

Though the great Waters sleep
GP-L006
SATB div., piano

Isaac Lovdahl

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Isaac Lovdahl

Though the great Waters sleep

for SATB div. choir and piano



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Text:

Though the great Waters sleep,
That they are still the Deep,
We cannot doubt
No vacillating God
Ignited this Abode
To put it out

- *Emily Dickinson (1830-86)*

From the Composer:

In six short and poignant lines, Emily Dickinson's poem "Though the great Waters sleep" presents the reader with a severe personal dilemma: She is confronting existential doubt regarding her purpose in life and the existence of a Creator. Many of us have experienced a great deal of anxiety as we attempt to contend with these big questions I certainly have. Dickinson asserts that "no vacillating God" would put us here just to have us die without meaning and function. As a juxtaposition to the poetry, I included melodic excerpts from the funeral hymn "Abide with Me" throughout the piece. The hymn text pleads for God to stay with us throughout life and to help us cross over into death. Though the text from the hymn is not sung at any point, the inclusion of the melodic material subtly hints at its broader meaning, implying that there is hope to be found beyond fear and doubt, regardless of one's individual resolution. We are here - we exist. Our meaning is found in our living and our striving. You have a purpose - known or unknown; bestowed, discovered, or invented. It is my hope that this music will simultaneously provoke thought and deep reflection while also offering comfort and solace to those who need it.

- *Isaac Lovdahl, 2023*

Selected as the winner of the 2021 Yale Glee Club Emerging Composers Competition

Though the great Waters sleep

for SATB div. choir and piano

Emily Dickinson (1830-1886)

Isaac Lovdahl

Elegantly

♩ = c. 58

Piano

(pedal naturally and harmonically throughout; always with warm legato)

S
A
T
B

Though the great Wat - ers sleep,

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7

molto f *mp*

S Though the great wat - ers sleep,

A Though the great wat - ers sleep,

T 8 Though the great wat - ers sleep,

B Though the great wat - ers sleep,

mf espress.

11

p

S Ooo

A Ooo

T 8 Ooo

B Ooo

mp

11

2

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With a bit more motion

Suddenly slower

19 *mf* *mp* *p*

S That ___ they ___ are ___ still ___ the Deep, the Deep, ___

A That ___ they ___ are still the Deep, the Deep, ___

T That ___ they ___ are still the Deep, the Deep, ___

B That they ___ are still ___ the Deep, the Deep, ___

19 *mf* *mp* *p*

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34 *mf*

S *mf* doubt We can-not doubt

A *mf* We can-not doubt We can-not doubt

T *mf* We can-not doubt We can-not doubt

B *mf* We can-not doubt

34 *mf*

37 *pp* *c. 10s* *Accel.*

S *pp* We can-not doubt No,

A *pp* We can-not doubt No,

T *p* No,

B *p* No,

37 *f* *mp* *c. 10s* *TM* *Accel.*

**Singers perform the melodic cell freely and in their own time.
Move to the downbeat of ms. 39 at the director's cue.

Boldly, with fire

c. 82

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S *mf* No vac-il - la-ting God,

A *mf* No vac-il - la-ting God,

T *mf*

B *mf*

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Boldly, with fire

♩ = c. 82

41 *mf* ***

44 S No vac-il-la-ting God,

A No vac-il-la-ting God, No

T No vac-il-la-ting God,

B No

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44

47

S For perusal purposes only. Do not copy.
No vac-il-la-ting God

A vac-il-la-ting God, vac-il-la-ting God

T No vac-il-la-ting God, vac-il-la-ting God

B vac - il - la-ting God, God

47

Maestoso, broader

50 *mp* *f*

S *mp* *f* *gliss.*
Ig - nit - ed, Ig - nit - ed this A -

A *mp* *f* *gliss.*
Ig - nit - ed, Ig - nit - ed this A -

T *mp* *f* *gliss.*
Ig - nit - ed, Ig - nit - ed this A -

B *mp* *f* *gliss.*
Ig - nit - ed, Ig - nit - ed this A -

50 *mp* *f*

Tenderly

$\text{♩} = \text{c. } 68$

Rit.

55

S
bode To put it out — Mmm

A
bode To put it out — Mmm

T
bode Mmm

B
bode Mmm

mp

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Tenderly

$\text{♩} = \text{c. } 68$

Rit.

55

8^{va}

mp

(The pianist may gently embellish the hymn tune as desired.)

61

S

A

T

B

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61

(8^{va})

68 $\text{♩} = \text{c. } 58$

S *pp* Though the great Wat-ers sleep,

A *pp*

T *pp*

B *pp*

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8^{va}

68 $\text{♩} = \text{c. } 58$

p

72 *Molto rit.*

S They are still the Deep.

A *p*

T

B

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72 *Molto rit.*

mf

p

9

Isaac Lovdahl



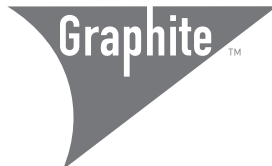
Isaac Lovdahl is an award-winning composer, conductor, educator, and vocalist based in Fargo, ND. He directed high school, church, and community choirs in Minnesota after graduating from Concordia College in 2015, and is now finishing a DMA in Choral Conducting at North Dakota State University where he was named the first ever Challey School of Music Choral Conducting Fellow. Along with his doctoral studies, Isaac directs the campus tenor-bass ensemble and teaches ear training. Additionally, he serves as the Assistant Conductor of the Fargo-Moorhead Choral Artists.

His choral compositions and art songs have been performed internationally by collegiate, community-based, and professional ensembles and soloists among others. Isaac and his team took first-place at Minneapolis SongSLAM 2020, an art song composition competition hosted by Source Song Festival in conjunction with Sparks and Wiry Cries. In 2021, he was named the winner of the Yale Glee Club Emerging Composer Competition and the Bellevue Chamber Chorus Emerging Composer Competition. Most recently, Isaac's piece "Freedom" earned second-place at the 43rd Annual Ithaca College Choral Composition Festival and he was named a finalist in the 2023 Young New Yorkers' Chorus Competition for Young Composers.

Isaac's original music can be found online through Graphite Publishing, Santa Barbara Music Publishing, NewMusicShelf, VocalEssence Music Press, MusicSpoke, and his own website.

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