

**'Der Tod Und Das Madchen'**

There they go, Death  
and the maiden; at first glance  
an unfortunate pairing,  
a sorry partnership.

It need not be in writing.  
Lacking specific agreement  
profits are to be divided equally;  
or, of course, losses.

By these presents assign you  
songs radiating from the hills:  
voices, a tumult of voices  
praising, praising.

Duly deliver up  
out of my safe keeping  
store of the winsome graces,  
the fragrances and smiles.

And take this bone;  
hand it to the man with the spade.  
He calls a skull a skull  
He will know what to do.

—*John V. Hicks*