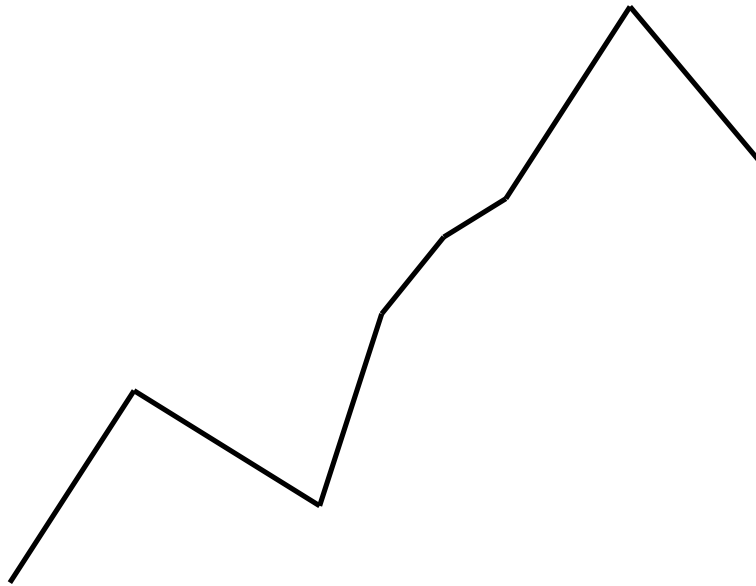


I Climb Mountains

For treble choir and piano.
Words by Barbara Taylor,
music by Barry Clegg.



I Climb Mountains

Dedicated to
MC, RC, AMC, JLC, LJC,
JAB, and the Toronto Children's Chorus.

Many thanks to Roger Hobbs
for generously converting the manuscript
into Macintosh-script.

Performance Notes

- The choir is divided into three sections, representing Lucy, Annie, and Peter. Each section contains sopranos and altos, who sing sometimes in unison and sometimes *divisi*. All the boys are Peter. Lucy on the whole sings higher than Annie. It may be helpful to borrow voices from other sections to reinforce passages uncomfortably high or low (e.g. some sopranos from Peter could help Annie on high notes).
- Peter should stand between Lucy and Annie.
- Clear diction is vital. The story must be understood by the audience at a single hearing.
- If the choir does not enjoy this music, they should not perform it!

August 31, 1996

Barry Clegg

I Climb Mountains

by Barbara Taylor, published by The Women's Press, Toronto, 1975

Peter: I can do lots of things you can't do.

Lucy: Oh? What sorts of things?

Peter: Well... (*he thinks a moment*) I can jump high fences, and dig long tunnels, and throw my ball further, and climb high trees, and...

Annie: But I can climb mountains.

(*Peter just laughs*)

Annie: I climb mountains, I scale peaks whose tips tickle the sun. I leap waterfalls whose spray dampens the stars. I climb so high I taste rainbows.

Peter: (*muttering*) You're nuts.

Annie: I drive trains, trains as fast as a comet's streak, as long as from here to there. Trains whose engines make their own tunnels in the cliff sides, and whose whistles shatter icy mountain tops.

Peter: (*shouting*) Wow! What a liar!

Annie: (*whispering to Lucy*) I dance, I jump so high I kiss the man-in-the-moon. I twirl so fast I make the sky dizzy.

Lucy: Hey, that's great! What else can you do?

Annie: I invent things. I invent frogs who sing, and boxes with no bottoms that hold everything. I create knives that chop up sunbeams, and I take icy moonbeams to sharpen the knives.

Peter: (*crossly*) You make things up all right.

Lucy: (*pretending not to hear*) I think it's wonderful.

Annie: I am so wise old camels from Tibet journey many miles for a word from me. I am so brave that the wind sends me on ahead to see what's around dark corners. I am so sharp-eyed that from my mountain peak I can see what will happen tomorrow.

Peter: (*shouting*) Baloney!

Lucy: (*shouting*) Hurrah! Hurrah for the mountains and hurrah for the trains, hurrah for wise camels and for hurricanes! And what flavours are rainbows? What colour is the wind? How do you make such strange boxes to put everything in? I wish I could do such things. (*sighing*)

Peter: (*laughing*) You're as silly as Annie. Annie can't drive a train, she can't even fix a bicycle. I can. Annie isn't so brave. She's afraid of the dark. I'm not. Annie doesn't invent anything... Except silly stories for her silly friend.

Lucy: (*after a pause*) These stories aren't silly.

(*Peter laughs*)

Lucy: Annie's stories aren't silly, and neither am I. I can hide in dark closets and never once cry. I can fix bicycles when the tires go flat. And I can make radios! I bet you can't do that! (*Annie and Peter stare at her*)

Peter: Radios? Ones that really work?

Lucy: Yes.

Annie: (*laughs and laughs*) Lucy builds radios, Lucy builds radios that sing in Japanese while someone in Africa hums along. She builds radios so small a fly could smuggle one under its wing, and ones so large that you must climb on a chair to reach the dial.

Lucy: (*doubtfully*) I don't know, I've got a little kit, but I think I'd need help for radios like that.

Annie: Lucy, if you let me help you, I'll tell you a bedtime story so spooky it'll make your shadow shiver.

Lucy: Great! Let's get started.

Peter: (*thoughtfully*) Just a second. Lucy, would you let me help on that radio too?

Lucy: Sure. Come on then.

Peter: Annie, I'd like to hear that story.

Annie: Okay - if you're sure you can take it...

(*Annie and Lucy laugh and laugh, and off they all go*)

I Climb Mountains

SSA with Piano

Text by
Barbara Taylor

Music by
Barry Clegg

1 $\bullet = 112$

LUCY

ANNIE

PETER

$\bullet = 112$

mf

8

L

A

P

8 *risoluto*

15

L

A

P

mf I can do lots of things you can't do. I can do

Detailed description: This system contains measures 15 through 21. The vocal staves (L, A, P) are mostly empty, indicating rests for the vocalists. The piano accompaniment (P) begins at measure 15 with a melody in the right hand and a bass line in the left hand. The lyrics are written below the piano staff: "I can do lots of things you can't do. I can do". The piano part features a rhythmic pattern of eighth and sixteenth notes with some rests.

22

L

A

P

lots of things you can't do. Lots of things, lots of things, lots of things, lots of things,

22

Detailed description: This system contains measures 22 through 28. Similar to the first system, the vocal staves (L, A, P) are mostly empty. The piano accompaniment (P) continues the melody from the previous system. The lyrics are written below the piano staff: "lots of things you can't do. Lots of things, lots of things, lots of things, lots of things,". The piano part maintains the same rhythmic and melodic patterns.

29

L

A

P

I can do lots of things that you can't do.

rall.

legato

36

L

A

P

Oh? What sorts of things? What sorts of things? What

What sorts, _____

36

43

L

A

P

Well... I can jump high fences, and dig long tunnels, and throw my

a tempo

* Swoop down to D from any pitch.

50

L

A

P

Ooh.

ball further, fur-ther, fur-ther, fur-ther, fur-ther, and climb high trees, and...

50

68

L Moun - tains. —

A Moun - tains. — I climb moun - tains, I scale peaks whose tips —

P ha.

mp *sempre cresc.*

♩ = 84 andante

73

L the sun stars. —

A tic - kle the sun. I leap wa - ter - falls — whose spray dam - pens the stars. —

P Lots of things stars. —

ff *8va*

78

L

A

P

p I climb so high I taste rain - bows, rain - - - - *ff* bows.

Rain - bows, rain - *ff* bows.

cresc.

78

* A few voices on the
A and B if possible.

85

L

A

P

You're _____ nuts.

(spoken)

I _____ drive _____

85

90

L

A

P

as— fast— as a co - met's

trains, I drive trains as fast, as— fast as a co - met's

96

L

A

P

streak, as— long, as long, as long as from here— to— there.

streak, as— long, as long, as long as from here— to— there.

101

L

A

P

Trains — whose en - gines make their own tun - nels in the cliff - sides, — and whose whis - tles —

106

L

A

P

ff shat - ter the moun - tain tops, shat - ter i - cy moun - tain tops.

ff shat - ter ic - y moun - tain tops, shat - ter the moun - tain tops.

cresc.

Woo - woo woo - woo woo - woo, woo - woo, woo - woo, woo *ff* Wow! —

106

ad lib.

110

L

A

P

What a li - ar, li - ar!

pp I dance,
(spoken)

a tempo *rall.*

trill

116

L

A

P

mf I jump so high, I kiss the man, kiss the man - in - the - moon. I twirl so fast I

Ooh! in - the - moon.

accel. *trill*

p.

$\bullet = 104$

122

L

A

P

make the sky ——— diz - - - - - zy.

diz - zy

diz - zy *

* Swoop up to any pitch

127

L

A

P

mf Hey, ——— that's great! That's great! What — else can you do?

127

132 $\bullet = 112$ $\bullet = 144$

L *f* Fa la la la la la. Fa

A *mf* I in - vent things. — I in - vent frogs — who sing, *f* Fa la la la la

P *mp* ings ogs ing

132 $\bullet = 112$ Moderato $\bullet = 144$ Allegro

137 $\bullet = 112$

L la la la la la Fa la la la la la la la.

A la Fa la la la la la la la la la la la. *mf* And box - es — with no

P *ff* Rib - bet. *mp* es

137 $\bullet = 112$ Moderato

142

L

A

P

ev' - ry - thing, ev' - ry - thing
dim. al niente

bot - toms that hold ev' - ry - thing, ev' - ry - thing, ev' - ry - thing
dim. al niente

bot - toms ev' - ry - thing, ev' - ry - thing
dim. al niente

147

$\bullet = 100$

L

A

P

Knives! Sun - beams!

mf I cre - ate knives that chop up sun - beams, and I take i - cy moon - beams to

Wow! *mf* What a

147

$\bullet = 100$
meno mosso

150 $\text{♩} = 112$ *mf*

L Moon - beams! I think it's

A sharp - en the knives.

P *f* li - ar, *ff* li - ar! *ff* You — make things up all right. *mf* You — make things up.

150 *piu mosso*

155 *mf* $\text{♩} = 72$

L won - der - ful. I think it's won - der - ful. It's won - der - ful.

A *mf* I am so

P Nyeh, nyeh, nyeh, nyeh. Nyeh, nyeh.

155 $\text{♩} = 72$ Adagio

160

L

A

P

wise old cam - els from Ti - bet jour - ney ma - ny ma - ny miles, — ma - ny miles — for a

163

L

A

P

mf She is so brave that the wind sends her a - head to see —

word from me. *f* I am so brave that the wind sends me a - head to see — what's a - round dark

Woo — Woo —

163

166 ♩ = 100

L what's a - round dark cor - ners, cor - ners. *mf* Ah

A cor - ners. — Cor - ners. — *ff* I am so sharp - eyed that from my

P Woo — Woo, woo.

169 ♩ = 100

L Ah — can see — what will hap - pen to - mor - row.

A moun - tain peak I can see — what will hap - pen to - mor - row, can see — what will hap - pen to - mor - row.

P Bah, * bah, bah! Bah, bah, bah! *mf* Ba -

* After first quarter beat, swoop down.

173

L *ff* Hur-rah!
(shouted) *mf* Hur -

A

P *ff*
lo - ney, ba - lo - ney, ba - lo - ney, lo - ney, lo - ney!

accel. *f*

173 *mf* = 144

177

L rah for— the moun - tains and hur - rah— for the trains, hur - rah for— wise ca - mels and for—

A Moun - tains! Woo - woo. Ca - mels and—

P

177

180

L
hur - ri - canes! And what fla - vours — are rain - bows? What col - our is the wind?

A
hur - ri - canes! Rain - bows. The wind.

P

180

181

182

183

L
f How — do you make such strange box - es to put ev' - ry - thing in? *mf* I wish I could

A
Woo. — Woo. — Box - es. Ev' - ry - thing in!

P

183

184

185

186

eee * ah ooo

* Match Lucy's vowel sounds.

188 $\bullet = 100$

L
do such things. —

A
Do! or* a a

P
ooo *f* You're as sil - ly as An - nie. An - nie can't drive a

* Match Peter's
vowel sounds.

193

L

A
eh a

P
train, she can't ev - en fix a bi - cy - cle. I can. An - nie is - n't so

193

199

L

A

P

eh ee ah

brave. She's a - fraid of the dark. I'm not. An - nie does - n't in - vent

f *mf*

meno mosso

204

L

A

P

an - y - thing... Ex - cept sil - ly sto - ries for her sil - ly friend.

mf These

a tempo

208 *cresc.*

L
sto - ries, these sto - ries, these sto - ries *f* aren't sil - ly. —

A
these sto - ries, these sto - ries aren't sil - ly. —

P
mf Ha ha. Ha ha Ha ha *stacc.*

208

214 *♩ = 66*

L
mf An - nie's sto - ries aren't sil - ly and nei - ther am

A

P
Ha Ha Ha.
Ha Ha Ha

214

221

L

I. I can hide in dark clo - sets and ne - ver once cry.

A

P

221

228

L

I can fix bi - cyc - les when the tires — go flat.

A

P

228

235

L

A

P

And I can make ra - di - os! I bet you can't do that!
(spoken)

235

rall.

242

L

A

P

$\bullet = 84$

mf Ra - di - os? *mp* Ones that real - ly work?

ad lib.

242

248 $\bullet = 112$

L

A

P

Yes. (spoken)

f Ah ha ha ha, ah ha ha! *mp* Lu - cy builds ra - di - os, *mf* Lu - cy builds

248 *accel.* $\bullet = 112$

legato

254 *mf*

L

A

P

sing in Ja - pa - nese. Ooh Mm *p* Mm

ra - di - os that sing in Ja - pa - nese while some - one in Af - ri - ca hums a - long.

254

[3]

260

L

mm mm mm mm.

A

mf She builds ra - di - os so small a fly could

P

mf Zi ma na zim.

265

L

A

smug - gle one un - der its wing, and one so

P

Zi ma na zim. Zi ma na zim. Zim ma na zim zim zim, zim ma na zim.

265

280 $\bullet = 84$

L

A *rall.*
if you'll let me help you, I'll tell you a bed - time sto - ry so spoo - woo - woo - woo - woo - ky

P
Woo - woo

285

L

A *f* shi - ver your sha - dow,
it will make your sha - dow shi - - - ver,

P
Woo - woo Woo woo Woo - woo Woo woo

288

L
 make your sha - dow shi - ver. *ff* Great! Let's get star - ted.

A
f shi - ver your sha - dow.

P
 Woo - woo Woo - woo

288

292

L
f Sure. Come

A
f Sure. Come

P
meno mosso
mf Just a sec - ond. *mp* Lu - cy, would you let me help on that ra - di - o?

292

297

L on then.

A on then.

P *mf* An - nie, I'd like to hear — that sto - ry.

If —

297 *a tempo*

303

L If — you're sure you can take it... Ah — ha ha ha ha ha

A — you're sure you can take it... Ah — ha ha ha

P Ah ha *mf* Ah

303

* "A" if possible

308 *risoluto*

L
ha ha ha ha ha. Ah ha ha ha ha ha ha. Ha ha

A
ha ha ha ha ha. *risoluto* Ah ha ha ha ha ha

P
ha ha ha ha ha ha ha ha ha.

314 (*)

L
ha ha ha ha ha ha ha ha ha. Ha ha ha ha ha ha ha ha. Ha ha ha ha ha ha ha ha ha

A
ha ha. Ha ha ha ha ha ha ha ha. Ha a ha ha ha ha ha ha ha ha ha ha ha ha ha ha ha ha.

P
Ah ha ha ha ha ha

* "A" if possible

319

L
ha, Ah ha ha ha. Ah ha ha ha. Ah ha ha ha ha ha ha ha ha

A
Ah ha ha ha. Ah ha ha ha. Ah ha ha ha. Ah ha ha

P
ha. Ah ha ha ha ha ha ha ha. Ah ha ha ha ha

323

L
ha. Ah ha. Ah ha. Ah ha ha ha ha ha

A
ha. Ah ha. Ah ha. Ah ha ha ha ha ha

P
ha. Ah ha. Ah ha. Ah ha. Ah ha ha ha ha ha

323

f *mf* *f* *mf* *ff* *f* *ff*

326

L
laughter al fine *

A
laughter al fine *

P
laughter al fine *

326

rall.

fff *

*

* Laugh freely, energetically, with variety. Try to drown out the piano.

* Try to drown out the laughter.

* Laughter cuts off abruptly with piano, at conductor's gesture.

Composition Notes

A guiding principle is that the words *must be understood* at a single hearing, without having to read the text. The rhythms of speech have largely guided the musical setting.

The three people in the story have different musical characters. Peter (all the boys) sings simple diatonic melodies against a jerky rhythm. Lucy (higher-voiced girls) has hymn-like music, also simple but with less rhythmic interest. Annie (lower-voiced girls), independent & unconventional, slides into unexpected keys and uses uneven rhythms. As the work progresses, Peter loses confidence while Lucy becomes more adventurous.

Musical unity is reinforced by recurring themes, particularly the mountain theme and the nose-thumbing *Nyeh nyeh nyeh* theme. Much of the other music also appears more than once, and helps hold the whole thing together.

The tempo markings are guidelines: slower might be better. The piece takes about 8.5 minutes with the markings given.

Bar Comments

- 1 The harmony of the opening section is presented with increasing energy until Peter's entry.
- 17 A simple jerky confident theme in G major shows Peter's mood (Gee!). The syncopated accompaniment protects the music from vapidness.
- 31 The awkward open-fifth chords are the *Nyeh nyeh nyeh* theme, of thumbing one's nose. We will hear more of this.
- 37 Lucy, especially at this early stage, sings hymn-like music of unadventurous simplicity.
- 57 Annie's mountain theme was inspired by a typical mountain profile (as plotted on the cover). Confidence and poetic imagination lead her into an unexpected key.
- 70 The piano bass-line plods inexorably upwards in equal intervals, in the manner of a slow steady ascent of a mountain; the right-hand presents a jagged mountain silhouette.
- 75 The piano part tumbles with the waterfall, before rising with the spray.
- 77 Lucy & Peter join in to create the shimmering of stars.
- 79 The whole-tone scale represents an endless climb.
- 86 The chuff-a-chuff theme runs through the train passage.
- 94 A passage in parallel thirds suggests train tracks always equidistant.
- 103 Corkscrewing sixteenth notes represent drilling into the cliffside (inspired by "burrowing like a worm" in Britten's *Serenade for Tenor, Horn, & Strings*).
- 106 The mountains shatter with downward acceleration, pitch falling a semitone, a tone, minor thirds, finally a major third (intervals of 0, 1, 2, 3, 3, & 4 semitones). Shattering is emphasized by 3 against 2 and 4 against 3.
- 109 Peter, already falling under Annie's influence, unwittingly sings her mountain theme in reverse, with a *Nyeh nyeh nyeh* in the piano.
- 116 This passage is a thinly disguised derivative from Delibes' *Coppélia*, music which above all rivals is difficult to sit still to.
- 121 The twirling accompaniment collapses dizzily at 126 into more hymn music for Lucy.

- 133 Annie's inventing things brings a brief quote from a Bach Two-Part Invention (originally in C) accompanying the echoing auras provided by Peter for some of Annie's key words. (Many choristers will spot the Bach.)
- 136 Madrigal music, with a cheap laugh from the frog.
- 141 Another Two-Part Invention (originally in F) twists off strangely to accompany the whole-tone descending scale of bottomless boxes. Voices fade out in the depths.
- 151 Peter's mounting irritation leads to an outburst of impatience.
- 160 The piano bass line depicts weary plodding of camels, while Annie sings of her wisdom.
- 164 A brief canon as Annie goes on ahead of the wind. Peter's "Woo", previously a train-word, is now a wind-word.
- 175 Jerky Peter is accompanied by a syncopated *Nyeh nyeh nyeh* in the piano.
- 177 The 7/8 passage refers back to earlier music as appropriate - the mountain theme at 177, train music at 178, plodding camels at 179, bottomless boxes at 185. The odd time signature suits this text very well.
- 187 Lucy's wistful music here is an echo of 40. Peter's held vowel sounds and Annie's "Do" add an organ-like accompaniment to Lucy.
- 190 Annie emphasizes the down beats of this passage by adding the vowel sound of Peter's words, so the audience will be in no doubt despite the piano's syncopation. *Nyeh nyeh* chords in the bass lead to a real snub at 205.
- 212 Peter's laughter, imitating 61, is losing confidence.
- 215 Lucy's hymn music in a jauntier rhythm, as her confidence rises.
- 233 The F natural against the piano's F sharp draws attention to the flat tire.
- 240 Lucy is now brave enough for her own (descending) *nyeh nyeh*.
- 255 Parallel fourths suggest oriental music.
- 264 The meaning of the triplet sixteenths is now clear - the buzzing of a fly.
- 283 A repetition of the train music, equally suitable for these words.
- 287 The music of "shatter icy mountain tops" also works well for "make your shadow shiver."
- 289 Reverse mountain theme again.
- 303 There are many occurrences of the mountain theme from here to the end, as it becomes the subject of a fughetta. The inversion is also used, as at 313.
- 309 Peter's last attempt to assert himself, before joining in with the mountain laughter at 315.
- 326 The singing gives way to energetic laughter at 326.
- 328 The piece ends with a glorious combination of ascending & descending *nyeh nyehs*. With any luck, the sudden controlled stop will make it impossible for the audience not to laugh & applaud.