

Rowan Tree

5 anthems for Holy Week
for organ and voices

Libretto

Bargain (Spy Wednesday)

*Silentium est aureum,
Mors me dives.*

Strangely, the scripture saith,
But one of his friends did Love allow
To go straight to his death
With Christ's last kiss still shining on his brow,
For all the world to see...

*Silentium est aureum,
Mors me dives.*

By that crown of thorns in his hair,
The Angels everywhere,
Guessed at the traitor's inner tragic loyalty.

*Silentium est aureum,
Mors me dives.
Miserere mei, Domine.*

Chalice (Maundy Thursday)

*Calicem salutaris accipiam:
Et nomen Domini invocabo.
Christus factus est pro nobis
Obediens usque ad mortem,
Mortem autem crucis.*

We had but sipped the wine
Watching its changing hue—
Deep purple in the shadowy amphora
But crimson where the light
Pierces the crystal cup.

*Calicem salutaris accipiam:
Et nomen Domini invocabo.
Christus factus est pro nobis
Obediens usque ad mortem,
Mortem autem crucis.*
And if we thought:
“True, the cup is soon emptied,
The amphora rings hollow
And our veins lack warmth and life”—
...a gentle melancholy
Making our present joy more keen and clear.

*Calicem salutaris accipiam:
Et nomen Domini invocabo.
Christus factus est pro nobis
Obediens usque ad mortem,
Mortem autem crucis.*

But now
Cold, terrible, unseen hands
Have dragged the cup from us.
We are distracted
We hurry in anguish
To an unfriendly town,
As to death.

*Calicem salutaris accipiam:
Et nomen Domini invocabo.
Christus factus est pro nobis
Obediens usque ad mortem,
Mortem autem crucis.*

Cross (Good Friday)

*Mother mine:
Help me to love.*

Existence is the place
Where one slowly bleeds,
Life, its Golgotha,
Love, its crucifix,
Self, the mob that scorns the soul
and Nature the God who goads them on.

*Mother mine:
Help me to love.*

Grave (Holy Saturday)

No name, but wild flowers
And the emblem which you choose
And now is yours forever...

*Pie Jesu, Domine;
Dona nobis requiem.*

How many thousands in the years to come
Will pass indifferently these common tombs,
Led by the memory of your glowing spirit
To gaze upon the stone above your bones.

*Pie Jesu, Domine;
Dona nobis requiem.*

No name, but wild flowers
And the emblem which you choose
And now is yours forever...

*Pie Jesu, Domine;
Dona nobis requiem.*

Resurrection (Easter)

*Praised be our Great Creator,
In the skies.
In earth and water.
Alleluia!*

Who doth not his works despise?
Us He loves.
And us improves.

How His goodness sweet abounds?
In our glory.
And his son's wounds.
Alleluia!

*Praised be our Great Creator,
In the skies.
In earth and water.
Alleluia!*

Though Wolves this Lamb did worry,
Yet He rose,
To shame his foes.
He did triumph over Hell.

Satan bound.
And Death did quell.
Alleluia!

*Praised be our Great Creator,
In the skies.
In earth and water.
Alleluia!*

He in Heaven with glory crowned,
With us stays,
And for us prays;
What tongue can his praises speak?
Ours want might.
Ours are too weak.
Alleluia!

*Praised be our Great Creator,
In the skies.
In earth and water.
Alleluia!*

Libretto adapted by the composer from:

“*The Last Kiss*”, Eva Gore-Booth (1870-1926)
From **The House of Three Windows**
Longmans, Green, and Co. LTD.
London, 1926

“*The Wine Cup*”, Richard Aldington (1892-1962)
From **Images of War**
Beaumont Press.
London, 1919

“*Prayer*”, Alfred Kreymborg (1883-1966)
From **Mushrooms**
Coward-McCann, Inc.
New York, 1916

“*A Grave*”, Richard Aldington (1892-1962)
From **New Poems**
Doubleday, Doran & Co, Inc.
Garden City, 1934

“*The Antiphon*”, Ralph Knevet (1600-1671)
From **The Gallery to the Temple**, circa 1640