

TIME CYCLE

Texts of the Songs

I

We're Late (W. H. Auden)

Clocks cannot tell our time of day
For what event to pray
Because we have no time, because
We have no time until
We know what time we fill,
Why time is other than time was.
Nor can our question satisfy
The answer in the statue's eye:
Only the living ask whose brow
May wear the Roman laurel now;
The dead say only how.
What happens to the living when we die?
Death is not understood by death; nor you, nor I.

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II

When the Bells Justle (A. E. Housman)

When the bells justle in the tower
The hollow night amid
Then on my tongue the taste is sour
of all I ever did.

III

Sechzehnter Januar
from Franz Kafka's *Diaries*

(Translation from the German by the Composer)

January 16. This last week was like a total breakdown — Impossible to sleep, impossible to wake, impossible to bear life, or more accurately, to bear the continuity of life. The clocks do not synchronize; the inner one chases in a devilish or demoniac, or at any rate inhuman manner; the outer one goes haltingly at its usual pace. What else can happen than that the two different worlds separate, and they separate, or at least tear at one another in a terrifying manner. The solitude, forced upon me to the greater extent, sought by me to some extent (but what else is this than being forced?) is taking an unmistakable course toward the extreme limit. Where will it lead? It can (this seems most plausible) lead toward madness. Nothing further can be said about this, the chase goes through me and tears me apart. — But then again I may, I may, be it only the smallest degree, hold myself up, let the chase “carry” me. Then where does this bring me? “Chase” is but an image — one might say instead: onslaught against the last frontier . . .

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IV

O Mensch, gib Acht
from Friedrich Nietzsche's
Thus Spake Zarathustra

(Translation from the German by the Composer)

One!	—O Man! Take heed!
Two!	—What speaks the deep midnight?
Three!	—“I slept, I slept—
Four!	—“From deep dream I awoke:
Five!	—“The world is deep,
Six!	—“And deeper than the day.
Seven!	—“Deep is its woe—
Eight!	—“Joy* deeper than heartache.
Nine!	—“Woe speaks: begone!
Ten!	—“But joy* desires eternity.
Eleven!	—“Desires deep, deep, eternity.”
Twelve!	—

*The German word *Lust* is a composite of lust, pleasure, joy, ecstasy.