

My Lord, What a Mornin'
arranged by
H. T. Burleigh

SATB with Accompaniment
First Sunday of Advent

Both Marian Anderson (1897-1993) and Paul Robeson (1898–1976) performed this traditional spiritual in a 1918 arrangement for solo voice and piano composed by Harry T. Burleigh (1866-1949). Burleigh subsequently made *a cappella* arrangements of *My Lord, What a Mornin'* for SSA and SAATTBB choruses. In preparing this adaptation for accompanied SATB choir I have retained, with two minor changes, Burleigh's keyboard accompaniment for his original solo-voice version.

In a footnote to his original version Burleigh writes: "In one of the earliest editions of the Jubilee songs this word [*mornin'*] was *mournin'*." He refers here to the published repertory of the Jubilee Singers of Fisk University, who in the 1870s first introduced the performance of African American spirituals into concert halls.

My Lord, What a Mornin' [or *Mournin'*] is particularly fitting for the First Sunday of Advent, Year B, when the Revised Common Lectionary readings reiterate apocalyptic themes, as in Mark 13:24: "Jesus said, 'But in those days, after that suffering, the sun will be darkened, and the moon will not give its light, and the stars will be falling from heaven....'" In the edition of 1918 Burleigh specifies the scriptural source as Revelation 8:10—a text that is not included in the Revised Common Lectionary.

I dedicate this adaptation to Archie C. Epps III (1937-2003) who over many years sang a thrilling rendition of *My Lord, What a Mornin'* accompanied by the Harvard Glee Club. He was an award-winning alumnus of Harvard Divinity School, and from 1971 to 1999 was Dean of Students at Harvard University. I was lucky to have numbered him among my most admired friends.

Albert Blackwell
August 1, 2012

My Lord, What a Mornin'

In memory of Archie C. Epps III (1937–2003)

*The third angel blew his trumpet,
and a great star fell from heaven,
blazing like a torch.... (Revelation 8:10)*

Traditional spiritual, arranged by
H. T. Burleigh (1866–1949),
adapted by Albert Blackwell

Adagio non tanto *p*

Soprano
Alto
Tenor
Bass

My Lord what a morn - in',
My Lord what a morn - in',
My Lord what a morn - in',
My Lord what a morn - in',

Adagio non tanto *p*

Acc.

5 *mf*

S
A
T
B

My Lord what a morn - in', Oh, my Lord what a
My Lord what a morn - in', Oh, my Lord what a
My Lord what a morn - in', Oh, my Lord what a
My Lord what a morn - in', Oh, my Lord what a

5 *mf*

Acc.

8

S
morn - in', when the stars be-gin to fall, when the stars be-gin to

A
morn - in', when the stars be-gin to fall, when the stars be - gin to

T
8
morn - in', when the stars be-gin to fall, when the stars be-gin to

B
morn - in', stars be-gin to fall, when the stars be - gin to

Acc.

12

S
p fall. My Lord what a morn - in', *mf* My Lord what a

A
fall. My Lord what a morn - in', My Lord what a

T
8
fall. My Lord what a morn - in', My Lord what a

B
fall. My Lord what a morn - in', My Lord what a

Acc.

p *mf*

16

S
morn - in', Oh, my Lord what a morn - in', when the

A
morn - in', Oh, my Lord what a morn - in', when the

T
8 morn in', Oh, my Lord what a morn - in', when the

B
morn - in', Oh, my Lord what a morn - in', when the

Acc.

19

S
stars be - gin to fall, when the stars be - gin to

A
stars be - gin to fall, when the stars be - gin to

T
8 stars be - gin to fall, when the stars be gin to

B
stars be - gin to fall, when the stars be - gin to

Acc.

mf *rit.*

22 *a tempo* ***f*** poco piu mosso

S fall. Done quit all my

A fall. Done quit all my

T fall. Done quit all my

B fall. Done quit all my

Acc. *a tempo* ***f*** poco piu mosso

25

S world - ly - ways, joined that heav-en - ly band.

A world - ly ways, joined that heav-en - ly band.

T world - ly ways, joined that heav-en - ly band.

B world - ly ways, joined that heav-en - ly band.

Acc.

28 *f cresc. e rit.* *rit. molto*

S Done quit all my world - ly ways, joined that heav - en - ly

A Done quit all my world - ly ways, — joined that heav'n - ly

T Done quit all my world - ly ways, joined that heav'n - ly

B Done quit all my world - ly ways, — joined that heav'n - ly

Acc. *f cresc. e rit.* *rit. molto*

31 *mf Tempo 1*

S band. Oh! My Lord what a morn - in',

A band. Oh! My Lord what a morn - in',

T band. Oh! My Lord what a morn - in',

B band. Oh! My Lord what a morn - in',

Acc. *mf Tempo 1*

f

34

S My Lord — what a morn - in'. Oh, my Lord what a morn - in', when the

A My Lord what a morn - in', — Oh, my Lord — what a morn - in', when the

T 8 My Lord what a morn - in', — Oh, my Lord — what a morn - in', — when the

B My Lord what a morn - in', — Oh, my Lord — what a morn - in', — when the

Acc.

rit. e dim.

38

S stars be - gin to fall. —

A stars be - gin to fall. —

T 8 stars be - gin to fall. —

B stars be - gin to fall. —

Acc.

p *rit. e dim.* *pp*