

Saving all the Whales in the Sea

Ensemble Version for 1-4 part chorus, 2 soloists, and piano



Elizabeth Alexander

Seafarer Press

Saving all the Whales in the Sea

Ensemble version for 1-4 pt. choir and 2 soloists

Well one fine day while talking to my friend, my friend declared to me:

“Oh wouldn’t it be very very good to save all the whales in the sea?”

We spoke to all the folks we knew who thought the same as we.

A thousand people signed right up to save all the whales in the sea!

“A thousand strong, we’ll never give an inch or shrink from noble fights.

As long as we are saving all the whales, let’s strengthen women’s rights!”

We told the happy news to those within our coterie.

Eight hundred people stuck around to strengthen women’s rights,

and save all the whales in the sea.

“Those amateurs who quit before the fight just had some basic flaws.

Without them we can do a better job to help the union’s cause.”

We told our fellow workers that we now had missions three.

Six hundred people stuck around to help the union’s cause,

and strengthen women’s rights,

and save all the whales in the sea.

“While helping workers, women, and the whales, let’s do some more besides.

It think it’s time to double down and work to ban all pesticides!”

We vowed that we would stand beside each butterfly and bee.

Four hundred people stuck around to ban all pesticides,

and help the union’s cause,

and strengthen women’s rights,

and save all the whales in the sea.

“It’s clear that those who couldn’t stick it out were little more than hacks.

They’d only hold us back as we attempt to lower income tax!”

We told our true believers that achieving this was key.

Two hundred people stuck around to lower income tax,

and ban all pesticides,

and help the union’s cause,

and strengthen women’s rights,

and save all the whales in the sea.

“Say, don’t you think it’s really quite a shame to see the sky so brown?

It wouldn’t take an awful lot of work to close the smokestacks down!”

We told our flock that now we stood for air that was smoke-free.

A hundred people stuck around to close the smokestacks down,

and lower income tax,

and ban all pesticides,

and help the union’s cause,

and strengthen women’s rights,

and save all the whales in the sea.

“I ask you has there ever been a team that had such unity?

I think we’re finally ready to address our foreign policy!”

She looked at me with eager eyes, expecting I’d agree...

And now works all alone to change our foreign policy,

and close the smokestacks down,

and lower income tax,

and ban all pesticides,

and help the union’s cause,

and strengthen women’s rights,

and save all the whales in the sea.

*Music & New Lyrics © 2025
by Elizabeth Alexander
(Original lyrics © 1991)*

Saving all the Whales in the Sea

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(♩ = 104-116)

Our Faithful Hero

Our Zealous Friend

The Eager Helpers

This system contains the first three vocal staves and the piano accompaniment. The vocal staves are for 'Our Faithful Hero', 'Our Zealous Friend', and 'The Eager Helpers'. The piano part is in 4/4 time and features a rhythmic pattern of eighth notes and chords. Chord symbols C, Bb, F, Eb, C, and Bb are placed above the piano staff.

4

Our Faithful Hero

1. Well one fine day while talk - ing to my friend, my

This system begins at measure 4. The vocal staff for 'Our Faithful Hero' has the lyrics '1. Well one fine day while talk - ing to my friend, my'. The piano accompaniment continues with chords G, C, and Bb.

6

Our Faithful Hero

friend de - clared to me:

Our Zealous Friend

Oh would - n't it be ve - ry ve - ry good to

This system begins at measure 6. The vocal staff for 'Our Faithful Hero' has the lyrics 'friend de - clared to me:'. The vocal staff for 'Our Zealous Friend' has the lyrics 'Oh would - n't it be ve - ry ve - ry good to'. The piano accompaniment continues with chords F, Eb, F, and Eb.

8

Our Faithful Hero

Our Zealous Friend

G F Eb

* We spoke to all the folks we knew who

save all the whales in the sea? * We spoke to all the folks we knew who

* If both Our Faithful Hero and Our Zealous Friend are either treble clef voices or bass clef voices, duet passages like mm. 9-10 may simply be sung as written. If one soloist is a treble clef voice and one is a bass clef voice, it's recommended that the bass clef voice sing the duet harmonies of Our Faithful Hero, resulting in a tighter close-harmony sound.

10

Our Faithful Hero

Our Zealous Friend

The Eager Helpers

Cm Bb C Eb G

thought the same as we.

thought the same as we.

** A thou-sand peo-ple signed right up to save all the whales in the

** The Eager Helpers may choose any vocal line to sing that they wish, as befits a scrappy group of reformers! The overall effect of this song is not dependent on any the existence of any particular voice part. (That said, of course you may choose to officially delegate voice parts if you wish.)

The most important role of The Eager Helpers is to react (and over-react!) to each additional reform. This is not a subtle song so there's absolutely no reason for subtle acting. Instead, imagine you're in an old silent movie!

Our Faithful Hero and Our Zealous Friend may sing along with The Eager Helpers at any point. The only exception to this is in the final refrain at Letter E, during which Our Zealous Friend is rendered utterly speechless.

A

The Eager Helpers hoist seven homemade "Save the Whales" signs into the air. (Get creative!)
 During this and the later piano interludes The Eager Helpers may gesture or shout. (Get fired up!)

13

The Eager Helpers

sea!

C Bb F Eb C Bb

16

Our Zealous Friend

2. A thou - sand strong, we'll ne - ver give an inch or

G C Bb

18

Our Zealous Friend

shrink from no - ble fights. As long as we are sa - ving all the whales, let's

F Eb F Eb

20

Our Faithful Hero

Our Zealous Friend

We told the hap - py news to those with -

streng - then wo - men's rights! We told the hap - py news to those with -

G F Eb

22

Our Faithful Hero

Our Zealous Friend

The Eager Helpers

- in our co - te - rie.

- in our co - te - rie.

Eight hun - dred peo - ple stuck a - round to

Cm Bb C Eb

24

The Eager Helpers

streng - then wom - en's rights and save all the whales in the

G7

B

One Eager Helper flips around their sign to reveal a “Strengthen Women’s Rights” sign.
 Most Helpers are excited about this, but 20% are clearly dismayed -- *so much so that they quit the movement altogether!* They may simply cross their arms or slam their folders shut, move to a different part of the stage, exit backstage or even join the audience!

26

The Eager Helpers

sea.

C Bb F Eb C Bb

29

Our Zealous Friend

3. Those am - a - teurs who quit be - fore the fight just

G C Bb

31

Our Zealous Friend

had some ba - sic flaws. With - out them we can do a bet - ter job to

F Eb F Eb

Opal Palmer Adisa, poet • Paul Adams, technological hero • Stephen Alexander, lyric consultant • Ginny Allen, Agile coach and friend • The great people at American Composers Forum • Yehuda Amichai, poet • A. R. Ammons, poet • Jennifer Anderson, conductor and composer advocate • Scott Bates, poet • Abbie Betinis, initiator of collaborative endeavors • Beth Norton, conductor and composer advocate • Dennis Blubaugh, more than just a music dealer • Michael deVernon Boblett, poet • Edna Busby, my first piano teacher • Ray Bradbury, writer • Augustin Cadena, translator • Norbert Capek, minister and advocate for religious freedom • Jessica Corbett, editor • David Cummings, poet • Philip Dacey, poet • Catherine Dalton, composer and scrum partner • Emily Dickinson, poet • Evelyn Dudley, poet and caregiver • Rob Eller-Isaacs, minister and composer advocate • Ralph Waldo Emerson, philosopher and poet • Louise Erdrich, writer • David Allan Evans, poet • Sophia Lyon Fahs, writer • Richard M. Fewkes, minister and writer • Pasha Gertler, poet • Jack Gallagher, composer and teacher • Paul Gerike, proofreader • Jocelyn Hagen and Michael Hagan, founders of Graphite Marketplace • Steve Harper, just about everything • Steve Harkins, web designer • Edie Hill, composer and friend • Langston Hughes, poet • Margaret and George Heald, piano technician • Karel Husa, composer and teacher • David Ignatow, poet • Kabir, mystic • Linda Kachelmeier, composer and scrum partner • Ruth Palmer, conductor and composer advocate • Joan Wolf Prefontaine, poet • Paul Rardin, conductor and composer advocate • Kalidasa, poet • Steve Kaul, recording engineer • Søren Kierkegaard, philosopher and poet • Dorothy Knost, piano teacher • Ben Krywosz, artistic director of Nautilus Music-Theater • Denise Levertov, poet • George Ella Lyon, poet • Jonathan Machen, vocalist • Dawna Markova, writer • Anne Matlack, conductor and composer advocate • Nancy Menk, composer advocate • Edna St. Vincent Millay, poet • Jane Ramseyer Miller, conductor, composer, social activist • Joe Mish, conductor and composer advocate • J. David Moore, composer • Gerald Rich, poet • Carl Sandburg, poet • friend • King Sigismund III, religious reformer • Ann Silsbee, composer, poet and friend • Simon Alexander-Adams, sounding board, fellow creative, and awesome son • Steven Stucky, composer and teacher • Rabindranath Tagore, poet • Sister Peronne Marie Thibert, teacher and writer • Oliver Alexander-Adams, unconventional thinker and light of my life • Howard Thurman, civil rights leader and writer • Everyone whose work supports the Association for Unitarian Universalist Music Ministries • Charles Varney, high school choral director • Anna Vonhuben, illustrator and graphic designer • Nancy White, poet • John Greenleaf Whittier, poet • Theodore Chickering Williams, poet • Daniel Winter, pianist and teacher • Nancy Wood, poet • Yehudi Wyner, composer and teacher

**A lot of hard work
and creativity went
into bringing this
music to you...**



**...and some of it
was even mine.**

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C

A “Union’s Cause” sign is raised, leading another 20% of the original choir to quit. After Verse 4 a “Ban Pesticides” sign is raised, leading an additional 20% to quit. Y’all get extra credit if the signs line up left to right so the audience can read along!

Once the audience catches on to what’s happening, the choir’s job is to articulate the heck out of the words, have fun, and (if you wish) invite the audience to sing along.

40

The Eager Helpers

sea.

C Bb F Eb C Bb

43

Our Zealous Friend

4. While help - ing work ers, wo - men and the whales, let's
5. It's clear that those who could - n't stick it out were

G C Bb

45

Our Zealous Friend

do some more be - sides! I think it's time to dou - ble down and work to
lit - tle more than hacks. They'd on - ly hold us back as we at - tempt to

F Eb F Eb

47

Our Faithful Hero

We vowed that we would stand be - side each but - ter - fly and bee.
We told our true be - liev - ers that a - chiev - ing this was key.

Our Zealous Friend

ban all pes - ti - cides! We vowed that we would stand be - side each but - ter - fly and bee.
low - er in - come tax! We told our true be - liev - ers that a - chiev - ing this was key.

The Eager Helpers

Four
Two

G F Eb Cm Bb

50

The Eager Helpers

1.

hun - dred peo - ple stuck a - round to ban all pes - ti - cides, and help the un - ion's cause, and

C Eb G7

53

The Eager Helpers

stren - then wom - en's rights and save all the whales in the

55

The Eager Helpers

hun - dred peo - ple stuck a - round to low - er in - come tax, and ban all pes - ti - cides, and

C Eb G7

58

The Eager Helpers

help the un - ion's cause, and stren - then wom - en's rights and save all the whales in the

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**A lot of hard work
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**...and some of it
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69

Our Faithful Hero
told our flock that now we stood for air that was smoke-free.

Our Zealous Friend
told our flock that now we stood for air that was smoke-free.

The Eager Helpers
A hun-dred peo-ple stuck a-round to

F Eb Cm Bb C Eb

72

The Eager Helpers
close the smoke-stacks down, and low-er in-come tax, and ban all pes-ti-cides, and

G7

75

The Eager Helpers
help the un-ion's cause, and streng-then wom-en's rights and save all the whales in the

E

A "No Smokestacks" sign is raised, alienating fully HALF of the remaining singers!

78

The Eager Helpers

sea.

C B \flat F E \flat C B \flat

81

Our Zealous Friend

7. I ask you has there e - ver been a team that

G C B \flat

83

Our Zealous Friend

had such u - ni - ty? I think we're fin - 'lly read - y to ad - dress our

F E \flat F E \flat

Slowly and freely A "Change Foreign Policy" sign is slowly raised... A Tempo

85

Our Faithful Hero

* She looked at me with ea - ger eyes, ex - pect - ing I'd a - gree,

Our Zealous Friend

for - eign po - li - cy!

The Eager Helpers

And

G dolce F Eb C Bb

* It goes without saying, but in measure 85 sing whatever pronoun is appropriate.

...and all remaining Eager Helpers defect, along with Our Faithful Hero!
 For an especially delicious touch, sign-carriers may hand all seven signs to Our Zealous Friend!

88

The Eager Helpers

now works all a - lone to change our for - eign po - li - cy, and

C Eb G7

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