

*Complete Lyrics and Shorter Poems*

*Volume 3*

*Complete Lyrics  
and  
Shorter Poems*

*Volume 3*

*Exile at Mikháylovskoye  
1824–26*

*Return to Metropolitan Life  
1826–29*

Alexander Pushkin

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## Foreword

This is one of a series of volumes being published by Alma Classics presenting the complete works of Alexander Pushkin in English. The series is a successor to the fifteen-volume *Complete Works of Alexander Pushkin* published by Milner and Company between 1999 and 2003, the rights to which now rest with Alma Classics. Alma’s aim is to build on the Milner edition’s work in giving readers of English access to all Pushkin’s writings in readable modern versions, faithful to Pushkin’s meaning and spirit.

This is the third of four planned volumes of Pushkin’s output of well over 700 lyrics and shorter poems, replacing volumes 1 to 3 of the Milner edition. Alma are going beyond Milner in providing for the first time Pushkin’s original Russian (or, in a few cases, French) texts of the poems alongside the English translations. Brief fragments, collaborative poems and poems of doubtful authenticity are not included.

The Russian texts reflect up-to-date Russian scholarship. Some of the translations are reprints or revisions of those in the Milner edition; many are new. Also provided are an index of people and places referred to by Pushkin, short explanatory notes on the poems and extra material on Pushkin’s life.

Volume 3 covers Pushkin’s shorter poetry from his years of exile at Mikháylovskoye (1824–26) and his years of rehabilitation, still as a bachelor, in Moscow and St Petersburg (1826–29). It contains 209 poems of varying length, subject matter and metre, translated by twenty translators, whose names and contributions are enumerated on pp. 392–93. Each poem shows something of the sensitivity, intelligence, erudition, wit and technical accomplishment for which Pushkin is famous. Together they provide a fascinating record of his frustrations and recreations while detained in the country and of his preoccupations and diversions while enjoying the relative freedom of bachelor life in Moscow and St Petersburg. They also show the transition in Pushkin’s political standpoint between contempt and defiance towards Tsar Alexander I and gratitude and expectancy towards his successor Nicholas I.

In publishing this new volume Alma Classics wish again to pay a warm tribute to the initiative and drive of the late Iain Sproat, managing director and owner of Milner and Company and chairman of the original project’s editorial board, in achieving the publication of Pushkin’s complete works in English for the first time, thus laying the foundation for the present volumes. Scholars, lovers of Pushkin and general readers wishing to gain knowledge of one of Europe’s finest writers owe him the heartiest admiration and gratitude.

– Alessandro Gallenzi, Publisher; Roger Clarke, Editor

Exile in Mikháylovskoye

1824–26

## 1824

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## ВОСПОМИНАНИЯ ОБ ОДЕССЕ

*из Путешествия Онегина*

- [20] Я жил тогда в Одессе пыльной...  
Там долго ясны небеса,  
Там хлопотливо торг обильный  
Свои подьмет паруса;  
Там всё Европой дышит, веет,  
Всё блещет югом и пестреет  
Разнообразностью живой.  
Язык Италии златой  
Звучит по улице веселой,  
Где ходит гордый славянин, 10  
Француз, испанец, армянин,  
И грек, и молдаван тяжелый,  
И сын египетской земли,  
Корсар в отставке, Морали.
- [21] Одессу звучными стихами  
Наш друг Туманский описал,  
Но он пристрастными глазами  
В то время на нее взирал.  
Приехав, он прямым поэтом  
Пошел бродить с своим лорнетом 20  
Один над морем – и потом  
Очаровательным пером  
Сады одесские прославил.  
Всё хорошо, но дело в том,  
Что степь нагая там кругом;  
Кой-где недавний труд заставил  
Младые ветви в знойный день  
Давать насильственную тень.

## 1824

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## MEMORIES OF ODESSA

*from Onegin's Journey*

- [20] I lived then in dusty Odessa...  
There skies are mostly clear.  
There trade is brisk and strong,  
filling the merchantmen's sails;  
and the air is heavy with smells of Europe.  
The whole place glows with southern brilliance,  
shimmering with colour, variety, life.  
The language of golden Italy  
rings out in the cheerful streets;  
proud Slavs walk there, 10  
and Frenchmen, Spaniards,  
Armenians, Greeks,  
ponderous Moldavians – and Moor Alí,  
Egyptian-born pirate (retired).
- [21] Our friend Tumánsky described  
Odessa in musical verses;  
but at that time his view of the city  
was over-kind.  
No sooner arrived, he set off alone,  
as poets will, lorgnette in hand, 20  
for a cliff-top stroll –  
and soon he'd composed  
a poem in praise of Odessa's gardens.  
All fine – though in actual fact  
it's bare steppe everywhere!  
Only here and there have recent efforts  
compelled young twigs in the heat of the day  
to give some forcible shade.



- [22] А где, бишь, мой рассказ несвязный?  
В Одессе пыльной, я сказал. 30  
Я б мог сказать: в Одессе грязной –  
И тут бы, право, не солгал.  
В году недель пять-шесть Одесса,  
По воле бурного Зевеса,  
Потоплена, запружена,  
В густой грязи погружена.  
Все дома на аршин загрязнут,  
Лишь на ходулях пешеход  
По улице дерзает вброд;  
Кареты, люди тонут, вязнут, 40  
И в дрожках вол, рога склоня,  
Сменяет хилого коня.
- [23] Но уж дробит камня молот,  
И скоро звонкой мостовой  
Покроется спасенный город,  
Как будто кованой броней.  
Однако в сей Одессе влажной  
Еще есть недостаток важный;  
Чего б вы думали? – воды.  
Потребны тяжкие труды... 50  
Что ж? это небольшое горе,  
Особенно, когда вино  
Без пошлины привезено.  
Но солнце южное, но море...  
Чего ж вам более, друзья?  
Благословенные края!
- [24] Бывало, пушка зоревая  
Лишь только грянет с корабля,  
С крутого берега сбегая,  
Уж к морю отправляюсь я. 60  
Потом за трубкой раскаленной,  
Волной соленой оживленный,  
Как мусульман в своем раю,  
С восточной гущей кофе пью.  
Иду гулять. Уж благосклонный  
Открыт Casino; чашек звон  
Там раздается; на балкон  
Маркёр выходит полусонный  
С метлой в руках, и у крыльца  
Уже сошлись два купца. 70
- [22] But, sorry, I've digressed!  
In "dusty Odessa" I had said. 30  
I could have said "muddy Odessa" –  
and, really, I wouldn't have lied.  
For five or six weeks of the year,  
the storm god Zeus wills that Odessa  
be swamped and flooded,  
drowned in thick mud.  
Each house is two foot deep in mire.  
Pedestrians need stilts  
before they dare to ford the street.  
Coaches and townsfolk flounder, founder; 40  
and oxen with lowered horns  
pull carriages in place of puny horses.
- [23] But rescue's at hand! Already  
are sledgehammers smashing stone slabs;  
the city will soon be protected with resonant pavements,  
as though with armour plating.  
In wet Odessa, though,  
there's one important shortage.  
Shortage of what, do you suppose? Of water!  
"Major construction works are needed..." 50  
But why? It's no great hardship,  
especially when wine's  
imported duty-free!  
Yes, southern sun, the sea...  
what more could you want, my friends?  
Charmed lands indeed!
- [24] In my day, the gun had no sooner  
roared its dawn salvo from the guardship  
than I'd run down the cliffs  
and head for the sea. And after that, 60  
enlivened by the salty waves,  
I'd sit behind a freshly lighted pipe,  
just like a Muslim in his paradise,  
and drink a coffee thick with eastern grounds.  
I'd take a walk. By now the casino club  
would, obligingly, be open. From there you'd hear  
cups jingling – and out onto the terrace  
the billiard-room attendant, half asleep,  
would come with broom in hand; and by the entrance steps  
already two merchants would have met. 70

- [25] Глядишь – и площадь запестрела.  
 Всё оживилось; здесь и там  
 Бегут за делом и без дела,  
 Однако больше по делам.  
 Дитя расчета и отваги,  
 Идет купец взглянуть на флаги,  
 Проведать, шлют ли небеса  
 Ему знакомы паруса.  
 Какие новые товары  
 Вступили нынче в карантин? 80  
 Пришли ли бочки жданных вин?  
 И что чума? и где пожары?  
 И нет ли голода, войны  
 Или подобной новизны?
- [26] Но мы, ребята без печали,  
 Среди заботливых купцов,  
 Мы только устриц ожидали  
 От цареградских берегов.  
 Что устрицы? пришли! О радость!  
 Летит обжорливая младость 90  
 Глотать из раковин морских  
 Затворниц жирных и живых,  
 Слегка обрызгнутых лимоном.  
 Шум, споры – легкое вино  
 Из погребов принесено  
 На стол услужливым Отоном;  
 Часы летят, а грозный счет  
 Меж тем невидимо растет.
- [27] Но уж темнеет вечер синий,  
 Пора нам в оперу скорей: 100  
 Там упоительный Россини,  
 Европы баловень – Орфей.  
 Не внемля критике суровой,  
 Он вечно тот же, вечно новый,  
 Он звуки льет – они кипят,  
 Они текут, они горят,  
 Как поцелуи молодые,  
 Все в неге, в пламени любви,  
 Как зашипевшего Аи  
 Струя и брызги золотые... 110  
 Но, господа, позволено ль  
 С вином равнять do-re-mi-sol?
- [25] You'd see the square, too, full of colour;  
 the town had sprung to life.  
 People rushed to and fro on business or no business –  
 but mostly busy anyhow!  
 Merchants, born to risk and calculation,  
 were on their way to inspect ships' flags,  
 to learn if Heaven had sent them  
 the vessels they'd been banking on.  
 Which cargoes, freshly come,  
 were undergoing clearance by port-health? 80  
 Had the expected casks of wine come in?  
 What news of plagues? Where'd there been conflagrations?  
 And weren't there famines, wars  
 and suchlike fresh disasters?
- [26] Amid those anxious merchants,  
 we carefree youngsters, on the other hand,  
 were just awaiting oysters  
 from the beds round Istanbul.  
 "What about oysters? They've arrived! Oh joy!"  
 And off we'd fly, young gluttons, 90  
 to swallow down those plump recluses  
 live from their seashells,  
 with lemon lightly sprinkled.  
 Then uproar, argument – Automne, ever attentive,  
 had placed on our table a light-bodied wine  
 fresh from the cellars.  
 The hours flew by; and all the while  
 the awesome bill, unheeded, mounted up.
- [27] But soon the evening dimmed to indigo –  
 time now to hurry to the opera. 100  
 Rossini's on there with his heady tunes,  
 darling of Europe, Orpheus of today.  
 He pays no heed to hostile critics –  
 always the same, yet always fresh!  
 He pours forth melodies  
 that fizz and froth and sizzle –  
 like youthful lovers' kisses,  
 lingering, incandescent;  
 or like the hissing streams and golden spray  
 of champagne from Ай... 110  
 (But, gentlemen, are we allowed  
 to liken notes of music to a wine?)

[28] А только ль там очарований?  
 А разыскательный лорнет?  
 А закулисные свиданья?  
 А prima donna? а балет?  
 А ложа, где, красой блистая,  
 Негоцианка молодая,  
 Самолюбива и томна,  
 Толпой рабов окружена? 120  
 Она и внемлет и не внемлет  
 И каватине, и мольбам,  
 И шутке с лестью пополам...  
 А муж – в углу за нею дремлет,  
 Впросонках фора закричит,  
 Зевнет и – снова захрапит.

[29] Финал гремит; пустеет зала;  
 Шумя, торопится разъезд;  
 Толпа на площадь побежала  
 При блеске фонарей и звезд; 130  
 Сыны Авзонии счастливой  
 Слегка поют мотив игривый,  
 Его невольно затвердив,  
 А мы ревом речитатив.  
 Но поздно. Тихо спит Одесса;  
 И бездыханна и тепла  
 Немая ночь. Луна взошла,  
 Прозрачно-легкая завеса  
 Объемлет небо. Всё молчит;  
 Лишь море Черное шумит... 140

[30] Итак, я жил тогда в Одессе...

## 355

## ПРОЗЕРПИНА

Плещут волны Флегетона,  
 Своды Тартара дрожат,  
 Кони бледного Плутона  
 Быстро к нимфам Пелиона  
 Из Аида бога мчат.  
 Вдоль пустынного залива  
 Прозерпина вслед за ним,  
 Равнодушна и ревнива,

[28] Music was not the only fascination there.  
 What of those prying opera glasses?  
 those backstage assignations?  
 The prima donna, the ballet?  
 And what of the box,  
 where a businessman's young wife  
 (so vain, so yielding)  
 gleamed beautifully amidst a mob of devotees? 120  
 She heard, and didn't hear, the aria;  
 she heard, and didn't hear, their pleas,  
 their banter mixed in equal part with flattery...  
 The husband? He dozed on at the back behind her,  
 half-woke to shout "encore" –  
 then yawned and snored again.

[29] Thunderous finale over, the theatre emptied;  
 carriages clattered as they rushed away.  
 By light of lanterns and the stars  
 crowds flocked into the square. 130  
 Young revellers from Italy  
 were crooning a catchy tune  
 they couldn't get from mind;  
 we others roared a recitative...  
 But now it's late. Odessa's sleeping softly.  
 The voiceless night  
 is warm and muggy.  
 The moon is up; a thin, transparent veil  
 enshrouds the sky. No sound is heard,  
 save for the Black Sea plashing on the shore... 140

[30] And so I lived then in Odessa... RC

## 355

## PROSERPINE

Waves on Phlegethon are tossing,  
 shuddering are Hades' halls.  
 Pallid Pluto's team of horses  
 speed the god of death away  
 for a tryst with friendly nymphs.  
 Making her own way behind him  
 by those empty waters, rode  
 goddess Proserpine, his consort,

Потекла путем одним.  
 Пред богинею колена 10  
 Робко юноша склонил.  
 И богиням льстит измена:  
 Прозерпине смертный мил.  
 Ада гордая царица  
 Взором юношу зовет,  
 Обняла – и колесница  
 Уж к Аиду их несет:  
 Мчатся, облаком одеты;  
 Видят вечные дуга,  
 Элизей и томной Леты 20  
 Усыпленные брега.  
 Там бессмертье, там забвенье,  
 Там утехам нет конца.  
 Прозерпина в упоенье,  
 Без порфиры и венца,  
 Повинуется желаньям,  
 Предаёт его лобзаньям  
 Сокровенные красы,  
 В сладострастной неге тонет  
 И молчит и томно стонет... 30  
 Но бегут любви часы:  
 Плещут волны Флегетона,  
 Своды Тартара дрожат:  
 Кони бледного Плутона  
 Быстро мчат его назад.  
 И Кереры дочь уходит.  
 И счастливца за собой  
 Из Элизия выводит  
 Потаенною тропой;  
 И счастливца отпирает 40  
 Осторожною рукой  
 Дверь, откуда вылетает  
 Сновидений ложный рой.

## 356

## АКВИЛОН

Зачем ты, грозный аквилон,  
 Тростник болотный долу клонишь?  
 Зачем на дальний небосклон  
 Ты облачко столь гневно гонишь?

listless, jealous and alone.  
 In the goddess' path a youngster 10  
 shyly dropped down on his knees.  
 Even goddesses are tempted:  
 mortal youth took this one's fancy,  
 so the underworld's proud queen  
 gave the lad a look of welcome,  
 took him in her arms, then off they  
 both sped in the coach to Hades.  
 Wrapped in cloud they raced along,  
 through the Blessed Fields, past Lethe's 20  
 somnolent and sluggish stream,  
 lighting in Elysium,  
 place where heroes live, forgetful,  
 lives of everlasting bliss.  
 Proserpine, ecstatic now,  
 shed her queenly robes and crown,  
 and, surrendering to desire,  
 yielded her once hidden beauties  
 to the youngster's kisses, whilst  
 swooning in intense delight,  
 falling silent, faintly moaning... 30  
 but love's hours were running short...  
 Waves on Phlegethon are tossing,  
 shuddering are Hades' halls.  
 Pallid Pluto's team of horses  
 speed the god of death back home.  
 Time for Proserpine's departure:  
 from Elysium she led him,  
 happy lad, back up to earth  
 by a footpath little known.  
 Then the lad, still happy, opened 40  
 gingerly the ivory door –  
 door (alas) that lets swarm through  
 all those dreams that don't come true. RC

## 356

## AQUILO

Why is it, fearsome Aquilo,  
 you flatten reeds against the ground?  
 Why do you furiously blow  
 a little cloud to heaven's bound?

Недавно черных туч грядой  
Свод неба глухо облекался,  
Недавно дуб над высотой  
В красе надменной величался...

Но ты поднялся, ты взыграл,  
Ты прошумел грозой и славой –  
И бурны тучи разогнал,  
И дуб низвергнул величавый.

10

Пускай же солнца ясный лик  
Отныне радостью блистает,  
И облачком зефир играет,  
И тихо зыблется тростник.

357

## К МОРЮ

Прощай, свободная стихия!  
В последний раз передо мной  
Ты катишь волны голубые  
И блещешь гордою красой.

Как друга ропот заунывный.  
Как зов его в прощальный час,  
Твой грустный шум, твой шум призывный  
Услышал я в последний раз.

Моей души предел желанный!  
Как часто по берегам твоим  
Бродил я тихий и туманный  
Заветным умыслом томим!

10

Как я любил твои отзывы,  
Глухие звуки, бездны глас  
И тишину в вечерний час,  
И своенравные порывы!

Смиренный парус рыбарей,  
Твоею прихотью хранимый,  
Скользит отважно средь зыбей:  
Но ты взыграл, неодолимый,  
И стая тонет кораблей.

20

Not long ago the louring sky  
hung overcast and dully glowered,  
not long ago upon the height  
an oak, still proud and stately, towered.

You rose, though, and, exulting loud,  
in awesome majesty you spoke –  
you put to flight the heavy clouds  
and overthrew that mighty oak.

10

From now on may the sun display  
his cheering face and shine forth brightly,  
may Zephyr waft the small cloud lightly,  
and gently may the reed bed sway.

RC

357

## TO THE SEA

Farewell, free element! Once more,  
for one last moment to remember,  
you roll blue waves against the shore  
and glitter in your pride and splendour.

Like pleas of one who, heaving sighs,  
entreats a parting friend to hear,  
your mournful, your beseeching cries  
for one last moment reach my ear.

The homeland of my spirit's choosing!  
How often by your mighty stream  
I wandered, mute and darkly musing,  
still haunted by a cherished dream!

10

O how I loved your muffled calls,  
the voice of bottomless recesses,  
the calm that reigns as evening falls  
and your impetuous excesses!

A fisher's humble sail, serene,  
by nothing but your whim upheld,  
will glide across your rippling stream,  
but when your waters rise supreme,  
a host of ships is overwhelmed.

20