

ЗАГРАЙ, ТИ ЦИГАНЕ СТАРИЙ

Заграй ти, цигане старий,
Такої, як гадаю,
І грошей дам, вина теж дам,
Всього, що тілки маю.

Бо лютий біль оттут горить,
І груди розпинає,
А бідне серце так болить,
Що гине, умирає.

Чаруй мені минувші дні,
Літа ті молодії,
Прегарні золотаві сні,
Той рай і ті надії.

Чаруй, старий! Як потечуть
Дві сльози по личеньку,
То легше стане на душі
І легше на серденьку.



PLAY, O, PLAY, OLD GYPSY, PLAY

*Play, oh, play, old gypsy, play
The dear songs of my youth
This coin, this wine, all mine is thine
Soft play your ancient crwth*

*My aching breast is as on fire
My soul is broken, crying
The pain just burns and burns and burns
My heart is surely dying*

*Your violin enraptures me
Like sips of sweet vermouth
The strings you bow so soft and low
Help ease the sad, sad truth*

*Oh, play me back to a yesterday
Becharmed with golden dreams
So play and pray for heaven's sway
And hope in glorious streams*

*So, sing, old gypsy, sing your chant
As tears spill down my face
Soothe the spirit, comfort lend,
And grant my poor heart grace*

PLAY, O, PLAY, OLD GYPSY, PLAY

*Play, oh, play, old gypsy, play
The sweet songs of my youth
This coin, this wine, all mine is thine
Just bow your ancient crwth*

*My aching breast is as on fire
My soul is broken, crying
The pain just burns and burns and burns
My heart is surely dying*

*Your violin enraptures me
Like sips of sweet vermouth
The strings you bow so soft and low
Help ease the sad, sad truth*

*Oh, play me back to a yesterday
Becharmed with golden dreams
So play and pray for heaven's sway
And hope in glorious streams*

*So, sing, old gypsy, sing your chant
As tears spill down my face
Soothe the spirit, comfort lend,
And grant my poor heart grace*

PLAY, O, PLAY, OLD GYPSY, PLAY

*Play, oh, play, old gypsy, play
The dear songs of my youth
My coin is thine, yours is my wine
Bow soft your ancient crwth*

*My aching breast is as on fire
My soul is broken, crying
The pain just burns and burns and burns
My heart is surely dying*

*Your violin entrances me
Like tingling of vermouth
Your melodies stir memories
And in my heart a truth*

*A truth so deep. so rich, so dear
That speaks of yesterday
How did we prove and vow our love
For ages and a day*

*So, sing, old gypsy, sing your chant
As tears spill down my face
Soothe the spirit, comfort lend,
And grant my poor heart grace*

For me, this Ukrainian melody and the words associated with it have always evoked a deep sense of sadness as they appear to embody a plea, a prayer, for a return to youth and yesteryear. The translations I humbly offer seem a bit stilted to me, but I would rather risk that criticism than leave this page without attempting to pass along to those of my readers who have no knowledge of the Ukrainian idiom at least some of that sense of sweet sadness that can fill an aging heart, as this melody does for me.

Improvements on my interpretations are happily encouraged.