The Troika

Why do you gaze so eagerly at the road,
Apart from your merry friends?
Surely your heart has sounded alarm—
Your whole face suddenly flushed.

And why do you run so hastily
After the troika that has sped past?..
At you, with a handsome hand on hip,
A passing cornet stared.

It's no wonder to gaze at you,
Everyone would gladly love you:
A scarlet ribbon winds playfully
In your hair, black as night;

Through the blush on your swarthy cheek
A light down breaks through,
From beneath your arched eyebrow
A sly little eye looks out boldly.

One glance of the dark-browed wild girl,
Full of charms that set the blood afire,
Will ruin an old man with gifts,
Will cast love into a young man's heart.

You'll live and celebrate to your heart's content,
Life will be full and easy...
But that is not the lot that fell to you:
You'll marry a slovenly man.

Having tied an apron under your arms,
You'll bind your breast misshapenly,
Your fussy husband will beat you
And your mother-in-law will bend you to triple ruin.

From black and hard labor
You'll fade before you've bloomed,
You'll sink into unbroken sleep,
You'll nurse, work and eat.

And in your face, full of movement,
Full of life, there will suddenly appear
An expression of dull endurance
And a senseless, eternal fright.

And they'll bury you in a damp grave,
When you've passed your heavy path,
Your uselessly extinguished strength
And your breast warmed by nothing.

So don't gaze with longing at the road
And don't hurry after the troika,
And the melancholy alarm in your heart
Hush forever as soon as you can!

You'll never catch the mad troika:
The horses are strong, well-fed, and spirited,
And the driver is drunk, and to another
The young cornet is racing like a whirlwind...