

Katherine Saxon
3 minutes

The sea is calm tonight.
The tide is full, the moon lies fair
Upon the straits; —on the French coast the light
Gleams and is gone; the cliffs of England stand,
Glimmering and vast, out in the tranquil bay.
Come to the window, sweet is the night air!
Only, from the long line of spray...

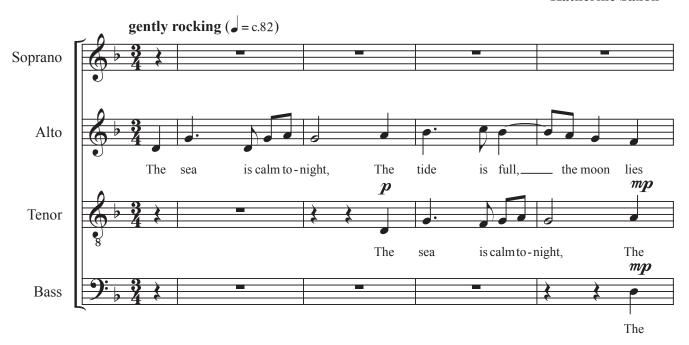
from "Dover Beach" by Matthew Arnold

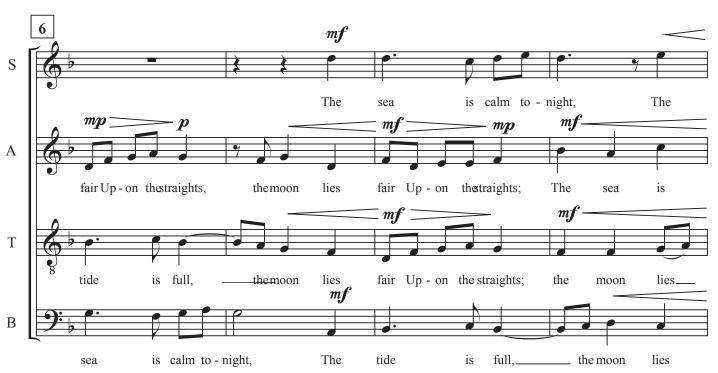
In his novel *The Demolished Man* Bester arranges the words Arnold's poem in a puzzle that implies multiple sentences and phrases. Likewise, the polyphony creates an new orderings and meanings not present in the original text and portrays the constant motion that is ever present in the ocean, even when it is calm. This cyclical and repetitive motion of the sea is also mirrored in the form: at the end of the piece the material cycles back to the beginning, but with the various phrases stirred up and switched about. Ultimately, though, it is a song about loss and the transient nature of life.

the sea is calm tonight...

words adapted from "Dover Beach" by Matthew Arnold

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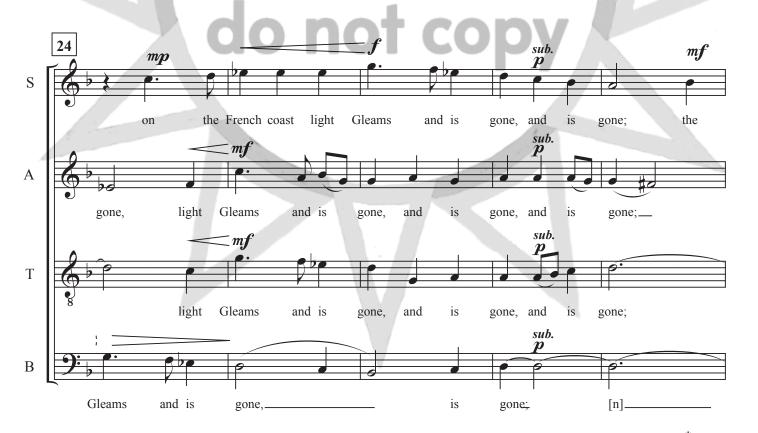












^{*} Close to an [n]



Score



^{*} Close to an [n]







Score





core

