

THE HAPPY GRASS

Seán Doherty

2018

SATB div. and Piano

TEXT

The Happy Grass

Here, in their final quiet, the singers lie.
True to the dead, to the living true
The grass is growing as it always grew
Drinking every human cry
Like the rain of summer reaching the repose
Of singers long out of sight.
Will we ever know what the grass knows
Flourishing in green wisdom, green delight?
When delusions of communication cease
And we are victims once again
Of rumours the gossip wind is bringing
We'll celebrate the singers in their peace
Because above the graves of men
The happy grass is singing.

Brendan Kennelly (1936–2021),
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PROGRAMME NOTE

This piece celebrates the 120th anniversary of the foundation of the Culwick Choral Society. This remarkable continuity is captured in the poem 'The Happy Grass' by the renowned Irish poet Brendan Kennelly, which honours the eternal nature of song in society. A calm, reflective opening, which commemorates past singers, is contrasted with a *danse macabre* in which the text becomes muddled to reflect the 'delusions of communication' of speech, that the poet contrasts with the true communication of song. Finally, opening musical material returns, reflecting the cyclical nature of life, and assuring us that though life may pass away, the tradition of song is everlasting. This setting, therefore, will honour all singers—past, present, and future—of the Culwick Choral Society.

Duration: c. 5 mins

Commissioned by The Culwick Choral Society on the occasion of its 120th anniversary

The Happy Grass

Brendan Kennelly (1936-2021)

Seán Doherty (b. 1987)

Adagio ♩ = 60

SOPRANO

ALTO

TENOR

BASS

Piano

Adagio ♩ = 60

p 5

ff

Largo ♩ = 40 molto accel.

3

5 5 5 5 5 5

Tempo primo ♩ = 60

4

mf

mf

6 *f* *espress.*
Here, in their fi - nal qui - et, —

mf *espress.*
Here the

mf *espress.*
Here the

mf *espress.*
Here the

f 5 5 5 5 5 5

8 *mf*
the sing - ers lie. the sing - ers

f *mf*
sing - ers lie. in their fi - nal qui - et, —

f *mf*
sing - ers lie. in their fi - nal

f *mf*
sing - ers lie.

5 5

11

mf (♩ = 80)

lie. True to the

mp the sing-ers lie.

mp *mf* qui-et, the sing-ers lie. True to the

mp in their fi-nal qui-et, the sing-ers lie.

mf *mp* *p* (♩ = 80)

15

dead, to the liv-ing true,

mf True to the dead, to the liv-ing

dead, to the liv-ing true.

mf True to the dead, to the liv-ing

30 *mf* *mp* **Lento** ♩ = 50 **Tempo primo** ♩ = 60 *p*

True! The grass is grow - ing as it al - ways grew.

True! ...is grow - ing as it al - ways grew.

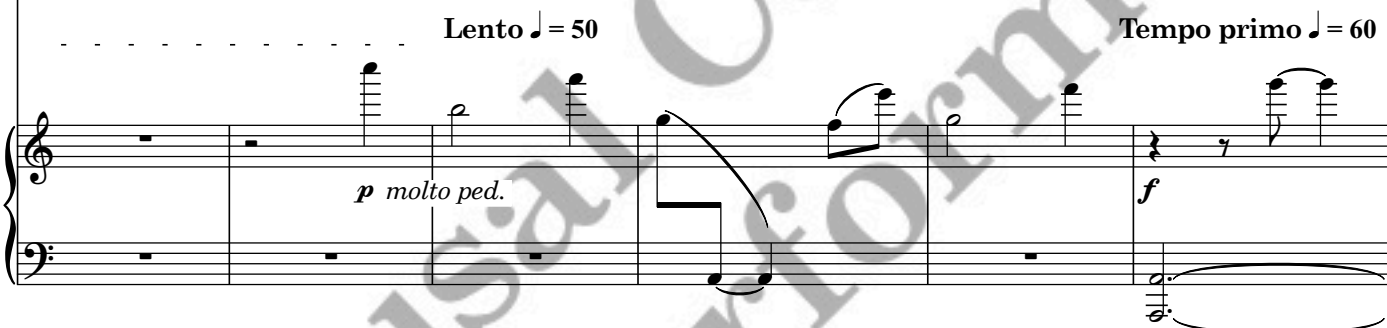
True! ...grow ing as it al - ways grew.

True! ...as it al - ways grew.



Lento ♩ = 50 **Tempo primo** ♩ = 60

p molto ped. *f*



36 *mp* *pp* *mf* *mf* *mf* *mf*

Drink - ing

Drink - ing

Drink - ing

Drink - ing

mp sub., like raindrops

♩ = ♩ (♩ = 50)



41

mf dolce

Drink-ing ev' - ry

p sub.

ev' - ry cry like rain of sum - mer reach - ing sing - ers. Drink - ing

p sub.

ev' - ry cry like rain of sum - mer reach - ing sing - ers. Drink - ing

p sub.

ev' - ry cry like rain of sum - mer reach - ing sing - ers. Drink - ing

48

hu - man cry like the rain of sum - mer reach-ing the re-pose of sing-ers long out of sight.

ev' - ry cry like rain of sum - mer reach - ing sing - ers.

ev' - ry cry like rain of sum - mer reach - ing sing - ers.

ev' - ry cry like rain of sum - mer reach - ing sing - ers.

54

Will we ev - er know what the grass knows

Drink - ing ev' - ry cry like rain of

Drink - ing ev' - ry cry like rain of

Drink - ing ev' - ry cry like rain of

58

Flour - ish - ing in green wis - dom, green de - light?

sum - mer reach - ing sing - ers.

sum - mer reach - ing sing - ers.

sum - mer reach - ing sing - ers.

61 *f marcato*

When de - lu - sions of com - mu - ni - ca - tion

f marcato

When de - lu - sions of com - mu - ni - ca - tion

f marcato

When de - lu - sions of com - mu - ni - ca - tion cease,

f marcato

When de - lu - sions of com - mu - ni - ca - tion cease,

f sub.

65

cease, de - lu - sions of com - mu - ni - ca - tion

cease, de - lu - sions of com - mu - ni - ca - tion

de - lu - sions, de - lu - sions of com - mu - ni - ca - tion

de - lu - sions, de - lu - sions of com - mu - ni - ca - tion

mp sub. *f*

69

cease, de-ca-tions, de-ca-tions, of com-mu-ni-lu-sion cease, de-

cease, de-ca-tions, de-ca-tions, of com-mu-ni-lu-sion cease, cease,

cease, de-ca-tions of com-mu-ni-lu-sion cease, cease,

cease, de-ca-tions of com-mu-ni-lu-sion cease, de-

mp

p sub.

74

lu-sions of com-mu-ni-ca-tion, de-ca-tions of com-mu-ni-lu-sion cease And we are

sions mu-tions, tions mu-sion cease And we are

lu-com-ca-ca-com-lu- cease And we are

of ni-de-of ni- cease And we are

mp *ff* *mf*

mp *ff* *mf*

mp *ff* *mf*

ff

78

f

vic - tims once a - gain of ru - mours the gos - sip wind is bring - ing

f

vic - tims once a - gain of ru - mours the gos - sip wind is bring - ing We'll

f

vic - tims once a - gain of ru - mours the gos - sip wind is bring - ing We'll ce - le - brate

f

vic - tims once a - gain of ru - mours the gos - sip wind is bring - ing We'll ce - le - brate We'll

mp sub.

f

83

mf *f*

We'll ce - le - brate the sing - ers in their peace For a - bove the

mf *f*

ce - le - brate the sing - ers in their peace For a - bove the

mf *f*

We'll ce - le - brate the sing - ers in their peace For a - bove the

mf *f*

ce - le - brate the sing - ers in their peace For a - bove the

Maestoso (♩ = 50)

ff 5

87

ff

graves of men The

ff

graves of men The

ff

graves of men The

ff

graves of men The

89

hap - - - py grass is

fff

hap - - - py grass,

hap - - - py grass is

hap - - - py grass is

Più mosso (♩ = 55)

91 *fff*

sing - - - - - ing.

Here the sing - ers lie. *ff* The

fff sing - - - ing. *ff* Here the sing - ers

sing - - - - - ing.

fff *ff*

Più mosso (♩ = 55)

93 *ff*

Here the sing - ers

hap - - - py grass is

lie. *ff* in their fi - nal

Here the sing - ers lie. The

95

lie. *f* in their fi - nal qui-et, -

sing - - - - ing. *f* Here the sing-ers

qui - et, - - - Here the sing - ers lie.

hap - - - py grass is sing - - -

f *mf* 5

98

Here the sing-ers lie. *mf* The hap - py grass - - is

lie. *mf* in their fi - nal qui-et, - - - The

f in their fi - nal qui-et, - - - Here the sing-ers lie.

f ing. Here the sing-ers lie. in their fi-nal

5 5 5

102

mp sing - ing. Here the sing - ers

mp hap - py grass is sing - ing. in their fi - nal qui - et,

mf Here the sing - ers lie. *mp* The hap - py grass is sing - ing.

mf qui - et, Here the sing - ers lie. *mp* The hap - py grass is

rit. Largo ♩ = 40
solo
mf *espress.* rit.

106

in their fi - nal qui - et,

lie. Here the sing - ers lie. *ppp*

Here the sing - ers lie. *ppp*

Here the sing - ers lie. *ppp*

Here the sing - ers lie. *ppp*

sing - ing. Here the sing - ers lie.

rit. Largo ♩ = 40 rit.