

America, I have missed you so

by Stefan Pasti
(May 28-30, 2021)

[I. The Call]

America,

I have missed you so
I never wanted you to g-o-o (choral ensemble)
and it's been sad
since you've been a-wa-ay (choral ensemble)

America,

I see a smile lighting up your lovely fa-ace
could it be you're comin' home to sta-a-ay? (choral ensemble lightly)

America,

there's always been a candlelight
in the window for y-o-o-ou (choral ensemble)

America,

won't you come home and make things right?

[II. Grandma]

America,

oh, how the souls
of those who built her
must have wondered...
when will this river of *dishonest swindlers*
ever *run DRY?*

And when would we get a Marshall
who is up-to-the-task
of cleaning up the toxic waste
they left be-hind (waste they left be-hind) (choral ensemble)

The thing is what we need (choral ensemble)
 is for the gr-e-e-eed
 to up and... help us fix it (runs scores from Amen Corner)(whistle sound)

America,

why can't we all just up and fix it? (come out and fix it) (choral ensemble)
 (it wouldn't be so bad, if we could fix it up) (fix it up) (choral ensemble lightly)]

(screen door slams)

("Grandpa! Grandma says just quit gabbin' about it and fix it
 --she'll have dinner on in half an' hour") (dinner bell rings twice)

America,

won't you come home and make things right? (choral ensemble)

[III. (dingdong)]

America... America... (lightly)

I think she's still got

another 100,000 miles in her (sound of hub cap falling off)

she just needs another engine, and a few-- (dingdong)

(well, and then there's about half of the World's GDP

that is owed to clean up all the...

[\[water comes through the new TV\]](#) into the living room of a local judge during the afternoon premiere party--
 and actually knocks over one of the well-dressed women in front of the TV (great special effects)
 in "A Plumbin' We Will Go" Three Stooges (1940)]

"Angels and ministers of grace defend us!"

(Hamlet: Act I, Scene IV)

(sounds of a jumble of things clattered together, and falling to the floor)

(things are now spinning to stop....)

[IV. We will need all that and more]

America, America

We need a new begin-ning
a new begin-ning (choral ensemble)

America, America

we've got to slow down
and make some changes [we've got to make some changes, oh yes (choral ensemble nodding)]

America, America

we need the value
every living soul can contribute [we will need all that and more (choral ensemble nodding)]

America, America

can't you see it? (we're all ready to help) (choral ensemble lightly)
and we can do it if we try (if we try) (choral ensemble lightly)

oh, America, I have missed you so

won't you please call
and-say-something-that-is-not-a-cuss-word? (censor buzzer)

and say there's no two ways a-bout hon-e-sty! (*no two ways*) (choral ensemble)

oh, America,

won't you come home and make things right?

[V. we all want you to know]

America, America

who's that on the front porch wa-a-av-ing? (choral ensemble)

America, America

there's a lotta folks who are looking just for yo-ou (just for yo-ou) (choral ensemble lightly)

oh, America,

we could all be all right

(sounds of small mountain village, at night)
 (sounds of the harbor, near a fishing town)
 (sounds of community supported industry in the city)
 (sounds of work, and other things, on the farm) (choral ensemble)

[we've got to let each of us find our own way
 with the right kind of moral compasses, we won't go a-stray... (choral ensemble lightly)
 many cultures yet to know, and we hope they can grow
 why can't we also learn how to grow?]

oh, America...

we still want waves of grain in our ballads
 we still want to live close to the land
 and we still want to be in the Good Graces
 of the highest ideals our culture has been granted

--and we still want to work together,
 --and look after each other best we can
 --and there's more that will come who are like-minded
 to be near such a LAND! (cheers from the choral ensemble) (then ceremonial quiet)

"Every part of this soil is sacred in the estimation of our people. Every hillside, every valley, every plain and grove, has been hallowed by some sad or happy event in days long vanished. Even the rocks, which seem to be dumb and dead as the swelter in the sun along the silent shore, thrill with memories of stirring events connected with the lives that we have lived... and the very dust upon which we now stand responds lovingly to our footsteps, because it is rich with the blood of our ancestors, and our bare feet are conscious of the sympathetic touch." (done with heartbeat native drumming, deep in the background... and maybe other sounds....)

oh, America,

we all have missed you so
 and we all want you to know
 just come back
 and we'll make you our homeland

(please come back, and we'll make you our homeland) (choral ensemble)

(instrumentation and voices according to the needs of the times)

[VI. we really need you to be true}

America,

please come back

there's a lotta folks who are looking just for yo-ou (choral ensemble lightly)

America, we really need you to be true (choral ensemble)

America, we really need you to be true

America, we really need you to be true

[Notes: below excerpts are from a guest blog by Donna Koh, Music Reader Services Librarian titled "German Lieder" (February 4, 2016) (at <https://blogs.loc.gov/nls-music-notes/2016/02/german-lieder/>) on the website of NLS Music Notes (which is a blog for and about those who want, need or provide the special format music of braille, audio, and large print offered by the NLS Music Section)... and this was all in the section "Personal voices from the Library of Congress: compelling stories & fascinating facts" (at <https://blogs.loc.gov/>) (excerpts below)]

"... genre of classical vocal music called art songs, typically written for a solo voice with piano accompaniment. They provide a deeply satisfying musical experience in an intimate setting without the costumes, stage settings and orchestra.

"My favorite art songs are German Lieder of the Romantic era set to the poems of the eighteenth and nineteenth-century German language poets such as Heine, Goethe, Eichendorff, and some whose names may have long been forgotten had their poems not been immortalized by a brilliant composer. These songs combine poetry and music: thoughts and expression distilled into the chosen few words and musical notes. I can't think of many art forms that are as potent, multifaceted and gratifying as these songs.

"At the risk of offending some singers, I must state that the piano part is equally important as the voice in this genre. The piano evokes a variety of moods and at times, conveys the parts of the protagonist's story too painful to be expressed verbally. In Schubert's songs, the piano describes a setting in nature that may at times be friendly, indifferent or hostile, bringing the listener close to what the protagonist is feeling at the moment. In some of Schumann's songs, the piano provides glimpses of the subconscious mind of the protagonist, helping the audience experience the depths of the hero's psyche. For a successful Lied performance, the pianist and singer must form a tight collaboration to present a musically and emotionally unified performance."