

Commissioned by Ellie Armsby & Cantilena in Arlington, MA

HANDMADE

Kelvyn Koning

for Two-Part Choir and Piano

Kelvyn Koning
2022

Earnestly ♩ = 126

Voice 1 and 2

Piano

p

mp

mp

5

Where are the hands that guide

10

— you and guard you? Where are the limbs to build — you a home?

13

Where are the hands that bring food — to the ta - ble? Where are the arms say-ing you're not a-lone?

17 *mf*

Where are the hands that teach — you to play? Where are the hands that push you to grow?

mf

21

Where are the thumbs that wipe your tears a - way? Where are the ones that want

24 *mp*

— you to know? — I un - der -

mp

— you to know? — I un - der - stand,

mp

29

stand — When you — fall down, I will lend you — a hand, —

— When you — fall down, I will lend you — a hand, —

34

p

— So take my hand when you are wear - y, Take my hand when you're in need,

— So take my hand when you are wear - y, Take my hand when you're in need,

p

38

— Take my hand when you're dis-cou - raged, Let me tend your wounds that bleed,

42

mf

— Take my hand when you're hun - gry, Take my hand when you're a - fraid,

mf

46

— Take my hand and we'll dis-co - ver you and I are both hand - made.

50

mp

54

mf

Thanks to the hands that guide me and guard me, Thanks to the limbs that built me a home,

mf

Thanks to the hands that guide me and guard me, Thanks to the limbs that built me a home,

mf

58

Thanks to the hands that bring food to the table, Thanks to the arms that show me

Thanks to the hands that bring food to the table, Thanks to the arms that show me

61

f

I'm not a - lone, Thanks to the hands that teach me to play,

f

I'm not a - lone, Thanks to the hands that teach me to play,

f

64

Thanks to the hands that push — me to grow, Thanks to the thumbs that wipe my tears a-way, —

Thanks to the hands that push — me to grow, Thanks to the thumbs that wipe my tears a-way,

68

Thanks to the ones that I'll — ne-ver know, I am

Thanks to the ones that I'll — ne-ver know, I am here,

mf

mf

72

here, I un-der-stand, When I — have fal-len, you've

I un-der-stand, When I — have fal-len, you've

77

f

lent me your hand, So take my hand when you are laugh-

f

lent me your hand, So take my hand when you are laugh-

81

- ing, Take my hand when you can't breathe, Take my hand when you're dis-tract-

- ing, Take my hand when you can't breathe, Take my hand when you're dis-tract-

85

- ed, Take my hand when you don't want to leave, Take my hand when you are cry-

- ed, Take my hand when you don't want to leave, Take my hand when you are cry-

89

- ing, Take my hand when you feel be-trayed, — Take my hand and we'll re-co-

- ing, Take my hand when you feel be-trayed, — Take my hand and we'll re-co-

93

- ver; you and I are both hand - made, — and we are — con -

- ver; you and I are both hand - made, — And we are — con -

97

nect - ed, — though seem - ing - ly a - part. Love is rare - ly — ex -

nect - ed, — though seem - ing - ly a - part. Love is rare - ly — ex -

101

pect - ed, — that's how it heals the heart. So I'll care for

pect - ed, — that's how it heals the heart. — So I'll care for

105

you just as you've cared — for me in more ways than

you just as you've cared for me in more ways than

109

rit. we could e - ver dream. *a tempo* So take my hand when you are wear-

we could e - ver dream. *p* So take my hand when you are wear-

p

Ad.

113

- y, Take my hand when you're in need, — Take my hand when you're dis-cou-

117

- raged, Let me tend your wounds that bleed, — Take my hand when you are hun-

mp

p

121

- gry, Take my hand when you're fraid, — Take my hand and we'll dis-co-

125

- ver you and I are both hand-made. — take my

rit. *ff*

Grand ♩ = 100

129

hand when you are laugh - ing, Take my hand when you can't breathe, Take my

hand when you are laugh - ing, Take my hand when you can't breathe, Take my

ff

133

hand when you're dis-tract - ed, Take my hand when you don't want to

hand when you're dis-tract - ed, Take my hand when you don't want to

3

136

leave, Take my hand when you are cry - ing, Take my hand when you feel be-trayed,

leave, Take my hand when you are cry - ing, Take my hand when you feel be-trayed,

f *accel.*

gva

f

140

mf

poco rit.

— Take my hand and we'll re - co - ver; you and I, —

— Take my hand and we'll re - co - ver; you and I, —

mp *mf*

144

— you and I, — you and I are both hand -

— you and I, — you and I are both hand -

p *mp*

150

Tempo I ♩ = 100

rit.

made. —

made. —

p *mp*

ABOUT:

I wrote "Handmade" in November 2022 for Cantilena's Fired Up concert in May 2023, featuring works oriented toward social justice. While considering many possible approaches, I spoke with some of my dear friends about their experiences with homelessness as LGBTQ+ young adults. I connected with the Y2Y homeless shelter for youth in Cambridge, MA as well as the AYA youth collective in Grand Rapids, MI to learn more and spent some time reflecting on various conversations to write the text for this piece. This led me to reflect on the idea of "helping hands."

On the one hand, it's nice to be left alone; on the other hand, it sucks to be ignored. On the one hand, it's nice to have a community; on the other hand, it sucks to rely on others. On the one hand, it's nice to be unique; on the other hand, it sucks to be 'othered.' We are both hands on the same body. You are me, just as I am you. One hand may seem dominant, but that doesn't mean the other should be cut off or underestimated. Both hands work together to feed and hold and clean and protect the body. But sometimes one hand isn't able, and so the other hand must feed and hold and clean and protect the body till the first hand is restored. And the helping hand doesn't ask for payback or applause because it acted in love, taking care of its member.

One friend I spoke with about this topic shared a quote with me and granted permission to use it:

"We so quickly forget where we were, not realizing how far we've come or how much we have. What a blessing it is to say 'now what?' or 'what next?'"

While the use of physical helping hands is not the reality for every person, I think all of us could emotionally or spiritually "lend a hand" or "take a hand." We have all had many people contribute to our lives, and we can all contribute to the lives of others.

DURATION: ~5'00"



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**TUX PEOPLE'S
MUSIC.**