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Elegy translated by Robley Wilson, Jr.

Aleksandr Pushkin

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ELEGY

The way the hell-bent years consume my pleasure
Numbs me like a hangover—a vague pressure
My mind wakes with. Time is like wine, in fact:
The older it gets, the stronger its effect,
And age is like a sea I'm pledged to drinking—
Or I'm a damned swimmer, forever sinking.

Is this a toast to death? Oh no, my friends.
I need to live; my suffering depends
On it. Distilled from all the hours of wasting
Are bound to be some moments worth the tasting:
A few sweet songs, a story told to pass
The time, a tear or two shed in my glass—
And perhaps by the time I've drunk life dry
Even love will drop around to smile goodbye.

*translated by
Robley Wilson, Jr.*