

ONOMASTIC GYMNASTICS

by Celeste Oram
for Nicolee Kuester

HYMN TUNE

Oh, may that [*], be it beyond or in my care,
Come to confound the name to them I did bestow; And for-
give us our proprie-tary airs, that what we tally
as our own not ease the weight of what we owe.

DESCANT

1. [1] Soon each thought now teething will tether to meaning.
[2] How crude a wound the name first shows;
[3] Til with a scar tentacular it close.
2. [4] We saw nought but bounties innominate gleaming;
[5] All gathered where the river slows.
3. [6] Soon each thought now teething will tether to meaning;
[7] How crude a wound the name first shows.
4. [8] Oh, may that [*], be it beyond or in my care,
Come to confound the name to them I did bestow;
And forgive us our proprietary airs,
That what we tally as our own not ease the weight
of what we owe.
5. [9] What kin claims a mother for children of Keening?
[10] His west-bound name his lover chose,
[11] Into its prophecy his fortune grows.
6. [12] Soon each thought now teething will tether to meaning.
[13] How crude a wound the name first shows,
[14] Til with a scar tentacular it close.
7. [15] Oh, may that [*], be it beyond or in my care,
Come to confound the name to them I did bestow;
And forgive us our proprietary airs,
That what we tally as our own not ease the weight
of what we owe.

NOTES FOR PERFORMANCE

This song is a 13-line rondeau interleaved with an additional hymn tune refrain. It can be performed by any number of singers and/or instrumentalists.

For the rondeau parts of the song, the cantus line is always either sung or played. The superius & tenor lines are optional; one or both (or neither) can accompany the cantus: either sung (with text), or played by instruments. The arrangement of voices and instruments – and the variation thereof throughout the piece – is left to the performers' discretion. Stanzas may be repeated to allow for additional variations of combinations.

- There are various options for performing the hymn tune:
- 1) all performers sing and/or play the tune in unison – optional: one performer plays or sings the descant line;
 - 2) the audience sings the tune together with the performers – optional: one performer plays or sings the descant line (in this case, some time might be taken before the song begins to informally teach the hymn to the audience);
 - 3) a recording is played of a group of people singing the hymn tune, with or without keyboard/instrumental accompaniment.

Other possibilities, or combinations of the above, are also available options.

The full text of the song is listed herewith, to give clarity to the musical structure implied by the numbering system in the score. Stanzas are indicated with brackets; if repeats are made, they should be of full stanzas.

[1] Soon each thought now teething will tether to meaning.
[2] How crude a wound the name first shows;
[3] Til with a scar tentacular it close.

[4] We saw nought but bounties innominate gleaming;
[5] All gathered where the river slows.

[6] Soon each thought now teething will tether to meaning;
[7] How crude a wound the name first shows.

[8] Oh, may that [*], be it beyond or in my care,
Come to confound the name to them I did bestow;
And forgive us our proprietary airs,
That what we tally as our own not ease the weight
of what we owe.

[9] What kin claims a mother for children of Keening?
[10] His west-bound name his lover chose,
[11] Into its prophecy his fortune grows.

[12] Soon each thought now teething will tether to meaning.
[13] How crude a wound the name first shows,
[14] Til with a scar tentacular it close.

[15] Oh, may that [*], be it beyond or in my care,
Come to confound the name to them I did bestow;
And forgive us our proprietary airs,
That what we tally as our own not ease the weight
of what we owe.

[*] = a creature or thing to whom the singer themselves has given a name (e.g. child, cat, dog, car, etc.); not all singers need to sing the same word at the same time.