

JS 047
2 minutes, 10 seconds

Each Saturday evening

SATB, a cappella

Music by
Joshua Shank

Text by
Paul Laurence Dunbar

Note 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 final movement, I chose a text by African American poet Paul Laurence Dunbar which takes place on a humble farmstead and set it to a jaunty tune to portray the story of a smitten farm boy going against the wishes of his father on a Saturday night.

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

Confirmation

by Paul Laurence Dunbar (1872-1906)

He was a poet who wrote clever verses,
And folks said he had a fine poetical taste;
But his father, a practical farmer, accused him
Of letting the strength of his arm go to waste.

He called on his sweetheart each Saturday evening,
As pretty a maiden as ever man faced,
And there he confirmed the old man's accusation
By letting the strength of his arm go to waist.

B&F Music
Joshua Shank

“This illegal copy will self destruct in 5...4...3...”

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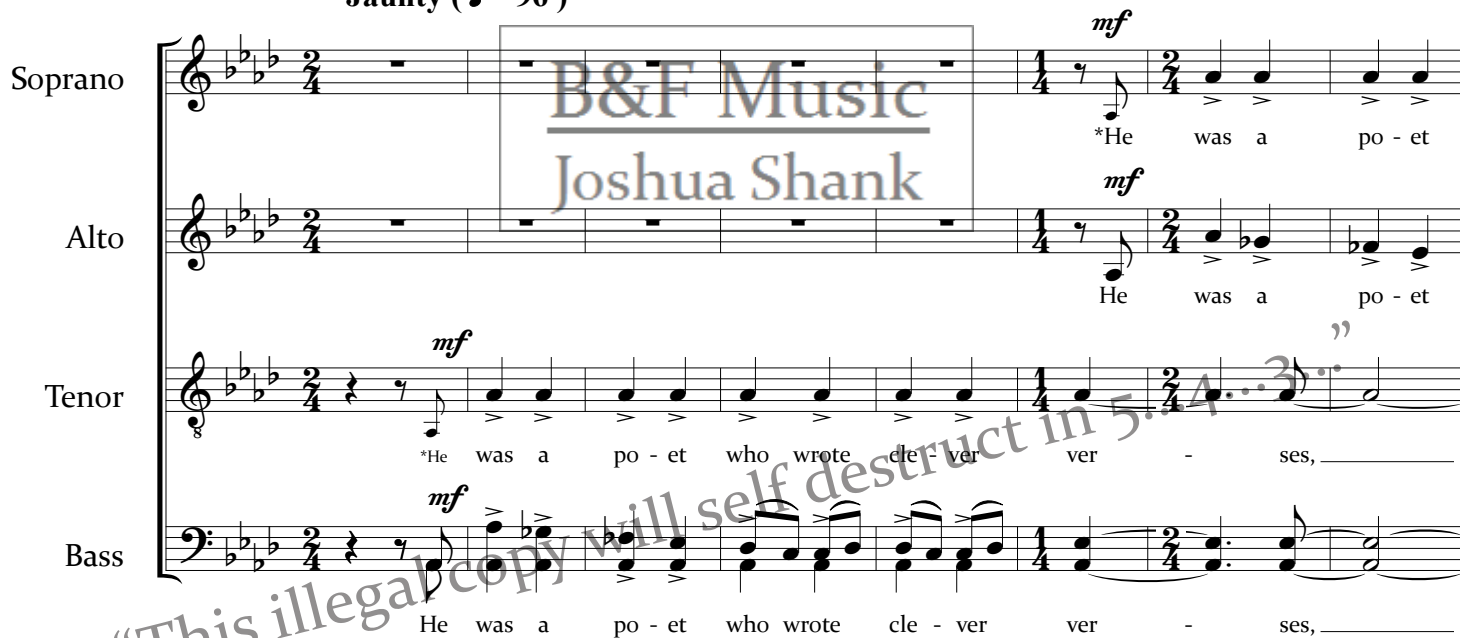
Jaunty (♩ = 96)

Soprano *mf* *He was a po - et

Alto *mf* He was a po - et

Tenor *mf* *He was a po - et who wrote cle - ver ver - ses,

Bass *mf* He was a po - et who wrote cle - ver ver - ses,




9 *mf* who wrote cle - ver ver - ses, And folks said he had a fine po - e - ti - cal

mf who wrote cle - ver ver - ses, And folks said he had a fine po - e - ti - cal

mf And folks said he had a fine po - e - ti - cal

mf And folks said he had a fine po - e - ti - cal



* Only sing if you have the A-flat solid. If not leave it off and come in on the next word here and in similar passages later in the piece.

17 *mf* smoothly

taste; But his fa-ther, a prac-ti-cal farm-er, ac-cused him of let-ting the strength of his

mf smoothly

taste; But his fa-ther, a prac-ti-cal farm-er, ac-cused him of let-ting the strength of his

mf smoothly

taste; But his fa-ther, a prac-ti-cal farm-er, ac-cused him of let-ting the strength of his

mf smoothly

taste; But his fa-ther, a prac-ti-cal farm-er, ac-cused him of let-ting the strength of his

29 Jaunty again

26 *poco rit.*

arm go to waste. He called on his sweet-heart each Sa-tur-day eve-

poco rit.

arm go to waste. He called on his sweet-heart each Sa-tur day eve-

poco rit.

arm go to waste. He called on his sweet-heart each Sa-tur day eve-

poco rit.

arm go to waste. He called on his sweet-heart each Sa-tur day eve-

34 *f* smoothly

ning, As pret-ty a mai-den as e-ver man faced,

f smoothly

ning, As pret-ty a mai-den as e-ver man faced,

f smoothly

ning, As pret-ty a mai-den as e-ver man faced,

f smoothly

ning, As pret-ty a mai-den as e-ver man faced,

43 Jaunty again

42 *mf*

And there he con - firmed the old man's ac - cu - sa - tion _____ by —

mf

And there he con - firmed the old man's ac - cu - sa - tion _____ by

mf

And there he con - firmed the old man's ac - cu - sa - tion by _____

mf

And there he con - firmed the old man's ac - cu - sa - tion by,,

49 *smoothly* *f*

let - ting the strength of his arm, by let - ting the strength of his arm _____

smoothly *f*

let - ting the strength of his arm, by let - ting the strength of his arm _____

smoothly *f*

let - ting the strength of his arm, by let - ting the strength of his arm _____

smoothly *f*

let - ting the strength of his arm, by let - ting the strength of his arm _____

57

mp go to waist.

sfz *f*

mp go to waist.

sfz *f*

mp go to waist.

sfz *f*

mp go to waist.

sfz *f*

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64

poco rit.

poco rit.

poco rit.

poco rit.

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Minneapolis, December 2013