

Lifters & **Leaners**

text by
Ella Wheeler Wilcox

music by
Matt Carlson



About the composer

Matt Carlson (b. 1991) is an engaging and energetic conductor, teacher, composer, and vocalist. He taught in the Pennsylvania public schools for eleven years and has conducted choirs from elementary through college ages. He draws on this experience to compose works that are both musically enriching and accessible to singers of all ability levels. His music has been commissioned by school, community, and collegiate choirs and programmed for choral festivals across the nation.



Website: mattcarlson.co

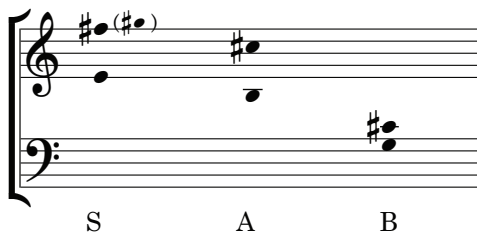
The Two Kinds of People

Ella Wheeler Wilcox

(adapted by the composer)

There are two kinds of people on earth today;
Just two kinds of people, no more, I say.
Not the sinner and saint, for it's well understood,
That the good are half bad, and the bad are half good.
Not the happy and sad, for the swift flying years
Bring each one their laughter and each one their tears.
No; the two kinds of people on earth I mean,
Are the people who lift and the people who lean.
And, oddly enough, you will find, as I've seen,
There's only one lifter to twenty to lean.
Which one are you? Are you easing the load
Of overtaxed lifters, who toil down the road?
Or are you a leaner, who lets others share
Your portion of labor and worry and care?

Ranges



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Lifters and Learners

Ella Wheeler Wilcox

Matt Carlson

Uplifting ♩. = 60

Uplifting ♩ = 60

Soprano (S): *p* Oo

Alto (A): *p* Oo

Bass (B): *p* Oo

Piano: *f* pedal throughout

4

mp

p *mp*

Oo

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1835-3

7

mf

There are two kinds of peo - ple on

mf

There are two kinds of peo - ple on

mf

There are two kinds of peo - ple on

PREVIEW

10

earth to - day; Just two kinds of peo - ple, no more, I

earth to - day; Just two kinds of peo - ple, no more, I

earth to - day; Just two kinds of peo - ple, no more, I

f

mf

1835-4

13

mf

say. Not the sin - ner and saint, for it's

mp

say. Not the sin - ner and saint,

mp

say. Not the sin - ner and

16

well un - der - stood, That the good are half bad and the

It's well un - der - stood, The good are half bad,

saint, The good are half bad and the

18

bad are half good. Not the

the bad are half good. Not the

bad are half good.

20

hap - py and sad, for the swift fly - ing years Bring

hap - py and sad, for the swift fly - ing years Bring

For the years Bring

1835-6

22

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25

mf
No; the two kinds of

mf
No; the two kinds of

mp *p*
mf
No; the two kinds of

29

peo - ple on earth I mean, Are the peo - ple who

peo - ple on earth I mean, Are the peo - ple who

peo - ple on earth I mean, Are the peo - ple who

33

lift and the peo - ple who lean.

lift and the peo - ple who lean.

lift and the peo - ple who lean.

8va

8va

38 *mf* Which one are you? _____ *mp* Which one are you? _____

mf Do you lift?

(*8va*) *loco* *p*

42 *p* Which one are you? _____ *mf* Which one are you? _____ And,

p Which one are you? _____ *mf* And,

mf Do you lean? *p* Which one are you? _____ *mf* And,

8va *loco*

46

odd - ly en - ough, you will find, as I've seen, There's

odd - ly en - ough, you will find, as I've seen, There's

odd - ly en - ough, you will find, as I've seen, There's

mf

48

on - ly one lift - er to twen - ty who lean.

on - ly one lift - er to twen - ty who lean.

on - ly one lift - er to twen - ty who lean.

51 *mf*

Which one are you? Are you eas - ing the load Of

mf

Which one are you? Are you eas - ing the load Of

mf

Which one are you? Are you eas - ing the load Of

mf

53

o - ver - taxed lift - ers, who toil down the road?

o - ver - taxed lift - ers, who toil down the road?

o - ver - taxed lift - ers, who toil down the road?

1835-11

55 *sub. p*

Or are you a lean - er, are you a

sub. p

Or are you a lean - er, are you a

mf

Or are you a lean - er, who lets oth - ers share Your

58 *mp*

lean - er? Which one are you?

f

lean - er? Which one are

por - tion of la - bor and wor - ry and care? _____

pp

62 *f*

Which one are you? _____ Which one? _____

you? _____ Do you lift? _

f

Which one are you? _____

65

Which _____

mp *f*

Are you _____ a lift - er or lean - er? You? _____

Do you lean? _____ A lift - er or lean - er? Which one _ are

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*Cue-sized notes are an optional descant or small group.

69 *mp*

Which one are you? _____

mp

Which one are you? _____

mp

you? Which one__ are

mp

Red.

73 *p*

are

p

are you? _____

p

you? _____

p

Red.

ova

Red.

Lifters and Leaners

for sab choir and piano

This poem by Ella Wheeler Wilcox is an opportunity to reflect on how we interact with each other. Do we conduct ourselves in a way that helps make the world easier for others? Or do we put too much of that burden on those around us? *Lifters and Leaners* explores these two ways of being, inspires us to lift each other up, and ends with an open-ended question. Which one are you?

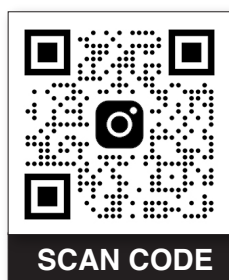
Wilcox's original poem is titled *The Two Kinds of People*. While she places lifters and leaners in two separate categories, we know that people are not one thing or another. We do not live in a binary world. Sometimes we need to be the lifter, and sometimes we need to be lifted. I myself leaned on my colleagues and friends in writing this music and thinking about the meaning behind this text. I hope that this piece can inspire you to consider how you can look out for those around you, and affirm that everyone needs to lean on their loved ones now and then.

Educational Considerations

- **Range:** The baritone part for this piece was written with a limited range targeted for developing voices, but in such a way that the singers will still find this piece enriching and rewarding to sing. Musical variety is achieved through modulations to other key areas, which use a similar range of pitches with a different harmonic landscape. This develops music literacy, aural skills, and vocal technique using pitches that developing voices can sing successfully.
- **Modulation:** Measures 13 and 18 include cue notes with enharmonic equivalents to help transition from one key area to the next. The new key signature is intentionally set before the start of the vocal phrase so that singers are audiating in the next key before they begin to sing.
- **Polyphony:** A goal of this piece was to provide opportunities for polyphonic singing in an accessible manner. This builds independent musicianship, provides variety in the musical texture, and gives each section their own important part.
- **Diction:** Great care was taken to set the text in such a way that it can be performed with clarity. Be sure to emphasize the ending constants of the key words "lift" and "lean." They have the potential to be confused with the words "live" or "lead" if the consonants are not crystal clear. Additionally, the words "not" and "no" at the start of stanzas are critical to understand the meaning of the text.

Questions for Discussion

- Reflect on the meaning behind the text. How can you lift others? Who has lifted you in your life? When have you needed to lean on someone? Who has leaned on you? How did it make you feel?
- How does the music reflect the words "lift" and "lean?" Start in measures 33 and 36, then look elsewhere in the piece for similar patterns.
- This piece quotes a famous composition by Beethoven. Can you find where this happens?



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