

VLADIMIR VYSOTSKY - I Love You Now

I love you now - not secretly, out loud!
Not "after... until" - I burn in your light!
Sobbing or laughing, but I love you *now*!
I want no past; future's out of sight.
"I loved": a grave holds less despair!
It clips my wings and hobbles hopes.
Though the poet of poets might declare
"I loved you - and love still, perhaps..."

Thus they speak of wilted things -
Condescending pity for the lost.
Thus they speak of dethroned kings,
Regretful for a thing that's past;
For urges stripped of urgency,
When "I love you" loses currency.

I love you now - vows can't explain,
My time is now - I won't cut its vein!
This time, ongoing, while the moment lasts-
I fear no future and I breathe no past.
I'll come to you over sea or land,
Chained or headless, I'll come still!
Only don't mistakenly demand
To 'I love you' be added 'always will'.

That "always" has a bitter taste,
Forged signatures and rot and waste,
A get-out clause, a 'just in case',
Dull poison at the glass's base,
And a slap in the present's face,
Where 'I love now' in doubt is placed.

My French dream overflows with time,
The past's not so, the future's scarier
I'm pilloried in the stocks and I'm
Called up to the language barrier.
The language gap! A state defective!
Together we can leap this fence,
I love you even when it's tense:
In the future and the past perfective.