

A Spiritual for Freedom

for the Henbury Singers and the 40th anniversary of Amnesty International

Words based on two negro spirituals from the time of the American Civil War noted down by Thomas Wentworth Higginson in 1867:

- o "We'll soon be free," for singing which negroes were put in jail in Georgetown, South Carolina, at the outbreak of the war
- o "Many thousand go," which used to be sung in secret to avoid detection

Oliver Barton

♩ = 100

Spare me, Lord, spare me, Lord!

Oh spare me!

spare me, Lord. Spare me, Lord, Spare me, Lord, Spare me, Lord, Spare me, Lord, Spare me, Lord,

p heavy, resigned

spare me, Lord, spare me, Lord, When I speak the truth then hundred

spare me, Lord, spare me, Lord, When I speak, hundred

spare me, Lord, spare me, Lord, When I speak the truth then hundred

spare me, Lord, spare me, Lord, When I speak the truth then hundred

©2001 MusicOLib

You may copy this score for performance and archival purposes only.

If you want to reproduce it in journals, books, websites or other publications, you must obtain written consent from MusicOLib . Although no charge is made for this music, if you want to perform it, please make a contribution to Amnesty International, and please let me know! oliver.barton@talktalk.net

38

lash for me. Oh spare me! Oh spare me, spare me, —
 lash for me. Spare me, — Lord, spare me, — Lord, spare me, —
 lash for me.
 lash for me.

44

Lord, When I speak the truth then hun - dred lash for me.
 Lord, — When I speak, hun - dred lash for me.
 When I speak the truth then hun - dred lash for me.
 When I speak the truth then hun - dred lash for me.

47

earnest & crisp

Solo Mezzo
 I spoke the truth, — I did, Lord,
 cried out for jus - tice and free - dom of speech, I spoke the truth, — I did, Lord,
 I spoke the truth, — I did, Lord,
 I spoke the truth, — I did, Lord,
 I spoke the truth, — I did, Lord,

51

I spoke the truth, — I did, Lord. Spare me, —
 done lock me up with the key out of reach. I spoke the truth, — I did, Lord. Spare me, —
 I spoke the truth, — I did, Lord. Spare me, —
 I spoke the truth, — I did, Lord. Spare me, —
 I spoke the truth, — I did, Lord. Spare me, —

56

Lord, spare me, Lord, spare me— Lord, 'Cos I

Lord, spare me, Lord, spare me— Lord, 'Cos I

Lord, spare me, Lord, spare me— Lord, 'Cos I

Lord, spare me, Lord, spare me— Lord, 'Cos I

3

61

spoke the truth there's pri-son cellfor me. Solo Mezzo

spoke, pri-son cell for me. beat me and starve me and want me to die,

spoke the truth there's pri-son cellfor me.

spoke the truth there's pri-son cell for me.

65 *mp crisp*

mp I speak the truth,— I do, Lord,

mp I speak the truth,— I do, Lord, I'm stay-ing strong, Lord, I ain't going to cry.

mp I speak the truth,— I do, Lord,

mp I speak the truth,— I do, Lord,

69 *pp heavy, press on beats 1 & 3*

I speak the truth,— I do, Lord. Oo,

I speak the truth,— I do, Lord. Oo,

I speak the truth,— I do, Lord. Oo,

I speak the truth,— I do, Lord. Oo,

75

oo When I cry for free-dom they done tor-ture me.

oo When I cry for free - dom, Oo

oo When I cry for free-dom they done tor-ture me.

80

Organ

gradual dim. *mp* heavy, emotionless

Solo Sop My Free me,—

Free me,—

Free me,—

Free me,—

Free me,—

90

f impassioned

Lord, free me,— Lord, Let it be near,— oh my Lord.

Lord, free me,— Lord, Let it be near,— oh my Lord.

Lord, free me,— Lord, Let it be near,— oh my Lord.

Lord, free me,— Lord,

96

p

Free me,— Lord, For we migh - ty sad and sore from suff-'ring here,

Free me,— Lord, For we migh - ty sad and sore from suff-'ring here,

Free me,— Lord, For we migh - ty sad and sore from suff-'ring here,

Free me,— Lord, For we migh - ty sad and sore from suff-'ring here,

100 *mf* *resigned* *ppp* *dull, thudding* 5

Let it be near, — oh my Lord. —

mf Let it be near, — oh my Lord. —

mf Let it be near, — oh my Lord. —

mf Let it be near, — oh my Lord. —

ppp Dm dm dm dm Lord, Lord, —

ppp Dm dm dm dm dm, dm, etc.

ppp Dm dm dm dm dm, dm, etc.

ppp Dm dm dm dm dm, dm, etc.

106

dm, dm, etc. Lord, Lord, — mm — dm dm dm dm dm dm dm dm

Lord, Lord, — dm dm etc.

112 *p* (hum) *p* (hum) *p* (hum) *p* (hum)

120 *mf* We'll soon be free, we'll soon be free, we'll soon be

Organ *mf* We'll soon be free, we'll soon be free, we'll soon be

124

free When the Lord will call us home. My bro-ther how long, my bro-ther how long,
 free When the Lord will call us home. My bro-ther how long,
 8

127

long, my bro-ther how long 'Fore we done suff-'ring here? It won't be
 my bro-ther how long, my bro-ther how long—'Fore we done suff-'ring here? It won't be
 8

130

long, it won't be long, it won't be long 'Fore the Lord will call us
 It won't be long, it won't be long, it won't be long 'Fore the Lord will call us
 8

133

home. We'll walk the road, the mi-ry road, we'll walk the
 home. We'll walk the road, the mi-ry road, we'll walk the
 8

136 *mf* *gradual dim. -----7*

road Where plea-sure ne-ver dies. Ah, ah,

road Where plea-sure ne-ver dies. Ah, ah,

mf Ah, ah,

Ah, ah,

142 *p* Solo Sop & Mezzo

Oh my Lord, how long? Loose the shack-les and climb a - board!

Oh yes, my Lord, how long?

Oh yes, my Lord, how long?

Oh yes, my Lord, how long?

Oh yes, my Lord, how long?

163 *f exultant*

Pro - mised mor-ning is here, my Lord, Free - dom wa-gon is at the door,

Pro - mised mor-ning is here, my Lord, Free - dom wa-gon is at the door,

Pro - mised mor-ning is here, my Lord, Free - dom wa-gon is at the door,

Pro - mised mor-ning is here, my Lord, Free - dom wa-gon is at the door,

167

Stops out-side, Doors o - pen wide, Loose the shack-les and climb a - board!

Stops out-side, Doors o - pen wide, Loose the shack-les and climb a - board!

Stops out-side, Doors o - pen wide, Loose the shack-les and climb a - board!

Stops out-side, Doors o - pen wide, Loose the shack-les and climb a - board!

171 *f excited*

Throw off the chains, throw off the chains, throw off the

Throw off the chains, throw off the chains, throw off the

Throw off the chains, throw off the chains, throw off the

Throw off the chains, throw off the chains, throw off the

174 *mf*

chains And walk out-side the door. Step in - to day *mf* light, step in - to

chains And walk out-side the door. Step in - to day - light,

chains And walk out-side the door. Step in - to day *mf* light, step in - to

chains And walk out-side the door. Step in - to day - light,

177 *f*

day - light, step in - to day-light 'Cos the Lord has set us free! Send up a

step in - to light, step in - to day-light 'Cos the Lord has set us free!

day - light, step in - to day - light 'Cos we're free!

step in - to light, step in - to day-light 'Cos the Lord has set us free! Send up a

180 *f*

cry, send up a shout, Go tell the peo - ple the pris-'ners are let

Send up a cry, send up a shout, Go tell the peo - ple the pris-'ners are let

Send up a cry, send up a shout, Go tell the peo - ple the pris-'ners are let

cry, send up a shout, Go tell the peo - ple the pris-'ners are let

183 *p* *cresc.* 9

out! Sing out for free - dom, sing out for peace, Sing out for
 out! Sing out for free - dom, sing out for peace, Sing out for
 out! Sing out for free - dom, sing out for peace, Sing out for
 out! Sing out for free - dom, sing out for peace, Sing out for

186 *cresc.* *ff*

jus-tice and ne-ver e-ver cease, and ne-ver e-ver cease, and ne-ver e-ver cease! *ff* Oh
 jus-tice and ne-ver e-ver cease, and ne-ver e-ver cease, and ne-ver e-ver cease! *ff* Oh
 jus-tice ne - ver cease, and ne - ver cease, and ne - ver cease! *ff* Oh
 jus-tice and ne-ver e-ver cease, and ne-ver e-ver cease, and ne-ver e-ver cease! Oh

190

glo - ry,— Lord, glo - ry,— Lord, glo - ry,— Lord, Hear my
 glo - ry,— Lord, glo - ry,— Lord, glo - ry,— Lord, Hear my
 glo - ry,— Lord, glo - ry,— Lord, glo - ry,— Lord, Hear my
 glo - ry,— Lord, glo - ry,— Lord, glo - ry,— Lord, Hear my

196

cry, bring free-dom to the whole wide world. Hear them,— Lord, hear them,—
 cry, Oh Lord, Hear them,— Lord, hear them,—
 cry, bring free-dom to the whole wide world. Hear them,— Lord, hear them,—
 cry,— Oh Lord, Hear them,— Lord, hear them,

201

Lord, hear them,— Lord, Hear your chil-dren's cry—

Lord, hear them,— Lord, Hear your chil-dren's cry, hear them, O

Lord, hear them,— Lord, Hear your chil-dren's cry, hear them O

Lord, hear them, Lord, Hear your chil-dren's cry, hear them O

206

— and bring them peace, O Lord.

Lord, peace. O Lord.

Lord, peace. O Lord, Lord.

Lord, peace. O Lord.

214

Hear us, Lord.

Hear us, Lord.

Hear us, Lord.

Hear us, Lord.

Maytree, 23 March 2001

I did not, when a slave, understand the deep meaning of those incoherent songs. They told a tale of woe which was beyond my feeble comprehension; they were tones loud, long and deep; they breathed the prayer and complaint of souls boiling over with the bitterest anguish. Every tone was a testimony against slavery and a prayer to God for deliverance from chains. The songs of the slave represent the sorrows of his heart; and he is relieved by them, only as an aching heart is relieved by its tears.

from *Narrative of the Life of Frederick Douglass, an American Slave*,

1845