# The Wind in the Willows

an entertainment based on the book by Kenneth Grahame

Words by David Grant Music by John Rutter

Kenneth Grahame's enchanting book *The Wind in the Willows* was first published in 1908 and has remained one of the best-loved of children's classics, enjoyed equally by generations of adult readers too. This musical adaptation was originally written as an 'entertainment' for The King's Singers (six male voices) and the City of London Sinfonia to perform at a family concert. The present published version, for five soloists, narrator and chorus, can either be performed as a concert piece or staged in various ways. Children can participate in the chorus (and as field-mice), though some altos, tenors and basses are essential. The main roles are intended for adult or teenage singers; Mole, a part originally written for male alto, could alternatively be sung by a boy alto, boy soprano, or baritone. The orchestral accompaniment is within the capacity of good teenage or amateur players; in the absence of orchestra, piano accompaniment would be adequate, with double-bass and drums if possible.

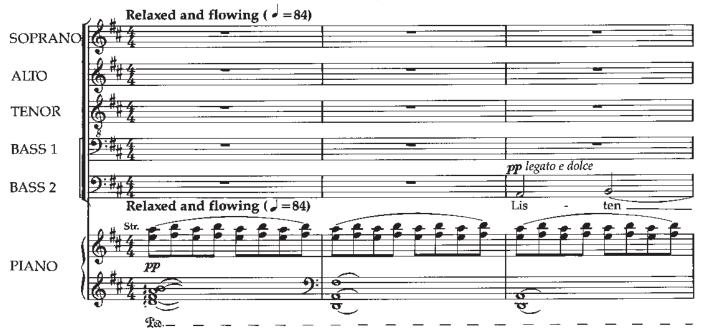


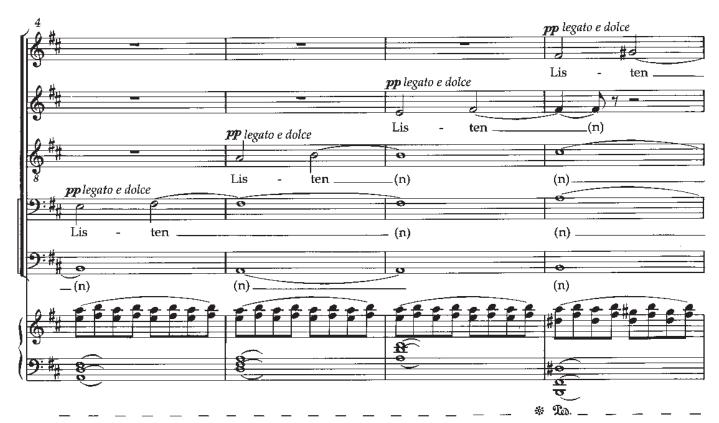
# THE WIND IN THE WILLOWS

Words by DAVID GRANT Music by JOHN RUTTER

#### 1: PROLOGUE

(Chorus)





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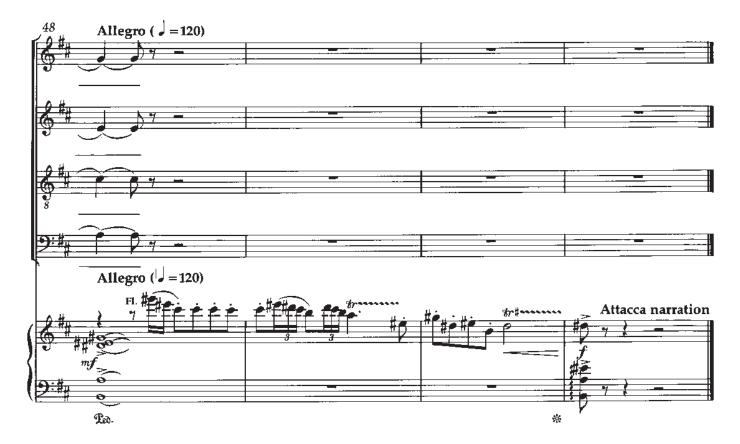












2: NARRATION

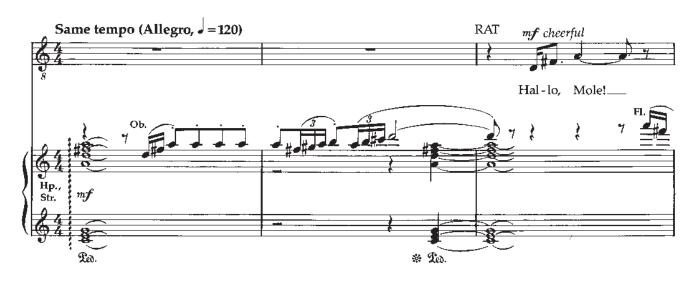
#### NARRATOR:

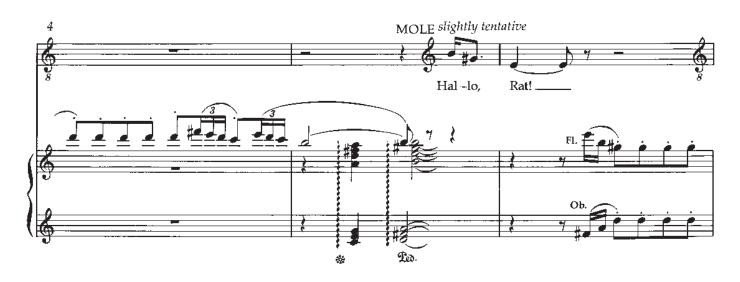
'Hang spring cleaning!' said Mole, flinging down his whitewash brush. 'Bother and blow!' said Mole, and he bolted out of the house, without even waiting to put on his coat. Something up above was calling him into the sunlight and away . . . across the meadows and alongside the copses . . . trotting along the river bank where, all of a sudden, he sat down, entranced and bewitched.

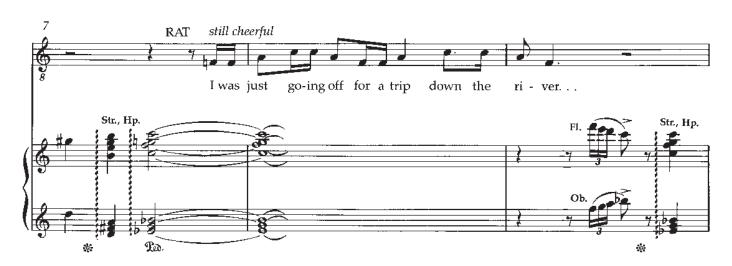
As he sat on the grass and looked across the river, he became aware of a bright little star winking at him from the opposite bank. The star became an eye . . . and then there was another eye . . . then a small brown face . . . with whiskers . . . (Attacca No. 3)

## 3: RIVER SCENE AND SONG

(Rat, Mole, and Chorus)









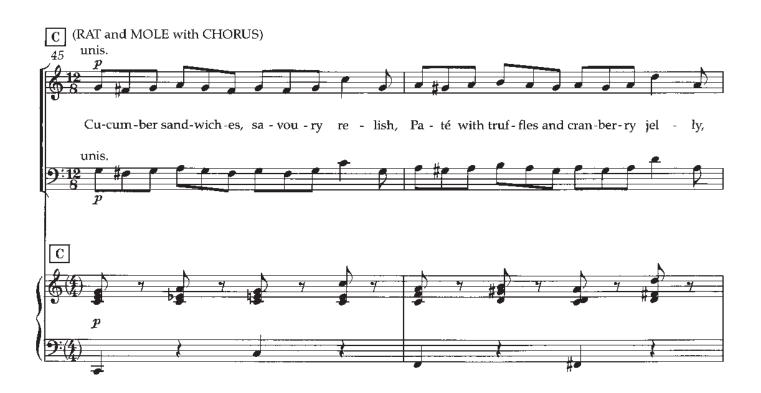
cresc.





















### 4: NARRATION

#### NARRATOR:

And so the two contented animals made their way slowly up the river to Rat's house. Rat spent the summer and the autumm showing Mole the sights of the River Bank, and introducing him to all his friends . . . except for one . . . the rather grumpy Mr Badger, who lived in the Wild Wood.

'Couldn't you invite him to dinner?' asked Mole.

'He wouldn't come,' said Rat. 'Simply hates Society.'

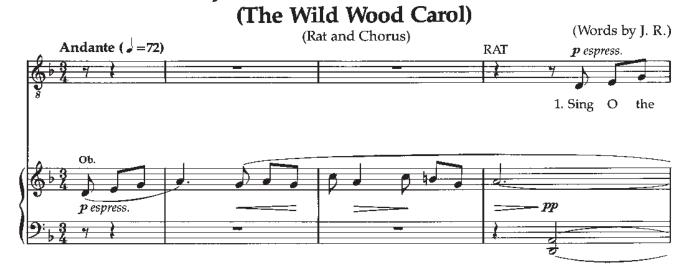
Well then, why don't we go and call on him?' suggested Mole.

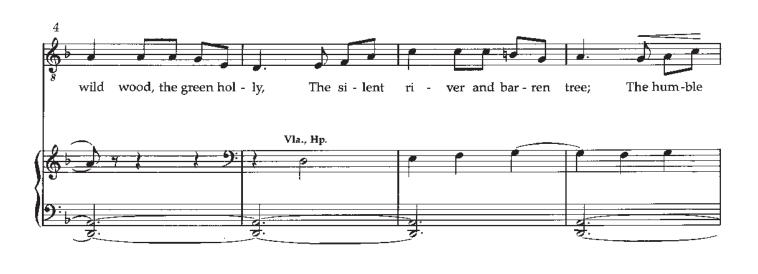
'It's a long journey,' replied Rat. 'But perhaps we should pay him a visit, especially as Christmas is coming on.'

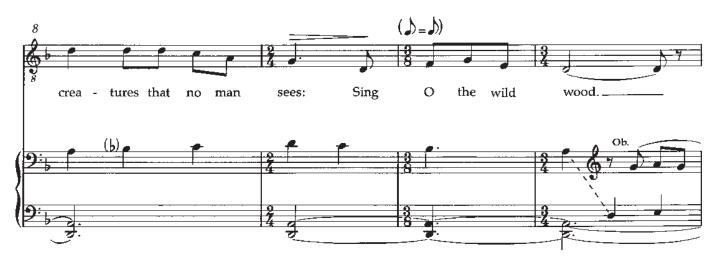
So one cold December day they set off together through the Wild Wood, rather thoughtfully . . .

Alternative version of final sentence (to be used if No. 5 is omitted): So one cold December day they set off together through the Wild Wood, till they reached Badger's house.

# \* 5: THE JOURNEY TO BADGER'S HOUSE







<sup>\*</sup> This number may be omitted if it is desired to shorten the work.











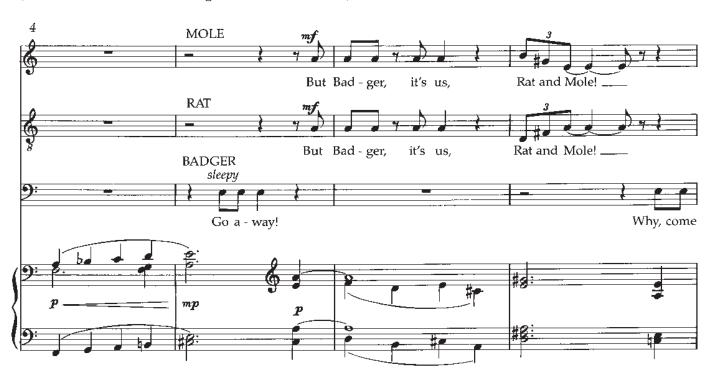
## 6: AT BADGER'S HOUSE

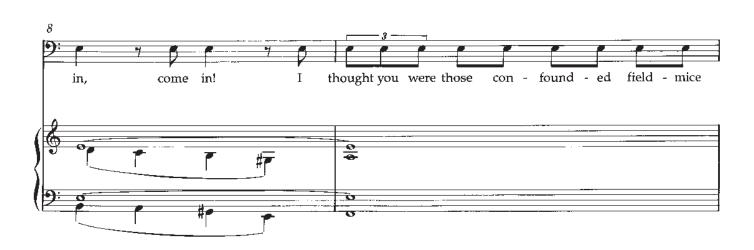
(Mole, Rat, Badger, and Field-Mice)

(RAT knocks softly three times at Badger's door. BADGER gives a deep yawn.)



(BADGER snores. RAT knocks again, louder. Start music.)























<sup>\*</sup> English sugar-coated confections



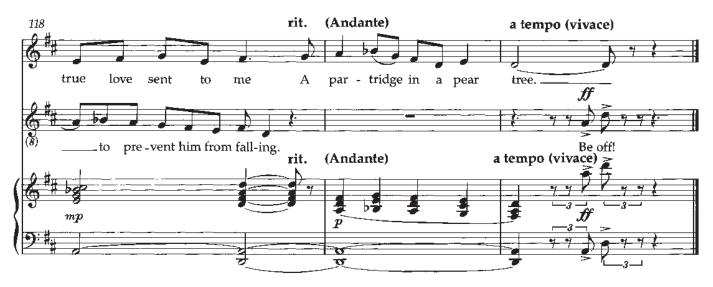












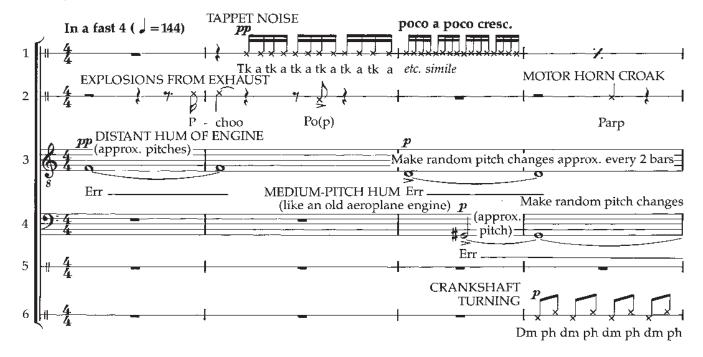
#### NARRATOR:

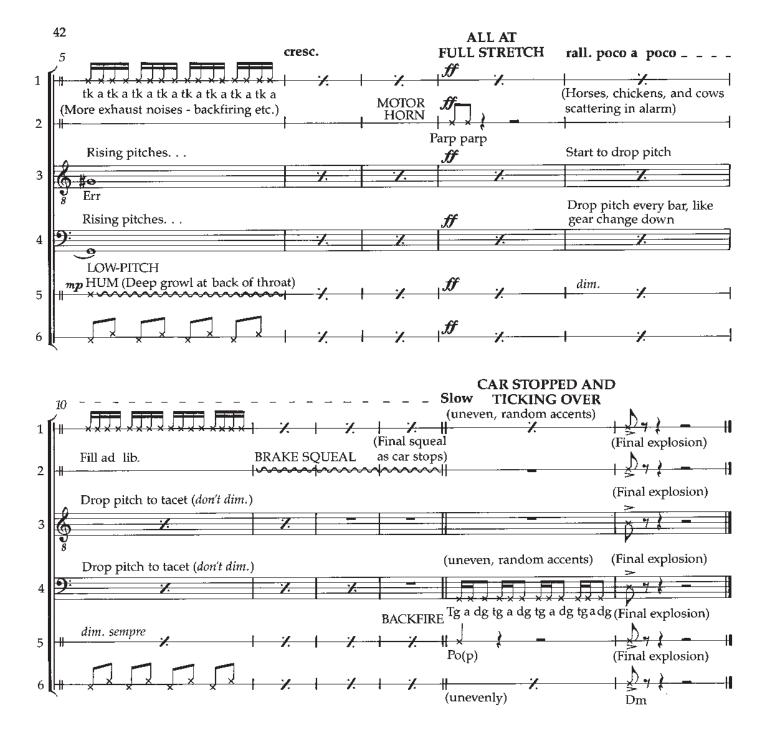
And that's how things were left. Rat and Mole returned home the next day, determined to save Toad from the dreadful consequences of his new motor car craze. The rest of the winter passed quietly, but one morning, quite early in the spring, all three animals happened to be standing in a peaceful lane near the river bank when they heard a most terrible commotion in the distance . . . (End of narration to overlap with start of No. 7)

### 7: TOAD'S CAR

(Chorus)

**Note to conductor**: What follows represents Toad's car (1908 vintage) already going fast as it becomes audible in the distance, getting nearer, slowing down and stopping. Allocate voices in whatever way works best.





#### NARRATOR:

Sure enough, it was Toad; he jumped down from his car.

I say, you chaps,' he said, 'what do you think of her? Straight eight, with sleeve valves of course . . . family crest on the door . . . does nearly fifty downhill!'

Badger interrupted sternly. 'Toad, you unhappy creature!'

'Me unhappy?' exclaimed Toad; 'What a lot of rot you do talk, Badger. Why, I'm the happiest creature alive! The open road  $\dots$  the smell of hot oil  $\dots$  if you chaps can't recognize the coming thing when you see it, then I'm afraid progress won't wait for you, and no more shall I  $\dots$  Must be off! See you all up at my place some time.'

And with that, Toad started up the car again and drove off. But that wasn't the end of it, as I'm afraid we shall see . . .

### 8: COURT SCENE

(Usher, Magistrate, Toad)

USHER: Silence! Silence in court!



served on this bench. . . never has been seen a creature more abjectly despicable, a Toad more steeped in the molasses of criminality, more tarred with the glue of felonious



turpitude than the hardened criminal we see melting like a fly-blown marshmallow before our averted eyes. Pull yourself together, prisoner! Be a man, and prepare to hear your



sentence! You shall be taken from this place and be flung into the deepest, darkest, and most vile-smelling dungeon that the resources of the County Gaol can provide. And there



<sup>\*</sup> During the delivery of the Magistrate's speech, TOAD utters appropriate wails, groans, etc.

you shall languish, on the first count-stealing a motor car-ten years; on the second count-driving in a most reckless and dangerous manner-fifteen years; on the



third count-insulting a policeman-twenty years. And in view of the seriousness of the offences and the hardened criminality of the felon, I order that these terms



of imprisonment be served both consecutively and concurrently. . . Take him away!\*

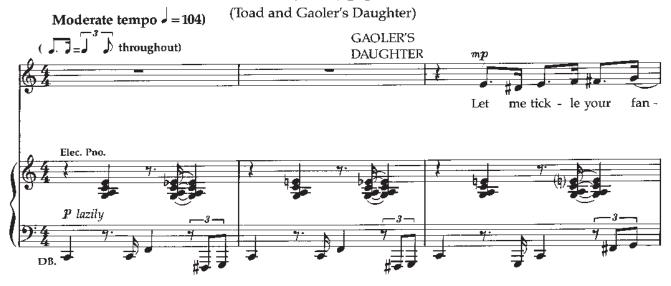


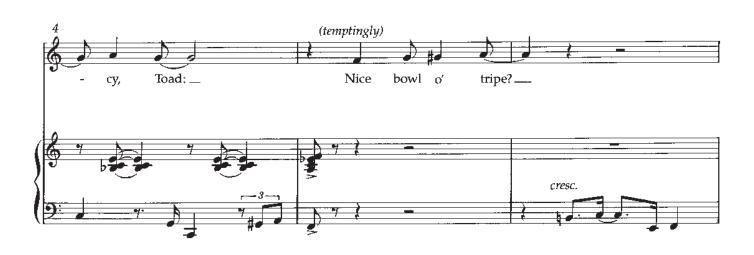
<sup>\*</sup> Speech and music should finish at approximately the same time.

#### NARRATOR:

Toad, abject and downcast, was led away roughly by two horny-handed gaolers and thrown into the nastiest of dungeons, with nothing for company save the occasional spider, and no solace save that provided by a tin mug of brackish water and the stale crusts thrown to him from time to time . . . and, oh, I nearly forgot — the rather comely and kind-hearted daughter of one of the gaolers. Let us eavesdrop as she attempts to rally the starving and disconsolate felon . . .

## 9: IN PRISON



















### NARRATOR:

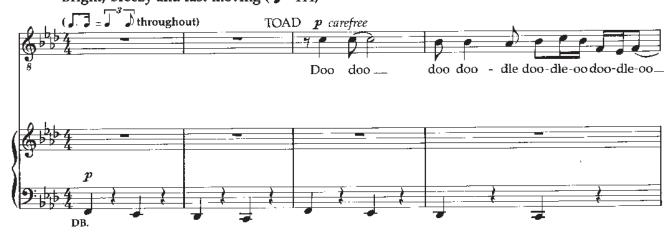
Nothing the gaoler's daughter had to offer seemed to rouse him. But like all great men of history, his single-mindedness saw him through. He escaped by exchanging clothes with a humble washerwoman; let us join him as he makes his way back to Toad Hall, a sadder and a wiser Toad . . . (Narration continues over start of No. 10)

## 10: ON THE ROAD TO TOAD HALL

(Toad and Chorus)

51

NARRATOR:... I'm not sure that's true, actually, but perhaps I'd better let you be the judge; here he is. Bright, breezy and fast-moving (  $\downarrow = 144$ )























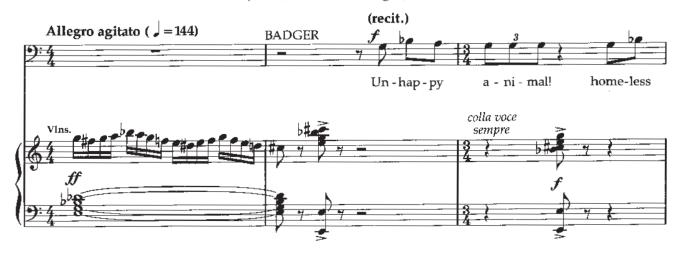






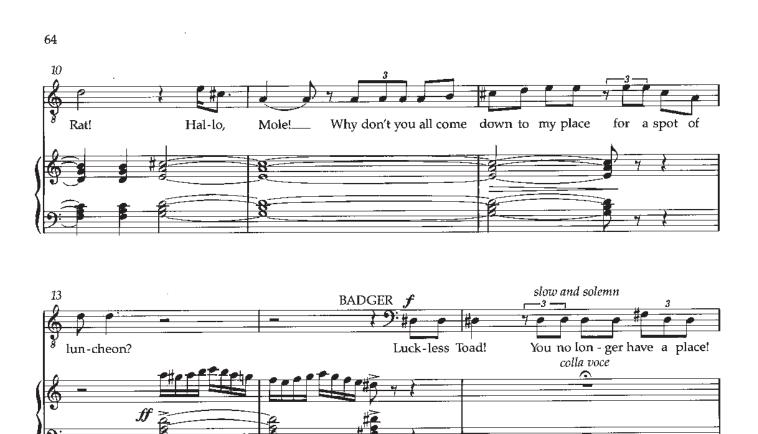
## 11: THE PLAN

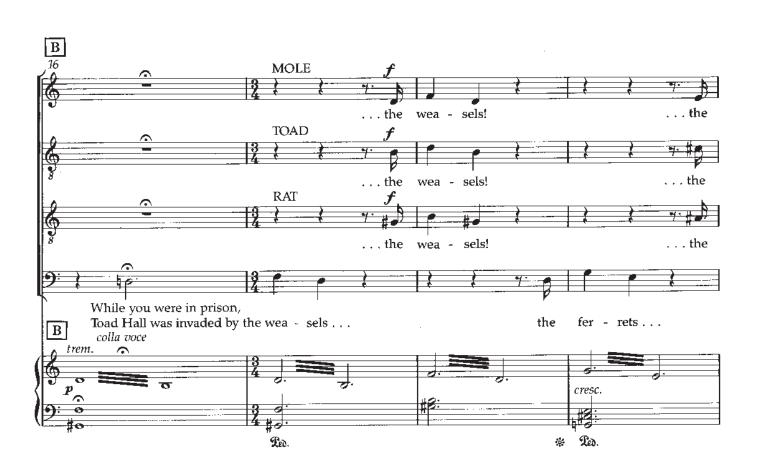
(Mole, Toad, Rat, Badger)











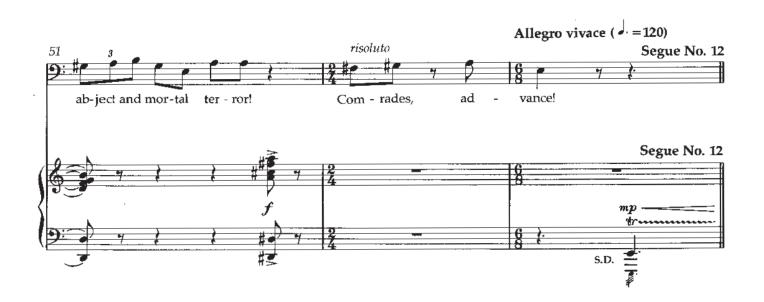












# 70 12: RECAPTURE OF TOAD HALL (Let's wallop a weasel)

(Mole, Toad, Rat, Badger)











<sup>\*</sup> In this number, the shrieks and cries of the weasels, ferrets, and stoats are to be allocated to suitable members of the chorus.









Swash

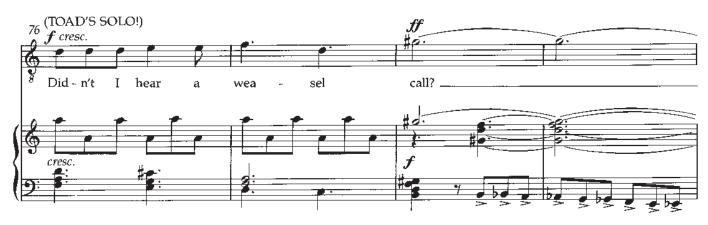
swash

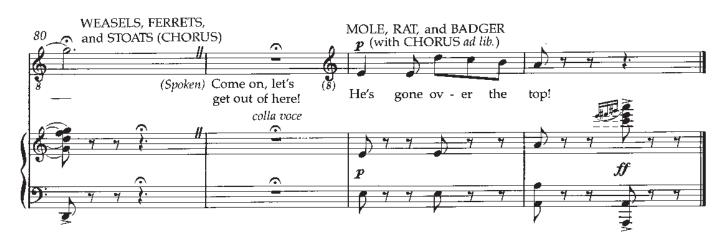
Squashed

him

flat!







## 13: NARRATION

## NARRATOR:

Every last weasel, ferret and stoat fled in panic and disorder, and Toad Hall was once more Toad's. Badger lectured Toad sternly, reminding him that his folly and boastfulness had nearly cost him his liberty and his home, and Toad promised to mend his ways.

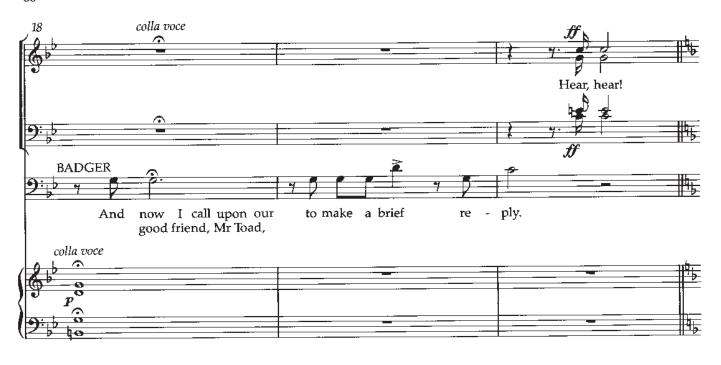
The next night a celebration banquet was held at Toad Hall, and everyone made merry. It was nearly midnight when Badger rose to his feet, rather unsteadily, and addressed the assembled company. (Attacca No. 14)

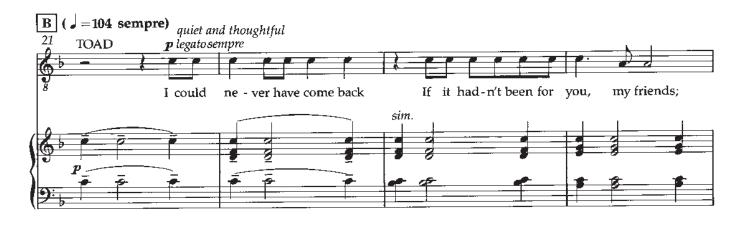
## 14: FINALE

(TOAD, BADGER, and CHORUS)















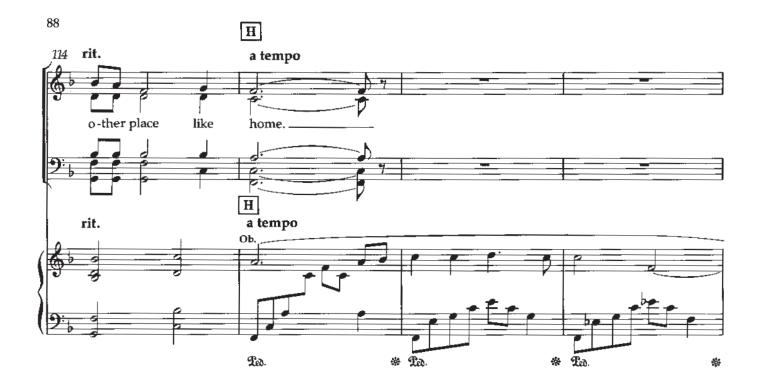








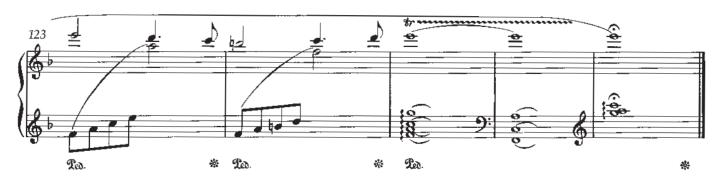




NARRATOR: Mole caught Rat's eye; Rat's eye caught Badger's eye. Each knew what home meant to the other. Nobody managed to catch Toad's



eye, but then Toad's eye was roving and resting lovingly an every detail of his home; worth a thousand gipsy caravans, worth a million motor cars, thought Toad.



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