2005

**What a Beast Art Thou!**

Eric Malmquist  
*Illinois Wesleyan University*

Follow this and additional works at: https://digitalcommons.iwu.edu/music_compositions

Part of the Composition Commons

**Recommended Citation**

https://digitalcommons.iwu.edu/music_compositions/17

This Article is protected by copyright and/or related rights. It has been brought to you by Digital Commons @ IWU with permission from the rights-holder(s). You are free to use this material in any way that is permitted by the copyright and related rights legislation that applies to your use. For other uses you need to obtain permission from the rights-holder(s) directly, unless additional rights are indicated by a Creative Commons license in the record and/ or on the work itself. This material has been accepted for inclusion by faculty at Illinois Wesleyan University. For more information, please contact digitalcommons@iwu.edu.

©Copyright is owned by the author of this document.
What a Beast Art Thou!
Three Shakespeare Songs
For Bass Voice and Piano

Eric Malmquist
Program Notes:

“What a Beast Art Thou! – Three Shakespeare Songs,” for bass voice and piano, explores the depths of the darker side of human nature. Using texts from *Titus Andronicus* Act 5, *Timon of Athens* Act 4, and *Titus Andronicus* Act 5 respectively, the three songs intend to express emotions of hate and anger, while conveying the drama unfolding during each particular scene. “What a Beast Art Thou!” was commissioned by William Roberts III and premiered by him in December 2005. Duration: approximately 10 minutes.
What a Beast Art Thou!
Three Shakespeare Songs

I. Hark, villains, I will grind your bones to dust...

Eric Malmquist (2005)

Bass

Piano
Hark, villains, I will grind your bones to dust...

of your shameful heads.

And bid that strumpet your unhallowed dam,

Like to the earth, swallow her own increase.

I will grind your bones to dust...
Hark, villains, I will grind your bones to dust...

This is the feast that I have bid her to, And this the ban -

quet she shall sur - feit on: For worse than Phil - o - mel you used my
daughter, And worse than Prog - ne I will be re - venged.
Hark, villains, I will grind your bones to dust...

And now prepare your throats.
II. A beastly ambition...

Bass

If thou wert the lion, the fox would beguile thee; if thou wert the lamb the fox would eat thee; if thou wert the fox the
A beastly ambition...

Lion would suspect thee when peradventure thou wert accused by the

Ass; if thou wert the ass, thy dullness would torment thee, and

Still thou livedst but as a breakfast to the wolf; if thou wert the wolf thy
A beastly ambition...

greediness would afflict thee and oft thou shouldst hazard thy life for thy dinner;

wert thou the unicorn pride and wrath would confound thee and

make thine own self the conquest of thy fury;
A beastly ambition...

wërth thou a bear, thou wëouldst be.killéd by the horse;

wërth thou a horse, thou wëouldst be.seized by the leopârd;

wërth thou a leopârd, thou wërgerman to the liôn, and the
spots of thy kin-dred were jurors on thy life. All thy

safety were removal and they defence absence. What

beast couldst thou be that were not subject to a beast? And
A beastly ambition...

what a beast art thou al-ready, that seest not thy loss in

transformation!
III. Even now I curse the day...

Even now, I curse the day, and yet, I think few come within the compass of my curse.

Wherein I did not some notorious ill, As
Even now I curse the day...

20

kill a man or else devise his death, Ravi sh a maid or

20

Pno.

20

pp

Pno.

23

f

plot the way to do it, Accuse some in-no-cent and for

23

Pno.

23

pp

Pno.

25

swear myself, Set deadly en-mit-y between two friends, Make
Even now I curse the day...

poor men's cattle break their necks,
Set fire on barns and hay-stacks

in the night
And bid the owners quench them with their tears.

Oft have I dugged up dead men from their graves.
Even now I curse the day...

And set them up right at their dear friends' door.

Even when their sorrows almost was forgot,

And on their skins, as on the bark of trees, Have with my knife

carved in Roman letters, *Let not your sorrow die though I am
Even now I curse the day...

dead'.

Tut, I have done a thousand dreadful things As willingly as one would kill a fly,
Even now I curse the day...

And nothing grieves me heartily indeed

But that I cannot do ten thousand more.