

Composer's Notes

One morning seated at the piano, I listened to Sir Ralph Richardson recite William Blake's poem *The Lamb* on perpetual loop, desiring earnestly to capture its simplicity and timelessness. After a long period of silence, I began to play. It was as if a gateway had opened, and the setting was finished in almost real-time. It was the first time such a thing had happened to me when writing. I don't know if that experience will ever happen again, but I'll cherish it always with profound gratitude.

—Luke Mayernik

Text

Little Lamb who made thee
Dost thou know who made thee
Gave thee life & bid thee feed.
By the stream & o'er the mead;
Gave thee clothing of delight,
Softest clothing woolly bright;
Gave thee such a tender voice,
Making all the vales rejoice!
Little Lamb who made thee
Dost thou know who made thee

Little Lamb I'll tell thee,
Little Lamb I'll tell thee!
He is called by thy name,
For he calls himself a Lamb:
He is meek & he is mild,
He became a little child:
I a child & thou a lamb,
We are called by his name.
Little Lamb God bless thee.
Little Lamb God bless thee.

—William Blake (1757–1827)

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Winner of the 2023 VOCES8 Composition Competition

To Susie – my childhood friend, sweetheart, and lifelong friend

The Lamb

for Soprano Solo and SATB Chorus (divisi) unaccompanied

William Blake
(1757–1837)

Luke Mayernik

Simply (♩ = 46-48) with rubato

Soprano

Alto

Tenor

Bass

Keyboard

for rehearsal only

Text: "The Lamb by William Blake, 1757–1827, from *Songs of Innocence* (1789) (PD).

poco rit.

5

Oo

Oo

unis.

Oo

poco rit.

8 *a tempo*

Sop. Solo *p*

Lit - tle Lamb who made thee? Dost thou know who made thee?

S A *pp*

Oo

T B *pp*

Oo

a tempo

12 *cresc. poco a poco* *rejoin section*

Gave thee life and bid thee feed, By the stream and o'er the mead?

Oo

Oo

16 *Tutti mp* *poco rit. poco dim.*

S *mp* *unis.* *poco dim.*

A *mp* *poco dim.*

T *mp* *unis.* *poco dim.*

B *mp* *poco dim.* *unis.*

Gave thee cloth-ing of de-light, soft-est cloth-ing wool-y bright?

Gave thee cloth-ing of de-light, soft-est cloth-ing wool-y bright?

Gave thee cloth-ing of de-light, soft-est cloth-ing wool-y bright?

Gave thee cloth-ing of de-light, soft-est cloth-ing wool-y bright?

poco rit.

20 *a tempo* ***p*** *poco cresc.*

Gave thee such a ten - der voice, mak - ing all the

p *poco cresc.*

Gave thee such a ten - der voice, mak - ing all the

p *poco cresc.*

Gave thee such a ten - der voice, mak - ing all the

unis. p *poco cresc.*

Gave thee such a ten - der voice, mak - ing all the

a tempo

23 *Solo mp*

Sop. Solo

unis. mp *poco dim.* *unis. p*

S vales re-joice! Lit - tle Lamb who made thee? Oo _____

mp *poco dim.* *p*

A vales re-joice! Lit - tle Lamb who made thee? Oo _____

mp *poco dim.* *p*

T vales re-joice! Lit - tle Lamb who made thee? Oo _____

mp *poco dim.* *unis. p*

B vales re-joice! who made thee? Oo _____

27 *poco rit.* *a tempo* *rejoin section*

made — thee? —

p *mp*

p *mp*

p *mp*

p *mp*

poco rit. *a tempo*

*poco rit.***More movement**

31 *p* *unis. p*

S Oo Lit - tle Lamb I'll

A Oo Lit - tle Lamb I'll

T *unis.* Oo Lit - tle Lamb I'll

B *p* *unis. p* Oo Lit - tle Lamb I'll

poco rit. **More movement**

35 *mp* *unis.*

S tell thee, Lit - tle Lamb I'll tell thee! He is call - èd

A *mp* tell thee, Lit - tle Lamb I'll tell thee! He is call - èd

T *mp* tell thee, Lit - tle Lamb I'll tell thee! He is call - èd

B *mp* tell thee, Lit - tle Lamb I'll tell thee! He is call - èd

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46 **Tempo primo** (♩ = 46-48)

Sop. Solo *mp*

I a child and thou a lamb, we are call - ed by his name.

S *(pp) poco cresc.*

Oo

A *(pp) poco cresc.*

Oo

T *(pp) poco cresc.*

Oo

B *(pp) poco cresc.*

Oo

Tempo primo (♩ = 46-48)

50

50

mp
Lit - tle Lamb God

p *mp* *unis. p*
Lit - tle Lamb God bless thee. Oo

p *mp* *p*
Lit - tle Lamb God bless thee. Oo

p *mp* *p*
Lit - tle Lamb God bless thee. Oo

p *mp* *unis. p*
God bless thee. Oo

8

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53 *poco rit.* *a tempo* *rejoin section*

bless thee.

p *mp*

Oo

p *mp*

Oo

p *mp*

Oo

p *mp*

Oo

poco rit. *a tempo*

57 *Slower* *p* *molto rit.* *n*

S A Lit - tle Lamb God bless thee.

T B Lit - tle Lamb God bless thee.

p *n*

