

Ode to Hope

for SATB chorus



Music by Melissa Dunphy
Text by Sophocles, translated by Philip Barnes

2024

7.5 min

*Commissioned for the Saint Louis Chamber Chorus (Philip Barnes, artistic director)
by William Larson in gratitude for this organization's commitment to choral excellence*

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Blessed are they who live long, far from evils,
Their homes stand free from the shaking of a god.
Yet when his ills fall upon a house without number,
Then does the tide wash over scions of age upon age.
As when the sea surges and throws up the sand
From the deep to the crests of the waves,
Battered and buffeted by harsh winds from the North,
Then the sea beats on every shore
And roars and moans its unending groan.

O Zeus, how might we mortal men
Pervert and curb your power,
Which neither sleep nor tireless months
Can weary hour by hour? [...]
The law you give is absolute
For those who live below, [...]
That no-one lives a boundless life
Not knowing a calamity.

The Labdakids of old have suffered woes of death,
Woes falling on their homes in every age;
Generations come and go but don't redeem the next,
And now I witness how a god is rushing its demise.
No atonement or reprieve are destined for this house.
Redemption's lights have shone their last upon the royal line
Of Oedipus, [...] For even now the gods below uproot it, and they tell
A tale of madness mired in blood, through dusty sacrifice.

Hope, it ranges and deranges
Every man in search of gain,
Yet often uses and abuses
The frail in truth and brain.
You veil our sight as we step
Into singeing fires of lust.
We reckon little all those seers
Who told us once and ever more,
How choices bad yet good appear
Whene'er we set our wits aside,
Not knowing a calamity.

From *Antigone*, Stasimon 2

Cover image: Antigone and Ismene with their father Oedipus. Engraving for E. Schröter by Martin Lämmel after a bas-relief by German sculptor A. Küpper, published 1879.



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Adagietto $\text{♩} = \text{c.72}$

Soprano *p warmly* <> *mp* <>

Bles-sed are they, bles - sed are they,

Alto *p warmly* <> <>

Bles-sed are they, bles-sed are they, bles-sed are they,

Tenor *p warmly* <> <> <>

Bles-sed are they, bles-sed are they, bles-sed are they, bles - sed are

Bass *p warmly* <> <>

Bles-sed are they, bles-sed are they, bles - sed are they,

Reduction *p warmly* <> *mp* <>

This section of the musical score consists of five staves. The top four staves represent the SATB voices: Soprano, Alto, Tenor, and Bass. The fifth staff is a reduction of the vocal parts. The key signature is A major (two sharps). The tempo is Adagietto at c.72 BPM. Dynamics include *p* (pianissimo) and *mp* (mezzo-pianissimo). The vocal parts sing the phrase "Bles-sed are they, bles - sed are they," repeated three times. The reduction staff shows the harmonic progression and the overall structure of the music.

8 *poco rit. . . a tempo*

S. *p* <> *mp* <>

bles-sed are they who live long far from e - vils, their homes stand free from the

A. *p* <> *mp* <>

bles-sed are they who live long far from e - vils, their homes stand free from the

T. *p* <> *mp* <>

they, bles-sed are they, bles-sed are they, bles-sed are they,

B. *p* <> *mp* <>

bles-sed are they, bles-sed are they, their homes stand free from the

poco rit. . . a tempo

p <> *mp* <>

This section continues the musical score for the SATB chorus. It begins with a dynamic *poco rit. . . a tempo*. The vocal parts sing the phrase "bles-sed are they who live long far from e - vils, their homes stand free from the" followed by "bles-sed are they who live long far from e - vils, their homes stand free from the". The Tenor and Bass staves then sing "they, bles-sed are they, bles-sed are they, bles-sed are they," followed by "bles-sed are they, bles-sed are they, their homes stand free from the". The final measure shows a dynamic *poco rit. . . a tempo* followed by a dynamic *p*.

15

S. *f implacable* *p*
shak-ing of a god. Yet when his ills fall up-on a house with-out num-ber, then does the

A. *f implacable* *p*
shak-ing of a god. Yet when his ills fall up-on a house with-out num-ber, then does the

T. *f implacable* *p*
free from the shak-ing of a god. When his ills fall with-out num-ber, then does the

B. *f implacable* *p*
shak-ing of a god. When his ills fall with-out num-ber, then does the

22

S. *mp*
tide wash o-ver sci - ons of age up-on age, age up-on age.

A. *mp*
tide wash o-ver sci - ons of age, age up-on age, age up-on

T. *mp*
tide wash o-ver sci - ons of age up-on age, age up-on

B. *mp*
tide wash o-ver sci - ons of age up-on age,

Poco piu mosso $\text{♩}=\text{c.80}$

28

S. *Ah, ah, to the crests of the*
age... Ah, ah, to the crests of the

A. *age. As when the sea surges and throws up the sand, from the deep to the crests, the*

T. *As when the sea surges and throws up the sand, from the deep to the crests, the*

B. *As when the sea surges and throws up the sand, from the deep to the crests, the*

Poco piu mosso $\text{♩}=\text{c.80}$

35

S. *waves, bat - tered and buf - fet - ed by*

A. *waves, bat - tered and buf - fet - ed, bat - tered and buf - fet - ed by*

T. *crests of the waves, bat - tered and buf - fet - ed by harsh winds from the*

B. *crests of the waves, Bat - tered and buf - fet - ed by harsh winds from the*

* NB enharmony

accel.

40 Andante $\text{♩} = \text{c}.92$

S. harsh, harsh, winds from the North, then the sea beats on ev' - ry

A. harsh, harsh, winds from the North, then the sea beats on ev' - ry

T. $\geq p$ North, then the sea beats on ev' - ry shore. and roars and

B. $\geq p$ North, then the sea beats on ev' - ry shore, then the sea beats on ev' - ry

accel.

Andante $\text{♩} = \text{c}.92$

46

S. shore and moans, and moans its un - end - ing

A. shore and roars and moans its un - end - ing groan, its un - end - ing

T. $\geq >$ $\geq >$ mp moans, roars and moans its un - end - ing groan.

B. $\geq <$ $\geq <$ mp shore and roars and moans its un - end - ing groan, its un -

p

B

53

S. **p** groan. Hope, it ran-ges and de - ran ges, yet a -

A. **p** groan. Hope, it ran-ges and de - ran - ges ev'ry man in search of gain, yet of-ten

T. **p** — Hope de - ran - ges ev'ry man in search of gain yet of-ten

B. **p** end - ing groan. Hope ran-ges and de - ran ges, yet a -

p

59

S. **mf** bu - ses the frail in truth and brain. You veil our sight as we step in - to

A. **mf** u-ses and a - bu - ses the frail in truth and brain. You veil our sight as we step in - to

T. **mf** u-ses and a - bu - ses the frail in truth and brain. You veil our sight as we step in - to

B. **mf** bu - ses the frail in truth. You veil our sight as we step in - to

mf

65

S. singe-ing fires of lust. Ah, when-e'er we set our wits a - side,

A. singe-ing fires of lust. Ah, when-e'er we set our wits a - side, not

T. singe-ing fires of lust. How choic-es bad yet good ap-pear, ah, not

B. singe-ing fires of lust. How choic-es bad yet good ap-pear, ah, not

poco rit. a tempo

71

S. a ca - lam - i - ty, a ca-lam - i - ty, a ca-lam - i - ty,

A. know - - ing a ca-lam - i - ty, a ca-lam - i - ty, a ca-

T. know - ing a ca - lam - i - ty, a ca - lam - i - ty, a ca -

B. know-ing a ca - lam - i - ty, a ca-lam - i - ty, a ca-lam - i -

poco rit. a tempo

77

rit.

S. a ca-lam - i - ty. The Lab - da-kids of old have

A. lam - i - ty, a ca-lam - i - ty. The Lab - da-kids of old have

T. lam - i - ty, a ca-lam - i - ty. The Lab - da-kids of old have suf-fered

B. ty, a ca-lam - i - ty. The Lab - da-kids of old have suf-fered

C Andante $\text{♩}=\text{c}.92$

p

*NB enharmony

Andante $\text{♩}=\text{c}.92$

p

84

S. suf-fered woes of death fall - ing on their homes; Gen - er -

A. suf-fered woes of death, fall - ing on their homes in ev'-ry age;

T. woes of death fall - ing on their homes in ev'-ry age; Gen - er -

B. woes of death fall - ing on their homes in ev'-ry age; Gen - er -

mp

f

mp

mp

mp

f

90

S. a - tions come and go but don't re-deem the next, and now I wit-ness how a god____ is

A. Gen - er - a - tions don't re-deem the next, and now I wit-ness how a god____ is

T. a - - - tions don't re - deem the next. Wit-ness how a god____ is

B. a - tions come and go but don't re-deem the next. Wit-ness how a god____ is

D

mf

96

S. rush - ing its de - mise. Re -

A. rush - ing its de-mise, rush - ing its de-mise, rush - ing its de-mise. Re -

T. rush - ing its de-mise, rush - ing its de-mise, rush - ing its de-mise. Re -

B. rush - ing its de - mise, rush - ing its de - mise, rush - ing its de -

f

f

f

f

102

S. demp - tion's lights have shone their last up - on the roy - al

A. demp - tion's lights, re - demp - tion's lights have shone their last up -

T. 8 demp - tion's lights have shone their last up - on the roy - al

B. *f* mise. Re - demp - tion's lights have shone their last up - on the

107

S. line of Oe - di - pus, for e - ven now, the gods be - * NB enharmony

A. on the roy - al line, for e - ven now, the

T. 8 line of Oe - di - pus, for e - ven now, the

B. line of Oe - di - pus, for e - ven now, the

112

S. *p* *f*
low_ up - root it, and they tell a tale of mad - ness

A. *p* *f*
gods, the gods be-low up - root it, tell a tale of mad - ness, of mad - ness

T. *p* *f*
8 gods be - low up - root it, and they tell a tale of mad - ness

B. *p* *f*
gods be - low up - root it and they tell, they tell a tale of mad - ness

118

E

S. *p* *mf*
mired in blood through dus-ty sac - ri - fice. Zeus, how
* NB enharmony

A. *p* *mf*
mired in blood through dus - ty sac - ri - fice. O Zeus,

T. *p* *mf*
8 mired in blood through dus - ty sac - ri - fice, sac - ri - fice. Zeus, how

B. *p* *mf*
mired in blood through dus - ty sac - ri - fice, sac - ri - fice. Zeus,

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126

S. might we mor-tal men per-vert and curb your power, which nei-ther sleep nor tire-less months can

A. we men per-vert and curb your power, which nei-ther sleep nor tire-less months can

T. 8 might we mor-tal men per-vert and curb your power, nei - ther sleep nor tire-less months can

B. we men per-vert and curb your power, nei - ther sleep nor tire-less months can

132

S. wear-y hour by hour? The law you give is ab - so-lute for those who live be - low, that no-one

A. wear-y hour by hour? The law you give is ab - so-lute for those who live be - low, that no-one

T. 8 wear-y hour by hour? The law you give is ab - so-lute for those who live be - low, that no-one

B. wear-y. The law you give is ab - so-lute for those who live be - low,

F

138

S. *f*
lives a bound-less life. Hope, it ran-ges and de - ran - ges ev'-ry

A. *f*
lives a bound-less life not know-ing a ca - lam - i - ty. Hope de - ran - ges ev'-ry

T. *f*
8 lives a bound-less life. Hope, it ran-ges and de - ran -

B. *mp* *f*
no - one lives not know-ing a ca - lam - i - ty. Hope de - ran -

144

S. *f*
man in search of gain, yet of-ten u-ses and a - bu - ses the frail in truth and brain. We reck-on

A. *f*
man in search of gain, yet of-ten u-ses and a - bu - ses the frail in truth and brain. We reck-on

T. *f*
8 ges, yet a - bu - ses the frail in truth and brain. We reck-on

B. *f*
ges, yet a - bu - ses the frail in truth. We reck - on

150

S. lit - tle all those seers who told us once and ev - er more, how choic - es *mp*

A. lit - tle all those seers who told us once and ev - er more, how choic - es *mp*

T. lit - tle all those seers who told us once and ev - er more, how choic - es *mp*

B. lit - tle all those seers who told us once and ev - er more, how choic - es *mp*

154

S. bad yet good ap-pear when-e'er we set our wits a - side, not know-ing a ca - *mf* *rit.* *f*

A. bad yet good ap-pear when-e'er we set our wits a - side, not know - *mf*

T. bad yet good ap-pear when-e'er we set our wits a - side, not know - ing *mf*

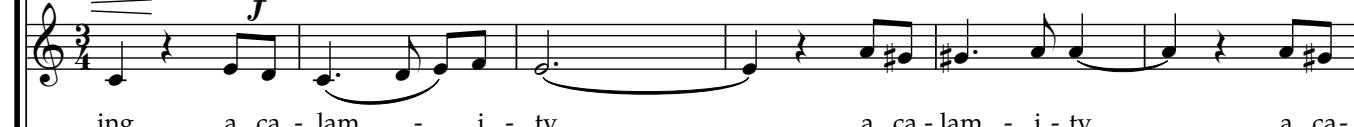
B. bad yet good ap-pear when we set our wits a - side, not know-ing a ca - *mf* *rit.* *f*

G a tempo

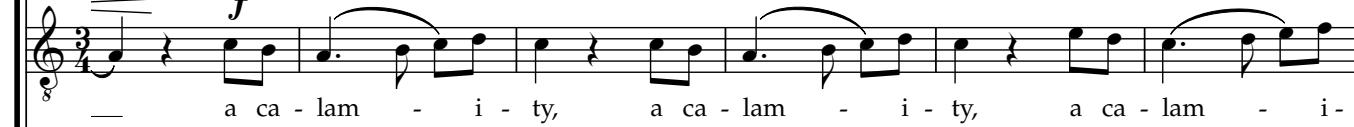
159

S. 

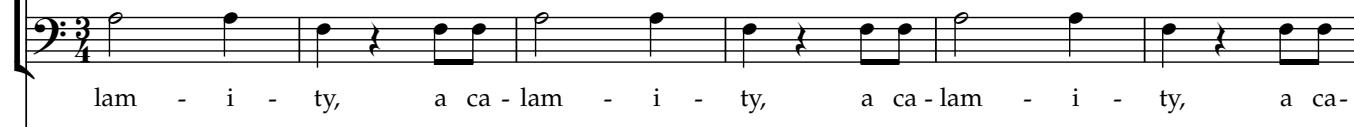
lam - i - ty, a ca - lam - i - ty, a ca - lam - i - ty, a ca -

A. 

ing a ca - lam - i - ty, a ca - lam - i - ty, a ca - lam - i - ty, a ca -

T. 

a ca - lam - i - ty, a ca - lam - i - ty, a ca - lam - i - ty, a ca -

B. 

lam - i - ty, a ca - lam - i - ty, a ca - lam - i - ty, a ca -

a tempo



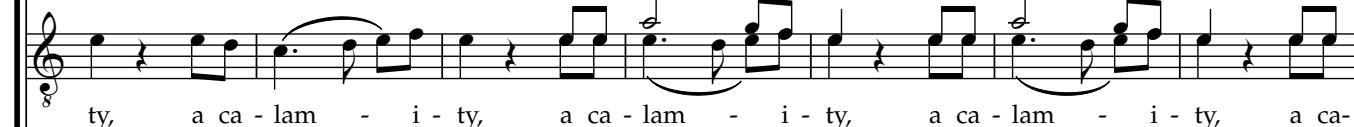
165

S. 

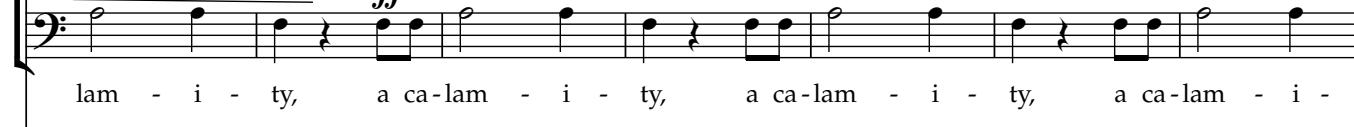
lam - i - ty, a ca - lam - i - ty, a ca - lam - i - ty, a ca - lam - i -

A. 

lam - i - ty, a ca - lam - i - ty, a ca - lam - i - ty, a ca - lam - i -

T. 

ty, a ca - lam - i - ty, a ca - lam - i - ty, a ca - lam - i - ty, a ca -

B. 

lam - i - ty, a ca - lam - i - ty, a ca - lam - i - ty, a ca - lam - i -



172

S. ty, a ca - lam - i - ty, not know-ing a ca - lam - i -

A. ty, a ca - lam - i - ty, not know-ing a ca -

T. lam - i - ty, a ca - lam - i - ty, ca - lam - i - ty, not

B. ty, a ca - lam - i - ty, ca - lam - i - ty,

The music consists of four staves. The soprano (S.) starts with a eighth note followed by a sixteenth-note pair. The alto (A.) follows with a eighth note followed by a sixteenth-note pair. The tenor (T.) enters with a eighth note followed by a sixteenth-note pair. The bass (B.) enters with a eighth note followed by a sixteenth-note pair. The vocal parts continue in this pattern. Measure 172 ends with a dynamic ***fff***. Measures 173 and 174 begin with ***fff*** dynamics. Measure 175 begins with a dynamic ***f***. Measure 176 begins with a dynamic ***mf***.

177 *rit.*

S. ty, not know-ing a ca - lam - i - ty.

A. lam - i - ty, not know-ing a ca - lam - i - ty.

T. know-ing a ca - lam - i - ty, a ca - lam - i - ty.

B. not know-ing a ca - lam - i - ty, ca - lam - i - ty.

The music consists of four staves. The soprano (S.) starts with a eighth note followed by a sixteenth-note pair. The alto (A.) follows with a eighth note followed by a sixteenth-note pair. The tenor (T.) enters with a eighth note followed by a sixteenth-note pair. The bass (B.) enters with a eighth note followed by a sixteenth-note pair. The vocal parts continue in this pattern. Measure 177 ends with a dynamic ***mp***. Measures 178 and 179 begin with ***mp*** dynamics. Measure 180 begins with a dynamic ***p***. Measures 181 and 182 begin with ***ppp*** dynamics. Measure 183 begins with a dynamic ***rit.***.