

Les berceaux

1879

poem by Sully-Prudhomme

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Les berceaux

Le long du quai, les grands vaisseaux,
Que la houle incline en silence,
Ne prennent pas garde aux berceaux,
Que la main des femmes balance.

Mais viendra le jour des adieux,
Car il faut que les femmes pleurent,
Et que les hommes curieux,
Tentent les horizons qui leurrent!

Et ce jour-là les grands vaisseaux,
Fuyant le port qui diminue,
Sentent leur masse retenue
Par l'âme des lointains berceaux.

The cradles

All along the pier the big ships
That the surge sways in silence
Pay no attention to the cradles
That the hands of women rock.

But the day of farewells will come,
For it is necessary that women weep,
And that curious men
Brave the horizons that lure them!

And on that day the big ships,
Fleeing the shrinking port,
Feel their bulk held back
By the soul of the far-off cradles.

Andante ♩. = 58

p *sempre*

The piano introduction consists of two staves. The right hand plays a series of eighth notes, mostly on the white keys of the piano, with some black notes. The left hand plays a more complex pattern of eighth and sixteenth notes, including many black notes, creating a rhythmic accompaniment. The tempo is marked 'Andante' with a quarter note equal to 58 beats per minute.

3

p

Le long du quai, — les grands — vais-seaux, Que la houle in-cline en si-

The vocal entry begins on the third measure of the piano introduction. The melody is simple, using mostly whole and half notes. The lyrics are written below the staff, with hyphens indicating syllables that span across measures.

6

len - ce, Ne pren - nent pas garde

opt.

Que la main des fem - mes ba -

8

aux ber-ceaux, Que la main des fem - mes ba -

10

lan - ce. Mais vien - dra le

crescendo poco a poco

13

jour des a - dieux, Car il faut que les fem - mes pleu - rent,

cresc. molto

Et que les hom - mes cu - ri - eux,

f sempre

Ten - tent les ho - ri - zons qui leur -

pp

rent! Et ce jour-là les

grands vais-seaux, Fuy - ant le port qui di - mi - nu - e,

26

*cresc.**f*

Sen - tent leur mas - se re - te - nu - e Par

*cresc.**mf*

29

l'â - me des loin - tains ber -

p

31

p

ceaux. Par l'â - me des loin -

pp

34

tains ber - ceaux.