

DAVID ARBURY

AT THE MANGER

FOR 8-PART CHORUS

In 2005, conductor William Culverhouse approached me to write a Christmas piece for his choir, the *Schola Cantorum* of St. Matthew's Cathedral. He suggested I look at Auden's *For the Time Being...*, an oratorio written for Benjamin Britten, though Britten died before composing any music for it. I found a passage in it that I knew immediately would be my text. The scene is Mary at the manger singing to the baby Jesus.

*Oh shut your bright eyes that mine must endanger with their watchfulness.
Protected by its shade, escape from my care.
What can you discover from my tender look but how to be afraid?
Love can but confirm the more it would deny.
Close your bright eye.*

*Sleep. What have you learned from the womb that bore you,
but an anxiety your Father cannot feel?
Sleep. What will the flesh that I gave do for you,
or my mother love but tempt you from His will?
Why was I chosen to teach His son to weep?
Little one, sleep.*

*Dream. In human dreams, earth ascends to heaven
where no one need pray nor ever feel alone.
In your first few hours of life here,
oh have you chosen already what death must be your own?
How soon will you start on the Sorrowful Way?
Dream while you may.*

David Arbury (b. 1973)

David Arbury grew up in Washington, D. C. where he sang as a boy treble at Washington National Cathedral in the Cathedral Choir of Men and Boys. He remained with the choir for eighteen years and in that time sang with every voice part. He has worked at the Music Division of the Library of Congress, co-founded an independent record label, conducted small ensembles, and performed extensively as a bass and percussion player. He has acted as composer-in-residence and received commissions and grants from numerous ensembles and organizations including the American Composers Forum, the Arizona Commission on the Arts, and the Phoenix Arts Commission. His compositions for concert hall, church, dance, and theater have been performed throughout the United States, as well as in Denmark, France, and Italy.

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N.B: Please report any performances by email to www.davidarbury.com. This allows the composer to update his performance records, helping him to find grants to write more music. Also, he likes hearing from you.

for Sarah

At the Manger

W. H. Auden

DAVID ARBURY

Moderate ♩ = 92

mp

Soprano

O shut your bright eyes that mine must en - dan - ger with their watch - ful - ness;

mp

Alto

O shut your bright

mp

Tenor

O shut your bright

mp

Bass

O shut your bright

Moderate ♩ = 92

(for rehearsal only)

8

mf

S.

pro - tec - ted by its shade es - cape from my care: what can you dis - cov - er from

pp

A.

eyes. (ooh)

pp

T.

eyes. (ooh)

pp

B.

eyes. (ooh)

15

S. *my ten - der look but how to be a - fraid? Love can but con - firm the more it*

A.

T.

B.

22

Slower ♩ = 84
pp

S. *would de ny. Sleep.*

S. *mp*
What have you learned from the womb that bore

A. *mp*
What have you learned from the womb that bore

A. *pp*
Sleep.

T. *mp* *pp*
Close your bright eye. Sleep.

B. *mp* *pp*
Close your bright eye. Sleep.

32

S. Oh, Sleep.

S. you but an an - xi - e - ty your Fa - ther can-not feel? What will the flesh that I

A. you but an an - xi - e - ty your Fa - ther can-not feel? What will the flesh that I

A. Oh, Sleep.

T. Oh, Sleep.

B. Oh, Sleep.

Piano accompaniment with triplets and complex chordal textures.

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poco rall.

42

S. *mp* Or my mo-ther love, but tempt you__ from His will?__ Why__ *mf*

S. *mp* gave do for you, Or my mo-ther love, but tempt you__ from His will?__ Why__

A. *mp* gave do for you, Or my mo-ther love, but tempt you__ from His will?__ Why__

A. *mp* Or my mo-ther love, but tempt you__ from His will?__ Why__

T.

B.

51

S. — was I cho - sen to teach His Son to weep? —

S. — was I cho - sen? Lit - tle One, sleep. — *p*

A. — was I cho - sen?

A. — was I cho - sen?

T. — — — — — Lit - tle One, sleep. — *p*

B. — — — — — Lit - tle One, sleep. — *p*

Piano accompaniment with chords and bass line.

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Peaceful ♩ = 66

61 *mp*

S. In hu-man dreams__ earth as - cends to__ heav'n where no one need

pp Dream._____ *mp* where

A. *pp* Dream._____ Dream._____

A. *pp* Dream._____ *mp* where

T. *mp* In hu-man dreams earth as - cends to heav'n where no one need

pp Dream._____ Dream._____


B. *pp* Dream._____ Dream._____

B. *pp* Dream._____ Dream._____

69

S. 
 pray nor ev - er feel a - lone. In your first few hours of life here, O have you


S. 
 no one need pray nor ev - er feel a - lone. In your first few hours of life here, O have you

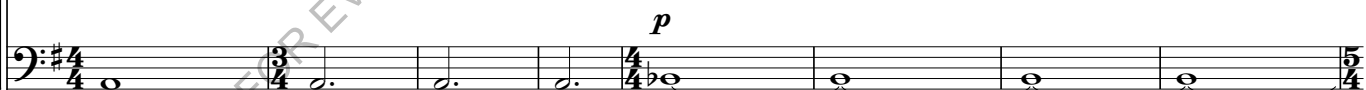
A. 
 Dream. *p*

A. 
 no one need pray nor ev - er feel a - lone. In your first few hours of life here, O have you

T. 
 pray nor ev - er feel a - lone. In your first few hours of life here, O have you

T. 
 In your first few hours of life here, O have you *mp*

B. 
 In your first few hours of life here, O have you *mp*

B. 
 Dream. *p*


 Musical accompaniment for piano, including treble and bass staves.

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rall.

molto rit..

77 *f* *p*

S. *f* *p*

cho - sen al - read - y what death must be your own?

S. *f* *p*

cho - sen al - read - y what death must be your own?

A. *f* *p*

A. *f* *p*

cho - sen al - read - y what death must be your own?

T. *f* *p* *mf* **molto rit.**

cho - sen al - read - y what death must be your own? How soon will you start on the

T. *f* *p* *mf*

cho - sen al - read - y what death must be your own? How soon will you start on the

B. *f* *p* *mf*

cho - sen al - read - y what death must be your own? How soon will you start on the

B. *mf*

How soon will you start on the

Freely, not too slow

83

S. Dream. Dream while you may.

S. Dream. Dream while you may.

A. *mp* Dream while you may. *p* Dream while you may.

A. *mp* Dream while you may. *p* Dream while you may.

T. Sor - row - ful Way? *p* Dream while you may.

T. Sor - row - ful Way? *p* Dream while you may.

B. Sor - row - ful Way? *p* Dream while you may.

B. Sor - row - ful Way? *p* Dream while you may.

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molto rit.

88

S. Dream while you may. Dream while you may.

S. Dream while you may. Dream while you may.

A. Dream while you may. Dream while you may.

A. Dream while you may. Dream while you may.

T. Dream while you may. Dream while you may.

T. Dream while you may. Dream while you may.

B. Dream while you may. Dream while you may.

B. Dream while you may. Dream while you may.

Piano accompaniment: The piano part consists of chords and arpeggiated figures in both hands, providing harmonic support for the vocal lines.

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