



Break, Break, Break
on Thy Cold
Grey Stones, O Sea

George A. Macfarren
(1813-1887)

Sir George Alexander Macfarren (1813-1887) was born in London. From early youth, he suffered from poor health and weak eyesight. His eyesight continually deteriorated until he became totally blind in 1860. However, his blindness had little effect on his productivity. Macfarren began to study music when he was fourteen and, at sixteen, entered the Royal Academy of Music. Because of his eyesight, he abandoned performance and concentrated on composition. He later taught at the Academy, eventually becoming a principal. He was also appointed professor of music at Cambridge University in 1875. He was conductor at Covent Garden, London; founder the Handel Society; program note writer for the Philharmonic Society; and edited the works of Handel and Purcell. He wrote 18 operas, 13 oratorios and cantatas, 9 symphonies, and 162 songs. He was active as writer of part-songs, literature for the many amateur choirs appearing throughout the country. He was knighted in 1883 on the same day as Arthur Sullivan and George Grove. His brother Walter Macfarren (1826-1905) was a pianist, composer and professor of the Royal Academy.

Break, break, break,
On thy cold gray stones, O Sea!
And I would that my tongue could utter
The thoughts that arise in me.

O, well for the fisherman's boy,
That he shouts with his sister at play!
O, well for the sailor lad,
That he sings in his boat on the bay!

And the stately ships move on *
To their haven under the hill;
But O for the touch of a vanish'd hand,
And the sound of a voice that is still!

Break, break, break
At the foot of thy crags, O Sea!
But the tender grace of a day that is dead
Will never come back to me. **

Alfred, Lord Tennyson (1809-1892)

* some editions of the poem reads "go on" instead of "move on."

** some editions of the poem reads "return to me" instead of "come back to me."

Break, Break, Break on Thy Cold Grey Stones, O Sea

G. A. Macfarren

Andante espressivo ♩ = 112

S
Break, break, break, On thy cold gray stones, O Sea! And I

A
Break, break, break, On thy cold gray stones, O Sea! And I

T
Break, break, break, break, And I

B
Break, break, break, On thy cold gray stones, O Sea! And I

Detailed description: This system contains the first four staves of the vocal score. The Soprano (S), Alto (A), and Bass (B) parts have identical lyrics: 'Break, break, break, On thy cold gray stones, O Sea! And I'. The Tenor (T) part has the lyrics: 'Break, break, break, break, And I'. The music is in 2/4 time, key of B-flat major, and features dynamic markings of piano (p) and fortissimo (sf). The tempo is marked 'Andante espressivo' with a quarter note equal to 112 beats.

5

S
would that my tongue could ut - ter The thoughts that a-rise in

A
would that my tongue could ut - ter The thoughts that a-rise in

T
would that my tongue could ut - ter The thoughts that a-rise in

B
would that my tongue could ut - ter The thoughts that a-rise in

Detailed description: This system contains the next four staves of the vocal score. All four parts (Soprano, Alto, Tenor, Bass) have the same lyrics: 'would that my tongue could ut - ter The thoughts that a-rise in'. The music continues in the same key and tempo as the first system.

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8

S me. Break *cresc.* And I would that my tongue could

A me. *cresc.* And I would that my tongue could ut - ter The

T me, *cresc.* And I would that my tongue could ut - ter The

B me, *cresc.* And I would that my tongue could ut - ter The

11

S ut - ter The thoughts *dim.* that a - rise in me. *p* *mf* O,

A thoughts *f* *dim.* that a - rise in me. *p* O,

T thoughts *f* that a - rise *dim.* in me. *p*

B thoughts *f* that a - rise *dim.* in me. *p*

14

S well for the fish - er - man's boy, That he shouts with his sis - ter at

A well, *pp* O, well That he shouts with his sis - ter at

T well, *pp* O, well That he shouts

B well, *pp* O,

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17 *pp* >

S play! O, well for the fish - er - man's boy, That he

A play! O, well for the fish - er - man's boy,

T at play! O, well for the fish - er - man's boy,

B well,

20

S shouts with his sis - ter at play!

A with his sis - ter at play!

T with his sis - ter at play! *dolce* O,

B *dolce* O, well, O, well for the sail - or

23 *dolce*

S O, well

A *dolce* O, well for the sail - or lad, That he sings in his

T well for the sail - or lad, O,

B lad, for the sail - or lad, That he sings in his

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26

S — That he sings in his boat on the bay! O, well That he

A boat, in his boat on the bay! O, well That he

T well That he sings in his boat on the bay! O, well That he

B boat, in his boat on the bay! O, well, That he

cresc.

29

S sings in his boat on the

A sings in his boat on the

T sings in his boat on the

B sings in his boat on the

f

32

S bay! Move on,

A bay! Move on, And the state - ly

T bay! Move on,

B bay! And the state - ly ships move on,

ff

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35

S move on,

A ships move on,

T move on, *f* And the state - ly

B move on,

38

S *f* And the state - ly ships move on To their ha - ven un - der the

A

T ships move on To their ha - ven un - der the

B *f* And the state - ly ships move on To their ha - ven un - der the

41

S *p* hill; But O *pp* for the touch of a van - ish'd hand,

A *p* But O *pp* for the touch of a van - ish'd hand,

T *pp* hill; But O for a van - ish'd hand, *mf* But

B *pp* hill; But O, *mf* but

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44

S *mf* for the touch of a van - ish'd hand, *pp* And the sound of a

A *mf* for the touch of a van - ish'd hand, *pp* And the sound of a

T O for a van - ish'd hand, *pp* And the sound,

B O, *pp* And the sound

47

S *cresc.* voice that is still, *p* And the sound of a voice that is still, *pp* And the

A *cresc.* voice that is still, *p* And the sound of a voice that is still, *pp* And the

T *cresc.* — And the sound of a voice that is still, still, —

B — *p* that is still,

50

S sound of a voice that is still, still, — that is

A sound of a voice that is still, — And the sound of a voice that is

T — that is still, And the sound of a voice that is

B — that is still, — that is

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53

S still, still, still, still, *cresc.* *mf*

A still, still, still, still, *cresc.* *mf*

T still, still, still, sill, still, *cresc.* *mf dim.*

B still, still, still, still, *cresc.* *mf*

57

S still! Break, break, break At the foot of thy crags, O *pp* *mf* *sf*

A still! Break, break, break At the foot of thy crags, O *pp* *mf* *sf*

T still! Break, break, break, *pp* *mf* *sf*

B still! Break, break, break At the foot of thy crags, O *pp* *mf* *sf*

61

S Sea! But the ten - der grace of a day that is dead Will *cresc.* *mf*

A Sea! But the ten - der grace of a day that is dead Will *cresc.* *mf*

T break, But the ten - der grace of a day that is dead Will *cresc.* *mf*

B Sea! But the ten - der grace of a day that is dead Will *cresc.* *mf*

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64

S *p* nev - er come back to me; *f* Break *cresc.* But the

A *p* nev - er come back to me; *f* But the ten - der grace Will *cresc.*

T *p* nev - er come back to me, *f* But the ten - der grace Will *cresc.*

B *p* nev - er come back to me, *f* But the ten - der grace Will *cresc.*

67

S ten - der grace Will *f* nev - er come back, *dim.* come back to

A nev - er, will *f* nev - er come back to *dim.*

T nev - er, will *f* nev - er come back to *dim.*

B nev - er, will *f* nev - er come back to *dim.*

70

S *f* me; Break *dim.* But the grace *p* of a

A *f* me; Break *dim.* But the grace *p* of a

T *f* me; Break *dim.* of a *p*

B *f* me; Break *dim.* But the grace *p* of a

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73

S day that is dead Will *pp* nev - er come back, *f* *cresc.* ne'er come

A day that is dead Will *pp* nev - er come back, *f* *cresc.* ne'er come

T day that is dead Will *pp* nev - er come back, *f* *cresc.* ne'er come

B day that is dead Will *pp* ne'er,

76

S back to me. *f* Will nev - er, *dim.* will nev - er come

A back to me. *f* Will nev - er, *dim.* will nev - er come

T back to me. *f* Will nev - er, *dim.* will nev - er come

B will nev - er come back, *f* will nev - er come

79

S back to me. *pp*

A back to me. *pp*

T back to me. *pp*

B back to me. *pp*

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