

To Jacob and Hilary, in loving memory of Etsegenet

Good Night, Dear Heart

TTBB Men's Chorus with Piano*

Text by
Robert Richardson and
Mark Twain (Samuel Langhorne Clemens)

Music by
DAN FORREST (ASCAP)

Very slowly, semplice, molto espressivo

Tenor I, II

Baritone, Bass

Warm sum - mer

p

rit.

Very slowly, semplice, molto espressivo

Piano

p

always gently and simply

rit.

And. generously

4

8

mp

sun, Shine kind - ly here, Warm south - ern

mp

4

8

8

wind, Blow soft - ly here. Green sod a -

8

12

bove, Lie light, lie light. Good

p

12

15

meno mosso

night, dear heart, Good night, good

meno mosso

15

poco piu mosso

19 *mp*

BII 8 night. Sun, Shine kind - ly

TII 8 night. Warm sum - mer warm sum - mer sun, shine

BI 8 night. Warm sum - mer, sun, Shine kind - ly,

BII 8 night. Warm sum - mer, warm sun, shine kind - ly,

poco piu mosso

19 *mf* *espressivo colla voce*

BII 8 night. Sun, Shine kind - ly

TII 8 night. Warm sum - mer warm sum - mer sun, shine

BI 8 night. Warm sum - mer, sun, Shine kind - ly,

BII 8 night. Warm sum - mer, warm sun, shine kind - ly,

23

BII 8 here, Warm south - ern wind, Blow soft - ly

TII 8 here, Warm wind, Blow soft - ly

BI 8 shine kind - ly here, wind, Blow soft, blow

BII 8 shine kind - ly here, south - ern wind, Blow soft, blow

23

BII 8 here, Warm south - ern wind, Blow soft - ly

TII 8 here, Warm wind, Blow soft - ly

BI 8 shine kind - ly here, wind, Blow soft, blow

BII 8 shine kind - ly here, south - ern wind, Blow soft, blow

27 *sub. p*

8 here. Green sod a - bove, Lie

8 here. Green sod a - bove, Lie

sub. p

soft - ly here, sod a - bove, Lie

soft - ly here, sod a - bove,

27 *sub. p*

30

8 light, lie light. Good night, dear

8 light, lie light. Good night, dear

light, lie light. Good night, dear

Good night, dear

30

33

heart, Good night, good night.

heart, Good night, good night.

heart, Good night, good night.

heart, Good night, good night.

33

Unhurried, reflective

pp (*espressivo simile*) (stagger breaths if desired)

37

Oo

pp (*espressivo simile*) (stagger breaths if desired)

37

44

rit. *mf*

(Oo)

44

mp

mf

rit.

48

p *pp*

Good night, dear heart, Good night,

p *pp*

48

p

53

rit.

good night.

53

rit.

pp

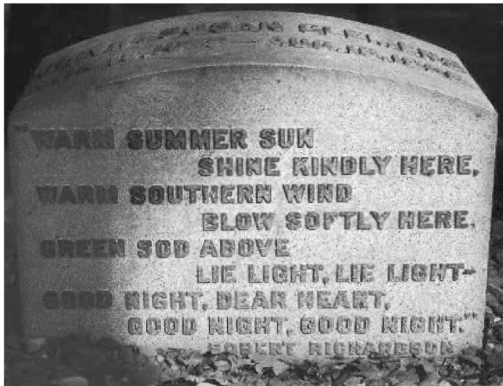
Composer's Note

In early October 2008, my brother and his wife found out that the four-month-old girl that they were soon to adopt from Ethiopia was in the hospital. They had been making plans for her, staring endlessly at her picture, and loving her from across the ocean, so the news was devastating. Unable to help her in any physical way, they prayed ceaselessly and made appeals to speed up the legal process in Ethiopia. Initially, she made a turn for the better, but on October 13, they received the news that she had died. God's plans were not for her to ever see the people who had loved her from halfway around the world, but for her to be taken instead to His loving arms.

For me, life circumstances (whether euphoric or tragic) have never translated into musical inspiration; the two have always been separate. As a result of this tragedy, though, I found myself longing to pour out a musical elegy.

My search for a suitable text led me all over the internet that night, but, amazingly, it ended with a picture from a cemetery in my hometown (Elmira, NY), where the great American author Mark Twain and his family are buried. My brother and I, from our youth, have known the poem that Twain placed on the tombstone of his beloved daughter Susy, when she died unexpectedly at age 24 and left him heartbroken. I was stunned by the bittersweet irony of this text being from our hometown, and in honor of a beloved daughter who died unexpectedly. I wrote this setting within a day, and gave it to the BJU Chorale for a reading. They learned it in only a few rehearsals, and premiered it in a concert only one week later, as an elegy for Etsegenet and a poignant reminder to all of us, of the orphans of Ethiopia.

DAN FORREST



*Headstone at the grave of Susy Clemens (daughter of Mark Twain)
in Woodlawn Cemetery, Elmira, NY*