

Gwyneth Walker

The Day is Done

a musical setting of the Henry W.
Longfellow poem *The Day is Done*

for Children's Chorus, SATB Chorus,
Flute, Strings & Percussion (or Piano)

commissioned in 2018 by The Bach Choir of Bethlehem, PA, in celebration of the 25th anniversary of Bel Canto Youth Chorus (founded 1993) and the merger of Bel Canto Youth Chorus with The Bach Choir of Bethlehem (founded 1898)

premiered on May 11, 2019 in Bethlehem, PA

The poem, *The Day is Done*, speaks of evening as the time when poetry and music come alive. They soothe the cares of day. The soul hears the music of *celestial harmonies*. This is *a benediction that follows after prayer*.

The musical setting presents the opening, beautiful lyrics in the children's voices, selected for their lightness and purity of tone. *The day is done, and the darkness falls from the wings of night*. These phrases, or slight variations thereof, return as refrains throughout the song, always falling gently.

The verses alternate between the men's and women's voices, with the children interjecting refrains or offering commentary in the background. Finally, the children interrupt the SATB dialogue with exclamations of *a song! a song! a song!* These lead to the climax of the song, given to the children's chorus, singing *And the night shall be filled with music*. All voices then join together in celebration: *Our song shall fill the night*.

The accompaniment (originally composed for piano, later adapted for flute, strings, and percussion) delights in text-setting with *sparkling arpeggios* depicting the *celestial harmonies*, and filigree patterns for the star-filled night sky.

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for Children's Chorus (SA), Adult Chorus (SATB) and Piano

“The Day is Done”
Henry Wadsworth Longfellow (1807–1882)
adapted by the composer

Gwyneth Walker

Moderate tempo ♩ = 120

Piano



p with pedal *simile*

The piano introduction is in 4/4 time with a key signature of two sharps (D major). It begins with a piano (*p*) dynamic and includes a 'with pedal' instruction. The melody in the right hand features a series of eighth notes, while the left hand provides a simple accompaniment of quarter notes. A 'simile' instruction is placed over the final measure.

4 A *unis. p gently*

Ch

The day is done, and the



The chorus begins at measure 4 with the instruction 'unis. p gently'. The vocal line (Ch) starts with a whole rest followed by the lyrics 'The day is done, and the'. The piano accompaniment continues with a similar accompaniment pattern as the introduction.

7

Ch

dark - ness falls from the wings of night, _____ as a



The chorus continues at measure 7 with the lyrics 'dark - ness falls from the wings of night, _____ as a'. The piano accompaniment features a more complex texture with sustained chords and a wavy line in the right hand. A 'Ped.' instruction is located at the bottom of the piano part.

10

Ch

feath-er float-ing down - ward from an ea - gle in her flight.

Ped.

14

Ch

The day is done, and the dark - ness falls from the wings of

18

Ch

night.

S
A

p

1

33 D

Ch wings of night.

T *unis. mp espr.*
B A feel - ing of sad - ness and

mp

37 *mp espr.*
S it re - sem - bles sor - row

T long - ing that is not a - kin to pain,

41 E *mp*
Ch Yet there is sad - ness. . .

S on - ly as the mist is like the rain.
A *gently, as mist falling*

E

45

Ch *when the day is done, day is done.*

49

Ch *Ah,*

S *mf cantabile*
A *Come, read to me some po - em, some sim - ple words that*

F *unis. p in the background*

53

Ch *Ah,* *unis.* *eve - ning...*

S *say*

T *mf cantabile*
B *that the mu - sic of the eve - ning can soothe the cares of*

57 **G** *mf*

Ch day. When dark - ness falls, and the day is

T day.

B

61 *p*

Ch done, day is done. *p*

T done, day is done. *p*

B No *p*

No *p*

65 **H** *with increasing rhythmic energy*

T words from the grand old mas - ters, nor from the bards sub -

B words from the grand old mas - ters, nor from the bards sub -

H *with increasing rhythmic energy*

68 *accel. poco a poco*

Ch

Alto *mf*

whose dis - tant foot-steps ech - o through the cor - ri - dors of

S

Alto *mf*

whose dis - tant foot-steps ech - o through the cor - ri - dors of

T

lime, whose dis - tant foot-steps ech - o through the cor - ri - dors of

B

lime, whose dis - tant foot-steps ech - o through the cor - ri - dors of

mf

accel. poco a poco

I **Faster** ♩ = 144
[marching character of the music]

72

f

Ch
Like the strains of march-ing mu - sic, mu - sic, their
time. Like the strains of march-ing mu - sic, mu - sic, their

f

S
Like the strains of march-ing mu - sic, their might - y words sug -

f

A
time. Like the strains of march-ing mu - sic, their might - y words sug -

f
unis.

T
time. Like the strains of march-ing mu - sic, their might - y words sug -

f

B
time. Like the strains of march-ing mu - sic, their might - y words sug -

I **Faster** ♩ = 144
[marching character of the music]

f

76 *rit.* [strong break]

Ch *p* words sug - gest life's end - less toil and en - dea - vor;

S *p* gest life's end - less toil and en - dea - vor; *unis. p* for

A *p* gest life's end - less toil and en - dea - vor; *unis. p* But now I long for

T *p* gest life's end - less toil and en - dea - vor;

B *p* gest life's end - less toil and en - dea - vor;

rit. [strong break]

80 *(slowly) p*

Ch , The day is done, and the

S rest. ,

A rest. ,

p

84 *accel.* **J** *a tempo* (♩ = 132)

Ch
 dark - ness falls from the wings of night.

accel. **J** *a tempo* (♩ = 132)

88

Ch

mf cantabile

91

94 **K** *mf*

S
 A
 Read from a hum - ble po - et whose songs come from the heart *mf*

T
 B

K

as

111 *unis.*

Ch
qui - et... care... and come like a ben - e -

S
qui - et... care... and come like a ben - e -

A
qui - et the rest - less pulse of care, *p* Hmm

T
qui - et the rest - less pulse of care, Hmm

B
qui - et the rest - less pulse of care, Hmm

115 *p* *with exuberance of celebratory song* *(p)*

Ch
dic - tion that fol - lows af - ter prayer. a song! a

S
dic - tion that fol - lows af - ter prayer.

A
dic - tion that fol - lows af - ter prayer.

T
that fol - lows af - ter prayer.

B
that fol - lows af - ter prayer.

with exuberance of celebratory song *(p)*

119 N

Ch
 song! a song! a song! a song! a
 a song! a song! a song! a song!

S
 A *mf*
 Then read from a trea - sured vol - ume the po - em of your

T
 B

N

123

Ch
 song! a song! a song! a
 a song! a song! a song!

S
 A
 choice,

T
 B *mf*
 and lend to the rhyme of the po - et the

126 *cresc.* *f* **O**

Ch song! a song! And the night shall be filled with

a song! And the night shall be filled with

S A

T B *cresc.* *f*

beau - ty of your voice.

cresc. *f* **O**

Ped.

129 *unis.* *p*

Ch mu - sic, Hmm

S A *f*

T B *unis. f*

shall fold their tents like

and the cares that in - fest the _ day

133 P

Ch *(p)*
and si - lent - ly steal a - way.

S
A *p*
phan - toms,

T *f*
For the night shall be filled with

B *f*
For the night shall be filled with

p P *f*

137 *f*

Ch mu - sic... high... *f*

S The

A *f* The
my song shall rise on high.

T mu - sic, my song shall rise on high.

B mu - sic,

140

Ch *chor - us . . .*

S
A *stars re - sound the chor - us of*

T
B

142

Ch *sky. . . Ah*

S
A *voi - ces 'cross the sky. The stars re - sound the*

T
B *Ah sky. The stars re - sound the*

p *f*

Q **Q**

Red.

145

Ch

S

A

T

B

chor - us. The heavens dance in de - light. We

chor - us. The heavens dance in de - light. We

light... We

rit.

148

Ch

S

A

T

B

lift our voice to - geth - er. Our song shall

lift our voice to - geth - er. Our song shall

lift our voice to - geth - er. Our song shall

lift our voice to - geth - er. Our song shall

rit. **Slower**

p

8va

rit.

154 *rit.*

Ch
shall fill the night.

S
shall fill the night.

A
shall fill the night.

T
shall fill the night.

B
shall fill the night.

rit.

3 3 3 3 5 5 5 5 5

8va-7

Ped.

5:00
September 30, 2018
New Canaan, Connecticut