

THE SIGHT OF MUSIC

The whole earth spins here in this garden,
In a spring wind shaking the snow-petals
Down from the plum-trees, dusting the wattle's gold.
The white metallic dance of gum-leaves
Counter-points the blossom on a ground-bass of pines.
Scarlet harmonies of japonica broider the sky,
Slashed with the black of crow's sudden cry.
The willow utters her first palest green whisper
To the bold blackbird bathing in the fountain;
Semi-quavers of magpies dart from the bushes,
A figure of simplest intention, foreseeing the summer.
Masquerading as sunlight, the Golden Rain
Betrays its honied soul to the dreaming bees,
Whose meditations bloom in yellow globes of sound.
' Ewig ewig . . . ' Mahler's Song of the Earth
Drifts through the window, becomes a glitter of leaves,
A blown dance of petals, the blackbird's several tunes.
Voice and strings die to the dominant wind,
Assent to the climbing sun, who himself will turn soon
From the blackbird's evening sone . . . Hush!
Hear him now, exerting his will on the day:
Trills and arpeggios spill in dazzling display,
Silver rain showered at the darkening sky,
Forbidding the night to advance, willing the sun
To stand firm, desperately urging him ' Stay! '
He gathers all the white and the red and the gold
Drunken bees, daffodils, scents of honey and pine
Into one last irrefutable fountain of notes,
A lyrical argument, flung at the dark . . .
Then gives over, spent like a lover,
And sleeps all night long,
At peace in his song.

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