

Let Evening Come

Program Note

Let Evening Come was composed in 2006 and premiered by the San Francisco choral group Volti, under the direction of Robert Geary.

Its setting takes its direction from Jane Kenyon's understated text, and her touching and heroic embrace of the coming night.

Kenyon was the poet laureate of New Hampshire and one of America's most celebrated writers. Much of her work is a symbolic and pictorial exploration of nature.

Let Evening Come was written for her friend and minister, Jack Jensen, at the end of his life. It is impossible to read her beautiful poem without reflecting on her own inner strength, faith and acceptance of the natural and human cycles.

Text by Jane Kenyon

Let the light of late afternoon
shine through chinks in the barn, moving
up the bales as the sun moves down.

Let the cricket take up chafing
as a woman takes up her needles
and her yarn. Let evening come.

Let dew collect on the hoe abandoned
in long grass. Let the stars appear
and the moon disclose her silver horn.

Let the fox go back to its sandy den.
Let the wind die down. Let the shed
go black inside. Let evening come.

To the bottle in the ditch, to the scoop
in the oats, to air in the lung
let evening come.

Let it come, as it will, and don't
be afraid. God does not leave us
comfortless, so let evening come.

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