

KOSTAS REKLEITIS

THE STIRLING CYCLE

FIVE SONGS FOR VOICE AND CELLO

Op. 36



THE BALLAD OF GUTHRIE'S RING - by John Coutts

THE SONG OF JOHN COWANE'S CHEST - by John Coutts

THE WIRELESS - by Clive Wright

ANCIENT AND NOW - by Colin Donati

CODA - by Colin Donati

ATHENS, MARCH 2017

THE BALLAD OF GUTHRIE'S RING

for mezzo-soprano and violoncello

A POEM BY JOHN COUTTS

MUSIC BY KOSTAS REKLEITIS

James Guthrie, Minister of Stirling, was a strong supporter of the National Covenant, agreed in 1638, and intended to uphold the principles of the Reformed [Presbyterian] Church. King Charles I was based in London, and his refusal to accept it led to the War of the Three Kingdoms, the execution of the King and the establishment of the English Republic [Commonwealth], Guthrie's own refusal to compromise led to schism in the church in Stirling.

He was regarded as an extremist by his opponents and a man of principle by his supporters. After the restoration of the monarchy in 1660, Guthrie was arrested, put on trial and hanged a year later. His death may be regarded as a judicial murder. His ring, passed down through six generations, is preserved in the Stirling Art Gallery and Museum.

THE BALLAD OF GUTHRIE'S RING

Now listen one and listen all
A tale I sing and tell
Of Stirling's treasure handed down,
Of memory guarded well

James Guthrie was the Minister
Who wore the gleaming ring.
He stood for godly Scotland,
For Covenant and king.

Three hundred years and more ago
When wars were lost and won:
They battled first with ink and pen
But then with pike and gun.

King Charles despised the Covenant.
'I hold my crown' he said
By right divine 'His English foes
Cut off the royal head.'

So Guthrie's dream of King and Kirk
Was doomed to fail and fall;
Yet that stubborn soul held firm
Come life, come death, come all.

But when a second Charles returned
'Revenge' was all the cry.
'The man whose words condemned us all
Must bend and break - or die.'

They laid a charge of treason:
His death was their intent
His enemies condemned him
He stood unbowed, unbent.

Beneath the looming gallows
He spoke of Christ the king,
And Scotland's broken Covenant:
And gave away the ring

And those who loved him guarded it,
As generations passed.
And now my song empowers the ring
To speak its mind at last.

'I am the ring that Guthrie
Wore in a stormy life
Some called the man 'a bigot',
'A king of needless strife.'

But others call him martyr
Who showed them how to live.
And you of latter ages -
What verdict will you give

On those who came before us?
What does your wisdom think
Of those who fought for truth with pike
And gun and pen and ink?

Learn from what they did rightly wisely
And shun what they did wrong,
And judge our forbears gently.
With this I end my song.

THE BALLAD OF GUTHRIE'S RING

A poem by John Coutts

Music by Kostas Rekleitis

~76

Voice

Violoncello

mf

5

mf

Now lis-ten one and lis-ten all a tale I sing and tell

9

of Stir-ling's trea-sure hand-ed down, of mem-o-ry guard ed well.

13

James Guthrie was the Minister Who wore the gleaming ring. He stood for godly Scotland, For Covenant and king.

p

17

mf

Three hun-dred years and more a-go when wars were lost and won:

mf

The ballad of Guthrie's ring"

21

they battl-ed first with ink and pen but then with pike and gun.

25

King Charles despised the Covenant.
'I hold my crown ' he said

By right divine ' His English foes
Cut off the royal head.

p

29

mf

mf

So Gu-thrie's dream of King and Kirk was doomed to fail and fall;

33

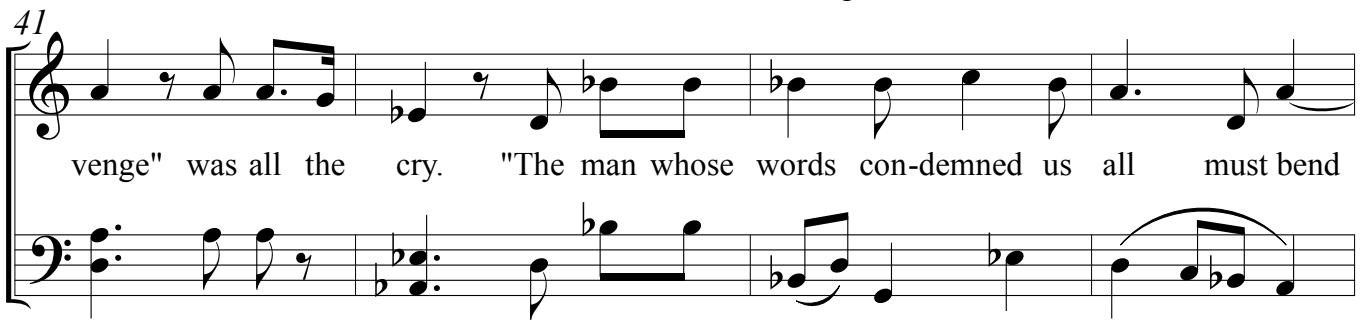
Yet that stub - born soul held firm come life, come death, come

38

all. But when a sec - ond Charles re - turned "Re -

The ballad of Guthrie's ring"

41



venge" was all the cry. "The man whose words con-demned us all must bend

45



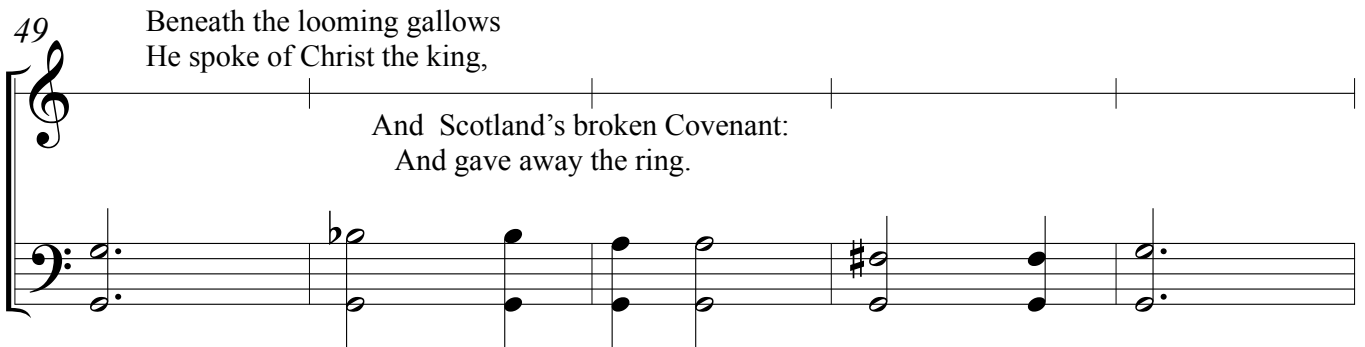
— and break or die."

They laid a charge of treason:
His death was their intent

His enemies condemned him
He stood unbowed, unbent.

p

49



Beneath the looming gallows
He spoke of Christ the king,
And Scotland's broken Covenant:
And gave away the ring.

54

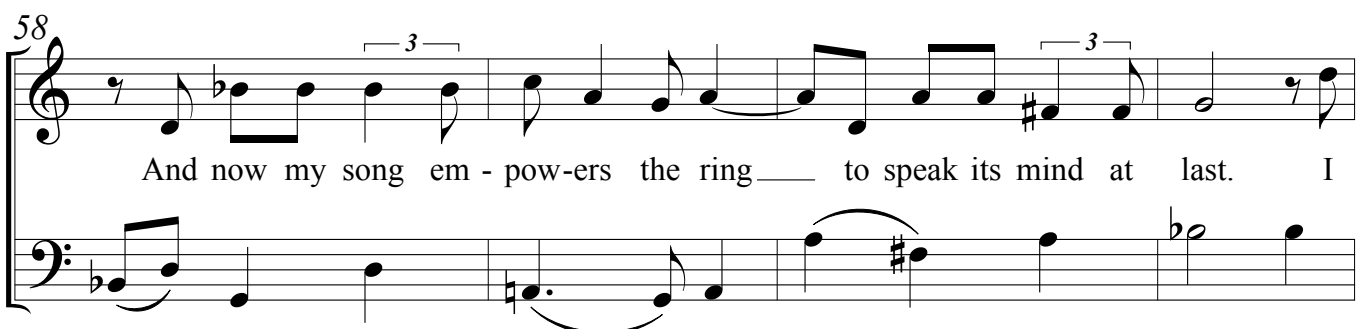


mf

And those who loved him guard - ed it, as gen - er - a - tions passed.

mf

58



And now my song em - pow - ers the ring — to speak its mind at last. I

The ballad of Guthrie's ring"

62

am the ring that Gu - thrie wore in a storm - y life

Musical notation for measures 62-65, including a treble and bass staff with lyrics.

66

Some called the man "a big-ot" "A king of need-less strife."

Musical notation for measures 66-69, including a treble and bass staff with lyrics.

70

But o - thers call him mar-tyr who showed them how to live.

Musical notation for measures 70-73, including a treble and bass staff with lyrics.

74

And you of lat - ter a - ges what ver - dict will you give.

Musical notation for measures 74-77, including a treble and bass staff with lyrics.

78

On those who came be - fore us? what does your wis - dom think

Musical notation for measures 78-81, including a treble and bass staff with lyrics and a triplet in measure 81.

The ballad of Guthrie's ring"

82

of those who fought for truth with pike, and gun and pen and ink?

Musical notation for measures 82-85, including vocal line and piano accompaniment.

86

Learn from what they did rightly and shun what they did wrong, and judge our forbears gently. With this I end my song.

mf

Learn

p *mf*

Musical notation for measures 86-91, including vocal line and piano accompaniment. Dynamics *p* and *mf* are indicated. A crescendo hairpin is shown between measures 88 and 91.

92

from what they did right - ly and shun what they did

Musical notation for measures 92-94, including vocal line and piano accompaniment.

95

wrong, and judge our for - bears gentl - y With this I

mp

Musical notation for measures 95-98, including vocal line and piano accompaniment. Dynamic *mp* is indicated.

99

end my song.

Musical notation for measures 99-102, including vocal line and piano accompaniment.

THE SONG OF JOHN COWANE'S CHEST

for mezzo-soprano and violoncello

A POEM BY JOHN COUTTS

MUSIC BY KOSTAS REKLEITIS

John Cowane [died 1633], was a prominent citizen of Stirling. His legacy funded the building of Cowane's Hospital, - which still stands - 'for the purpose of supporting twelve decayed gildbrothers, burgesses and indwellers of the Burgh'. The Hospital's Charter Chest – which Cowane might already have used to preserve his increasing wealth - was carried away by the retreating Jacobite army in 1746. It was abandoned in Doune, and used to store meal. The chest was brought back to Stirling in 1882, and is now on display in The Smith Art Gallery and Museum. Among its many carved Biblical inscriptions are the words: 'It is more blessed to give than to receive.'

[See A History of Stirling in 100 Objects, by Elspeth King; pp. 41 and 44]

THE SONG OF JOHN COWANE'S CHEST

Let me sing you a song of John Cowane the merchant,
A wheeler and dealer of cunning and zest,
Who borrowed and lent in the City of Stirling,
And locked up his gains in a fine wooden chest.

With ships in the Forth and good friends in the Tolbooth
He steadily feathered a snug little nest.
But Biblical warnings were whispering softly;
'Beware of the gold in that fine wooden chest.'

And here's the great truth that he wisely remembered
'To get may be good - but to give is more blest.'
So a carver whose name has been sadly forgotten
Inscribed those wise words on that fine wooden chest.

At last, when he knew that his days were well numbered,
Old Cowane prepared a far-sighted bequest:
Scots marks - forty thousand - he left to the city
Along with his treasure - that fine wooden chest.

And the Trust in his name is still happily with us
Having stood Father Time's ever rigorous test:
His Hospital stands by the Kirk and the Castle;
But 'The Smith' keeps its grip on that fine wooden chest,

Though Jacobites took it when sadly retreating,
Till looters grew weary and longed for a rest.
They dumped it in Doune as encumbering lumber;
And oatmeal was kept in that fine wooden chest.

But at last it was rescued and brought back to Stirling.
You see it before you. Behold, Be impressed!
[You may view it at leisure: behold! Be impressed!]
And since it stands empty - of meal and of money -
You may store your best thoughts in this fine wooden chest.

THE SONG OF JOHN COWANE'S CHEST

A poem by John Coutts

Music by Kostas Rekleitis

$\text{♩} \sim 90$ *mf* all way through, like a traditional tune

Voice

Let me sing you a song of John Co-wane the mer-chant,

Violoncello

mf

3

a wheel-er and deal-er of cun-ning and zest, who

5

bor-rowed and lent in the Cit-y of Stir-ling,

7

and locked up his gains in a fine wood-en chest.

9

With ships in the Forth and good friends in the Tol-booth

11 He steadily feathered a snug little nest. But Biblical warnings were whispering softly;

14 *mf* 'Be - ware of the gold_ in that fine wood - en chest.'

16 And here's the great truth that he wise - ly_ re - membered

18 'To get may be good but to give is more blest.'

20 So a carv - er whose name_ has been sad - ly for - got - ten in -

The song of John Cowane's chest

22

scrib - ed those wise words_ on that fine wood - en chest.

24

At last, when he knew that his days were well numbered,

26

Old Cowane prepared a far-sighted bequest: Scots marks - forty thousand - he left to the city

28

along with his treasure - that fine wooden chest.

30

And the Trust in his name is still hap - pi - ly with us_

The song of John Cowane's chest

32

hav - ing stood Fa - ther Time's e - ver ri - go - rous test: His

Musical notation for measures 32-33, including treble and bass staves with lyrics.

34

Hos - pi - tal stands by the Kirk and the Cas - tle;

Musical notation for measures 34-35, including treble and bass staves with lyrics.

36

But 'The Smith' keeps its grip on that fine wood - en chest.

Musical notation for measures 36-37, including treble and bass staves with lyrics.

38

Though Jacobites took it when sadly retreating, till looters grew weary and longed for a rest.

Musical notation for measures 38-39, including treble and bass staves with lyrics.

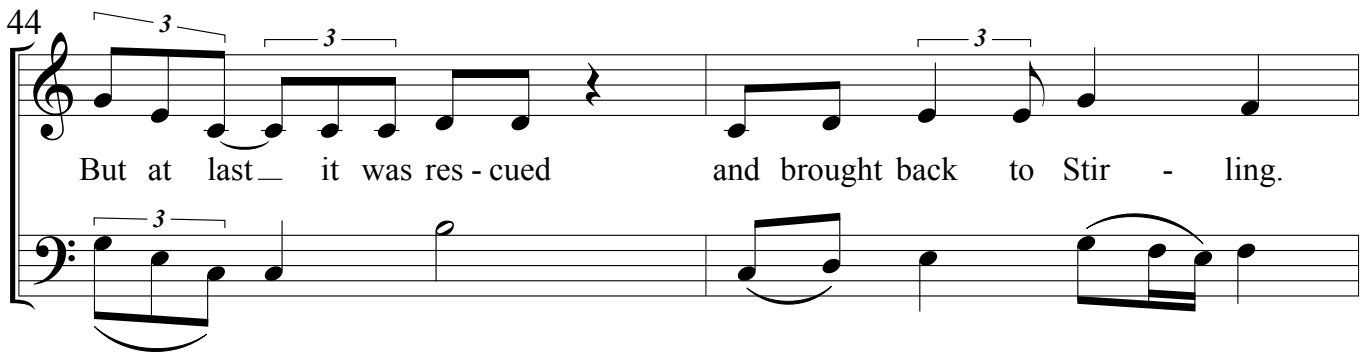
41

They dumped it in Doune as encumbering lumber; And oatmeal was kept in that fine wooden chest.

Musical notation for measures 41-42, including treble and bass staves with lyrics.

The song of John Cowane's chest

44



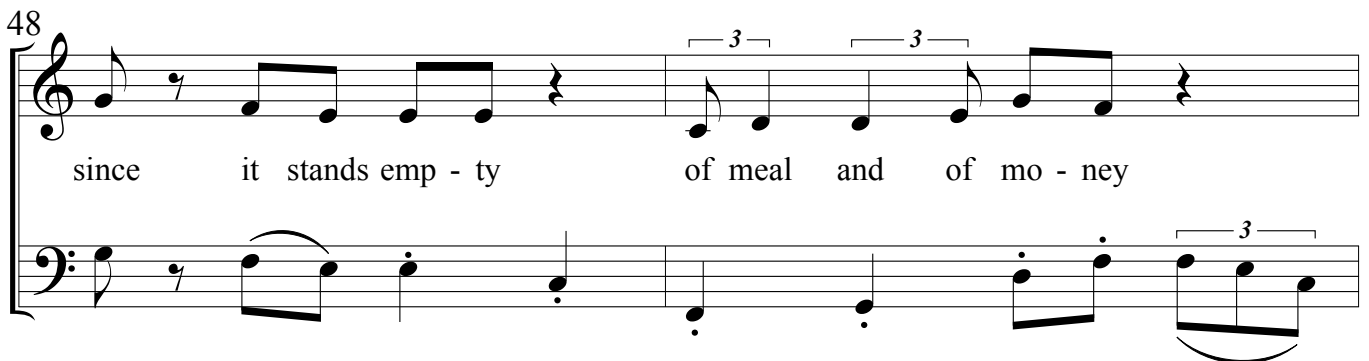
But at last_ it was res - cued and brought back to Stir - ling.

46



You see it be - fore you/ Be - hold, be im - pressed! And

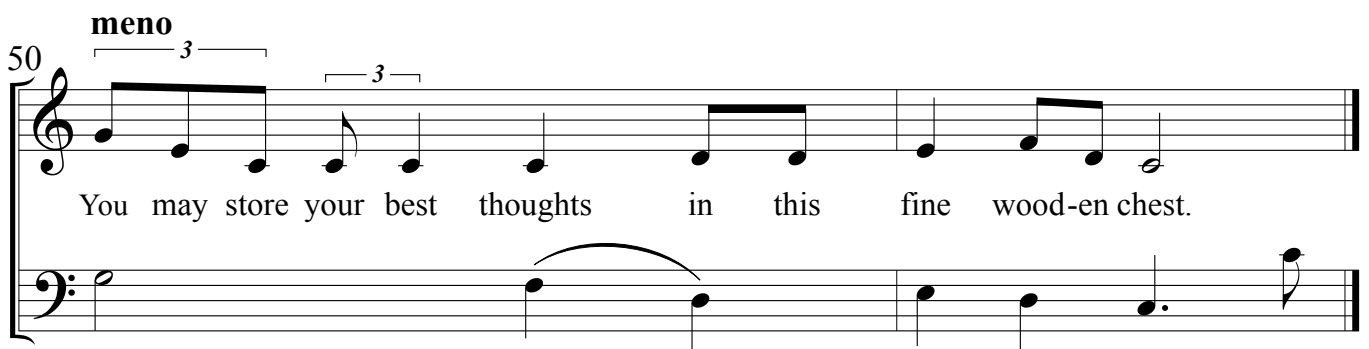
48



since it stands emp - ty of meal and of mo - ney

meno

50



You may store your best thoughts in this fine wood - en chest.

KOSTAS REKLEITIS

THE WIRELESS

FOR SOPRANO AND CELLO

A POEM BY CLIVE WRIGHT

ATHENS 2017

The Wireless

I remember your hum...
I remember the buzz there was
as the light glowed low and
showed on the screen, flickering, names...
Marseilles Motala Oslo Minsk
Delhi Lahti, fantastic, foreign – just
twiddle the knob and it takes you there...
The way it crackled like excited
Inside the set, like you could hear
voices from that distant place...
Morava Moscow Reykjavik
Andorra Allouis Honolulu ...
and I imagine them away and far
over the waves talking to me –
only I cannot make them out,
this queer kaleidoscope of sound –
impatient still I twiddle the dials...

Now, suddenly, it's clear :
all loud and clear he speaks them out :
Portland Plymouth Fitzroy Wight
Fair Isle Forties Malin Forth...
and now fingers and thumbs are still...
here in my ears the song rings true :
from North to South, from East to West,
where'er you wander, where'er you roam,
it's true: there is no place like home.

THE WIRELESS

A poem by Clive Wright

Music by Kostas Rekleitis

~ 92 *distant*

Voice

Violoncello

Con sord.

p

6 *p* *mf*

I re-mem-ber your hum... I re-mem-ber the buzz there was as the

p *mf*

9

light glow - ed low and showed on the screen, flick - er - ing,

mf

12 Spoken

names... Marseilles Motala Oslo Minsk Delhi Lahti, fantastic, foreign

p

17 *mf* *p*

Just twid-dle the knob and it takes you there... The way it crackl-ed

mf

THE WIRELESS

21 *mf*

like ex-cit-ed in-side the set like you could hear

24 *Spoken*

voic-es from that dis-tant place... Morava Moscow Reykjavik Andorra Allouis Honolulu...

mp

31 *p* *mf*

and I i-ma-gine them a-way and far o-ver the waves talk-ing to

p *mf*

34 *mf*

me on-ly I can-not make them out this queer ka-lei-do-scope of

mf

38 *mf*

sound im-pa-tient still I twid-dle the dials...

mf

THE WIRELESS

41 *mf*

Now, sud-den-ly it's clear all loud and clear he speaks them

45

Portland Plymouth Finisterre Fair Isle Forties Malin Forth..
and now fingers and thumbs are still...here in my ears the song rings true:

out

mp

51 *mf*

from North to South from East to West whe-re - ver you

mf

55

wan-der whe-re - ver you roam it's

58

true there is no place like home.

ANCIENT AND NOW

A poem by Colin Donati

Music by Kostas Rekleitis

~ 78 *freely*

Voice *mf*

Violoncello *mf*

6 *mf* *p*

11 *mf*

16 *p*

20 *mf* *p* *mp* *p rit.*

The new and the
now are an - cient and the on - ly con - stan - cy — the light
is now is new is an - cient
to see for the first — time mere - ly mere - ly — to be born and to
die as im - pos - si - ble — as death the on - ly con - stan - cy...

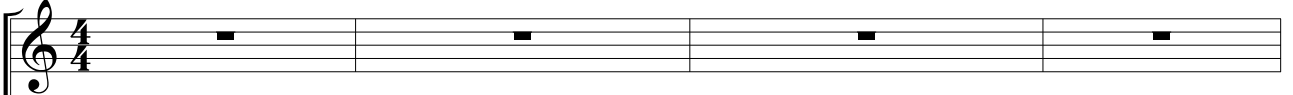
CODA

A poem by Colin Donati

Music by Kostas Rekleitis

♩ ~ 82 *gently*

Voice



Violoncello



5 *mf*

v. the rain falls and the rain falls and the same rain falls

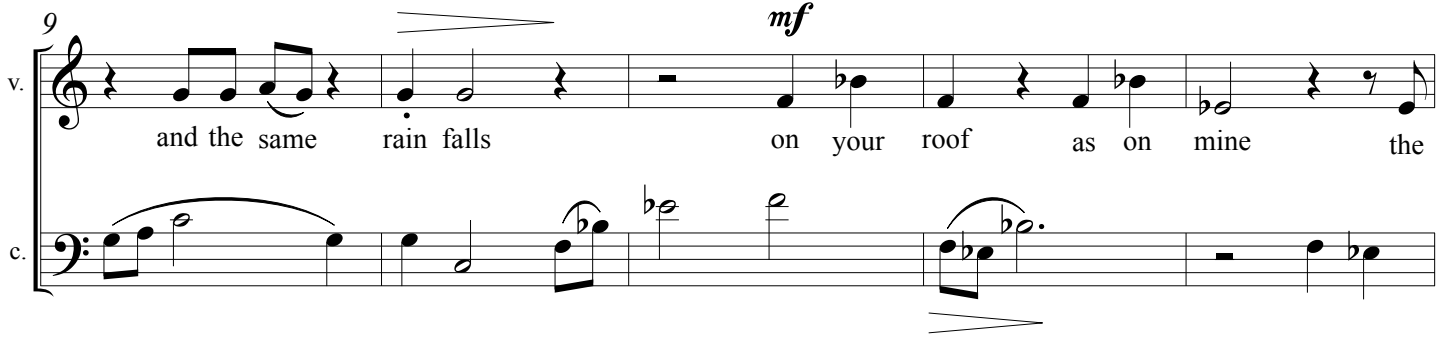
c.



9 *mf*

v. and the same rain falls on your roof as on mine the

c.



14 *mp*

v. rain and the night - time and the night your

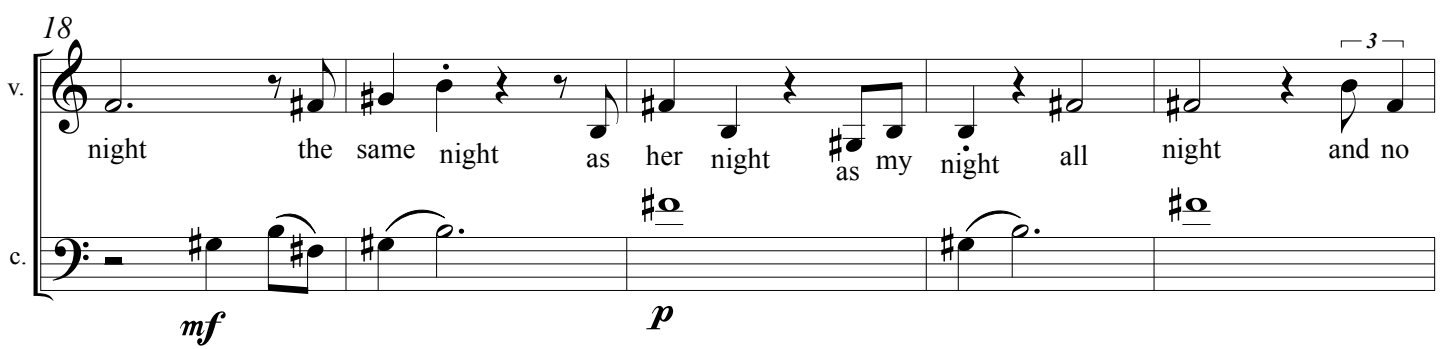
c. *p*



18

v. night the same night as her night as my night all night and no

c. *mf* *p*



CODA

23 *mf*

v. night the wind blows and the wind blows and the same wind blows

c. *mf*

28

v. and the same wind blows through your skin as through mine

c. *p*

32 *mf*

v. the wind and the day-time and the day your day the same

c. *mf*

37 *p* *mf*

v. day as his day as my day all day and no day all

c. *p* *mf*

41

v. rain and all wind no rain and no wind

c. *p*