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Composed for and dedicated to Norman and Shirley Scribner
and the singers in The Choral Arts Society, Washington, D.C.

THE SONG OF MARY AT THE MANGER

For eight-part chorus with optional organ accompaniment

W. H. AUDEN, from
the Christmas Oratorio,
'For the Time Being'

RICHARD DIRKSEN

Adagio $\text{♩} = 48$

Soprano I II

Alto I II

Tenor I II

Bass I II

All *ppp* molto legato

Close your bright eye,

All *ppp* molto legato

Close your bright eye, close your bright

† Organ

pp Strings, Flute

Ped. *pp* 16', 8'

I *ppp* molto legato

O shut your bright eyes

close your bright eye, close your

eye, close your bright eye, close

Solo Flute

p

† Optional Organ accompaniment.

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— that mine must en - dan - ger — With their watch - ful - ness;
bright eye, close your bright eye,
your bright eye, close your bright

The first system of the musical score consists of four staves. The top staff is a vocal line with lyrics. The second staff is another vocal line with lyrics. The third staff is a vocal line with lyrics. The fourth staff is a piano accompaniment line. The lyrics are: "— that mine must en - dan - ger — With their watch - ful - ness; bright eye, close your bright eye, your bright eye, close your bright".

pro - tect - ed by its shade. Es-cape — from my care: —
close your bright eye, close your
eye, close your bright eye, close

The second system of the musical score consists of four staves. The top staff is a vocal line with lyrics. The second staff is another vocal line with lyrics. The third staff is a vocal line with lyrics. The fourth staff is a piano accompaniment line. The lyrics are: "pro - tect - ed by its shade. Es-cape — from my care: — close your bright eye, close your eye, close your bright eye, close".

I (humming) *p* Hm - m - m - m . . .

II (humming) Hm - m - m - m . . .

pp *All p*

what can you dis -

pp bright eye, close your bright eye,

pp your bright eye, close your bright

cov - er — From my ten - der look but how to be a -

close your bright eye, close your

eye, close your bright eye, close

p

mp calando

fraid? Love can but con - firm — the more it would de -

p

bright eye, close your bright eye,

p

your bright eye, close your bright

mp

molto rit.

Sleep, —

pp (hushed)

ny. Close your bright eye. —

dim. *pp*

close your bright eye, close your bright eye. —

dim. *pp*

eye, close your bright eye, Hm - m - m ... Sleep, —

molto rit.

pp

a tempo

Sleep. *p* What have you learned

ppp lit - tle one, sleep,

ppp Sleep, lit - tle one, sleep,

ppp Sleep, lit - tle one, sleep,

p *All pp* lit - tle one, sleep, lit - tle one, sleep, lit - tle one,

a tempo

pp

from the womb that bore you But an an - xi - e - ty your

sleep, lit - tle one, sleep,

cresc. sleep, lit - tle one, sleep,

cresc. sleep, lit - tle one, sleep,

cresc. sleep, lit - tle one, sleep, lit - tle one, sleep, lit - tle one,

cresc.

Fa - ther can - not feel? All *mf*
ppp lit - tle one, sleep. Sleep. What will the flesh that I
mp Close your bright eye, Lit - tle one, sleep,
mp Close your bright eye, Lit - tle one, sleep,
mp Close your bright eye, Lit - tle one, sleep, lit - tle one,

The first system of the musical score consists of four staves. The top staff is a vocal line with lyrics: "Fa - ther can - not feel? All *mf* lit - tle one, sleep. Sleep. What will the flesh that I". The second and third staves are vocal lines with lyrics: "Close your bright eye, Lit - tle one, sleep,". The bottom staff is a piano accompaniment with lyrics: "Close your bright eye, Lit - tle one, sleep, lit - tle one,". The piano part features triplets and a *cresc.* marking.

mp gave do for you, Or my moth-er love, but tempt you
f lit - tle one, sleep, *p* sleep,
f lit - tle one, sleep, *p* sleep,
f sleep, lit - tle one, *p* sleep, lit - tle one, *p* sleep, lit - tle one,

The second system of the musical score consists of four staves. The top staff is a vocal line with lyrics: "gave do for you, Or my moth-er love, but tempt you". The second and third staves are vocal lines with lyrics: "lit - tle one, sleep, sleep,". The bottom staff is a piano accompaniment with lyrics: "sleep, lit - tle one, sleep, lit - tle one, sleep, lit - tle one,". The piano part features dynamic markings *f* and *p*.

from His will? _____ Why was I _____

lit - tle one, sleep, _____ Close your bright

lit - tle one, sleep, _____ Close your bright _____

sleep, lit - tle one, sleep, lit - tle one, Close your bright

f *All f*

cresc. *f*

cho - sen, _____ cho - sen, _____ cho - sen _____

eye, lit-tle one, _____ lit-tle one, dream. _____

eye, _____ lit-tle one, _____ lit-tle one, dream. _____

eye, lit-tle one, dream, lit-tle one, dream. *molto rit.*

p *p* *p*

molto rit.

16' *pp*
32'

p *l a piacere* *slower* *mp* *pp*

— to teach His Son to weep? —

All p *pp*

weep? —

All p *pp*

weep? —

All p

Close your bright

pp *ppp* *p* Ped.

Tempo I

(All) pp

Dream. — In hu-man dreams, — earth as-cends to

pp

Dream, — dream, — dream, — dream, —

pp

eye, close your bright eye, close your bright

Tempo I

p

pp

Heav - en — Where no one need pray nor ev - er feel a - lone. —
 dream, — dream, — dream, —
 eye, close your bright eye, close

poco rit. *a tempo* *molto*
 All *mp* —————
 In your first few hours of life here,
mp *molto*
 Hm, dream, —
mp *molto*
 dream, — dream, — dream, — and
mp *molto*
 your bright eye, close your bright

poco rit. *a tempo* *molto*

ff *ritenuto* *rall. dim.*

o — have you Cho - sen — al - read - y what death must be your own? —

ff *dim.*

dream, dream, bright

close — your — bright —

ff *dim.*

dream, — dream, — bright —

ff *dim.*

eye, bright eye, bright eye, bright

ff *ritenuto* *rall. dim.*

eye, dream — while you may, — dream —

mp

eye, — dream while you

mp All

eye, dream — while you may, — dream —

mp

eye, — bright eye, — dream while you

p

while you may, _____ *sempre calmando* dream _____ while you may, _____
p
may, dream while *sempre calmando* you may, _____
p
while you may, _____ dream _____ while you may, _____
sempre calmando
p
may, dream while you may, _____

sempre calmando

pp

Soli p (hushed)

How soon will you start on the

ppp

ppp

dream _____

ppp

dream _____

Soft Flute *ppp* (tr) b2 s p

ppp

Ped. *ppp*

while you may, _____ *sempre calmando* dream _____ while you may, _____
p
may, dream while *sempre calmando* you may, _____
p
while you may, _____ dream _____ while you may, _____
sempre calmando
p
may, dream while you may, _____
sempre calmando
pp

Soli p (hushed)
How soon will you start on the
ppp
dream _____
ppp
dream _____
Soft Flute *ppp* (2) *pp*
ppp
Ped. *ppp*

sor - row - ful way? *ppp*

p Lit - tle

div. *pp*

Dream,

All *pp*

Dream.

ppp

Man. *pp*

Dream. *pp* *ppp* *morendo*

Dream.

one *pp* dream. *ppp* *morendo*

dream.

Dream. *pp* *ppp* *morendo*

ppp *morendo*

ppp

Slowly release notes from bottom to top, holding the top B \sharp as long as possible, like the Bethlehem Star shining forever.