

Mark Kilstofte
Invisible Angels

for SATB chorus



Notes

Several years ago I suffered a professional bruising at the hands of some colleagues I considered friends. Stephen Mitchell's insightful translation of Rilke's *Klage* gave voice to the profound sense of betrayal and grief I felt at that time, but until I created this setting I was unable to move past the experience. Human history is strewn with instances of individuals who have soldiered on in the face of adversity, treachery, even death, for what they loved and what they believed in. Compared to their suffering — the world's — the breaking of "my slow tree of joy" was but "a fallen berry of jubilation, unripe."

We all experience injury and injustice at some point during our lives. When we do, our innermost selves — our minds, our souls, our better angels — long to be heard and seen, to be acknowledged. I believe that they are. I hope my music makes this clear.

Requiescat in pace, Alexei Anatolyevich Navalny (1976-2024)

Text

Lament

Whom will you cry to, heart? More and more lonely,
your path struggles on through incomprehensible
mankind. All the more futile perhaps
for keeping to its direction,
keeping on toward the future,
toward what has been lost.

Once. You lamented? What was it? A fallen berry
of jubilation, unripe.

But now the whole tree of my jubilation
is breaking, in the storm it is breaking, my slow
tree of joy.

Loveliest in my invisible
landscape, you that made me more known
to the invisible angels.

translated by Stephen Mitchell
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Klage

Wem willst du klagen, Herz? Immer gemiedener
ringt sich dein Weg durch die unbegreiflichen
Menschen. Mehr noch vergebens vielleicht,
da er die Richtung behält,
Richtung zur Zukunft behält,
zu der verlorenen.

Früher. Klagtest? Was wars? Eine gefallene
Beere des Jubels, unreife.

Jetzt aber bricht mir mein Jubel-Baum,
bricht mir im Sturme mein langsamer
Jubel-Baum.

Schönster in meiner unsichtbaren
Landschaft, der du mich kenntlicher
machtest Engeln, unsichtbaren.

Rainer Maria Rilke (1875-1926)

Performance Notes

The work should be sung as written but may be transposed to suit the vocal ranges of the ensemble performing it. In passages where sopranos and altos or tenors and basses sing three-note sonorities, these may be distributed equally among the women's (e.g., measures 1-9, 49-52, 77-84, etc.) or men's voices (e.g., measures 14-17, 69-76, 81-84, etc.). Triplets on the text "incomprehensible mankind" (measures 8-9) should be sung freely, approximating the rhythms of speech. Measures 10-20 should build steadily in volume, cresting at (or just shy of) *forte*. The same is true of measures 61-72, but in this case should drive toward the *forte* of measure 73. If none of the basses can produce the D2 of measures 59-60 it may be omitted. It is important that measures 92-103 be sung without any significant change in dynamic. There, a degree of rubato may be employed to suggest a more tender, intimate connection. Brackets surround the 's' of "angel[s]" in instances where it may be omitted.

Acknowledgments

This work was commissioned by Rodney Wynkoop and the Vocal Arts Ensemble of Durham and was premiered on June 16, 2024 in Duke University Chapel. I am deeply grateful for their artistry and ongoing friendship. Thanks also to Stephen Mitchell for permission to use his exquisite translation of Rilke's *Lament*.



Mark Kilstofte is admired as a composer of lyrical line, expert text setting, and keen sensitivity to sound, shape and event, qualities stemming in part from his many years of vocal study. Winner of the Rome Prize, Kilstofte's honors also include ASCAP's Rudolf Nissim Award, several Copland House Awards, and fellowships from the Guggenheim Foundation and the American Academy of Arts and Letters. His choral works have been featured by the Santa Fe Desert Chorale, National Lutheran Choir, Råby Kammarsångare, NEWVoices and the Vocal Arts Ensemble of Durham.

Commissioned by the Vocal Arts Ensemble of Durham
Rodney Wynkoop, Director

Invisible Angels

for SATB choir

Rainer Maria Rilke

translated by Stephen Mitchell*

Mark Kilstofte

vulnerable, wounded; a soliloquy ♩ = 72-78

Whom will you cry to?

Whom will you cry to, heart? More and more lone-ly, more and more lone-ly,

Whom will you cry to?

vulnerable, wounded; a soliloquy ♩ = 72-78

p

5

Whom will you cry to? *molto ritard.* All *(p)*

whom will you cry to, heart, your path strug-gles on through in-com-pre-hen-si-ble man-kind. All

Whom will you cry to?

5

molto ritard.

* Used by permission

10

a tempo

S — the more fu - tile for keep - ing to its di - rec - tion,

A (*p*) — Whom will you cry to, heart? Whom will you cry to, heart? All *mp*

T *p* Whom will you cry to? Whom will you cry to?

B *p* Whom will you cry to? Whom will you cry to?

10

a tempo

P (*p*) — *mp*

14

mp cresc.

S (*mp*) *cresc.* — Whom will you cry to, heart? Whom will you cry to, heart? — *mf*

A — the more fu - tile, all the more fu - tile, all *mf*

T *mp cresc.* All the more fu - tile, for keep - ing on toward the fu - ture, all *mf*

B *mp cresc.* All the more fu - tile, all the more fu - tile,

14

P (*mp*) *cresc.* — *mf*

18 *mf cresc.* *p*

S All the more fu - tile, all the more fu - tile, keep -

mf cresc. the more fu - tile for keep - ing to its di - rec - tion,

A Whom will you cry to, heart? Whom will you cry to heart?

mf cresc. the more fu - tile for keep - ing to its di - rec - tion,

T Whom will you cry to, heart? Whom will you cry to heart?

B *mf cresc.*

P 18 *mf cresc.*

all the more fu - tile, all the more fu - tile,

22 *slowing* *freely, molto ritard.* *poco*

S - ing on toward the fu - ture, toward what has been

p *poco*

A all the more fu - tile, toward what has been

p *poco*

T all the more fu - tile, toward what has been

p *poco*

B what has been

22 *slowing* *freely, molto ritard.* *poco*

P *p*

26 *tenderly, wistful, a little slower* ♩ = 58-60

p

S lost. _____ Once. You la - ment - ed? What was it? A

A lost. _____ Once. You la - ment - ed? What was it? A

T lost. _____ You la - ment - ed? What was it? A

B lost. _____ You la - ment - ed? What was it? A

26 *tenderly, wistful, a little slower* ♩ = 58-60

p

P

31 *< più*

S fall - en ber - ry of ju - bi - la - tion, of

A fall - en ber - ry of ju - bi - la - tion, of

T fall - en ber - ry of ju - bi - la - tion, of

B fall - en ber - ry of ju - bi - la - tion, of

31 *< più*

P

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43

p cresc.

S my — ju - bi - la - tion, ju - bi -

p cresc.

A the whole tree of my — ju - bi - la - tion, ju - bi -

cresc.

T now the whole tree of my — ju - bi - la - tion,

cresc.

B now the whole tree of my ju - bi - la - tion,

43

cresc.

P

47

(cresc.)

S la - tion is break - ing, is break - ing, break - ing, is

(cresc.)

A la - tion is break - ing, is break - ing, break - ing, is

(cresc.)

T ju - bi - la - tion is break - ing, break - ing, is

(cresc.)

B ju - bi - la - tion is break - ing, break - ing, is

(cresc.)

P

molto ritard.
molto

47

(cresc.)

molto ritard.
molto

quasi a tempo **ritardando**

51

f **ff**

S break - ing, in the storm it is break - ing, my slow tree of

A break - ing, in the storm it is break - ing, my slow tree of,

T break - ing, in the storm it is break - ing, my slow tree of

B break - ing, in the storm it is break - ing my slow tree of

P

f **ff**

quasi a tempo **molto ritard.**

56

p **poco**

S joy.

A slow tree of joy.

T joy, slow tree of joy.

B joy, slow tree of joy.*

P

p **poco**

56

quasi a tempo **molto ritard.**

* In the event that none of the basses can produce the low D, it may be omitted.

new \ 'n(y)ü\ adj : having recently
come into existence : RECENT,
MODERN

neume \ 'n(y)üm\ n : any of various
symbols used in the notation of
Gregorian chant – **neu·mat·ic**
\n(y)ü-'mat-ik\ adj

New·mat·ic Press \n(y)ü-'mat-ik
'pres\ n : publisher of music by
Rome Prize-winning composer
Mark Kilstofte

pneu·ma \ 'n(y)ü-mə\ n : SOUL,
SPIRIT

pneu·mat·ic \n(y)ü-'mat-ik\ adj : of
or relating to the pneuma :
SPIRITUAL

69 *cresc. poco a poco*

S - - li - est in my in - vis - i - ble land - scape,

mf cresc. poco a poco

A love - li - est in my in - vis - i - ble land - scape,

mf cresc. poco a poco

T love - li - est in my in - vis - i - ble land - scape,

mf cresc. poco a poco

B love - li - est in my in - vis - i - ble land - scape,

69 *mf cresc. poco a poco*

P

resolute, defiant, pressing (a bit)

73 you that made me more known to the an - gels,

f

TB you that made me more known to the an - gels,

73 **resolute, defiant, pressing (a bit)**

P

77 you that made me more known to the an - gels,

f

SA you that made me more known to the an - gels,

77 *(f)*

P

81

*a cri de coeur**broadening**cresc.*

S *(f)* made me more known to the in - vis - i - ble an - gels, made me more *cresc.*

A *(f)* made me more known to in - vis - i - ble an - gels, made me more *cresc.*

T *(f)* made me more known to the in - vis - i - ble an - gels, made me more *cresc.*

B *(f)* made me more known to in - vis - i - ble an - gels, made me more *cresc.*

81

*a cri de coeur**broadening**cresc.*

P *(f)*

86

*molto rit.**ff*

S known to the in - vis - i - ble an - - - gels. *ff*

A known to the in - vis - i - ble an - - - gels. *ff*

T known to the in - vis - i - ble an - - - gels. *ff*

B known to the in - vis - i - ble an - - - gels. *ff*

86

*molto rit.**ff*

P *ff*

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100 *(sempre pp)* ***molto rit.***

S — that made me known to the in - vis - i - ble an - gels,

A you that made me more — known to in - vis - i - ble — an - gels,

T 8 you that made me known to in - vis - i - ble an - gels,

B you made me known to in - vis - i - ble an - gels,

P 100 *(sempre pp)* ***molto rit.***

104 ***a tempo; hushed, whispered*** *ppp* *pochis.* *pochis.*

S an - gels in - vis - i - ble an - gels, in - vis - i - ble

A *ppp* *pochis.* an - - - - - gel[s],

T 8 *ppp* an - gels, in - vis - i - ble an - gels, in - vis - i - ble

B *ppp* an - gels, in - vis - i - ble an - gels, in - vis - i - ble

P 104 ***a tempo; hushed, whispered*** *ppp*

108 *ppp* *pochis.* *molto rit.*

S an - - - - - gels, in - vis - i - ble an - gels, in - vis - i - ble

A an - gels, in - vis - i - ble an - gels, in - vis - i - ble

T an - gels, in - vis - i - ble an - gels, in - vis - i - ble

B an - gels, in - vis - i - ble an - gels, in - vis - i - ble

P *pochis.* *pochis.* *molto rit.*

112 *pure, translucent, crystalline* *(ppp)*

S an - - - gels.

A an - - - gels.

T an - gels.

B an - gels.

P *(ppp)*

112 *pure, translucent, crystalline* *(ppp)*

Mark Kilstofte: Selected Works

Orchestral

The White Album (mezzo soprano and orchestra)
Zero to 60
NewsFlash!
Of Rivers Within (soprano, chorus and orchestra)
Endless Streams (chorus and orchestra)
Elegy (string orchestra)
Recurring Dreams: Variations for Orchestra
Centone (tenor or soprano and orchestra)

Large Ensemble

Ballistic Etude 3.0 (wind ensemble)
Ballistic Etude 2.0 (brass and percussion)
Ballistic Etude 1.0 (brass and percussion)

Chamber

Oh, David (string quartet)
Oh, David (viola and piano)
American Idyll (piano quartet)
Ballistic Etude 3.1 (mixed sextet)
Inner Voices (oboe solo)
Inner Voices (saxophone solo)
Sentinels (two trumpets)
Sonata (alto saxophone and piano)
Sonata (clarinet and piano)
You [unfolding] (viola solo)
You [unfolding] (violin solo)
You [unfolding] (violoncello solo)
A Past Persistence (brass quintet)
Lovelost (baritone and nine instruments)
Four Postcards to Betsy (clarinet solo)
String Quartet

Choral

Here
What You Dream
Everyone's Voice
Enfold Us
Caritas
Through the Waters
Sol La Fanfare
This Amazing Day
Come to Him
To Music
Of Rivers Within (soprano, chorus and orchestra)
Four Hopkins Settings (available separately)
 Being
 Peace
 Beauty
 Grandeur
Gazing Up At Stars
Endless Streams (chorus and orchestra)
Christmas Rounds
Whitsunprayer
A Prayer
Lulla for Christmastide
Missa L'Homme on the Range
A Clear Midnight

Vocal

The White Album (soprano or mezzo soprano)
The Thirsty Land (soprano)
Lovelost (baritone)
Centone (high voice)
Pavane (low voice)



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