

The Bedbug, Op. 19

[6] Wedding Scene

Solo:

Dlya promivki vashey glotki,
Za izyashchestvo i negu
Khvost sel'dya i ryumku vodki
Prepodnosim mi Olegu.

[music]

S'ezzhalisya k zagsu tramvai,
Tam krasnaya svad'ba bila.

Chorus:

Zhenikh bil vo vsey prozodezhde,
Iz bluzi torchal profbilet.

[9] Chorus of Firemen

Tovarishchi-grazhdane, vodka – yad!
P'yanīye respubliku zazrya spalyat!

Zhivya s kaminami, zhivya s primusami,
Sozhzhyote dom i sgorite sami.

Sluchayniy son – prichina pozharov.
Na son ne chitayte Nadsona i Zharova, i Zharova!

[11] March of the Pioneers

Mi zdorovo uchimsya na bīvsheye “yat”³,
Zato mi i luchshe vsekh umeyem gulyat'.
Iksi i i-greki davno sdani,
Idyom tuda, gde tigriki, i gde sloni,
Syuda, gde zveri mnogiye i mi s lyud'yom
V sad zoologii idyom, idyom, idyom!

[13] March of the City Fathers

Sluzhbī bremya ne smorshchilo nas,
Delu vremya – potekhe chas.
Privet vam ot goroda, khrabriye lovtsi,
Mi vami gordi, mi goroda otsi!

The Bedbug, Op. 19

[6] Wedding Scene

Solo:

To flush out your throats,
And for elegance and sensual pleasure,
A herring tail and a shot-glass of vodka
Bring we to Oleg.

[music]

The trams rolled up at the Registry Office,
A Red wedding was going on there.

Chorus:

The groom was all in his working clothes,
His trade-union card sticking out of his shirt.

[9] Chorus of Firemen

Comrade-citizens, vodka is poison!
Drunks will pointlessly burn down the Republic!

Living with fireplaces, living with Primus stoves,
You will set your house on fire and get burned up yourselves.

Accidental sleep is a cause of fires.
Don't read Nadson¹ and Zharov² in bed!

[11] March of the Pioneers

Not only do we excel at our studies,
But we're also the best at having fun.
Our maths assignments are long handed in,
And we're off to the place where there are tiger-cubs and elephants,
The place where there are lots of animals, and with everyone else
We're off to the zoological park, we're off, we're off, we're off!

[13] March of the City Fathers

The burden of service has not made us frown,
There's a time for work and a time for amusements.
Greetings to you from the city, brave animal-catchers,
We are proud of you, we – the City Fathers!

Transliteration: Gerard McBurney

Translation: Gerard McBurney

¹ Semyon Yakovlevich Nadson (1862–1887), 19th century writer of part-Jewish extraction, who died very young and whose sentimental drawing-room verses Mayakovsky often mocked. Nadson's poems were set by several well-known composers of the pre-revolutionary period including Rachmaninov.

² Aleksandr Alekseyevich Zharov (1904–1984), Communist poet of peasant background, and another frequent butt of Mayakovsky's jokes. In the 1930s, Zharov was best known for his popular lyrics to Pioneer and Komsomol songs.

³ Yat' – name of the pre-revolutionary Cyrillic letter ѣ, abolished in the alphabetical reforms of 1918 and replaced by a simple 'e'. Mayakovsky is making a joke: 'to do something to the yat' is a common idiom meaning 'to do something brilliantly' or 'in a first-class way'. Children in the 1920s and 1930s would not have been likely to study the actual letter yat'.

Love and Hate, Op. 38

[19][23] How Long Will My Heart Moan And Ache?

Akh, akh, akh, akh, akh,
Akh, akh, akh, akh
Dolgo l' serdtsu nít – bolet'?
Poidu s gorya lyagu na krovatushku,
Na krovatushke mlada ya raskachusya,
S puhovoyu ya podushkoy oboymusya,
S puhovoyu ya podushkoy oboymusya
I goryuchimi slezami zal'yusya.
Akh vî, nochi moi dolgi,
Nochi dolgi, tyomniye,
Nadoyeli vî mne, nadoskuchili,
S moim milim vî menya razluchili.

[21] Soldiers' March

Men's Chorus:

Nash otryad bîstreya ptitsî,
Pust' ne dumayut vrâgi,
Ne uspeli obnositsa
Boyeviye sapogi.

Za rabochuyu krainu,
Cherez chornuyu bedu
Ya poidu i ryadom sîna
Za soboyu provedu,
Za soboyu provedu.
Yesli gde-to gromko gryanet,
I, pochuvstvuya bedu,
Mî podnimem nashe znamya
Za svobodnuyu stranu,
Za svobodnuyu stranu.

I potom nad mirom novîm,
Cherez grozniye goda,
Nashim imenem surovîm
Nazovutsa goroda,
Nazovutsa goroda.
Nazovutsa goroda.

[38] Finale

Nash otryad bîstreya ptitsî,
Pust' ne dumayut vrâgi,
Ne uspeli obnositsa
Boyeviye sapogi.

Love and Hate, Op. 38

[19][23] How Long Will My Heart Moan And Ache?

Oh, oh, oh, oh, oh,
oh, oh, oh, oh
How long will my heart moan and ache?
I will go lie down on my bed,
I, a young woman, will toss and turn on my bed,
I will cradle my down pillow,
I will cradle my down pillow
And let my hot bitter tears pour.
Oh you nights, you long nights,
You long dark nights,
I'm so tired of you, I'm so bored of you,
You have severed me from my darling.

[21] Soldiers' March

Men's Chorus:

Our troop is swifter than a bird,
Let no enemy think otherwise.
Our battle boots
Haven't been worn out yet.

For my workers' district
I will walk through the blackest peril
And will lead my son beside me,
Lead him after me
Lead him after me.
When thunder roars
And we feel peril afoot,
We'll raise our banner
For our free country,
For our free country.

And then, looming over the new world,
After all the terrible years,
There will be new cities bearing
Our stern names,
Our stern names,
Our stern names,

[38] Finale

Our troop is swifter than a bird,
Let no enemy think otherwise.
Our battle boots
Haven't been worn out yet.

Transliteration: Anastasiya Lebedev

Translation: Anastasiya Lebedev