

JS 041
2 minutes, 5 seconds

*I met a man
under the moon
on Sunday*

SATB, a cappella

Music by
Joshua Shank

Text by
E. E. Cummings

Notes from the composer

When Dr. Kevin Coker approached me about collaborating on a choral song cycle, we talked through many different themes that we felt might tie a set of pieces together. In a previous work, *Color Madrigals*, I had used the color wheel and texts by John Keats as a jumping-off point so, for this new cycle, we entertained various ways to do the same. The idea we hit upon that we thought might yield something interesting was a song cycle based around something entirely quotidian (literally): the days of the week. We sometimes see the week as a thing to make it through, but momentous events like the first atomic bomb being dropped on Hiroshima and man's first steps on the surface of the moon happened, boringly enough, on a Monday. But more personal stories—falling in love, having a child, losing a parent—can also happen to us no matter what day of the week it is. Thus, *Songs for Seven Days* was born.

To that end, I searched for texts that mentioned each day of the week and came up with some beautifully diverse offerings. For the first movement, I read through E. E. Cummings's collected works and found a goofy text about a chance encounter with a random stranger in Rome.

Songs for Seven Days was commissioned by the Blue Valley Northwest High School Chamber Singers (Dr. Kevin Coker, conductor) for their performance at the 2014 Kansas Music Educators Convention.

The text

XLVI

by E. E. Cummings (1894-1962)

i met a man under the moon
on Sunday.

by way of saying
nothing he
smiled (but

just by the dirty collar of his

jacket were two glued uncarefully ears
in

that face a box of
skin lay eyes like
new tools)

whence i guessed that he also had climbed the pincian
to appreciate rome at nightfall; and because against this
wall his white sincere small,
hands with their guessing fingers

did-not-move exquisitely
,like dead children

(if he had been playing a fiddle i had

been dancing; which is
why something about me reminded him of ourselves)

as Nobody came slowly over the town

Text used by permission.

14 *f* *p* *mf*

col - lar of his jack - et _____ oh _____

col - lar of his jack - et were two glued un - care - ful - ly ears _____

col - lar of his jack - et _____ were two glued - un - care - ful - ly ears _____

col - lar of his jack - et _____ oh _____

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20 Slower (♩. = 56)

mp *mf*

in that face lay eyes like new tools)

in that face a box of skin _____ lay eyes like new tools)

in that face lay eyes like new tools)

in that face a box of skin lay eyes like new tools)

25 Back to fast tempo

mf (3+2+2)

whence I guessed that he al so had _____ climbed the

whence I guessed that he al - so had _____ climbed the *pin -

whence I guessed that he al - so had _____ climbed the *pin - cian _____

whence I guessed that he al - so had _____ climbed the *pin - cian

* A hill in Rome. It's pronounced "PIN-chyuhn".

(3+2)

(3+2+2)

smoothly, no vibrato

*pin - cian to ap - pre - ci - ate rome at night - fall;

cian to ap pre - ci - ate rome at night - fall;

to ap - pre - ci - ate rome at night - fall;

to ap - pre - ci - ate rome at night - fall;

32 Slower (♩ = 52)

mf

(♩ = 52)

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(3+2)

and be - cause a - gainst this wall his white sin - cere small

and be - cause a - gainst this wall his white sin - cere small

and be - cause a - gainst this wall his white sin - cere small

and be - cause a - gainst this wall his white sin - cere small

no vib.

poco rit.

A little slower, relaxing

hands with their guess - ing fin - gers did not move ex - qui - site -

hands with their guess - ing fin - gers did not move ex - qui - site -

hands with their guess - ing fin - gers did not move ex - qui - site - ly,

hands with their guess - ing fin - gers did not move ex - qui - site - ly,

40 Back to fast tempo (♩ = 160)

39 *mf* (3+2) (2+3+2)

ly, (if he had been play - ing a fid - dle i had been

ly, (if he had been play - ing a fid - dle i had been

(if he had been play - ing a fid - dle i had been

(if he had been play - ing a fid - dle i had been

44 *f* *sub. mp hushed, but still intense*

danc - ing: _____ which is why some - thing a - bout me re - mind - ed him

danc - ing: _____ which is why some - thing a - bout me re - mind - ed him

danc - ing: _____ which is why some - thing a - bout me re - mind - ed him

danc - ing: _____ which is why some - thing a - bout me re - mind - ed him

51 Joyfully (♩ = 72)

49 *mf*

of our - selves) as No - bo - dy came slow - ly

of our - selves)

of our - selves) as No -

of our - selves)

53

o-ver the town, as No-bo-dy came slow-ly o-ver the town, as No-bo-dy came slow-ly

mf

as No-bo-dy came slow-ly o-ver the town, as No-bo-dy came slow-ly

bo-dy came slow-ly o-ver the town, as No-bo-dy came slow-ly o-ver the town, as No-

mf

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Senza rit. to the end

57

o-ver the town, as No-bo-dy came slow-ly o-ver the town

mp (no fermata)

o-ver the town, as No-bo-dy came slow-ly o-ver the town

mp (no fermata)

bo-dy came slow-ly o-ver the town, slow-ly o-ver the town

mp (no fermata)

bo-dy came slow-ly o-ver the town, slow-ly o-ver the town

mp (no fermata)

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Joshua Shank

Austin, October 2013

"This illegal copy will self destruct in 5...4...3..."