

Blessed Be the Flower That Triumphs

Michael de Vernon Boblett

SATB, 2 horns, harp, strings



Elizabeth Alexander

Seafarer Press

Blessed Be the Flower That Triumphs at Last

Blessed be the flower that triumphs
Over snows, over thorns, over withered stems,
Over windswept mountains, over deserts cruel and dry.
Blessed be the flower that triumphs.

Blessed be the flower that triumphs
Over wars, over change, over centuries,
Over barbed wire fences, over soldiers' heavy feet.
Blessed be the flower that triumphs.

Blessed be the flower that triumphs
Over well-meaning hands bent on gathering.
Over small closed rooms, with their vases hard and cold.
Blessed be the flower that triumphs.

Blessed be the flower that triumphs
Over vain words of priests and of poets' pens
And attempts to domesticate its wild, wild Truth.
Blessed be the flower that triumphs.

Blessed be the flower that triumphs
Over past, over death, over silences,
Enduring beyond iron and tears and severed roots,
And restoring to all things a joyful smallness.
Blessed be the flower that triumphs at last.

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Composer Note: When I was asked to compose this “companion piece” for a concert featuring the Fauré *Requiem*, I felt both excited and intimidated. What more could my music say about death, loss and transcendence than was already conveyed by that timeless choral masterwork?

As I mulled this question over in my mind I kept coming back to the same word: Resurrection. What a big and weighty word! And what exactly did it mean?

I found a surprisingly small and simple answer in Michael de Vernon Boblett’s poem “Blessed Be the Flower that Triumphs at Last.” Resurrection is what happens when a patient flower faithfully returns despite the ravages of wind and drought, pride and avarice, brutality and war. It is what happens when love and hope refuse to be snuffed out even by death itself, blessing the living with their eternal legacy.

Blessed Be the Flower That Triumphs exists in two versions, one for SATB chorus *a cappella* (SEA-078-00) and one for SATB chorus with a small chamber orchestra consisting of 2 horns, harp and strings (SEA-078-01). While the orchestral version includes additional instrumental material, the choral parts themselves are identical in both versions. Choirs wishing to have the opportunity to perform both versions may wish to purchase and sing from the orchestral version’s choral part (SEA-078-03).

Instrumentation

2 Horns

Harp

SATB choir

Strings



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Michael de Vernon Boblett is a retired Unitarian Universalist minister living within sight of the San Diego River in San Diego, CA. As a certified practitioner of Rolfing® bodywork, he likes to say: “Now my hands do my talking.” Michael’s life also includes family, distance running, mountain climbing, telling funny stories to children, and practicing *zazen* meditation at a local meditation center. Most of his recent poems are haiku.

Blessed Be the Flower That Triumphs

for SATB choir, 2 horns, harp, and strings

Michael deVernon Boblett

Elizabeth Alexander

(♩ = 50-54) *Tenderly*

The musical score is arranged in a system with the following parts from top to bottom:

- 2 Horns in F:** Treble clef, 2/2 time signature. The first staff contains a melodic line starting with a half note G4, followed by a half note A4, and then a half note B4. The notes are marked with a *p* dynamic and are connected by a slur. There are also some notes with stems pointing down.
- Harp:** Treble and bass clefs, 2/2 time signature. The staff contains a series of rhythmic markings: *+++|+|+*.
- SATB Choir:** Soprano (S), Alto (A), Tenor (T), and Bass (B) parts, all in treble clef with a bass clef for the Bass part. The staves are currently empty.
- Strings:** Violin I (Vln I), Violin II (Vln II), Viola (Vla), Cello, and Bass. The Violin I and II parts have a *Solo: tenderly* marking and a *p* dynamic. The Violin I part has a *Tutti* marking. The strings are currently empty.

21 **A**

Harp (Hp)

Soprano (S)

Alto (A)

Tenor (T)

Bass (B)

Vln I

Vln II

Vla

Vc

Cb

p

Bless-ed be the flow - er that tri - umphs o - ver snows, o - ver thorns, o - ver

Bless-ed be the flow - er that tri - umphs o - ver snows, o - ver thorns, o - ver

Bless-ed be the flow - er that tri - umphs o - ver snows, o - ver thorns, o - ver

Bless-ed be the flow - er that tri - umphs o - ver snows, o - ver thorns, o - ver

B \sharp → B \flat
E \sharp → E \flat
F \sharp → F \natural

27

Soprano (S)

Alto (A)

Tenor (T)

Bass (B)

with - ered stems, o - ver wind - swept moun - tains, des - erts cruel and dry,

with - ered stems, o - ver wind - swept moun - tains, des - erts cruel and dry,

with - ered stems, o - ver wind - swept moun - tains, des - erts cruel and dry,

with - ered stems, o - ver wind - swept moun - tains, des - erts cruel and dry,

33

Hn *p* 1.

S Bless - ed be the flow - er that tri - umphs,

A Bless - ed be the flow - er that tri - - - - umphs.

T Bless - ed be the flow - er that tri - - - - umphs.

B Bless - ed be the flow - er that tri - - - - umphs.

Vln I *p*

Vln II *p*

Vla *p*

Vc *p*

39

Hn 1. *un poco aggressivo* *mp* 3

Harp *mp*

Vln I

Vln II *mp*

Vla *mp*

Vc *mp*

Cb *mp*

A \sharp → A \flat
D \sharp → D \flat

43

Hn

Hp

Vln I

Vln II

Vla

Vc

Cb

mf

2. 3

mf

mf

mf

mf

mf

mf

47

Hn

Hp

Vln I

Vln II

Vla

Vc

Cb

2. 3

pesante

pesante

pesante

nondiv.

div.

52 2.

Hn

Harp

Vln I Solo: dolce

Vln I gli altri

Vln II dolce

Vla

Vc

p

mp

p

p

p

p

p

B \flat → B \natural

E \flat → E \natural D \flat → D \natural
A \flat → A \natural F \sharp → F \natural

57

Harp

Vln I Tutti:

Vln II

Vla

Vc

Cb

B

61

Hn *f* a_2 3 3

Hp *mf* *f*

F# → F \flat
 A \sharp → A \flat
 B \sharp → B \flat

S *mf* *f*
 Bless-ed be the flow - er that tri - umphs _____ o - ver wars, o - ver change, o - ver

A *mf* *f*
 Bless-ed be the flow - er that tri - umphs, that tri - umphs o - ver wars, o - ver change, o - ver

T *mf* *f*
 Bless-ed be the flow - er that tri - umphs, that tri - umphs o - ver wars, o - ver change, o - ver

B *mf* *f*
 Bless-ed be the flow-er that tri - umphs, that tri - umphs o - ver wars, o - ver change, o - ver

Vln I *mf* *f*

Vln II *mf* *f*

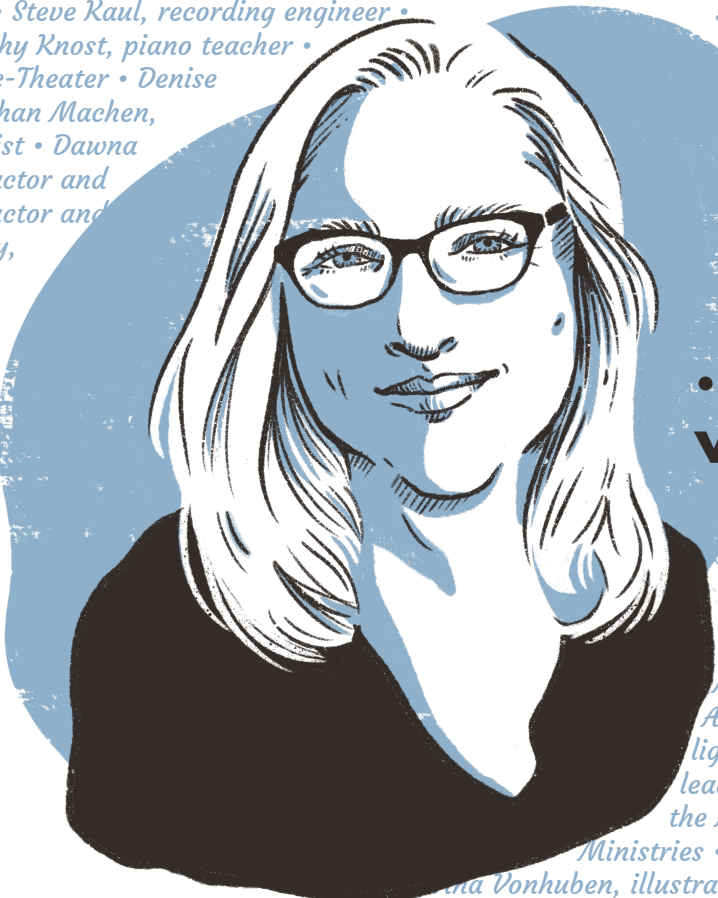
Vla *mf* *f*

Vc *mf* *f*

Cb *mf* *f*

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**...and some of it
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C

80

Hp *mp*

S *mp* well - mean - ing hands bent on gath - er - ing, o - ver *Ab → A \flat*

A *mp* well - mean - ing hands bent on gath - er - ing, o - ver

T *mp* well mean - ing hands bent on gath - er - ing, o - ver

B *mp* well mean - ing hands gath - er - ing, o - ver

Vln I

Vln II

84

Hn *p*

Hp *mf*

S *mf* small closed rooms, with their vas - es hard and cold, o - ver *A \flat → A \flat*

A *mf* small closed rooms, with their vas - es hard and cold, o - ver

T *mf* small closed rooms with their vas - es hard and cold, o - ver

B *mf* small closed rooms with their vas - es hard and cold, o - ver

88

Hn

S

A

T

B

Vln I

Vln II

Vla

Vc

Cb

vain words of priests and of po - ets' pens, and at - tempts to do - mes - ti - cate its

vain words of priests and of po - ets' pens, and at - tempts to do - mes - ti - cate its

vain words of priests and of po - ets' pens, and at - tempts to do - mes - ti - cate its

vain words of priests and of po - ets' pens, and at - tempts to do - mes - ti - cate its

vain words of priests and of po - ets' pens, and at - tempts to do - mes - ti - cate its

mf

mf

mf

mf

mf

mp

mp

mp

mp

2.

100 *freely* **meno mosso** **a tempo**

Hn *pp*

S *pp tenderly*
Bless- ed be, _____ bless- ed be, _____

A *pp tenderly*
Bless- ed be, bless-ed be, bless- ed be, _____ Bless - ed

T *pp tenderly*
Bless- ed be, _____ bless - ed be, Bless - ed

B *pp tenderly*
Bless- ed be, _____ bless - ed be, Bless - ed

Vln I *Solo: tenderly*
p

Vln II

Vla *Solo: tenderly*
p *Tutti:*

Vc *p*

Cb

D

108

Hp *p*

S
Bless - ed be the flow - er that tri - - umphs _____ o - ver

A
be the flow - er that tri - - umphs _____ o - ver

T
8
be the flow - - - - er that tri - umphs, that tri - umphs o - ver

B
be the flow - er that tri - umphs, that tri - umphs o - ver

Vln I *pp*

Vln II *pp*

Vla *p*

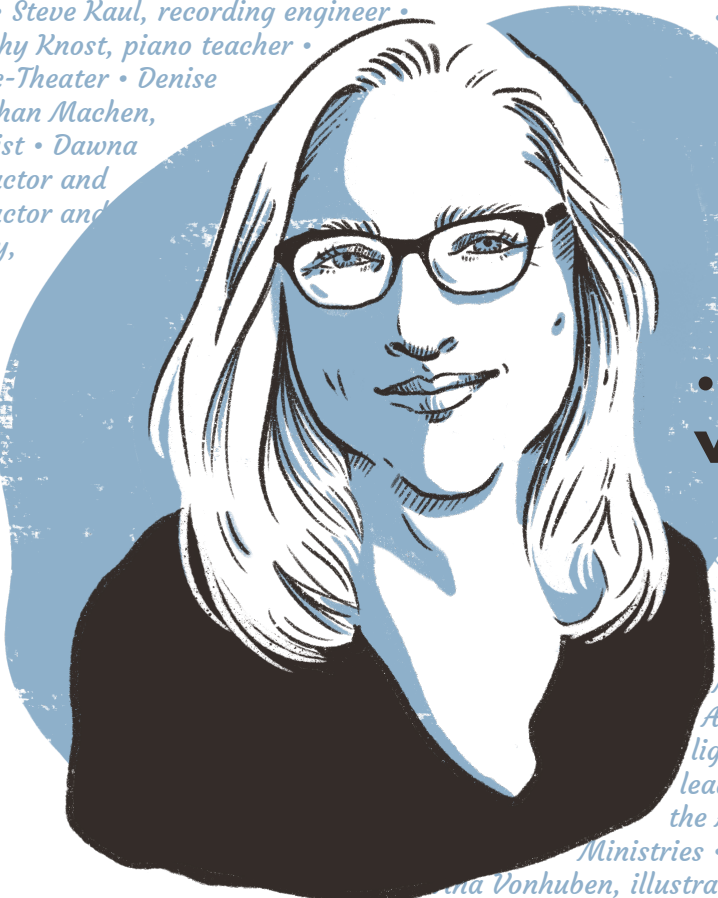
Vc *p*

Cb

+++|+++

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116

Harp (Hp) part with chords: $G\sharp \rightarrow G\flat$, $C\sharp \rightarrow C\flat$. Dynamics: *p*, *pp*.

Soprano (S): *p* si - lenc - es, *pp* si - lenc - es,

Alto (A): *p* si - lenc - es, *pp* si - lenc - es, si - lenc - es,

Tenor (T): *p* si - lenc - es, *pp* si - lenc - es, si - lenc - es, *p* en -

Bass (B): *p* si - lenc - es, *pp* si - lenc - es, si - lenc - es, *p* en -

E

122

Soprano (S): *p* en - dur - ing, en - dur - ing, en - dur - ing, en -

Alto (A): *p* en - dur - ing, en - dur - ing, en - dur - ing, en - dur - - -

Tenor (T): *p* - dur - ing, en - dur - ing, en - dur - - - - - - - ing, en - dur - ing, en -

Bass (B): *p* - dur - ing, en - dur - ing, en - dur - - - - - - - ing, en - dur - ing, en -

Vln I, Vln II, Vla, Vc, Cb parts with dynamics: *p*, *mp*.

p

127

Hn *a2* *p* *f* *div.*

S *ff* *mf*

A *ff* *mf*

T *ff* *mf*

B *ff* *mf*

Vln I *mf* *ff* *div.*

Vln II *ff* *div.*

Vla *ff* *div.*

Vc *ff*

Cb *mf*

- dur - - - - - ing, en - dur - ing be - yond iron, be -

- - - - - ing, en - dur - ing, en - dur - ing be - yond iron, be -

- dur - ing, en - dur - ing, en - dur - ing be - yond iron, be -

- dur - ing, en - dur - - - - - ing, be - yond iron, be -

132

Hp *mf*

D \sharp → D \flat *mf* F \sharp → F \flat

S *mp* *p*
- yond tears, be - yond sev - ered roots. Bless - ed

A *mp* *p*
- yond tears, be - yond sev - ered roots. Bless - ed

T *mp* *p*
- yond tears, be - yond sev - ered roots. Bless - ed

B *mp* *p*
- yond tears, be - yond sev - ered roots. Bless - ed

Vln I *pizz.* *mf*

Vln II *pizz.* *mf*

Vla *mp* *p* *p*
Solo: tenderly

Vc *mp* *p*

Cb *mp* *p*

138

Hp

Solo

Solo

S

A

T

B

Vla

p

p

Bless - ed be,

Bless - ed be,

be,

And re - stor - ing to

And re - stor - ing to

And re - stor - ing to

And re - stor - ing to

And re - stor - ing to

warmly

warmly

warmly

warmly

D \flat →D \sharp C \flat →C \sharp B \flat →B \sharp
 E \flat →E \sharp G \flat →G \sharp A \flat →A \sharp

143

S

A

T

B

Vln I

all things a joy - ful small - ness,

all things a joy - ful small - ness,

all things a joy - ful small - ness,

all things a joy - ful small - ness,

Bless - ed be,

Bless - ed be,

mp

p

p

Solo: arco

Tutti:

150

Hn
f *ff*

Hp
mf *gliss.* *ff*

S
mf *ff* *mf*
 Bless-ed be, bless-ed be. Bless-ed

A
mp *ff*
 Bless-ed be, bless-ed be.

T
ff *mf*
 be, bless-ed be. Bless-ed,

B
ff
 bless-ed be.

Vln I
div. *ff*

Vln II
arco *div.* *mp* *ff*

Vla
arco *mp* *ff*

Vc
mf *ff*

Cb
mf *ff*

8^{va}

+++|+++ B \sharp → B \sharp +++|+++ A \sharp → A \flat
 B \sharp → B \flat
 F \flat → F \sharp

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163 **meno mosso** *mp*

Solo *mp* at last,

Solo *mp* at last, that tri - umphs at

S *mp* tri - umphs, *p* bless - ed be at

A *mp* tri - - umphs, *p* bless - ed be at

T *mp* tri - umphs, *p* bless - ed be, at

B *mp* tri - - umphs, *p* bless - ed be, at

Vln I *mp*

Vln II *mp*

Vla *mp*

Vc *mp*

Cb *mp*

169 1. **rallentando**

Hn *p* *p*

Solo *p* Bless - ed be. *mp*

Solo last, Bless - ed

S last, at last,

A last, at last,

T last, at last,

B last, at last,

174 con sordino

Hn *pp*

Hp *mp*

Solo be. *pp*

S *pp* bless - - - ed be. *pp*

A *pp* bless - - - ed be. *pp*

T *pp* bless - - - ed be. *pp*

B *pp* bless - - - ed be. *pp*

Vln I Solo: *pp*

Selected Choral Music by Elizabeth Alexander

- A Palette To Paint Us As We Are** (Gerald Rich)
SATB, piano • SSA, piano
- Beware the Winter Settlin' In** (Elizabeth Alexander)
SATB, Celtic band, opt. unison children's choir
- Blessed Be the Flower That Triumphs** (Michael Boblett)
SATB a cappella • SATB, orchestra
- Cherish Your Doubt** (Elizabeth Alexander)
SATB, piano • SSAA, piano
- Die Gedanken Sind Frei** (German protest song, arr.)
SATB, piano • vocal duet, piano
- Do Not Leave Your Cares at the Door** (Norman Naylor)
SATB a cappella • TTBB a cappella
- Even a Fist Was Once an Open Palm** (Yehuda Amichai)
SATB a cappella
- Faith Is the bird that feels the light** (Rabindranath Tagore)
SSA a cappella • SATB a cappella
- Fighting Over What We Believe** (Elizabeth Alexander)
SATB, soloists, piano • SSA, soloists, piano
- Finally On My Way To Yes** (Pesha Gertler)
SSATB, piano
- Folks, I'm Telling You** (Langston Hughes)
SSATB, piano
- Get Curious** (Elizabeth Alexander)
SSAA a cappella
- Glen Song** (Scott Bates)
SSATB, piano
- Grace** (Elizabeth Alexander)
SATB, piano • SSA, piano
- Handles** (Elizabeth Alexander)
SSA, piano
- How To Sing Like a Planet** (Elizabeth Alexander)
SATB, piano • TBB, piano
- If You Can Walk You Can Dance** (Zimbabwean Proverb)
SAB, piano, claves • TBB, piano, claves
SSA, piano, claves • SATB, piano, claves
- Immortal Love** (John Greenleaf Whittier)
SATB a cappella
- Infant Holy, Infant Lowly** (Polish carol, arr.)
SSA a cappella
- Jump!** (Ray Bradbury)
SSA, piano • SSA, string quartet
- Kindling** (Elizabeth Alexander)
SATB, piano • SATB, chamber ensemble
- Let it Matter** (Elizabeth Alexander)
SSA, piano • SATB, piano
- Like a Leaf** (Wendell Berry)
SATB, piano
- No Other People's Children** (Elizabeth Alexander)
1-4 part choir, soloist, piano
- ...or a musician** (Philip Dacey)
SATB, orchestra
- A Palette To Paint Us As We Are** (Gerald Rich)
SA, piano • SATB, piano
- Praise Wet Snow Falling Early** (Denise Levertov)
SATB, piano
- Reasons for the Perpetuation of Slavery** (Alexander)
SSAA a cappella
- Same Birds** (David Allen Evans)
SATB a cappella
- Sing Me Awake** (Gregory Orr)
SATB, piano, string quartet • SATB, piano, string orchestra
- Song of Kabir** (Kabir)
SATB a cappella
- The Gate is Open** (Sister Peronne Marie Thibert)
SATB a cappella
- They Have Freckles Everywhere** (Elizabeth Alexander)
SSAA, piano
- To Make a Prairie** (Emily Dickinson)
SSA, piano
- We Give Thanks for Being** (Traditional)
1-4 part choir, piano
- We Lift Up Our Hearts** (Richard Fewkes)
Unison children's choir, SATB, piano
- We Remember Them** (Sylvan Kamens, Jack Riemer)
SATB, piano
- Where there Is Light in the Soul** (Chinese proverb)
SAB a cappella • SATB a cappella
SSA a cappella • TBB a cappella
- When the Song of the Angels Is Stilled** (Howard Thurman)
SATB a cappella • TTBB a cappella
SSAA a cappella • SATB, flute
- Why I Pity the Woman Who Never Spills** (Joan Prefontaine)
SSAA a cappella

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