

[9] Come spring, the womenfolk clean house,
Preparing for the holy Feast.
With myrrh, aloof from everyone,
I will anoint Thy most pure feet.

I'm looking everywhere to find
Thy sandals. I'm blinded by my tears.
My hair has fallen like a pall
In loosened coils and blind my eyes.

I have placed Thy feet upon my skirt
And washed them, Jesus, with my tears.
I wound my necklace round Thy feet;
I dried, I hid them with my hair.

I see the future clearly now
As if the world has come to a stop,
And I can prophesy events
Like an ancient sibyl in a trance.

The veil will tremble in the Temple,
While we will huddle, crouch in fear.
The earth will rock beneath our feet
Perhaps from pity just for me.

The watchmen will be changed again,
And horsemen will be riding by.
A whirlwind, springing in a storm,
Thy Cross will strive to reach the sky.

I'll fall before it, faint beside
The Crucifix, I'll gnaw my lips.
Thy arms, O Lord, upon on the Cross
Embrace too many in the world.

For whom Thy life, Thy open arms?
For whom such agony, such power?
Are there so many souls to save,
So many hamlets, rivers, woods?

Three days of agony shall pass,
Three days of frightful emptiness,
But with my faith I shall behold
The hour of Resurrection come.

Poem from "Dr. Zhivago"
by Boris Pasternak
Trans. Eugene M. Kayden
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