



# how oft has the Benshee cried!

THE DIRGE

AIR: THE DEAR BLACK MAID

michael william balfe  
(1808-1870)

Andante

S  
A  
T  
B

How oft has the Ben - shee cried! How oft has

How oft has the Ben - shee cried! How oft has

How oft has the Ben - shee cried! How oft has

How oft has the Ben - shee cried! How oft has

Andante

Piano

# how oft has the Benshee cried!

6 *cresc.*

S death un - tied Bright links that Glo - ry wove, Sweet bonds, en - twin'd by Love!

A death un - tied Bright links that Glo - ry wove, Sweet bonds, en - twin'd by Love!

T death un - tied Bright links that Glo - ry wove, Sweet bonds, en - twin'd by Love!

B death un - tied Bright links that Glo - ry wove, Sweet bonds, en - twin'd by Love!

Pno.

11 *pp dim.* *cresc.*

S Peace to each man - ly soul that sleep - eth! Rest to each faith - ful eye that weep - eth!

A *pp dim.* *cresc.*  
Peace to each man - ly soul that sleep - eth! Rest to each faith - ful eye that weep - eth!

T *pp dim.* *cresc.*  
Peace to each man - ly soul that sleep - eth! Rest to each faith - ful eye that weep - eth!

B *pp dim.* *cresc.*  
Peace to each man - ly soul that sleep - eth! Rest to each faith - ful eye that weep - eth!

Pno.

*pp* *cresc.*

# how oft has the Benshee cried!

15

S Long may the fair and brave Sigh o'er the he - ro's grave.

A Long may the fair and brave Sigh o'er the he - ro's grave.

T Long may the fair and brave Sigh o'er the he - ro's grave.

B Long may the fair and brave Sigh o'er the he - ro's grave.

Pno.

21

S We're fall'n up - on gloom - y days, Star af - ter

A We're fall'n up - on gloom - y days, Star af - ter

T We're fall'n up - on gloom - y days, Star af - ter

B We're fall'n up - on gloom - y days, Star af - ter

Pno.

# how oft has the Benshee cried!

26 *cresc.*

S star de - cays, Ev - 'ry bright name, that shed Light o'er the land, is fled.

A star de - cays, Ev - 'ry bright name, that shed Light o'er the land, is fled.

T star de - cays, Ev - 'ry bright name, that shed Light o'er the land, is fled.

B star de - cays, Ev - 'ry bright name, that shed Light o'er the land, is fled.

Pno.

31 *pp dim. cresc.*

S Dark falls the tear of him who mourn - eth Lost joy, or hope that ne'er re - turn - eth,

A Dark falls the tear of him who mourn - eth Lost joy, or hope that ne'er re - turn - eth,

T Dark falls the tear of him who mourn - eth Lost joy, or hope that ne'er re - turn - eth,

B Dark falls the tear of him who mourn - eth Lost joy, or hope that ne'er re - turn - eth,

Pno. *pp cresc.*

# how oft has the Benshee cried!

35

S But bright - ly flows the tear, Wept o'er a he - ro's bier!

A But bright - ly flows the tear, Wept o'er a he - ro's bier!

T But bright - ly flows the tear, Wept o'er a he - ro's bier!

B But bright - ly flows the tear, Wept o'er a he - ro's bier!

Pno.

41

S Oh! quench'd are our bea - con lights- Thou, of the

A Oh! quench'd are our bea - con lights- Thou, of the

T Oh! quench'd are our bea - con lights- Thou, of the

B Oh! quench'd are our bea - con lights- Thou, of the

Pno.

# how oft has the Benshee cried!

46 *cresc.*

S hun - dred fights! Thou, on whose burn - ing tongue Truth, peace and free - dom hung!

A hun - dred fights! Thou, on whose burn - ing tongue Truth, peace and free - dom hung!

T hun - dred fights! Thou, on whose burn - ing tongue Truth, peace and free - dom hung!

B hun - dred fights! Thou, on whose burn - ing tongue Truth, peace and free - dom hung!

Pno.

51 *pp dim. cresc.*

S Both mute— but— long as val - our shin - eth, Or— mer - cy's— soul at war re - pin - eth,

A Both mute— but— long as val - our shin - eth, Or— mer - cy's— soul at war re - pin - eth,

T Both mute— but long as val - our shin - eth, Or— mer - cy's— soul at war re - pin - eth,

B Both mute— but long as val - our shin - eth, Or— mer - cy's— soul at war re - pin - eth,

Pno. *pp cresc.*

# how oft has the Benshee cried!

55

S  
So long shall E - rin's pride\_ Tell how they liv'd and died.

A  
So long shall E - rin's pride Tell how they liv'd and died.

T  
So long shall E - rin's pride Tell how they liv'd and died.

B  
So long shall E - rin's pride Tell how they liv'd and died.

Pno.  
55

*f* *dim.* *pp*

The musical score is for a four-part vocal setting with piano accompaniment. It begins at measure 55. The vocal parts (Soprano, Alto, Tenor, and Bass) all sing the same lyrics: "So long shall E - rin's pride\_ Tell how they liv'd and died." The piano accompaniment features a melody in the right hand and a bass line in the left hand. Dynamics include *f* (forte), *dim.* (diminuendo), and *pp* (pianissimo). The score concludes with a double bar line.

J. Alfred Novello  
(1859)

**Michael William Balfe** (1808-1870) was born in Dublin, Ireland, and studied music in Ireland and London. At age 16, he became violinist in the Drury Lane orchestra and was celebrated as a singer throughout the region. His patron, Count Mazzara, took him to Italy, where he studied composition in Rome and Milan. His first dramatic piece was produced in Milan in 1826. He sang at the Paris Italian Opera and in Italian theaters until 1835, also producing several Italian operas, and sang in New York City in 1834. He returned to England and was a successful composer of English operas, at times residing in Paris and Vienna. He retired in 1864 and died in Rowney Abbey, Hertfordshire. His compositions include a number of operas, cantatas, glees, and part-songs.

How oft has the Benshee cried!  
How oft has death untied  
Bright links that Glory wove,  
Sweet bonds, entwin'd by Love!  
Peace to each manly soul that sleepeth!  
Rest to each faithful eye that weepeth!  
Long may the fair and brave  
Sigh o'er the hero's grave.

We're fallen upon gloomy days [1],  
Star after star decays,  
Every bright name, that shed  
Light o'er the land, is fled.  
Dark falls the tear of him who mourneth  
Lost joy, or hope that ne'er returneth,  
But brightly flows the tear,  
Wept o'er a hero's bier!

Oh! quench'd are our beacon lights——  
Thou, of the hundred fights [2]!  
Thou, on whose burning tongue [3]  
Truth, peace and freedom hung!  
Both mute—but long as valour shineth,  
Or mercy's soul at war repineth,  
So long shall Erin's pride  
Tell how they liv'd and died.

Thomas Moore (1779–1852)

1. I have endeavoured here, without losing that Irish character, which it is my object to preserve throughout this work, to allude to the sad and ominous fatality, by which England has been deprived of so many great and good men, at a moment when she most requires all the aids of talent and integrity.

2. This designation, which has been applied to LORD NELSON before, is the title given to a celebrated Irish Hero, in a Poem by O'Gnive, the bard of O'Niel, which is quoted in the "Philosophical Survey of the South of Ireland." Page 433. "Con, of the hundred fights, sleep in thy grass-grown tomb, and upbraid not our defeats with thy victories!"

3. Fox, "ultimus Romanorum."

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