



The American Prize  
2014 Finalist

# Wise Words of Love

women's chorus / piano



Words by William Shakespeare

Music by Rebecca Oswald  
(2000)



Duration 13:10



Rebecca Oswald Music  
[rebeccaoswald.com](http://rebeccaoswald.com)

**Rebecca Oswald** (b. 1958) is an award winning composer and lifelong pianist. Her catalogue includes music for piano as well as other solo instruments, various chamber ensembles, string and full orchestra, art songs, all types of choral ensembles including chorus with orchestra, a clarinet concerto, and an opera. She has also written music for film and games. She holds a Bachelor of Music degree, *summa cum laude*, in music theory and composition from Westminster Choir College (1998), and a Master of Music degree in music composition from the University of Oregon School of Music (2001). For more information please visit [rebeccaoswald.com](http://rebeccaoswald.com) or write to [rebecca@rebeccaoswald.com](mailto:rebecca@rebeccaoswald.com).

Rebecca Oswald

# Wise Words of Love

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## Program notes:

*Wise Words of Love* wends its way through a colorful landscape of various aspects of love in nine short movements. A unique collection of lines spoken by women characters in various plays by William Shakespeare (1564-1616), arguably both England's and the English language's greatest poet and playwright, serves as the text. Drawing from Shakespeare's comedies and tragedies alike, the viewpoint starts out firmly tongue-in-cheek, then swings, pendulum-like, to deeply romantic, and then back again. Text painting, musical archetypes, occasional humor, and consonant and dissonant harmonic language join together to reflect and express love's changing moods.

## Requests:

- (1) Please report all U.S. performances of this work to BMI (classical@bmi.com) and to me (rebecca@rebeccaoswald.com) by emailing a JPG or PDF of a program, flyer, poster, or ticket showing the title of my programmed work(s) and my name (Rebecca Oswald).
- (2) Similarly, please report all non-U.S. performances to the host country's national performance rights organization, to BMI (classical@bmi.com), and to me (rebecca@rebeccaoswald.com).

Many thanks! I hope you and your choir enjoy singing *Wise Words of Love*.

— *Rebecca Oswald*



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## Wise Words of Love

### I. Disdain

I had rather hear my dog bark at a crow  
Than a man swear he loves me.

Beatrice, *Much Ado About Nothing*

### II. Pursuit

Love sought is good, but given unsought is better.

Olivia, *Twelfth Night*

I give him curses, yet he gives me love.  
O that my prayers could such affection move!  
The more I hate, the more he follows me.  
The more I love, the more he hateth me.

Hermia and Helena, *A Midsummer Night's Dream*

### III. The Eyes of Love

Things base and vile, holding no quantity,  
Love can transform to form and dignity.  
Love looks not with the eyes, but with the mind;  
And therefore is wing'd Cupid painted blind.

Helena, *A Midsummer Night's Dream*

Who ever lov'd that lov'd not at first sight?

Phebe, *As You Like It*

### IV. Folly

Love is blind, and lovers cannot see  
The pretty follies that themselves commit,  
For if they could, Cupid himself would blush.

Jessica, *The Merchant of Venice*

How many fond fools serve mad jealousy?

Luciana, *The Comedy of Errors*

We are wise girls to mock our lovers so.  
They are worse fools to purchase mocking so.

The Princess of France and Rosaline, *Love's Labours Lost*

### V. Courtship

We cannot fight for love, as men may do.  
We should be woo'd, and were not made to woo.

Helena, *A Midsummer Night's Dream*

Come, woo me, woo me,  
For now I am in a holiday humour and like enough  
to consent.

Rosalind, *As You Like It*

### VI. Passion

How does he love me?  
With adorations, fertile tears,  
With groans that thunder love,  
With sighs of fire.

Olivia and Viola, *Twelfth Night*

Didst thou but know the inly touch of love,  
Thou wouldst as soon go kindle fire with snow  
As seek to quench the fire of love with words.

Julia, *The Two Gentlemen of Verona*

### VII. Devotion

His words are bonds, his oaths are oracles,  
His love sincere, his thoughts immaculate,  
His tears pure messengers from his heart,  
His heart as far from fraud as heaven from earth.

Julia, *The Two Gentlemen of Verona*

My bounty is as boundless as the sea,  
My love as deep; the more I give to thee,  
The more I have, for both are infinite.

Juliet, *The Tragedy of Romeo and Juliet*

### VIII. Marriage

Men are April when they woo,  
December when they wed;  
Maids are May when they are maids,  
But the sky changes when they are wives.

Rosalind, *As You Like It*

### X. Parting

Good night, good night! Parting is such sweet  
sorrow,  
That I shall say good night till it be morrow.

Juliet, *The Tragedy of Romeo and Juliet*

# Wise Words of Love

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Words by William Shakespeare

Music by Rebecca Oswald

Like a music box (♩ = 72)

both hands

8va

## I. Disdain

Coarsely

The score is divided into three systems. The first system shows the piano introduction with a tempo of ♩ = 72. The piano part is marked *p* and *una corda*. The second system features the vocal entries for Soprano (S) and Alto (A), both marked *f*. The lyrics are: "I had rather hear my dog bark at a crow". The piano accompaniment continues with a *ff* dynamic and *tre corde* marking. The third system shows the vocalists continuing with the lyrics: "Than a man swear he loves me." The piano part concludes with a *p* dynamic.



30

S

A

love.

30

*f* *mf* *f* *mf*

34

*f* with longing

S

A

O that my prayers could such af - fec - tion

34

*fz* *mf*

38

S

A

move!

38

*f* *mf* *f*

42

S

A

*f* *angrily*

The more I hate, the more he fol - lows

42

*mf*

46

S

A

me.

46

*f* *mf* *f* *mf*

50

S

A

*f* *despairing*

The more I love, the more he hat - - - eth

50

*fz* *mf* *f*

54

S me.

A

mf f mf f mf

58

Slowly Intoned, freely

S *tutti p*

A *tutti p*

Love sought is good, but giv-en un-sought is bet-ter.

Love sought is good, but giv-en un-sought is bet-ter.

58

Slowly Intoned, freely

*sfz mf p pp*

\* Ped \*

### III. The Eyes of Love

Heavily (♩ = 126)

61

*f* *mf*

S *mp* heavily *warmly*  
 Things base and vile, hold - ing no quan - ti - ty, Love can trans -

A *mp*  
 Things base and vile, hold - ing no quan - ti - ty, Love can trans -

65

*mp* *warmly*

S *mf* *mp*  
 form to form and dig - ni - ty. Love looks not with the eyes,

A *mf* *mp*  
 form to form and dig - ni - ty. Love looks not with the eyes,

70

*mf* *mp*

75 *f* *mp*  
S but with the mind; And there - fore is wing'd  
A but with the mind; And there - fore is wing'd

79 *mf*  
S Cu - pid paint - ed blind.  
A Cu - pid paint - ed blind.

84 *p* *ritard.* *a tempo*  
S Who ev - er lov'd that lov'd not at first sight?  
A Who ev - er lov'd that lov'd not at first sight?

# IV. Folly

Mischievously (♩ = 96)

92

S *pp* Love is blind,

A *mf* Love is blind, and lov-ers

*f* *mp*

*senza ped.*

97

S *mf* Love is blind, For if they could, For *f*

A *mf* can-not see \_\_\_\_\_ The pret-ty fol-lies that them-selves com - mit, *mp* If they could,

97

101

S *f* if they could, Cu - pid, Cu - pid, Cu - pid him - self would blush. *mp* (spoken, hushed)

A *mf* For if they could, *f* Cu - pid, Cu - pid, Cu - pid him - self would blush. *mp* (spoken, hushed)

101

*f* *p*

107 Bouncy (♩ = 72)

Piano accompaniment for measures 107-112. The score is in 3/8 time and features a rhythmic pattern of eighth and sixteenth notes. Dynamics include forte (f) and mezzo-forte (mf).

113 Lightly (♩ = 88)

*poco accel.*

Vocal staves for Soprano 1 (S1), Soprano 2 (S2), and Alto (A) for measures 113-118. The lyrics are "How man-y, man-y, man-y, man-y, man-y?". Dynamics include piano (p) and mezzo-forte (mf).

113 Lightly (♩ = 88)

*poco accel.*

Piano accompaniment for measures 113-118. The score is in 2/4 time and features a steady eighth-note accompaniment. Dynamics include piano (p) and mezzo-forte (mf).

119 *mp*

*a tempo*

*poco accel.*

Vocal staves for Soprano 1 (S1), Soprano 2 (S2), and Alto (A) for measures 119-124. The lyrics are "How man-y, man-y, man-y, man-y, man-y, man-y, man-y, man-y, man-y, man-y?". Dynamics include mezzo-piano (mp) and forte (f).

*a tempo*

*poco accel.*

Piano accompaniment for measures 119-124. The score is in 2/4 time and features a steady eighth-note accompaniment. Dynamics include mezzo-piano (mp) and forte (f).



Yee-haw! (♩ = 112)

144

*ff*

*senza ped.*

150

S

A

*f*

We are wise girls to mock our lov - ers so.

150

*mf*

156

S

A

*f*

They are worse fools to

156

*f*

*mf*

162

S

A

pur-chase mock-ing so.

*f*

We

*f*

We

162

*mf*

*sva*

168

S are wise girls to mock our lov - ers so.

A are wise girls to mock our lov - ers so.

168

*mf*

*f*

174

S They are worse fools to pur-chase mock-ing so.

A They are worse fools to pur-chase mock-ing so.

174

*f*

*f*

*mf*

180

S Ai!

A Ai!

180

*f*

*ff*

8va

# V. Courtship

Lacking subtlety (♩ = 160)

184

*mf* *f* *ff*

ped. \* \* \*

188

*sfz* *fff* *mp*

*primly*

Conductor looks suspiciously at accompanist, who feigns innocence.

senza ped.

195

S *mp*

We can-not fight for love, as men may do. We should be

A *mp*

We can-not fight for love, as men may do.

205

S *mf*

woo'd, we should be woo'd,

A *mp* *mf*

We should be woo'd, we should be

205 rhapsodic;

*mp* *poco a poco cresc.*

ped. \* \* \*

211 *f* *ff*

S 1 we should be woo'd,

S 2 we should be woo'd, we should be woo'd,

A woo'd, we should be woo'd,

211 *f* *ff* *8va* *hard swing eighths*

*senza ped.*

216 *ritard.* *f* *mp* *pp*

*Conductor glares at accompanist, who shrugs sheepishly.*

221 *a tempo* *mp* *mf*

S 1 ...and were not made to woo.

S 2 ...and were not made to woo.

A ...and were not made to woo.

221 *a tempo* *delicately* *rhapsodic; straight eighths* *mf*



238 *mp* *straight tone; close quickly to "m" every time*

S 1 Come, \_\_\_\_\_ Come, \_\_\_\_\_

S 2 Come, \_\_\_\_\_ Come, \_\_\_\_\_

A Come, woo me, \_\_\_\_\_

238

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244 *mf*

S 1 Come, \_\_\_\_\_ For now I \_\_\_\_\_ am in a

S 2 Come, \_\_\_\_\_

A Come, woo me, \_\_\_\_\_

244 *mf* *straight eighths*

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250

S 1 *mp* *p* hol - i - day hu - mour and like e - nough to con - sent.

S 2 *mp* *p* hol - i - day hu - mour and like e - nough to con - sent.

A *mp* *p* *mp* hol - i - day hu - mour and like e - nough to con - sent. Come,

250 *mp* *p* *mp* swing eighths

255 *mp* *ritard.*

S 1 Come,

S 2 *mp* Come, Hol-i - day.

A *fingersnaps as before* *p* woo me, Hol-i - day.

255 *ritard.* *p* *pp* 8va

# VI. Passion

261 *Slowly* *mp* *Steadily* (♩ = 84)

S How does he love me?

A With a - dor - a - tions, fer - tile tears,

261 *Slowly* *mp* *Steadily* (♩ = 84)

*mp*

265 *mp*

S How does he love me?

A With groans that thun - der love, With a - dor - a - tions,

265 *mf*

268 *mf*

S How does he

A fer - tile tears, With groans that thun - der love,

268 *f*

271

S love me?

A *f* With a - dor - a - tions, fer - tile tears, With groans that

271

274

S *f* How does he love me? *ff* With sighs

A *ff* thun - der love, With sighs of fire, with

274

277

S of fire, with sighs

A sighs of fire, with sighs, sighs

277

280

S of \_\_\_\_\_ fire. Didst *mp*

A of \_\_\_\_\_ fire. Didst *mp*

280

*p*

*8<sup>va</sup>*

\* ♯ ♯

284

S thou but know the in - ly touch of love, Thou wouldst as soon \_\_\_\_\_ go kin - dle *mf*

A thou but know the in - ly touch of love, Thou wouldst as soon \_\_\_\_\_ go kin - dle *mf*

284

*r.h. p to m. 290*

*mp*

\* flutter pedal, quasi secco

287

S fire \_\_\_\_\_ with snow As seek to quench the fire of love, The *mp*

A fire \_\_\_\_\_ with snow As seek to quench the fire of love, The *mp*

287

*f* *mf* *mp*

*mf* *f* *mf*

290 *f*

S  
fire of love, the fire of love, the fire of love

A  
fire of love, the fire of love, the fire of love

290 *mp* *mf* *f*

293 *poco rit.*

S  
with words.

A  
with words.

293 *mp* *poco rit.* *mp*

Ad.

\*

# VII. Devotion

297 **Faithfully** (♩ = 104)

*mf*

301 *mp*

S His words are bonds, his oaths are or-a-cles, His love sin -

A His words are bonds, his oaths are or-a-cles, His love sin -

*mp*

301 *mp*

306

S cere, his thoughts im - mac - u - late,

A cere, his thoughts im - mac - u - late, His tears pure

*mf*

306 *mf > mp*

311 *mf* His tears pure mes-sen-gers from his  
mes-sen-gers from his heart, His tears pure mes-sen-gers from his

♩ ♪ ♫

316 *p* heart, His heart as far from fraud as heav - en from earth, as heav - en  
heart, His heart as far from fraud as heav - en from earth, as heav - en

♩ ♪ ♫

322 *mf* from earth. *f* My  
from earth. *f* My

♩ ♪ ♫

327

S boun-ty is as bound-less as the sea, My love as

A boun-ty is as bound-less as the sea, My love as

331

S deep; the more I give to thee, *più f* The more I have, *più f* the more I

A deep; the more I give to thee, *più f* The more I have, *più f* the more I

337

S have, for both are in - fin - ite. *ff* *ritard.*

A have, for both are in - fin - ite. *ff*

# VIII. Marriage

Mysteriously (♩ = 144)

343

S *mp* Men are Ap - ril

A *mp* Men are Ap - ril

*mp* *f* *mp* *f* *mp*

349

S when they woo, De - cem - ber when they wed;

A when they woo, De - cem - ber when they wed;

354

S Maids are May when

A Maids are May when

*mf* *mp* *mf* *mp*

359 **Coarsely** (♩ = 72) *f*

S they are maids, But the sky chang - - - es when

A they are maids, But the sky chang - - - es when

359 **Coarsely** (♩ = 72) *f*

\* (=) indicates an enharmonic equivalent

363

S they are wives.

A they are wives.

363 *8va* *p*

# IX. Parting

Like a music box (♩ = 72)

both hands  
8<sup>va</sup>

369

*p*

una corda al fine

373

S

A

Alto soloist: *mf*

Good night, \_\_\_\_\_ good night! Part - ing is such sweet sor - row, That I shall

(both hands  
8<sup>va</sup>)

373

378

S

1st sopranos: *mf*

Good night, good night! Part -

A

1st altos: *mf*

say \_\_\_\_\_ good night till \_ it \_ be mor - row. Good night, \_\_\_\_\_ good night!

(both hands  
8<sup>va</sup>)

378

383

S - - ing is such sweet sor - row, That I shall say good night, good night, good

A Part - ing is such sweet sor - row, That I shall say \_\_\_\_\_ good

(both hands)  
8<sup>va</sup>

383

387 *tutti*

S night till it be mor - row. Good night, good night! Part - ing is such sweet

A night till it be mor - row. *tutti* Good night, \_\_\_\_\_ good night! Part - ing is

(both hands)  
8<sup>va</sup>

387

392

S sor - row, That I shall say good night, good night, good night till it be

A such sweet sor - row, That I shall say \_\_\_\_\_ good night till it be

(both hands)  
8<sup>va</sup>

392

396 *p*

S mor - row. Good night, good night! Part - - ing is such sweet

A mor - row. Good night, good night! Part - ing is

(both hands *8va*)

396

400

S sor - row, That I shall say good night, good night, good night till it be

A such sweet sor - row, That I shall say good night till it be

(both hands *8va*)

400

404 *poco a poco molto rit.*

S mor - row.

A mor - row.

(both hands *8va*) *poco a poco molto rit.*  
(like a music box winding down)

404

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