



Gwyneth Walker

Tagore:

Songs of Heaven and Sky

for High Voice and Piano

1. Heaven of Freedom
2. This is My Prayer
3. Thou art the Sky



Tagore: Songs of Heaven and Sky

total duration: 6 minutes

The poetry of Rabindranath Tagore (1861-1941) is known for its imaginative, uplifting qualities – always reaching skyward. **Songs of Heaven and Sky** are inspired by these Tagore traits.

“Heaven of Freedom” speaks of noble aspirations for society: *into that Heaven of Freedom, my Father, let my country awake!* This is a strong, powerful song.

“This is My Prayer” seeks to give up the self to the Lord to *rise high above daily trifles. Give me the strength to surrender my strength to thy will with love.* This surrender leads to a peaceful acceptance.

“Thou Art the Sky” is a transcendent poem. There is little grounded here, as voice and piano remain mostly in the upper range. *There, where spreads the infinite sky for the soul to take her flight in, reigns the stainless white radiance.* And this is the poet’s vision of Heaven.

Heaven of Freedom

Where the mind is without fear and the head is held high;
Where knowledge is free;
Where the world has not been broken up into fragments by narrow domestic walls;
Where words come out from the depth of truth;
Where tireless striving stretches its arms towards perfection;
Where the clear stream of reason has not lost its way into the dreary desert sand of dead habit;
Where the mind is led forward by thee into ever-widening thought and action—
Into that heaven of freedom, my Father, let my country awake.

This is My Prayer

This is my prayer to thee, my lord —
Give me the strength lightly to bear my joys and sorrows.
Give me the strength to make my love fruitful in service.
Give me the strength never to disown the poor or bend my knees before insolent might.
Give me the strength to raise my mind high above daily trifles.
And give me the strength to surrender my strength to thy will with love.

Thou art the Sky

Thou art the sky and thou art the nest as well.

O thou beautiful, there in the nest is thy love that encloses the soul with colours and sounds and odours.

There comes the morning with the golden basket in her hand bearing the wreath of beauty, silently to crown the earth.

And there comes the evening carrying cool draughts of peace in her golden pitcher from the ocean of rest.

But there, where spreads the infinite sky for the soul to take her flight in, reigns the stainless white radiance. There is no day nor night, nor form nor colour, and never, never a word.

Tagore: Songs of Heaven and Sky

Rabindranath Tagore (1861–1941)

Gwyneth Walker

1. Heaven of Freedom

“into that heaven of freedom, my Father, let my country awake!”

Moderate tempo ♩ = 80

p

Voice

Where the mind is with-out fear and the head is held

Moderate tempo ♩ = 80

Piano

p

6

high; Where know-ledge is free; Where the world has not been bro-ken up in-to

9 *poco cresc.* *mf* **A**

frag-ments by nar-row do-mes-tic walls; Where words come out from the depths of truth,

A *mf*

12 *p* B

from the depths of truth;_ Where tire - less stri - ving stre-tches its

p B

slight pedal

15 *cresc. poco a poco*

arms_ t'ward per - fec - tion; Where the clear stream of rea-son has not lost its way in - to the

cresc. poco a poco

more pedal

18 *(cresc.)* **Slower** *a tempo* C

(cresc.) **Slower** *a tempo* C

drea-ry des-ert sand of dead hab - it; Where the mind is led for-ward by thee, Where the

(cresc.) **Slower** *a tempo* C

f

22

mind is led for-ward by thee in - to ac - tion, in - to ev - er wid-ening

ped.

25

(f) with strength **D**

thought and ac - tion... in - to that heaven of free - dom let my coun-try a -

D

p

28

E *p sub.*

wake. Where the mind is with-out fear

E *p sub.*

ped.

32 *poco cresc.* *rit.* **Slower**, *f grandly*

and the head is held high; Where words are spo-ken in truth; In-to that

poco cresc. *rit.* **Slower**

F 36 *a tempo*

heaven of free - dom, my Fath - er, let my coun - try a - wake,

F *a tempo*

39 *rit.*

let my coun - try a - wake!

rit.

*Cue-sized note are an *ossia* for lower voices.

2. This is My Prayer

“to surrender my strength to thy will with love”

Rabindranath Tagore (1861–1941)

Moderate tempo ♩ = 92

p gently

Voice

This is my prayer to thee, my Lord.

Piano

p

with pedal

5

A

mp

This is my prayer to thee, my Lord. Give me the strength

A

mp

8

light - ly to bear my joys and sor - rows. — Give me the strength to

11 B
mf
 make my love fruit-ful in ser-vice. — Give me the strength

B
mf

14 *f* 3
 nev-er to dis-own the poor or — bend my knees be-fore in - so - lent might.

f

mf

17 *Slightly faster* ♩ = 100, with motion C
p
 Give me the strength to raise my mind

Slightly faster ♩ = 100, with motion C

p

with pedal

21 *mf*
 high a-bove dai - ly tri - fles. And give me the strength,

mf

24 *f* 3 *p*

give me the strength to sur - ren - der my strength to thy will with love.

28 *rit.* **D** Original tempo ♩ = 92 *p*

This is my prayer to thee, my Lord.

rit. **D** Original tempo ♩ = 92

(*Leg.*)

32

This is my prayer to thee, my Lord. This is my prayer to thee, my Lord to sur -

36 *rit. to end* 3 *pp*

ren - der my strength to thy will with love.

rit. to end *pp*

Leg. *pp* *8va-*

3. Thou art the Sky

"Thou art the sky and Thou art the nest as well."

Rabindranath Tagore (1861–1941)

With gentle motion ♩ = 108

Voice

Piano

With gentle motion ♩ = 108

p

with pedal

5 *p*

Thou art the sky and Thou art the nest as well. _____

9 *rit.* *mf espr.*

Thou art the sky and Thou art the nest as well. _____ O thou

rit.

A Slightly slower

13 *mf* *rit.* *mf*

beau-ti-ful there in the nest it is thy love that en-clos-es the soul with

A Slightly slower

mf

Ped.

B *a tempo* (♩ = 108)

16 *p*

col-ours and sound and o-dours. Thou art the sky and Thou art the nest as

B *a tempo* (♩ = 108)

p

Ped.

C Slightly slower

19 *rit.* *mf*

well. And there comes the morn-ing with the gold-en

C Slightly slower

mf

Ped.

C Slightly slower

22 *p*

bask-et in her hand bear-ing the wreaths of beau-ty,

p

(Ped.)

24 *mf* **D**

si - lent - ly to crown the earth. And there comes the eve - ning

27 *p quasi recitative* *f* *p* **Slowly**

car - ry - ing cool draughts of peace in her gold - en pitch - er from the o - cean of rest. But

28 **E** *cresc. poco a poco*

there, where spreads the in - fin - ite sky for the soul to take her flight in, reigns the

30 *(cresc.)* **F** *a tempo* (♩ = 108) *f with motion*

stain - less white ra - diance. There is no day or night.

33 *p sub.* *poco cresc.*

There is no form or colour, and never, never, never, never a

37 *rit.* **G** *a tempo* (♩ = 108) *p*

word. Thou art the sky and Thou art the nest as

with pedal

41

well. Thou art the sky and

44 *rit.*

Thou art the nest as well.