The Blades of Strawblane

New Brunswick Folk Song

(origin: Scotland)

For S.A.T.B. Choir with Piano Accompaniment

Collected by Helen Creighton Arranged by Gary Ewer

Performance Notes:

 This song originates in Scotland, under various titles. It was first published as The Braes of Strathdon in 1866, with the following text:

As I was a-walking one morning in May Doon by a bonnie braeside I fondly did stray I spied a bonnie lassie, she wis standing her lane She wis bleaching her claes on the braes o' Strathdon

I stepped up tae her as I seemed for tae pass Ye're bleaching yer claes, my bonnie young lass It's twelve months and mair since I've had ye on my mind Jist for tae get married if you are inclined

Tae marry, tae marry, I'm three time o'er young Besides a' you young men have flattering tongues My faither and my mither they would baith angry be If I was tae marry a rover like ye

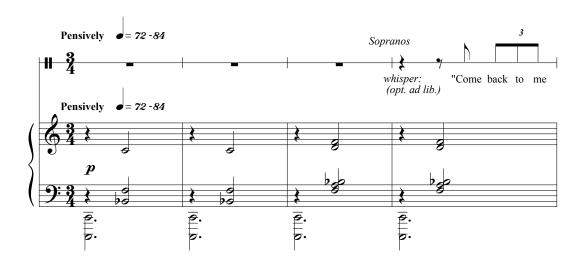
Come a' ye pretty fair maids, take a warning frae me And never slight a young man for his poverty For slighting of a young man I'm afraid ye'll get nane And single ye'll wander the braes o' Strathdon

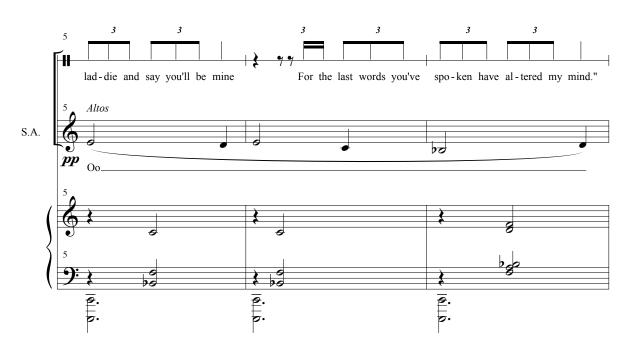
- The spoken parts can be done in either one of two ways: 1) Consider the rhythms of the spoken text fragments to be approximate, with the choir not striving to perform them exactly as written. This will give an interesting "chaotic" effect which, I believe, will properly convey the emotional turmoil of the "fair maid"; or 2) Perform the rhythms of the spoken text fragments exactly as written. The conductor could also decide to perform some text ad lib and other fragments as written. In other words, feel free to experiment.
- The spoken words at the end of verse 2 ("All 'round my hat I will wear the green willow / Green willow for my true love that's far, far away") are adapted from the English folk song All Round My Hat. In folklore, wearing the willow symbolizes sadness or desertion.
- The chosen tempo should not be slower than mm= 72, nor faster than mm= 84.

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