

Hymn for the Earth

Narrator:

So extravagant is nature with her choicest treasures, spreading beauty as she spreads sunshine,
pouring it forth onto land and sea, garden and desert.
The beauty of lilies falls on angels and men, bears and squirrels, birds and bees,
but as far as I have seen, man alone, and the animals he tames, destroy the garden.
Lumbering bear and trampling deer saunter and feed over the land,
yet never a lily have I seen spoiled by them.

$\text{♩} = 120$
F C F Dm7 B \flat F Am Bm7 \flat 5 Gm/C F

Child-ren of earth, heirs of all time, treas-ures of beau-ty are ours to mind.

Narrator:

Whether my writing vanishes like fallen leaves or goes to friends in letters,
it is nothing compared to the sight of this great wilderness.
No pain here, no dull, empty hours, no fear of the past or future.
The blessed mountains are filled with God's beauty, with no room for our petty hopes and illusions.
Breathing the living air, every movement of limbs is a pure pleasure.
We enter this place with our whole flesh, our souls transparent as crystal.

6 F C F Dm7 B \flat F Am Bm7 \flat 5 Gm/C F

Liv-ing a-bounds, rich in de-sign, born of a cru-ci-ble deep in time.

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Narrator:

As I wander through the solemn woods in silence, I hear an inner voice cry out, "fear not."

All suffering here is just grist-mill flour.

Man has such trouble gaining food for life, but here it is given in abundance and all are fed.

Why do we sleep in paltry chambers when there is the spacious magnificence of the starry sky,
the fragrance of fir groves?

Here water gathered from all the mountains makes music that could draw angels from the heavens
to listen.

11 F C F Dm7 Bb F Am Bm7b5 Gm/C F

Earth is our home, our leg-a-cy, lov-ers and guard-i-ans may we be.

The musical score is for a hymn in F major, 4/4 time. It consists of a vocal line and a piano accompaniment. The vocal line begins with a whole rest in the first measure, followed by a melody of eighth and quarter notes. The piano accompaniment features a steady eighth-note bass line and chords in the right hand. The lyrics are: 'Earth is our home, our leg-a-cy, lov-ers and guard-i-ans may we be.'

[The readings are inspired by, and adapted from, selections from John Muir's My First Summer in the Sierra (1911): chapter 4 (first reading), chapter 5 (second reading), and chapters 6 and 7 (third reading).]