

DREAM OF GERONTIUS, ELGAR
Words by Cardinal Newman
Part One

Gerontius – Tenor
Assistants – Chorus
Priest – Baritone

PRELUDE

GERONTIUS

Jesu Maria - I am near to death,
And Thou art calling me: I know it
now.
Not by the token of this faltering
breath,
This chill at heart, this dampness on
my brow,
(Jesu, have mercy! Mary, pray for me!)
'Tis this new feeling, never felt before,
(Be with me, Lord, in my extremity!)
That I am going, that I am no more.
'Tis this strange innermost
abandonment,
(Lover of souls! great God! I look to
thee.)
This emptying out of each constituent
And natural force, by which I come to
be.

Pray for me, O my friends; a visitant
Is knocking his dire summons at my
door,
The like of whom, to scare me and to
daunt,
Has never, never come to me before;
So pray for me, my friends, who have
not strength to pray.

ASSISTANTS

Kyrie eleison, Christe eleison, Kyrie
eleison.
Holy Mary, pray for him.
All holy Angels, pray for him.
All Apostles, all Evangelists, pray for
him.
All holy Disciples of the Lord, pray for
him.
All holy Innocents, pray for him.
All holy Martyrs, all holy Confessors,
All holy Hermits, all holy Virgins,
All ye Saints of God, pray for him.

Kyrie eleison.

GERONTIUS

Rouse thee, my fainting soul, and play
the man;
And through such waning span
Of life and thought as still has to be
trod,
Prepare to meet thy God.
And while the storm of that
bewilderment
Is for a season spent,

And, ere afresh the ruin on me fall,
Use well the interval.

ASSISTANTS

Be merciful, be gracious; spare him,
Lord.
Be merciful, be gracious; Lord, deliver
him.
From the sins that are past;
From Thy frown and Thine ire;
From the perils of dying;
From any complying
With sin, or denying
His God, or relying
On self, at the last;
From the nethermost fire;
From all that is evil;
From power of the devil;
Thy servant deliver,
For once and for ever.

By Thy birth, and by Thy Cross,
Rescue him from endless loss;
By Thy death and burial,
Save him from a final fall;
By Thy rising from the tomb,
By Thy mounting up above,
By the Spirit's gracious love,
Save him in the day of doom.

GERONTIUS

Sanctus fortis, Sanctus Deus,
De profundis oro te,
Miserere, Judex meus,
Parce mihi, Domine.
Firmly I believe and truly
God is Three, and God is One;
And I next acknowledge duly
Manhood taken by the Son.
And I trust and hope most fully
In that Manhood crucified;
And each though and deed unruly
Do to death, as He has died.
Simply to His grace and wholly
Light and life and strength belong,
And I love, supremely, solely,
Him the holy, Him the strong.
Sanctus fortis, Sanctus Deus,
De profundis oro te,
Miserere, Judex meus,
Parce mihi, Domine.
And I hold in veneration,
For the love of Him alone,
Holy Church, as His creation,
And her teachings, as His own.
And I take with joy whatever
Now besets me, pain or fear,
And with a strong will I sever
All the ties which bind me here.
Adoration aye be given,
With and through the angelic host.
To the God of earth and heaven,
Father, Son and Holy Ghost.

Sanctus fortis, Sanctus Deus,
De profundis oro te,
Miserere, Judex meus,
Mortis in discrimine.

I can no more; for now it comes again,
That sense of ruin, which is worse than
pain,
That masterful negation and collapse
Of all that makes me man. And,
crueller still,
A fierce and restless fright begins to
fill
The Mansion of my soul. And, worse
and worse,
Some bodily form of ill
Floats on the wind, with many a
loathsome curse
Tainting the hallowed air, and laughs,
and flaps
Its hideous wings,
And makes me wild with horror and
dismay.
O Jesu help! pray for me, Mary, pray!
Some Angel, Jesu! such as came to
Thee
In Thine own agony...
Mary, pray for me, Joseph, pray for
me.

Mary, pray for me.

ASSISTANTS

Rescue him, O Lord, in this his evil
hour,
As of old so many by Thy gracious
power:-
Noe from the waters in a saving home;
Job from all his multiform and fell
distress;
Moses from the land of bondage and
despair;
David from Golia and the wrath of
Saul;
- So, to show Thy power,
Rescue this Thy servant in his evil
hour.

GERONTIUS

Novissima hora est; and I fain would
sleep,
The pain has wearied me...
Into Thy hands, O Lord, into Thy
hands...

THE PRIEST AND ASSISTANTS

Proficiscere, anima Christiana, de hoc
mundo!
Go forth upon thy journey, Christian
soul!
Go from this world! Go, in the Name
of God
The Omnipotent Father, who created
thee!
Go, in the Name of Jesus Christ, our

Lord,
 Son of the living God, who bled for
 thee!
 Go, in the Name of the Holy Spirit,
 who
 Hath been poured out on thee! Go, in
 the name
 Of Angels and Archangels: in the
 name
 Of Thrones and Dominations; in the
 name
 Of Princedoms and of Powers; and in
 the name
 Of Cherubim and Seraphim, go forth!
 Go, in the name of Patriarchs and
 Prophets;
 And of Apostles and Evangelists,
 Of Martyrs and Confessors; in the
 name
 Of holy Monks and Hermits; in the
 name
 Of holy Virgins; and all Saints of God,
 Both men and women, go! Go on thy
 course:
 And may thy place today be found in
 peace,
 And may thy dwelling be the Holy
 Mount
 Of Sion; through the same, through
 Christ our Lord.

Part Two

Soul of Gerontius – Tenor
 Angel – Mezzo-Soprano
 Angel of Agony – Baritone
 Demons, Angelicals, and Souls -
 Chorus

SOUL OF GERONTIUS

I went to sleep; and now I am
 refreshed.
 A strange refreshment: for I feel in me
 An inexpressive lightness, and a sense
 Of freedom, as I were at length myself,
 And ne'er had been before. How still it
 is!
 I hear no more the busy beat of time,
 No, nor my fluttering breath, nor
 struggling pulse;
 Nor does one moment differ from the
 next.
 This silence pours a solitariness
 Into the very essence of my soul;
 And the deep rest, so soothing and so
 sweet,
 Hath something too of sternness and
 of pain.
 Another marvel: someone has me fast
 Within his ample palm; A uniform
 And gentle pressure tells me I am not

Self-moving, but borne forward on my
 way.
 And hark! I hear a singing: yet in sooth
 I cannot of that music rightly say
 Whether I hear, or touch, or taste the
 tones,
 Oh, what a heart-subduing melody!

ANGEL

My work is done,
 My task is o'er,
 And so I come,
 Taking it home,
 For the crown is won,
 Alleluia,
 For evermore.

My father gave
 In charge to me
 This child of earth
 E'en from its birth,
 To serve and save,
 Alleluia,
 And saved is he.

This child of clay
 To me was given,
 To rear and train
 By sorrow and pain
 In the narrow way,
 Alleluia,
 From earth to heaven.

SOUL

It is a member of that family
 Of wondrous beings, who, ere the
 worlds were made,
 Millions of ages back, have stood
 around
 The throne of God.

I will address him. Mighty one, my
 Lord,
 My Guardian Spirit, all hail!

ANGEL

All hail, my child!
 My child and brother, hail! what
 wouldst thou?

SOUL

I would have nothing but to speak
 with thee
 For speaking's sake. I wish to hold
 with thee
 Conscious communion; though I fain
 would know
 A maze of things, were it but meet to
 ask,
 And not a curiousness.

ANGEL

You cannot now
 Cherish a wish which ought not to be
 wished.

SOUL

Then I will speak. I ever had believed
 That on the moment when the
 struggling soul
 Quitted its mortal case, forthwith it fell
 Under the awful Presence of its God,
 There to be judged and sent to its own
 place.

What lets me now from going to my
 Lord?

ANGEL

Thou art not let; but with extremest
 speed
 Art hurrying to the Just and Holy
 Judge.

SOUL

Dear Angel, say,
 Why have I now no fear at meeting
 Him?
 Along my earthly life, the thought of
 death
 And judgment was to me most
 terrible.

ANGEL

It is because
 Then thou didst fear, that now thou
 dost not fear.
 Thou hast forestalled the agony, and
 so
 For thee the bitterness of death is
 passed.

Also, because already in thy soul
 The judgment is begun.

ANGEL

A presage falls upon thee, as a ray
 Straight from the Judge, expressive of
 thy lot.
 That calm and joy uprising in thy soul
 Is first-fruit to thee of thy recompense,
 And heaven begun.

SOUL

Not that the hour is come, my fear is
 fled;
 And at this balance of my destiny,
 Now close upon me, I can forward
 look
 With a serenest joy.
 But hark! upon my sense
 Comes a fierce hubbub, which would
 make me fear
 Could I be frightened.

ANGEL

We are now arrived
 Close on the judgment court: that
 sullen howl
 Is from the demons who assemble
 there,
 Hungry and wild, to claim their
 property,
 And gather souls for hell. Hark to their