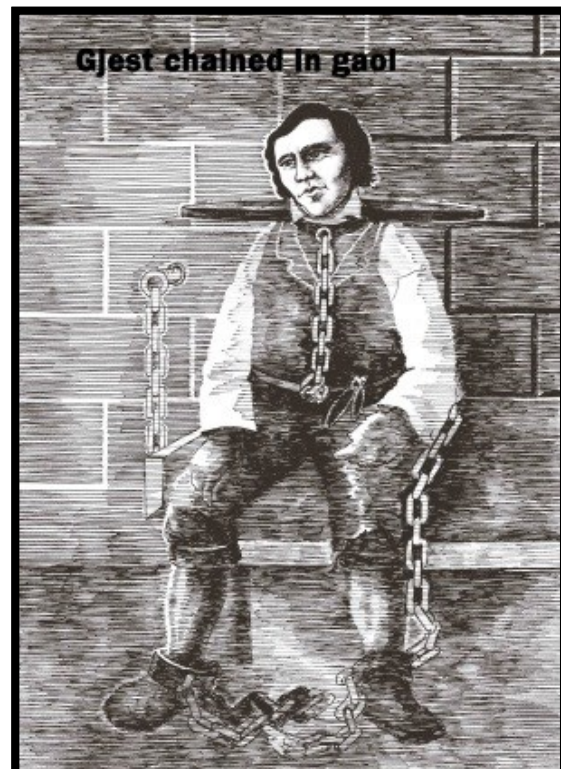
Gaol and Freedom

O welcome day which now in eastern heaven
Unfolds its lovely rose-hues so clear,
And light and pure it does my soul leaven,
I welcome you, you are my heart so dear.

Joyful I am my freedom's morning,
O so long I have sighed for you!
Now my bosom again is free from mourning,
Now once more I am free and glad anew.

For eighteen years I sit in this dismal jail,
My age of manhood passed in grief and gall.
And there I would only moan and wail,
And many a tear would from my eye fall.

My heart now swells from joy and happiness;
A warm and humble thanks I offer thee;
To him who let me walk freedom's road I bless,
Bless him, my Lord, for setting me free!



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