

Entreat me not to leave you

for SATB voices unaccompanied

by hunter t. johnson

text adapted from Ruth 1:16–17

Background Notes

I wrote this piece for the wedding ceremony of a dear friend of mine, Elizabeth Farris. In searching for a text that could possibly capture even an echo of the love shared by these two people, I was struck by this passage. I realized that the wedding could be approached not only from the perspective of the love these two people share, but also from that of the love that they have for their families. I composed the piece in Geneva, Switzerland, taking inspiration from the beautiful Rhône river and the harmony that such a multilingual city holds. In the silences of trains and river boat rides, I found the echoes that I was searching for. As an additional homage to this specific relationship, the phrase "you and me" is sung in total 6 times, one for each year they spent together.

Biography

hunter t. johnson (he/him) is a dynamic young composer with a rapidly growing catalog of choral works, art songs, and chamber pieces. He takes inspiration from issues of social justice and conflict, working to give voice to sentiments and ideas that he feels are ignored in everyday life. In composing vocal works, he seeks poetry and texts that range from those that explore nature and beauty to those that examine social issues such as self-harm, suicide, and other traditionally avoided topics. He has completed commissions for art songs and choral works, including several works for Grammy Award-winning soprano Christine Brewer. Other commissioning ensembles include Emmanuel Episcopal Church in Webster Groves, MO; the Webster University ChordLoks; and the Lindenwood University Concert Choir under the direction of Pamela Grooms.

An active choral musician, hunter has performed with and conducted groups in concerts across the United States. He is one of the co-founders and the conductor of the choral ensemble *catenary*. hunter's composition *Stars* was awarded the 2017 Missouri Choral Director's Association Opus Award, which recognizes an outstanding choral composition by a Missouri-based composer. His works have been performed by the Webster University Chamber Singers, Concert Choir, and Women's Chorus, under his direction as well as that of Drs. Trent A. Patterson and Stuart Chapman Hill.

hunter holds a Bachelor's of Music Degree in Composition from Webster University in St. Louis, Missouri, where he studied composition with Dr. David Werfelmann and Kim Portnoy.

for Elizabeth & Nicholas

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Lento ed espressivo

p gently

Soprano
En - treat me not to leave you, or to re - turn from

Alto
En - treat me not to leave you, or to re - turn from

Tenor
En - treat me not to leave you, or to re - turn from

Bass
En - treat me not to leave you, or to re - turn from

Piano
(for rehearsal use only)

6

mf

fol - low - ing af - ter you; for where you go I will

mf

fol - low - ing af - ter you; for where you go I will

mf

fol - low - ing af - ter you; for where you go I will

mf

fol - low - ing af - ter you; for where you go I will

10

p *rit. poco*

go, and where you live I will live.

p *rit. poco*

go, and where you live I will live.

p *rit. poco*

go, and where you live I will live.

p *rit. poco*

go, and where you live I will live.

14

p a tempo

Your peo-ple shall be my peo-ple, and your God my God.

p a tempo

Your peo-ple shall be my peo-ple, and your God my God.

p a tempo

Your peo-ple shall be my peo-ple, and your God my God.

p a tempo

Your peo-ple shall be my peo-ple, and your God my God.

19

mf passionately*deliberately*

Where you die I will die, and there I will be bu - ried.

mf passionately*deliberately*

Where you die I will die, and there I will be bu - ried.

mf passionately*deliberately*

Where you die I will die, and there I will be bu - ried.

mf passionately*deliberately*

Where you die I will die, and there I will be bu - ried.

24

p gently

The LORD do so un - to me, and more al - so,

p gently

The LORD do so un - to me, and more al - so,

p gently

The LORD do so un - to me, and more al - so,

p gently

The LORD do so un - to me, and more al - so,

28 *f passionately* *rit.*

if ought but death parts you and me.

f passionately *rit.*

if ought but death parts you and me.

f passionately *rit.*

if ought but death parts you and me.

f passionately *rit.*

if ought but death parts you and me.

32 *slowly, tenderly* *p* *simile al fine* *smorzando*

you and me, you and me, you and me, you and me, you and me.

slowly, tenderly *p* *simile al fine* *smorzando*

you and me, you and me, you and me, you and me, you and me.

slowly, tenderly *p* *simile al fine* *smorzando*

you and me, you and me, you and me, you and me, you and me.

slowly, tenderly *p* *simile al fine* *smorzando*

you and me, you and me, you and me, you and me, you and me.