



The messenger bird

Based on an old melody

Howard Kingsbury
(1842-1878)

Howard Kingsbury (1842–1878) was born in New York City, New York, and graduated from Yale University. He became an ordained minister, serving at the Second Presbyterian Church, Newark, Ohio, and later at the Village Church in Amherst, Massachusetts. He died in Amherst. He wrote many hymns, and wrote part songs for singing schools and conventions. Some of his songs were recognized by the Sol-Fa movement and republished by John Curwen's company in England in both traditional and sol-fa notation.

Thou art come from the spirits' land, thou bird!
Thou art come from the spirit's land:
Through the dark pine grove let thy voice be heard,
And tell of the shadowy band!

We know that the bowers are green and fair
In the light of that summer shore,
And we know that the friends we have lost are there,
They are there—and they weep no more!

And we know they have quenched their fever's thirst
From the Fountain of youth ere now,
For there must the stream in its freshness burst
Which none may find below!

And we know that they will not be lured to earth
From the land of deathless flowers,
By the feast, or the dance, or the song of mirth,
Though their hearts were once with ours.

Though they sat with us by the night-fire's blaze,
And bent with us the bow,
And heard the tales of our fathers' days,
Which are told to others now!

But tell us, thou bird of the solemn strain!
Can those who have loved forget?
We call—and they answer not again—
Do they love—do they love us yet?

Doth the warrior think of his brother there,
And the father of his child?
And the chief, of those that were wont to share
His wandering through the wild?

We call them far through the silent night,
And they speak not from cave or hill;
We know, thou bird! that their land is bright,
But say, do they love there still?

Felicia Dorothea Hemans (1793–1835)

The messenger bird

H. Kingsbury

Gently

S
Thou art come from the spir - its' land, thou bird! Thou art come from the

A
Thou art come from the spir - its' land, thou bird! Thou art come from the

T
Thou art come from the spir - its' land, thou — bird! Thou art come from the

B
Thou art come from the spir - its' land, thou bird! Thou art come from the

6
S
spir - its' land: _____ Thro' the dark pine grove let thy voice be heard, And

A
spir - its' land: _____ Thro' the dark pine grove let thy voice be heard, And

T
spir - its' land: _____ Thro' the dark pine grove let thy voice be heard, And

B
spir - its' land: _____ Thro' the dark pine grove let thy voice be heard, And



The messenger bird

13

S tell__ of the shad - ow - y band!_____ And tell__ of the shad - ow - y band!_____

A tell of the shad - ow - y band!_____ And tell of the shad - ow - y band!_____

T tell__ of the shad - ow - y band!_____ And tell__ of the shad - ow - y band!_____

B tell__ of the shad - ow - y band!_____ And tell of the shad - ow - y band!_____

S We__ know that the bow'rs are green and fair In the light of that

A We know that the bow'rs are green and fair In the light of that

T We__ know that the bow'rs are green and__ fair In the light of that

B We know that the bow'rs are green and fair In the light of that

26

S sum - mer shore,_____ And we know that the friends we have lost are there, They are

A sum - mer shore,_____ And we know that the friends we have lost are there, They

T sum - mer shore,_____ And we know that the friends we have lost are there, They

B sum - mer shore,_____ And we know that the friends we have lost are there, They

The messenger bird

33

S there— and they weep no more! _____ They are there— and weep no more! _____

A there— and they weep no more! _____ They are there— and weep no more! _____

T there— and they weep no more! _____ They are there— and weep no more! _____

B there— and they weep no more! _____ They there— and weep no more! _____

S And we know they have quench'd their fe - ver's thirst From the Foun - tain of

A And we know they have quench'd their fe - ver's thirst From the Foun - tain of

T And we know they have quench'd their fe - ver's thirst From the Foun - tain of

B And we know they have quench'd their fe - ver's thirst From the Foun - tain of

46

S youth ere now, _____ For there must the stream in its fresh - ness burst Which

A youth ere now, _____ For there must the stream in its fresh - ness burst Which

T youth ere now, _____ For there must the stream in its fresh - ness burst Which

B youth ere now, _____ For there must the stream in its fresh - ness burst Which

The messenger bird

53

S none may find be - low! _____ Which none may find be - low! _____

A none may find be - low! _____ Which none may find be - low! _____

T none may find be - low! _____ Which none may find be - low! _____

B none may find be - low! _____ Which none may find be - low! _____

S And we know that they will not be lured to earth From the land of _____

A And we know that they will not be lured to earth From the land of _____

T And we know that they will not be lured to _____ earth From the land of _____

B And we know that they will not be lured to earth From the land of _____

66

S death - less flow'rs, _____ By the feast, or the dance, or the song of mirth, Though their

A death - less flow'rs, _____ By the feast, or the dance, or the song of mirth, Though

T death - less flow'rs, _____ By the feast, or the dance, or the song of mirth, Though

B death - less flow'rs, _____ By the feast, or the dance, or the song of mirth, Though

The messenger bird

73

S hearts were once with ours, _____ Though their hearts were once with ours. _____

A hearts were once with ours, _____ Though their hearts were once with ours. _____

T hearts were once with ours, _____ Though their hearts were once with _____ ours. _____

B hearts were once with ours, _____ Though hearts were once with _____ ours. _____

S Though they sat with _____ us by the night - fire's blaze, And _____ bent with _____

A Though they sat with _____ us by the night - fire's blaze, And _____ bent with _____

T Though they sat with us by the night - fire's _____ blaze, And _____ bent with _____

B Though they sat with us by the night - fire's blaze, And _____ bent with _____

86

S us the bow, _____ And _____ heard the tales of our fa - thers' days, Which

A us the bow, _____ And heard the tales of our fa - thers' days, Which

T us the bow, _____ And _____ heard the tales of our fa - thers' days, Which

B us the bow, _____ And heard the tales of our fa - thers' days, Which

The messenger bird

93

S are__ told to oth - ers now!_____ Which are__ told to oth - ers now!_____

A are told to oth - ers now!_____ Which are told to oth - ers now!_____

T are__ told to oth - ers now!_____ Which are__ told to oth - ers now!_____

B are__ told to oth - ers now!_____ Which are told to oth - ers now!_____

S But__ tell us, thou bird of the sol - emn strain! Can__ those who have

A But tell us, thou bird of the sol - emn strain! Can__ those who have

T But__ tell us, thou bird of the sol - emn strain! Can__ those who have

B But tell us, thou bird of the sol - emn strain! Can__ those who have

106

S loved for - get?_____ We__ call— and they an - swer not a - gain— Do they

A loved for - get?_____ We call— and they an - swer not a - gain— Do they

T loved for - get?_____ We__ call— and they an - swer not a - gain— Do they

B loved for - get?_____ We call— and they an - swer not a - gain— Do they

The messenger bird

113

S love— do they love us yet? _____ Do they love— do they love us yet? _____

A love— do they love us yet? _____ Do they love— do they love us yet? _____

T love— do they love us yet? _____ Do they love— do they love us yet? _____

B love— do they love us yet? _____ Do love— do they love us yet? _____

S Doth the war - rior__ think of his broth - er there, And the fa - ther__

A Doth the war - rior__ think of his broth - er there, And the fa - ther__

T Doth the war - rior think of his broth - er__ there, And the fa - ther__

B Doth the war - rior think of his broth - er there, And the fa - ther__

126

S of his child? _____ And the chief, of those that were wont to share His__

A of his child? _____ And the chief, of those that were wont to share His

T of his child? _____ And the chief, of those that were wont to share His

B of his child? _____ And the chief, of those that were wont to share His

The messenger bird

133

S wan - der - ing thro' the wild? His wan - der - ing thro' the wild?

A wan - der - ing thro' the wild? His wan - der - ing thro' the wild?

T wan - der - ing thro' the wild? His wan - der - ing thro' the wild?

B wan - der - ing thro' the wild? His wan - der - ing thro' the wild?

S We call them far thro' the si - lent night, And they speak not from

A We call them far thro' the si - lent night, And they speak not from

T We call them far thro' the si - lent night, And they speak not from

B We call them far thro' the si - lent night, And they speak not from

146

S cave or hill; We know, thou bird! that their land is bright, But

A cave or hill; We know, thou bird! that their land is bright, But

T cave or hill; We know, thou bird! that their land is bright, But

B cave or hill; We know, thou bird! that their land is bright, But

The messenger bird

153

S
say, do they love there still? But say, do they love there still?

A
say, do they love there still? But say, do they love there still?

T
say, do they love there still? But say, do they love there still?

B
say, do they love there still? But say, do they love there still?

Taintor Brothers
(1874)

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