

# 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.