

Notes for

Black is the Colour

Folk songs of America are a combination of our country's diverse ancestral cultures — a musical expression of its people, whether they were slaves from Africa, mountain folk from Kentucky, or pilgrims from the Old World. Before musical notation, the songs were passed down by oral tradition from generation to generation. Often melodies were changed as they were remembered in different versions.

Black is the Colour has its roots in the Elizabethan love songs of the Southern Appalachian mountains. A search for the words and melody uncovered what is suspected to be the original, unmuted melody, and not the traditional one associated with this title that many of us learned as children. Sources of traditional Appalachian folk songs contain the major mode melody. Black is the Colour, [*mode 4, b (with sharpened 7th; no 4th)*] was found in Cecil J. Sharp's book, English Folk Songs from the Southern Appalachians, an appalachian tune collected from and sung by Mrs. Lizzie Roberts, at Hot Springs, North Carolina, September 15, 1916. This pentatonic mode melody has been incorporated into the arrangement as the middle section. It is surrounded by the traditional minor mode melody found in modern day folk song collections, thus giving the piece an A B A form with a short introduction and a short coda.

L.A.H.

Black Is the Colour

SSAA Chorus a cappella

performance time: 3:00

Text: Traditional

Traditional Appalachian Folk Song melodies
arranged by Laura Ann Horwitz

Molto legato ♩ = 100 (as in the distance)

pp *ritard*

Soprano 1
Loo loo loo loo loo loo loo loo loo loo.

Soprano 2
Loo loo loo loo.

Alto 1
Loo loo loo loo.

Alto 2
Loo loo loo loo loo loo.

Piano (rehearsal only)

5

♩ = 69 (tenderly)
mp

S. 1
Black, black, black is the col-our of my true loves hair, His lips — are like some

S. 2
Black, black, black is the col-our of my true loves hair, His lips — are like some

A. 1
Black, black, black is the col-our of my true loves hair, oo His lips — are like some

A. 2
Black, black, black is the col-our of my true loves hair, oo His lips — are like some

mp *(gently)*

9

S. 1
ro - sy fair; The pret - ti - est face and the neat - est hands, I love the

S. 2
ro - sy fair; The pret - ti - est face and the neat - est hands, I love the

A. 1
ro - sy fair; The pret - ti - est face — and the neat - est hands,

A. 2
ro - sy fair; The pret - ti - est face — and the neat - est hands,

mf *poco rit.*

12

poco rit. *a tempo*
mf

S. 1 ground on where he stands. I love my love and well he knows I

S. 2 ground on where he stands. I love my love and well he knows I

A. 1 oo oo Love my love and well he knows I

A. 2 oo oo Love my love and well he knows

poco rit. *a tempo*

16

cresc. *rubato* *f*

S. 1 love the ground where-on he goes. If you no more on earth I see, I can't serve

S. 2 love the ground where-on he goes. If you no more on earth I see, I can't serve

A. 1 love the ground where-on he goes. If you no more on earth I see, I can't serve

A. 2 oo the ground where-on he goes. If you no more on earth I see, I can't serve

cresc. *rubato* *f*

rubato

19

ritard *a temp)*
mf *ritard*

SP S you as you have me. Still I hope the time will come when you and I shall be as one.

SP 2 you as you have me. oo

P S you as you have me. oo

P 2 you as you have me. oo

ritard *a temp)* *ritard*

22

a little faster (rich sound)
f

SP S So fare you well, my own true love, The time has

SP 2 So fare you well, my own true love, The time has

P S So fare you well, my own true love, The time has

P 2 So fare you well, my own true love, The time has

a little faster

25

S. 1
passed but I wish you well; But still I hope the time will

S. 2
passed but I wish you well; But still I hope the time will

A. 1
passed but I wish you well; But still I hope the time will

A. 2
passed but I wish you well; But still I hope the time will

28

S. 1
come When you and I will be as one.

S. 2
come When you and I will be as one.

A. 1
come When you and I will be as one.

A. 2
come When you and I will be as one.

31

Adagio
mp

mf

S. 1
Win - ter's passed and the leaves are green, The

S. 2
Win - ter's passed leaves are green, The

A. 1
Win - ter's passed leaves are green, The

A. 2
Win - ter's passed leaves are green, The

Adagio

34

poco a poco rit.

poco a poco rit.

poco a poco rit.

poco a poco rit.

poco a poco rit.

S. 1
time is passed that we have seen, But still I hope the time will come when you and

S. 2
time is passed that we have seen, But still I hope the time will come when you and

A. 1
time is passed that we have seen, But still I hope the time will come when you and

A. 2
time is passed that we have seen, But still I hope the time will come when you and

37 *allarg.* *Very Slow (gently)* *p*

S. 1 I shall be as one. Black, black, black is the

S. 2 I be one. Black, black, black is the

A. 1 I be one. Black, black, black is the

A. 2 I be one. Black, black, black is the

allarg. *Very Slow*

40 *rall.*

S. 1 col - our of my true loves hair.

S. 2 col - our of my true loves hair.

A. 1 col - our of my true loves hair.

A. 2 col - our of my true loves hair.

rall.