Sir Edward Elgar, right, with Algernon Henry Blackwood, February 1916
# Sir Edward Elgar (1857 – 1934)

**COMPACT DISC ONE**

*premiere recording in this version*

**The Starlight Express, Op. 78*  
Incidental Music**

## Act I

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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Song (Organ-grinder) 'To the Children'. Allegro non troppo – Moderato – Tempo I – Più mosso – Moderato – Tempo I – Allegretto – Tempo I – Allegretto – Moderato</td>
<td>20:29</td>
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**Scene I**

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<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>'in the village of Bourcelles...' [Moderato]</td>
<td>1:37</td>
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<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Allegretto</td>
<td>0:30</td>
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<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Lento</td>
<td>0:42</td>
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<td>4</td>
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<td>0:32</td>
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<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>Allegretto</td>
<td>0:33</td>
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<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>Moderato – Molto animato – Allegro – A tempo allegro</td>
<td>1:22</td>
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<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>Lento</td>
<td>1:48</td>
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<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>Allegretto</td>
<td>0:15</td>
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<td>9</td>
<td>Allegro</td>
<td>0:37</td>
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<td>10</td>
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Peter Thomas, violin
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<tr>
<td>11</td>
<td>Allegro molto</td>
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<tr>
<td>12</td>
<td>Lento</td>
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<tr>
<td>13a</td>
<td>[Andante]</td>
<td>0:38</td>
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<tr>
<td>13b</td>
<td>[Andante]</td>
<td>1:32</td>
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<tr>
<td>14</td>
<td>Andantino</td>
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**Act II**  
**37:30**

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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>15</td>
<td>Song (Organ-grinder) 'The Blue-eyed Fairy'. Allegro</td>
<td>3:22</td>
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**Scene I**

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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>16</td>
<td>Allegro non troppo</td>
<td>1:06</td>
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<tr>
<td>17</td>
<td>Moderato – Lento – Allegro – Lento – Più lento –</td>
<td>1:18</td>
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<tr>
<td>18</td>
<td>Song (Organ-grinder) 'The sun has gone'. Allegretto – Lento – Allegro – Allargando</td>
<td>4:38</td>
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<tr>
<td>19</td>
<td>Andantino</td>
<td>2:01</td>
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<tr>
<td>20a</td>
<td>Lento – Quasi recitative – Lento</td>
<td>1:15</td>
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<tr>
<td>Peter Thomas</td>
<td>violin</td>
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<tr>
<td>20b</td>
<td>Allegro</td>
<td>0:21</td>
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<tr>
<td>Peter Thomas</td>
<td>violin</td>
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<tr>
<td>21</td>
<td>Lento</td>
<td>1:01</td>
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<tr>
<td>22</td>
<td>Allegro</td>
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<tr>
<td>23</td>
<td>Allegro molto</td>
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<td>24</td>
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<td>25</td>
<td>[ ]</td>
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<tr>
<td>26</td>
<td>Song (Laugher) 'I'm ev'rywhere'. Presto</td>
<td>0:48</td>
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<td>27</td>
<td>Allegro</td>
<td>0:13</td>
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</tbody>
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28  [  ]  0:27
29  Song (Organ-grinder) 'Wake up, you little Night Winds!'  
    Allegro non troppo  1:29
30  Dance of the Winds. Moderato – Lento – Brillante – Lento  2:20
31  Moderato  0:43
32  Lento  1:06
    Peter Thomas violin
33  Sun Dance, Presto  2:45

Scene 2
34  Adagio  1:06
    Peter Thomas violin
34a  Song (Gardener) 'Dandelions, Daffodils'.  [  ]  0:52
35  Andante –  1:14
36  Allegretto  1:04

Scene 3
37  Più lento  1:18
    David Watkin cello
38  Song (Laughing) 'O, Stars Shine Brightly'. Allegro moderato –  
    Andante  3:16
    Peter Thomas violin
39  Adagio –  0:48
    Peter Thomas violin
40  Allegro  0:18
41  Song (Laughing) 'Dawn Song'. Allegro  1:09
    TT 58:03
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<tr>
<td>Act III</td>
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<td>28:47</td>
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<tr>
<td>Scene 1</td>
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<tr>
<td>43</td>
<td>Song (Jane Anne) 'Dandelions, Daffodils'.</td>
<td>1:15</td>
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<td>44</td>
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<td>1:11</td>
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<tr>
<td>45</td>
<td>Lento – Più mosso – Più lento – Più lento –</td>
<td>1:09</td>
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<tr>
<td>46a</td>
<td></td>
<td>0:34</td>
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<tr>
<td>46b</td>
<td>Tempo di valse</td>
<td>3:34</td>
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<tr>
<td>Scene 2</td>
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<tr>
<td>47</td>
<td>Lento – Allegro – Poco sostenuto – Moderato e grazioso – Moderato – Moderato – Moderato – Allegretto –</td>
<td>7:45</td>
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<tr>
<td>David Watkin</td>
<td>cello</td>
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<tr>
<td>48</td>
<td>Andante – Allegretto</td>
<td>2:37</td>
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<tr>
<td>49</td>
<td>Moderato – Animato – Moderato –</td>
<td>2:08</td>
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<tr>
<td>50</td>
<td>Finale. Duet (Laugher and Organ-grinder) 'Hearts must be soft-shiny dressed'. [ ] – L'istesso tempo –</td>
<td>2:44</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>['The First Nowell'] Grandioso</td>
<td>1:33</td>
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Clive Carey (1883 – 1968)

premiere recording

**Three Songs from 'The Starlight Express'**  6:03
Orchestrated by Sir Andrew Davis

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>No.</th>
<th>Title</th>
<th>Duration</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>I</td>
<td>The Organ-grinder's Song. Andante comodo</td>
<td>3:07</td>
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<tr>
<td>II</td>
<td>The Dustman's Song. Tranquillo e misterioso</td>
<td>1:39</td>
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<tr>
<td>III</td>
<td>The Gardener's Song. Allegretto fantastico</td>
<td>1:17</td>
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Sir Edward Elgar

premiere recording

**Suite from 'The Starlight Express'**  44:57
Arranged by Sir Andrew Davis

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<th>No.</th>
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<th>Duration</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>1. Song (Organ-grinder) 'To the Children'. Allegro non troppo –</td>
<td>6:16</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Moderato – Tempo I – Più mosso – Moderato – Tempo I –</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Allegretto – Tempo I – Allegretto – Moderato</td>
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<td>2</td>
<td>14. Andantino</td>
<td>1:33</td>
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<td>3</td>
<td>15. Song (Organ-grinder) 'The Blue-eyed Fairy'. Allegro</td>
<td>3:16</td>
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<td>4</td>
<td>18. Song (Organ-grinder) 'The sun has gone'. Allegretto – Lento –</td>
<td>4:51</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Allegro – Allargando</td>
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<td>5</td>
<td>19. Andantino</td>
<td>2:04</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
6 21. Lento 0:29
7 22. Allegro 0:23
8 26. Song (Laugher) 'I'm ev'rywhere', Presto 0:45
9 29. Song (Organ-grinder) 'Wake up, you little Night Winds!' Allegro non troppo 1:20
11 32. Lento 0:50
Peter Thomas violin
12 33. Sun Dance. Presto 2:34
13 35. Andante – 1:14
14 36. Allegretto 1:05
15 38. Song (Laugher) 'O, Stars Shine Brightly'. Allegro moderato – Andante 3:20
Peter Thomas violin
16 41. Song (Laugher) 'Dawn Song'. Allegro 1:04
17  42. Song (Organ-grinder) 'My old tunes'. Allegro – [Più lento] –
Poco più lento – Tempo I – [Più lento]  4:02
18  43. Song (Jane Anne) 'Dandelions, Daffodils'. [ ]  0:55
19  49. Moderato – Animato – Moderato – 2:04
20  50. Finale. Duet (Laugher and Organ-grinder) 'Hearts must be soft-shiny dressed'. [ ] – L'istesso tempo – 2:46
   ['The First Nowell.'] Grandioso  1:34
   TT 80:05

Elin Manahan Thomas  soprano (Laugher / Jane Anne)**
Roderick Williams  baritone (Organ-grinder / Gardener)**
Simon Callow  narrator*
Scottish Chamber Orchestra
Peter Thomas  leader
Sir Andrew Davis
children, who he felt had not yet lost access to, and capacity for wonder at, the spiritual world. This gave rise to a number of books for or about children, and foremost among these is *A Prisoner in Fairyland*. It was published in May 1913 and rapidly caught the attention of Violet Pearn (1890 – 1947). An aspiring playwright, she was convinced that it would make a marvellous play and, through her theatrical connections, seems to have secured one of the London theatres for performances some time in 1914. Early on it was realised that music would enhance the play enormously and the young composer, singer, and director Clive Carey (1883 – 1968) was asked to provide it. (Carey subsequently became one of London’s most highly regarded singing teachers, working most notably with the young Joan Sutherland.)

Alas, various factors, not the least of which were the outbreak of war and Zeppelin raids over London, scuppered the project, but it was resurrected a year later. By then Carey seems to have been forgotten, and Elgar was approached. Like Blackwood, Elgar was much enamoured of the innocence and simplicity of

Elgar: The Starlight Express

Algernon Henry Blackwood (1869 – 1951) was a mass of contradictions: though counting among his forbears a Lord Mayor of London, a Governor of North Carolina, and various members of the Scottish, English, and Irish aristocracies, he was for a good deal of his life of no fixed abode and, in later years, had purportedly reduced his possessions to a change of clothes, a holdall, pyjamas, and his typewriter. While enjoying great popularity as a raconteur with his wide circle of friends (and later, through his broadcasts, with the British public), he was never happier than when off on one of his adventures – punting down the Danube, canoeing in the Canadian wilderness, climbing the Alps, exploring the Caucasus, wandering at night in the Egyptian desert, skiing in the Swiss Jura mountains.

If his charming social persona is reflected in the elegance and wit of much of his writing, it is his intimate relationship with nature, and his special gift for apprehending the powers that lie within and behind it, that gives so many of the ‘supernatural’ stories by Blackwood their authenticity. His other remarkable quality was his ability to identify and communicate with
It seems that the younger members of the audience, at least, were more appreciative. The play closed after forty performances, which, in view of the wartime circumstances, is perhaps not so bad.

As I was contemplating this recording, it seemed to me that performing the play, even in a heavily cut version, was not an option, for the reasons outlined above. On the other hand, all the music, excepting the songs and interludes, was designed as melodrama, and in some cases, as in *The Crown of India* (1912), is meaningless on its own. I have therefore taken the bold step of writing a narrative which is based partly on the play and partly on *A Prisoner in Fairyland*. Its storyline follows that of the play for the first two acts, but the second scene of Act III, rather than being set outside the Star Cave in the mountains, is devoted to the reading by John Campden (Daddy) of his finished book. The very end is tricky. Perhaps because it was the Christmas season – who knows? – Violet Pearn superimposed the concept of the Star of Bethlehem as the source from which all other stars receive their light. Having grown up under a tyrannical evangelical father, Blackwood must have hated it. Elgar gave us a marvellous orchestration of ‘The First Nowell’, but, as all commentators have agreed, the moment grates. I have tried to find final lines that are truer to Blackwood.

childhood – the Suites *The Wand of Youth*, based on some of his early compositions, had been published a few years earlier – and after a week’s hesitation he agreed. He had in fact decided to use some of the music from *The Wand of Youth* – ‘Sun Dance’ is played in its entirety as an interlude in Act II – but found himself composing more original numbers as he went on, fired by his enthusiasm for the venture and his admiration for Blackwood, who, then and afterwards, became a welcome visitor to the Elgar household.

It is sad, then, that both author and composer should have become somewhat downhearted as rehearsals proceeded. The play is overlong and Violet Pearn had embraced the sentimentality to which the book comes dangerously close but which it somehow just manages to avoid. Even worse, however, were the set and costumes: the designer had chosen to depict the Sprites as Greek gods. Blackwood was horrified, writing to Elgar: "this suburban, Arts & Crafts pretentious rubbish stitched on to your music is really too painful for me to bear."

He contemplated vetoing the whole thing, but in the end the premiere went ahead as planned, on 29 December 1915. The critics were by and large inclined to ridicule the play, although the reviewer in *The Times* memorably closed his piece with the words, ‘Whosoever is “wumbled”, let him listen to Sir Edward Elgar.'
employed by Elgar in The Starlight Express – and hope thus to have compensated the young composer belatedly for the unjust treatment that he received!

In September 2011, I visited the village of Bôle in the Swiss Jura, the real Bourcelles. Blackwood, just like Henry Rogers in Prisoner, had spent several months there, in 1886–87, studying French in the company of his cousin, and he returned there often in later life to write and ski. Most of the places mentioned in the book still stand: the Pension, the church, the sentinel pine tree – though the Citadelle (indeed built by Lord Wemyss) burnt down, I discovered, in 1925. I also walked through the gorges of the river Areuse, and even stumbled on what could have been the entrance to a ‘Star Cave’ in the weirdly eroded cliffs.

Blackwood’s message – that the world badly needed to rediscover what Blackwood called Sympathy, but which is better rendered nowadays as empathy or fellow-feeling – was one that certainly resonated with many in those days before, during, and after the First World War. It is no less relevant today.

A Prisoner in Fairyland is a wondrous, if flawed, book. Mike Ashley put it perfectly when he wrote that it ‘benefits from a second reading if you can survive the first’.

I believe that Elgar understood Blackwood’s message, and that is the reason why he put so

Now, clearly, the effect of a narration read over the music is not the same as that of lines declaimed over it in the theatre. But I hope nonetheless that our solution on this recording will give a satisfactory framework for Elgar’s wonderful and touching score.

And we have a bonus. As a result of a footnote in Mike Ashley’s excellent biography of Blackwood, Starlight Man (2001), which I highly recommend, I learned that three songs that Clive Carey wrote for the play still survive; and, by dint of detective work on the internet and the discovery of a company which specialises in out-of-print music, I got my hands on them about a month before the recording sessions would take place.

Of the three, the first offers the most interesting contrast: Carey set ‘To the Children’ (‘O children, open your arms to me’) in a simple strophic manner over a drone bass, reminiscent of Schubert’s ‘Der Leiermann’, from Winterreise; Elgar’s setting is infinitely more elaborate and subtle. The text of the second was not set by Elgar but left to be spoken (in the scene in the forest that opens Act II). In his version of the third song, Elgar set the text as an unaccompanied quasi-folksong.

Carey’s musical language looks forward to the twenties. I find the songs fresh and attractive and it was with pleasure that I orchestrated them for the orchestral forces
much of himself into what others might have seen as an irrelevant or lightweight enterprise. At other times during the early years of war he wrote the kind of patriotic works that people expected of him; very fine many of them are too, and due for re-evaluation. But the fact that he chose music from The Starlight Express for one of his first recordings, in February 1916, is significant, as is the following letter which he received in October 1917 from an officer serving in Flanders:

> Although unknown to you, I feel I must write to you tonight. We possess a fairly good gramophone in our mess, and I have bought your record Starlight Express: ‘Hearts must be soft’ dressed, being played for the twelfth time over. The Gramophone was anathema to me before this war, because it was abused so much. But all is changed now, and it is the only means of bringing back to us the days that are gone, and helping us through the Ivory Gate that leads to Fairyland, or Heaven whatever one likes to call it... Music is all that we have to help us carry on.

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Born in Swansea, the soprano Elin Manahan Thomas read Anglo-Saxon, Norse, and Celtic at Clare College, Cambridge before embarking on a busy musical career. She first received great acclaim for her performance in Bach’s St Matthew Passion under Sir John Eliot Gardiner at the Thomaskirche in Leipzig, and for her soaring top line in Allegri’s Miserere under Harry Christophers, and gave the world premiere of Sir John Tavener’s Requiem under the late Richard Hickox in Liverpool Cathedral. She has appeared at the Edinburgh International Festival and Lufthansa Festival, as well as at the Wigmore Hall, London and Concertgebouw, Amsterdam. She has been heard on numerous radio programmes and on television has appeared in Birth of British Music (BBC 2), Sacred Music (BBC 4), How Music Works (Channel 4), and, on Christmas Day, A Musical Nativity (BBC 2). She was also the main performer in S4C’s six-part documentary Y Sopranos, and as a presenter has twice been nominated for a Bafta. She released her debut album, Eternal Light with the Orchestra of the Age of Enlightenment, in 2007, and is the first singer ever to record Bach’s Alles mit Gott, a birthday ode written in 1713 and rediscovered in 2005. Her large discography now includes five solo albums. In 2012 Elin Manahan Thomas was made an Honorary Fellow of the Royal Welsh College of Music and Drama, which she considers her greatest honour and achievement so far – apart from having her baby boy!

Performing a wide repertoire, from baroque to contemporary music, the baritone Roderick
The actor, director, and writer Simon Callow CBE made his first West End appearance in 1975 in *The Plumber's Progress* at the Prince of Wales Theatre, since when he has appeared in theatres all over the UK and abroad. His many roles include Sir Toby Belch (*Twelfth Night* at the National Theatre), the title-roles in *Amadeus*, *Faust*, and *Titus Andronicus*, Orlando (*As You Like It*), Verlaine (*Total Eclipse*), Molina (*The Kiss of the Spider Woman*), Dysart (*Equus*), Falstaff (*Merry Wives: the Musical* with the Royal Shakespeare Company), Garry Essendine (*Present Laughter*), Pozzo (*Waiting for Godot*), and roles in *Aladdin* and *The Woman in White*. He has given a number of one-man shows, including *The Mystery of Charles Dickens*, *Dr Marigold and Mr Chops*, *A Christmas Carol*, and *Being Shakespeare* which he has recently performed in New York and Chicago. On the big screen he has appeared in *Amadeus*, *Four Weddings and a Funeral*, *Shakespeare in Love*, *The Phantom of the Opera*, *A Room with a View*, *Maurice*, *Postcards from the Edge*, and – in rhyming couplets – *Acts of Godfrey*, among others. He also appears regularly on UK television, and has presented and written programmes such as *Orson Welles over Europe* and *Acting in Restoration Comedy*. He has directed many plays, as well as the

Williams has enjoyed close relationships with Opera North, where his latest role was Goryanchikov (*From the House of the Dead*), and Scottish Opera, where he recently appeared as the Count (*Le nozze di Figaro*). Particularly associated with the baritone roles of Mozart, he gave highly acclaimed performances of Papageno (*The Magic Flute*) at English National Opera in 2007 and 2009. He returned to the company to sing Pollux (*Rameau's Castor and Pollux*) in 2011. In 2008 he sang Schaunard (*La bohème*) at The Royal Opera, Covent Garden, where he most recently appeared as Ned Keene (*Peter Grimes*). He has also sung the world premiere of operas by David Sawer, Sally Beamish, Michael van der Aa, Robert Saxton, and Alexander Knafel, among others. He has worked with orchestras throughout Europe, including all the BBC orchestras in the UK, and has appeared at the BBC Proms as well as the Edinburgh, Cheltenham, and Aldeburgh festivals, among many others. An accomplished recital artist, he has performed at venues such as the Wigmore Hall, London, Perth Concert Hall, Howard Assembly Room, Leeds, and Wiener Musikverein. He may be heard regularly on BBC Radio 3, where he has participated on Iain Burnside's programme *Voices*. His extensive discography has received worldwide acclaim. Roderick Williams is also a composer, whose works have been premiered at the Wigmore and Barbican halls, the Purcell Room, and live on national radio.

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winning recordings. Also enjoying close relationships with many leading composers, the Orchestra has commissioned more than a hundred new works from, among others, Sir Peter Maxwell Davies (Composer Laureate), Mark-Anthony Turnage, Judith Weir, Sally Beamish, Lyell Cresswell, and Hafliði Hallgrímsson. SCO Connect, the Orchestra’s education and outreach department, provides a unique programme of projects for children and adults across Scotland. The Orchestra broadcasts regularly and its discography exceeds 150 recordings. The Scottish Chamber Orchestra receives funding from the Scottish Government.

Since 2000, Sir Andrew Davis has served as Music Director and Principal Conductor of Lyric Opera of Chicago. He is the former Principal Conductor, now Conductor Laureate, of the Toronto Symphony Orchestra, the Conductor Laureate of the BBC Symphony Orchestra – having served as the second longest running Chief Conductor since its founder, Sir Adrian Boult – and the former Music Director of the Glyndebourne Festival Opera. Born in 1944 in Hertfordshire, England, he studied at King’s College, Cambridge, where he was an organ scholar before taking up the baton. His repertoire ranges from baroque to contemporary works, and his vast conducting credits span

Formed in 1974 with a commitment to serve the Scottish community, the Scottish Chamber Orchestra (SCO) is recognised as one of the finest chamber orchestras in the world and as one of Scotland’s foremost cultural ambassadors, touring internationally and appearing regularly at the Edinburgh, St Magnus, and Aldeburgh festivals and the BBC Proms as well as performing throughout Scotland. Robin Ticciati took up the post of Principal Conductor at the beginning of the 2009/10 season; he and the Orchestra have been acclaimed as ‘one of the great partnerships in British music’ by The Daily Telegraph. Also appearing regularly with the Orchestra are Joseph Swensen (Conductor Emeritus), Richard Egarr (Associate Artist), Olari Elf, John Storgårds, Thierry Fischer, Louis Langrée, Oliver Knussen, Piotr Anderszewski, and Alexander Janiczek (Associate Artist). The Orchestra’s long-standing relationship with the late Sir Charles Mackerras (Conductor Laureate) resulted in many exceptional performances and award-winning recordings.
Maestro Davis is a prolific recording artist, currently under exclusive contract to Chandos. He received the Charles Heidsieck Music Award of the Royal Philharmonic Society in 1991, was created a Commander of the Order of the British Empire in 1992, and in 1999 was appointed Knight Bachelor in the New Year Honours List. www.sirandrewdavis.com


Elgar:
The Starlight Express
mehr und mehr verzagten. Das Schauspiel ist überlang und Violet Peern akzentuierte besonders die sentimentale Stimmung, der das Buch gefährlich nahe kommt, die zu vermeiden ihm aber immer gerade noch gelingt. Schlimmer noch waren allerdings Bühnenbild und Kostüme: Der Bühnenbildner hatte beschlossen, die Elfen als griechische Gottheiten darzustellen. Voller Entsetzen schrieb Blackwood an Elgar:

Dieser vorstädtische kunstgewerbliche anmaßende Mist, der Ihrer Musik da übergestülpt wird, erscheint mir absolut unerträglich.


Zumindest die jüngeren Zuschauer scheinen das Stück aber gemocht zu haben. Das Werk wurde nach vierzig Aufführungen abgesetzt, was angesichts der Kriegsumstände vielleicht gar nicht so übel ist.

Als ich mir über diese Aufnahme Gedanken machte, schien mir aus den oben skizzierten Gründen eine Aufführung des Schauspiels...

Naturlich ist die Wirkung einer zur Musik gelesenen Erzählung nicht die gleiche, wie wenn man den Text im Theater zur Musik deklamiert. Doch ich hoffe trotzdem, dass die von uns auf dieser Einspielung vorgestellte Lösung Elgars wunderbarer und anrührender Musik einen überzeugenden Rahmen verleiht.


Das erste der drei Stücke bietet den interessantesten Kontrast: Carey vertonte "To the Children" ("O children, open your arms to me") als einfaches Strophenlied über einem Bordunbass, ähnlich wie "Der Leiermann" aus Schuberts Winterreise. Elgars Fassung ist unendlich komplexer und subtiler. Der Text des zweiten Lieds wurde von Elgar nicht zu Musik gesetzt, sondern wird nur gesprochen (in der Szene im Wald, mit der der Zweite Akt beginnt). In seiner Version des dritten Lieds vertonte Elgar den Text als eine Art unbegleitetes Volkslied.

Careys Musiksprache antizipiert die 1920er Jahre. Ich finde die Songs erfrischend
und reizvoll und es war mir ein Vergnügen, sie für die von Elgar in The Starlight Express verwendete Besetzung zu orchestrieren; auch hoffe ich, den jungen Komponisten für die ungerechte Behandlung, die ihm zuteilwurde, damit nachträglich entschädigt zu haben!

Im September 2011 besuchte ich das Dorf Bôle im Schweizer Jura, das eigentliche Bourcelles. Hier hatte Blackwood – genau wie Henry Rogers in Prisoner – 1886 / 87 in Gesellschaft seines Cousins mehrere Monate verbracht, um Französisch zu lernen; später kehrte er oft an den Ort zurück, um zu schreiben und Ski zu fahren. Die meisten in dem Buch erwähnten Plätze stehen noch – die Pension, die Kirche, die markante Kiefer; nur die Zitadelle (die übrigens von Lord Wemyss erbaut wurde) ist, wie ich erfuhr, 1925 abgebrannt.

Ich wanderte auch durch die Schluchten der Areuse und stieß in den seltsam erodierten Klippen sogar auf etwas, das der Eingang zu einer "Sternengrotte" hätte sein können. Blackwoods Botschaft – dass die Welt dringend das wiederentdecken müsse, was er selbst als Sympathie bezeichnete, was wir heute aber wohl eher mit dem Begriff Empathie oder Gemeinschaftssinn umreißen würden – sprach in der damaligen Zeit vor, während und nach dem Ersten Weltkrieg wohl viele Menschen an. Aber auch heute noch ist sie nicht weniger relevant. A Prisoner in Fairyland ist ein erstaunliches, wenn auch mit Mängeln behaftetes Buch. Mike Ashley hat dies perfekt ausgedrückt, als er schrieb, es "lohnt sich, [das Buch] ein zweites Mal zu lesen, wenn man das erste Mal überlebt hat".

Ich glaube, Elgar hat Blackwoods Botschaft verstanden und sich deshalb so stark eingesetzt für etwas, das andere für ein unbedeutendes oder oberflächliches Unterfangen gehalten haben würden. Zu anderen Zeiten in den ersten Kriegsjahren komponierte er die Art von patriotischer Musik, die von ihm erwartet wurde; darunter sind durchaus ausgezeichnete Werke, die einer Neubewertung harren. Doch der Umstand, dass er für eine seiner ersten Aufnahmen im Februar 1916 Musik aus The Starlight Express wählte, ist ebenso bedeutungsvoll wie der folgende Brief, den er im Oktober 1917 von einem in Flandern stationierten Offizier erhielt:

Obwohl Sie mich nicht kennen, spüre ich, dass ich Ihnen heute Abend schreiben muss. Wir haben ein recht gutes Grammophon in unserem Kasino und ich habe Ihre Platte Starlight Express gekauft: "Hearts must be soft-shiny dressed" (Herzen müssen sanft-glänzend gewandet sein) spielt gerade zum zwölften Mal. Vor dem Krieg war mir das Grammophon ein Grau, weil es zu häufig benutzt wurde. Doch jetzt ist alles anders und es ist das einzige Mittel, uns die


Der Schauspieler, Regisseur und Schriftsteller Simon Callow CBE feierte 1975 am Prince of Wales Theatre im Londoner Westend sein Schauspieldebüt in The Plumber’s Progress; seither hatte er Engagements in ganz Großbritannien sowie auch im Ausland. Zu seinen zahlreichen Rollen zählen Sir Toby Belch (in Twelfth Night am National Theatre), die Titelrollen in Amadeus, Faust und Titus Andronicus, Orlando (As You Like It), Verlaine (Total Eclipse), Molina (The Kiss of the Spider Woman), Dysart (Equus), Falstaff (Merry Wives: the Musical mit der Royal Shakespeare Company), Garry Essendine (Present Laughter), Pozzo (Waiting for Godot) sowie Rollen in Aladdin und The Woman in White. Er hat eine Reihe von One-Man-Shows gegeben, darunter The Mystery of Charles Dickens, Dr Marigold and Mr Chops, A Christmas Carol und Being Shakespeare; das letz tgenannte Stück hat er vor kurzem in New York und Chicago präsentiert. Auf der Kinolein wand war er unter anderem in Amadeus, Four Weddings and a Funeral, Shakespeare in Love, The Phantom of the Opera, A Room with a View, Maurice, Postcards from the Edge sowie in dem in Reimpaaren gesprochenen Film Acts of Godfrey zu sehen. Er erscheint auch regelmäßig im britischen Fernsehen und hat Sendungen wie zum Beispiel Orson Welles over Europe und Acting in Restoration Comedy geschrieben und moderiert. Bei zahlreichen Schauspielen hat er Regie geführt und außerdem die Opern Così fan tutte (in Luzern), Die Fledermaus (für Scottish

Simon Callow
Brian Pidgeon, Sir Andrew Davis, and Roderick Williams in the control room at the Usher Hall, Edinburgh
From the recording sessions in the Usher Hall, Edinburgh
Elgar: The Starlight Express

Algernon Henry Blackwood (1869 – 1951) était tout en contradictions: bien qu’il comptât parmi ses aïeux un lord-maire de Londres, un gouverneur de Caroline du Nord et divers membres de l’aristocratie écossaise, anglaise et irlandaise, il vécut pendant une bonne partie de sa vie sans domicile fixe et aurait réduit ses biens, plus tard au cours de son existence, à des vêtements de rechange, un fourre-tout, des pyjamas et sa machine à écrire. S’il jouissait d’une grande popularité comme conteur auprès de son large cercle d’amis (et par la suite, auprès du public anglais grâce à ses émissions), il n’était jamais plus heureux qu’en route pour une de ses aventures – descendre le Danube dans une petite barque à fond plat, canoter dans le Canada sauvage, escalader les Alpes, explorer le Caucase, errer la nuit dans le désert égyptien, skier dans le Jura suisse.

Si ce personnage sociable et charmant transparaît dans l’élégance et l’esprit de la plus grande partie de son œuvre, c’est sa relation intime avec la nature et le talent particulier qu’il a de percevoir les puissances qui l’animent ou qu’elle recèle qui donnent leur authenticité à tant d’histoires “surnaturelles” de Blackwood. Il avait un autre don remarquable, celui de s’identifier aux enfants et de communiquer avec eux, car il sentait qu’ils n’avaient pas perdu le contact avec l’univers spirituel et pouvaient encore s’en émerveiller. Un certain nombre de livres pour les enfants ou sur les enfants en résultèrent, dont le principal est A Prisoner in Fairyland. Il fut édité en mai 1913 et attira rapidement l’attention de Violet Pearn (1890 – 1947) qui, ambitionnant de devenir dramaturge, était convaincue que cela ferait une pièce merveilleuse; par ses relations dans le monde du théâtre, elle semble s’être assurée de porter l’œuvre à la scène dans l’un des théâtres de Londres à un certain moment en 1914. Bien vite on se rendit compte que la pièce gagnerait énormément à être rehaussée par de la musique et le jeune compositeur, chanteur et metteur en scène Clive Carey (1883 – 1968) fut invité à la fournir. (Carey devint par la suite l’un des professeurs de chant les plus réputés de Londres, travaillant tout particulièrement avec le jeune Joan Sutherland.)

Hélas, divers facteurs, notamment le déclenchement de la guerre et les raids de
ce fourbis prétentieux, suburbain, artisanal, crocheté sur votre musique est pour moi vraiment trop pénible à entendre. Il envisagea de mettre son veto à toute l'affaire, mais finalement la première eut lieu comme prévu, le 29 décembre 1915. Les critiques eurent tendance dans l'ensemble à ridiculiser la pièce, néanmoins dans *The Times* le commentaire se terminait par ces mots mémorables: "Que celui qui broie du noir, écoute Sir Edward Elgar." Il semble que les plus jeunes dans le public, au moins, l'apprécièrent davantage. Le rideau tomba définitivement après quarante représentations ce qui, compte tenu des circonstances en cette période de guerre, n'est après tout pas si mal.

En examinant cet enregistrement, il m'a semblé qu'exécuter la pièce, même en version fortement abrégée, n'était pas, pour les raisons décrites ci-dessus, une bonne option. D'autre part toute la musique, à l'exception des mélodies et des interludes, était conçue en tant que mélodrame et, dans certains cas, comme dans *The Crown of India* (1912), elle n'a pas de signification propre. J'ai donc pris l'initiative audacieuse d'écrire une histoire basée en partie sur la pièce et en partie sur *A Prisoner in Fairyland*. Le récit suit la ligne narrative de la pièce pour ce qui est des deux premiers actes, mais la deuxième scène de l'Acte III, plutôt que de se dérouler à l'extérieur de la Star Cave (la Caverne des Étoiles) dans les montagnes, a
lieu dans le Den (l’Antre) à la Citadelle et est consacrée à la lecture par John Campden (Daddy) de son livre, achevé. La toute fin est complexe. Parce que c’était la période de Noël peut-être – qui sait? – Violet Pearn rajouta le concept de l’Étoile de Bethléem, source de la lumière de toutes les étoiles. Ayant grandi sous la férule d’un père tyranique de confession évangélique, Blackwood dut détester cela. Elgar nous a donné une merveilleuse orchestration de “The First Noel”, mais, de l’avis de tous les commentateurs, l’épisode écorche l’oreille. J’ai essayé de trouver des lignes finales plus fidèles à Blackwood. Mais il est clair que l’effet d’une narration lue sur la musique n’est pas pareil à celui que produit la déclamation d’un texte sur la musique au théâtre. J’espère néanmoins que la solution adoptée pour cet enregistrement offrira une charpente s’appropriant à la merveilleuse et émouvante partition d’Elgar. Et nous avons un bonus. En lisant une note en bas de page dans l’excellente biographie de Blackwood écrite par Mike Ashley, Starlight Man (2001), dont je ne peux que fortement recommander la lecture, j’ai appris que trois mélodies écrites par Clive Carey pour la pièce ont survécu; et à force d’accomplir un travail de détective sur internet et grâce à la découverte d’une compagnie spécialisée dans les musiques épuisées, j’ai pu mettre la main sur ces mélodies un mois environ avant que commencent les séances d’enregistrement. Des trois mélodies, c’est la première qui offre le contraste le plus intéressant: Carey mit en musique “To the Children” (“O children, open your arms to me”) de manière strophique simple sur les sonorités graves d’un bourdon rappelant “Der Leiermann” de Schubert dans le Winterreise; la mise en musique d’Elgar est infiniment plus élaborée et subtile. Le texte de la deuxième mélodie ne fut pas mis en musique par Elgar, mais laissé tel quel pour être récité (dans la scène d’ouverture de l’Acte II, dans la forêt). La mise en musique de la troisième faite par Elgar est conçue comme une mélodie quasi folklorique non accompagnée.

Le langage musical de Carey préfigure le style des années vingt. Je trouve les mélodies pleines de fraîcheur et de charme, et ce fut avec plaisir que je les orchestrai pour les effectifs prévus par Elgar dans The Starlight Express – j’espère ainsi avoir offert tardivement une compensation au jeune compositeur pour la manière injuste dont il fut traité. En septembre 2011, j’ai visité le village de Bôle dans le Jura suisse, le vrai Bourcelles de la pièce. Blackwood, exactement comme Henry Rogers dans A Prisoner in Fairyland, avait passé plusieurs mois là-bas, en 1886–1887, étudiant le français en compagnie de son cousin, et il y retourna souvent, plus tard, pour écrire et
Le message de Blackwood – à savoir que le monde avait l’impérieux besoin de redécouvrir ce qu’il appelait “Sympathy”, mais qui est mieux rendu de nos jours par le concept d’empathie – était certes de nature à toucher un grand nombre d’individus en ce temps-là, soit avant, pendant et après la Première Guerre mondiale. Ce message reste tout aussi pertinent de nos jours. "A Prisoner in Fairyland" est un livre merveilleux, malgré ses imperfections. Mike Ashley l’exprima parfaitement lorsqu’il écrivit qu’il “gagne à être lu une deuxième fois si vous réussissez à survivre à la première lecture”. Je présume qu’Elgar comprit le message de Blackwood et que c’est la raison pour laquelle il s’investit autant dans ce que d’autres auraient pu considérer comme une entreprise inopportune ou insignifiante. Au cours des premières années de guerre, il lui arriva aussi d’écrire le genre d’œuvres patriotiques que l’on attendait de lui; nombreuses d’entre elles sont très belles et devraient être réévaluées. Mais le fait qu’il choisit de la musique de The Starlight Express pour l’un de ses premiers enregistrements, en février 1916, est significatif, tout comme la lettre qui suit, qu’il reçut en octobre 1917 d’un officier en service en Flandre:

Bien que vous ne me connaissiez pas, je sens que je dois vous écrire ce soir. Nous avons un assez bon gramophone dans notre mess, et j’ai acheté votre disque “Les cœurs doivent être enveloppés d’un doux velours”, alors qu’on le joue pour la douzième fois. J’avais le gramophone en abomination avant cette guerre: on en abusait tant. Mais tout a changé maintenant, et c’est le seul moyen qu’il y a de nous rappeler les jours enflammés et de nous aider à franchir la porte d’ivoire qui conduit à l’autre monde, ou au paradis, peu importe le nom qu’on lui donne… La musique est tout ce que nous avons pour nous aider à aller de l’avant.

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Traduction: Marie-Françoise de Meeûs

Née à Swansea, la soprano Elin Manahan Thomas étudia l’anglo-saxon, l’ancien norde et le celtique au Clare College à Cambridge avant de se lancer dans une active carrière musicale. Elle fut d’abord très applaudi pour sa prestation dans la Passion selon Saint Matthieu de Bach dirigée par Sir John...
Le baryton **Roderick Williams** entretient d’étroites relations avec l’Opéra North et le Scottish Opera dans un vaste répertoire, de la musique baroque à la musique contemporaine. À l’Opéra North, son dernier rôle a été Goriantchikov (De la maison des morts) ; au Scottish Opera, il s’est récemment produit dans celui du Comte (Le nozze di Figaro). Particulièrement identifié aux rôles de baryton de Mozart, il a remporté un grand succès dans Papageno (Die Zauberflöte) à l’English National Opera en 2007 et en 2009. Il y est retourné pour chanter le rôle de Pollux (Castor et Pollux de Rameau) en 2011. En 2008, il a été Schaunard (La bohème) au Royal Opera de Covent Garden, où il s’est produit très récemment dans le rôle de Ned Keene (Peter Grimes). Il a aussi participé à la création mondiale d’opéras de David Sawer, Sally Beamish, Michael van der Aa, Robert Saxton et Alexander Knaifel, notamment. Il travaille avec orchestre dans toute l’Europe, notamment avec tous les orchestres de la BBC au Royaume-Uni, et s’est produit aux Proms de la BBC, ainsi qu’aux festivals d’Edimbourg, Cheltenham et Aldeburgh, parmi tant d’autres. Il excelle en récital et a chanté au Wigmore Hall de Londres, au Concert Hall de Perth, à la Howard Assembly Room de Leeds et au Wiener Musikverein. On peut l’entendre régulièrement sur BBC Radio 3, où il a participé...
à l'émission d'Iain Burnside Voices. Sa vaste discographie connaît un grand succès dans le monde entier. Roderick Williams est également compositeur; ses œuvres ont été créées au Wigmore Hall et au Barbican, à la Purcell Room, et en direct à la radio nationale.


Formé en 1974 avec l'engagement de servir la communauté écossaise, le Scottish Chamber Orchestra (SCO) est reconnu comme l'un des meilleurs orchestres de chambre du monde et comme l'un des principaux ambassadeurs culturels de l'Écosse, se produisant dans le monde entier et, de manière régulière, aux festivals d'Edimbourg, de St Magnus et d'Aldebourg, ainsi qu'aux Proms de la BBC et partout en Ecosse. Robin Ticciati en devint le chef principal au début de la saison 2009/2010; lui-même et l'Orchestre ont été salués par The Daily Telegraph comme "l'un des grands partenariats dans la musique anglaise". Les artistes suivants se produisent régulièrement avec l'Orchestre: Joseph Swensen
étant resté plus longtemps que lui à ce poste; il a été également directeur musical de l'Opéra du Festival de Glyndebourne. Né en 1944 dans le Hertfordshire, en Angleterre, il a fait ses études au King's College de Cambridge, où il a étudié l'orgue avant de se tourner vers la direction d'orchestre. Son répertoire s'étend de la musique baroque à l'opéra et aux œuvres contemporaines et ses qualités très développées dans le domaine de la direction d'orchestre couvrent l'univers symphonique, lyrique et choral. Outre le répertoire symphonique et lyrique de base, il est un grand partisan des œuvres du vingtième siècle de compositeurs tels Janáček, Messiaen, Boulez, Elgar, Tippett et Britten. Il a donné des concerts avec le BBC Symphony Orchestra aux Proms de la BBC et en tournée à Hong-Kong, au Japon, aux États-Unis et en Europe. Il a dirigé tous les plus grands orchestres du monde, ainsi que des productions dans des théâtres lyriques et festivals du monde entier, notamment au Metropolitan Opera de New York, au Teatro alla Scala de Milan et au Festival de Bayreuth. Maestro Davis enregistre de manière prolifique; il est actuellement sous contrat d'exclusivité chez Chandos. Il a reçu la Charles Heidsieck Music Award de la Royal Philharmonic Society en 1991, a été fait commandeur de l'Ordre de l'Empire britannique en 1992, et en 1999 Knight Bachelor au titre des distinctions honorifiques décernées par la reine à l'occasion de la nouvelle année. www.sirandrewdavis.com

Depuis l'an 2000, Sir Andrew Davis est directeur musical et premier chef du Lyric Opera de Chicago. Ancien premier chef du Toronto Symphony Orchestra, il en est aujourd'hui chef d'orchestre laureat; il est également chef laureat du BBC Symphony Orchestra – dont il a été le premier chef pendant de nombreuses années, seul son fondateur, Sir Adrian Boult,
Sir Andrew Davis with the score of 'The Starlight Express' at the BBC Broadcasting House, London
Who brushes the fringe of their lace-veined lids?
Who trims their innocent light?
Who draws up the blinds when the sun peeps in?
Who fastens them down at night?

O children, I pray you sing low to me,
And cover my eyes with your hands.
O kiss me again till I sleep and dream
That I’m lost in your fairylands;
That I’m lost in your fairylands;
For the grown-up folk are a troublesome folk,
And the book of their childhood is torn!
Is blotted, and crumpled, and torn!

Scene 1

In the village of Bourcelles in the Swiss Jura mountains stood the Citadelle, the crumbling wing of a castle begun by the Jacobite exile Lord Wemyss but never completed. It was here that the English family had lived for the past five years, and here, in a southern-facing room, that they now sat after tea. Despite the fact that John Campden, the father, barely earned enough from his well-regarded but not very successful books to keep their heads above water, they were all devoted to each other and happy. The author, just now wrestling with a new book far bigger than anything he had attempted before, was absent-mindedly lighting his pipe for the tenth time; his wife, an ample and motherly woman, was knitting on the other side of the fireplace, with the family cat, Riquette, asleep in her lap.
with us – he arrives tonight!' He went on to tell them how he and Henry, now a newly retired successful businessman, had spent a year together in Bourcelles in their youth, studying French and staying at the Pension des Glycines where the family now took its meals.

Jane Anne (Jinny)
Get out, you Morning Spider!
You fairy-cotton rider,
With my tiny nets of feather
I collect the stars together:
And on strips of windy weather
Bring the day!

A third, taller child had come in. She was sixteen, of a sunny though earnest disposition; her eyes held a curiously puzzled look, as though life confused her so much that while she did her duties bravely she did not quite understand why it should be so. Now she gently brushed a crumb from her father’s beard and dusted his hair – Jinny dusted everything. ‘I wish you could dust my brain,’ he said.

No. 2
Just then a lamplighter, a tall man with a long pole, went down the street, but vanished before they could get a good look at him. ‘Oh, the lamplighter reminds me,’ said Daddy, ‘my cousin Henry is coming to stay with us – he arrives tonight!’ He went on to tell them how he and Henry, now a newly retired successful businessman, had spent a year together in Bourcelles in their youth, studying French and staying at the Pension des Glycines where the family now took its meals.

No. 3
At that time, Henry had told him about the old railway carriage that his father had bought him as a Christmas present. He had named it the Starlight Express and peopled it with special passengers whom he called the Sprites.

‘One of them was a lamplighter, I remember,’ said Daddy, ‘who lights us up and makes us glow – that’s Hope. There was the Laugher, who sings all trouble into joy, the Gardener, who clears away the dead leaves and makes things grow in the night, the Sweep who cleans chimney flues – and hearts – and the Woman of the Haystack, majestic and imperturbable...’

No. 4
...the mother of them all.

There was a Tramp too, an unkempt figure like an old rag-and-bone man, Traveller of the World, the Eternal Wanderer, homeless as the wind, who played an old-fashioned barrel organ.
It then gets knotted, looped and all
up-jumbled,
And, long before I get it straight again,
unwumbled,
To make my verse or story;
The interfering sun has risen
And burst with passion through my silken
prison
To melt it down in dew,
Like so much spider-gossamer or fairy-cotton.
Don't you?
I call it rotten!'  
Jinny very reasonably objected that 'Don't
you?' should go
after
'I call it rotten!', not
before. Monkey mischievously put a crumb
back
into her father's beard. Jimbo turned his
head towards the windows and said softly,
'Someone in heaven is letting down the star-
ladders'.

Daddy was getting excited. 'By George, they
really were splendid – and they would be the
perfect mouthpieces for the ideas I'm trying to
put across in my new book.

No. 5
Oh! but I'm forgetting the most important
one of all. The Dustman – he flies tirelessly
through the Constellations, filling his sacks
with stardust, which he scatters about the
world, bringing dreams of Love and Beauty.'
He sighed. 'I could really use his help right
now. Sometimes some of his starlight comes
to me but then I seem to lose it. Actually, I tried
to express that in a little verse I wrote today.'
The children all gathered round him.

No. 6
They were always eager to hear his poetry,
though they usually found it puzzling. He
cleared his throat nervously and began:

'Starlight
Runs along my mind
And rolls into a ball of golden silk –
A little skein
Of tangled glory;
And when I want to get it out again
To weave the pattern of a verse or story,
it must unwind.

And suddenly a new, enormous thing
stirred in their father's heart. A softness of ten
thousand stars trooped down into his blood.
A thought came to him, he knew not whence.
'You know about the Star Caves, I suppose?'
They shook their heads. 'They're places where
lost starlight gathers. There are numbers of
them round the world and one, I think, may not
be far from here – where the forests of Boudry
dip towards the gorges of the river Areuse. It's
hard to get in because the entrance is narrow
"That's odd," said Mother, 'you don't need to sweep leaves in the Spring', but the irrepressible Monkey, clearly fascinated with her father's newly invented word, declared that it just proved that the whole village was 'wumbled', and began to dance giddily round the room, chanting, 'Bourcelles! Bourcelles! Little wumbled Bourcelles!' 'It's not just our village, dear', Mother said ruefully. 'It's the whole world.'

But something caught her eye, and Monkey too stopped her dance. It was Jinny; she had found an old shawl, blue spangled with...
How could this stranger be so enchanting?

But once again Mother intervened, taking Jinny away to help prepare something for their guest to eat. Immediately the two younger children pounced.

No. 13a

‘We want to tell you something; only you must promise never to let it out – as long as the stars shine.’ Henry promised on his starlight honour. ‘There,’ said Monkey, ‘we knew you were a star person. We’ve got a secret society, a Star Society – oh bother! Here’s Jinny!’ And indeed their sister was back...

Jane Anne (Jinny)

With their tiny nets of feather
They collect the stars to-gether:
And on scraps of windy weather...

...to put a cloth on the table – which task accomplished, she went back to the kitchen in full song. ‘Isn’t Jinny in the Society too?’ asked Henry. ‘Oh no,’ said Monkey, ‘she’d never understand. Now repeat after me:

No. 13b

All the rules I swear to keep,
When awake or when asleep,
None can tell what I’m about,
For when I’m in I’m also out.’
Henry duly recited. ‘Now you’re a full member of the Secret Star Society. You must choose a star.’ ‘What’s yours?’ Henry asked. Not surprisingly Monkey had two whole constellations – the Great and Little Bears. ‘Mine’s the Pole Star’, said Jimbo. ‘I’ll take Orion’, said Henry. ‘He’s always chasing the seven Pleiades.’ Monkey said scornfully. ‘Jiminy calls the Pleiades hers, but people who aren’t in can’t have a star’. Jimbo was thoughtful. ‘I wonder if Daddy has one?’ ‘But listen’, Monkey interrupted. ‘We think – we’re almost sure – we get out of our bodies at night and go shooting up to the stars. We think you go there too. But we want to know more about the Starlight Express and the Sprites – Daddy told us about them.’ ‘Well, you see, it’s like this’, Henry replied. ‘I can’t talk about these things except under the stars.’ ‘Then we must call a meeting for tomorrow night’ – Monkey was beside himself with excitement – ‘up in the mountains near the gorges of the Areuse.’ ‘I know exactly where’, added Jimbo.

But Jinny and Mother were back with Henry’s supper and the two young ones were packed off to bed, but not before reminding their guest of the next day’s rendezvous.

Act II

No. 15. Song ‘The Blue-eyed Fairy’

Organ-grinder

There’s a fairy that hides in the beautiful eyes
Of the children who treat her well;
In the little round hole where the eye-ball lies
She weaves her magical spell.
She is awfully tiny and shy to the sight,
But her magic’s past believing
For it fills you with light and with laughter,
It’s the spell of her own sweet weaving.

But the eyes must be blue,
And the heart must be true,
And the child must be better than gold!
They all looked southward, where above the Alps the huge outline of Orion began to appear, tilting with the speed of his eternal pursuit of the Pleiades, who sail ever calmly beyond his reach.

No. 17

Henry explained that the Pleiades had been attendants upon Artemis, and that the gods had set them among the stars to escape from the Mighty Hunter. 'But Orion never gave up', he said. 'He hunts them still. Look at his head and shoulders leaning forward above the horizon, never tired, never resting; his gleaming sword; his shining belt; and his aching arms, stretched out, across the sky. 'But truly, you know, he has caught them.' Henry was thinking of himself. 'Because their beauty is in his heart; and they toss their golden rain over him with their song, their tears, their laughter. And every night they dance together over our poor wumbled world.'

No. 18. Song ‘The sun has gone’

And then, as he had promised, Henry began to tell of the Starlight Express and the passengers whom he had brought to life from his boyhood's imagination and who each possessed a special magic which they used to bring the world back into sympathy and harmony.
The busy Dustman hurries through the sky;
The kind old Dustman's coming to your eye!

Organ-grinder
The sun has gone;
The tide of stars is setting all one way,
The Pleiades call softly to Orion
As, nightly, they have called these million years:
The children lie asleep; now let them out;
And, overhearing,
We waft the fairy call into your dreams,
That you may swim upon that tide of gold
And, list'ning in your hearts,
Just overhear
That deep, tremendous thunder
Signalling reply:
All's well!
Orion answering the Pleiades!

The Curfew began to ring from the village below. The three roused themselves, put out the fire, and started homewards. It had been an important evening for all of them.

As they approached the Citadelle Henry said, 'Don't forget to dream tonight!'
quite natural: Monkey got out of herself as a sword slips from its sheath. Her body went on breathing in the bed; Monkey herself stood softly shining on the floor. Jimbo was close behind, even brighter than his sister.

No. 20a

Turning towards the open window, they rose up lightly and floated through it into the starry night.

Their flight took them through the forest to the entrance to the Star Cave, which in their dream forms they had visited before but never entered. Imagine their astonishment as a brilliant figure flew past them and into the cave - it was none other than Jinny! Narrow though the entrance was, she clearly had no trouble getting in.

Monkey was ashamed; to think that she had not wanted her sister in the Star Society! Jinny was obviously far more at home here than they were.

To Jimbo it seemed that she was perhaps more her true self here than in her waking hours. Her frequent air of perplexity was explained; she was simply waiting for sleep to take her to a place where her natural generosity of spirit could find fulfilment.

No. 20b

At length Jinny came out of the cave and came over to them. ‘Oh good, you’re here!’ she said. ‘You can help me – I’ve been collecting stardust for Mother and Daddy. Mother has such a burden of worry on her shoulders, and Daddy needs such an awful lot to help clear the way for his big ideas to come through.

No. 21

Then there’s Madame Jequier and dear Miss Waghorn – and so many others need help...

Baritone (from a distance)

Ah!

Listen! Do you hear? It’s the whole world crying in its sleep.

‘I must go,’ Jinny cried, ‘I’ve got so much to do before the interfering sun comes up!’ And she shot away like a comet. At the same time a new light appeared in the sky. Could it be the sun already? Another comet like Jinny? Whatever it was dipped slowly through the trees, settled, stopped, and began to purr. Jimbo gasped. ‘It, it, it, it’s, it’s a railway train!’ he stammered in amazement.

No. 22

Could it be?

It was!

The Starlight Express!

‘Last stop; all get out here!’ cried the Guard. ‘Return journey begins five minutes before the interfering Sun rises.’
And the shabby Tramp, playing his barrel organ.

‘Well, let’s see now’, said Monkey. She counted on her fingers: Dustman, Sweep, Gardener, Laugher, Lamplighter, and you, Tramp – oh, but where’s the Haystack Woman?’ asked Monkey. ‘Stuck in the train, I’m afraid’, replied the Tramp. ‘We need the Winds to blow her out; I’ll call ‘em.’

Song ‘Wake up, you little Night Winds!’

Wake up, you little Night Winds,
Blow your best!
We want you all –
Ha! Ha! that’s East and West;
The North Wind too –
She always blows the strongest:
You all must draw your deepest breath and longest,
With open mouth!
Now go and blow the Haystack out of bed!
Whistle her dreams of straw across the sky
And whirl her canvas skirts about her head!
You can but try!
Go, sweep her to’ards the Cave, and break her trance:

And with that the first passenger hurried by them: he already was aglow before he entered the cave.

It was the Dustman.

Behind him came a figure enveloped in a cloud of black that turned golden as he went in.

The Sweep.
Next came the sunburnt figure of the Gardener.

Then a fantastic, light twirling creature who sang as she danced around them – the Laugher.

Song ‘I’m ev’rywhere’

Ah! That sings away the half
Of ev’ry care
Because I laugh! I laugh!

Now the lanky form of the Lamplighter rushed by, to gather dust to light the stars.
'But where's Cousin Henry?' Jimbo said anxiously.

'Let me think now,' the Tramp said with a twinkle in his eye. 'I'm almost sure I saw him on the Express; he can't be far away.'

'I've been here all along,' came the familiar voice, 'watching the excitement. But now it's time to go into the Cave.' 'What do we do there?' Monkey asked. 'We load ourselves with starlight, and then it's off to mix it with people's dreams.'

And so saying, he led them towards the entrance, from which a great light shone, and together they plunged in.

Thick Mother of the Sprites –
She must get in:
Even a Haystack's elephantine dance
Is somewhere thin!
Is somewhere - thin!

The Haystack Woman's natural state was inertia. Some of the passengers had been trying to pull and push her through the carriage door.

No. 30. Dance of the Winds

To no avail!
The Winds began a dance, at first gentle, then more boisterous, hoping somehow to propel the Haystack Woman's enormous frame out of the train.

'Oh, what's the use?...' came the voice from the mass of hay. 'Nothing short of a gale could move me; and if I ever should get into the cave I'd block the whole place up!' The Winds kept trying anyhow.

'Will someone please fetch the Dustman?...' said the Guard.

The Dustman sprinkled the poor exhausted Haystack Woman with a few golden handfuls and she fell asleep instantly.

'She'll dream she's been in', he said. 'That's just as good.'

No. 31

Anyone gazing skywards at that moment would have seen the Seven Sisters of the Pleiades – Maia, Electra, Alcyone, Taygete, Asterope, Celaeno, and Merope – dancing their gently radiant dance.

Three glowing figures, loaded with stardust, had emerged from the cave. 'Now our work begins', said Henry. 'We'll stop first at the Pension to see how we can help, and then to Mother and Daddy, who need us the most. But we must be quick to do as much as we can before the sun rises.'
dark and dense – could their starlight succeed in getting through to her?

'We must deal with this at once,' Henry said, 'but, truthfully, I'm not sure how to begin.'

As though summoned by his words, the Gardener was instantly at their side. 'I'll show you how,' he said. 'She loves her garden, and her sympathy with nature always lets me in.'

And he began to sing of the yellow flowers that store starlight.

No. 34a. Song 'Dandelions, Daffodils'

Gardener

Dandelions, Daffodils,
Sheet o' yaller Roses,
Golden Rod and Marigold,
Buttercups for Posies!

Golden Gorse shines up the hill,
Primroses are near you,
Cowslips ring their starry bells
Ev'rywhere to cheer you!

Henry and the children were now outside the Pension. They hovered for a moment over the fragrant lilac bushes and then, gliding into the house, stood beside the bed of the Widow Jequier.

Scene 2

No. 34

Madame Jequier's constant anxiety about her obligations to her bank and the future of the Pension had clearly not been relinquished when she slept; the atmosphere about her was
Scene 3
No. 37
At the Citadelle, Henry and Monkey found
Mother and Daddy both asleep in the den:
she on the couch, where the Woman of the
Haystack hovered over her; he on a daybed
by his desk. Jinny was there. 'Oh, please help
me', she said. 'I've been pulling so hard. His
night-body comes out easily as far as the
head, but then it sticks hopelessly.' 'Let me
look', Henry said.

No. 35
In her attic chamber above, the old lady lay
among her fragments of broken memory. They
were hardly surprised to find the Lamplighter
there before them; with his glowing pole he
was touching the objects strewn in disarray
about the room; though he could not restore
her dishevelled mind, he could help her find
more readily some of the lost things her
memory often sought in vain.
'She's fastened so delicately to the heart
and brain', Henry murmured. 'Already she's
partly out!'
He thought of the stardust kept only
'For the old and lonely,
Who sleep so little that they need the best.'

No. 36
Henry turned to the children. 'Now for your
parents!' But, in a twinkling, Jimbo was gone,
woke by the singing of the birds in the plane
tree outside his window: dawn was not far off.

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parents!' But, in a twinkling, Jimbo was gone,
woke by the singing of the birds in the plane
tree outside his window: dawn was not far off.

The room filled with the little rushing music
of wind in leaves, and Madame Jequier stirred
in her sleep and smiled, settling into a peaceful
slumber.

Henry wondered if there was something
he might do to help her in the waking world.
'Should we go to Miss Waghorn now?' asked
Jimbo.

No. 35
In her attic chamber above, the old lady lay
among her fragments of broken memory. They
were hardly surprised to find the Lamplighter
there before them; with his glowing pole he
was touching the objects strewn in disarray
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'For the old and lonely,
Who sleep so little that they need the best.'

No. 36
Henry turned to the children. 'Now for your
parents!' But, in a twinkling, Jimbo was gone,
woke by the singing of the birds in the plane
tree outside his window: dawn was not far off.

Jane Anne (Jinny)
I dust the den with starlight
Till it glistens and it gleams!
And I give my wumbled parents
The Pleiades for dreams!

No. 38. Song 'O, stars shine brightly'
First to appear was the Laugher.
She began a light and graceful dance, and
Daddy's pattern started to clear.
'I'm calling the others!' she cried.
The Sprites had almost finished their task. Henry and the girls began to feel their concentration slipping away; the interfering sun was about to rise.

Said the Dustman, 'The pattern's disentangled. It will hold the light when it arrives'.

Henry and the girls slipped back into their sleeping bodies; they would remember nothing when they waked.

The Sprites flitted out, back to the Starlight Express.

The Laugher was the last to leave, greeting the coming day with Jinny's song. Or had Jinny been singing hers?

No. 41 Song 'Dawn Song'

Laugher

We shall meet the Morning Spiders,
The fairy-cotton riders,
Each mounted on a star’s rejected ray.
With their tiny nets of feather
They collect our Thoughts together
And on strips of windy weather
Bring the day!
When a voice disturbed the Lancers:  
‘Children, come! It’s time for bed!’
Railway carriage, Sprites and Dancers  
Flew up to the stars instead!

Now I am a Constellation,  
Free from ev’ry earthly care,  
Playing nightly at my station  
For the Big and Little Bear;  
But my tunes are still entrancing  
As that night in leafy June,  
When I caught the children dancing  
With the Sprites beneath the moon!

Still the children come to hear me  
In the lone and dingy street;  
Still the heavy pavement near me  
Flutters to their happy feet;  
For my tunes are ne’er forgotten,  
And they bring the scent of musk:  
Grown-up folk may call ‘em rotten,  
But I’m looked for when it’s dusk.

Scene I
No. 43. Song ‘Dandelions, Daffodils’
A few days later the early morning saw the  
den of the Citadelle a hive of activity.

Jane Anne (Jinny)
Dandelions, Daffodils,  
Sheet o’ yaller Roses,  
Golden Rod and Marigold,  
Buttercups for Posies!
Miss Waghorn, whose confusion of mind had of late made her exasperating and difficult to live with – she was becoming increasingly argumentative – had suddenly changed; she seemed soothed, composed, and gentle. Her mind and memory were more orderly somehow – she was sweet and good-natured all day, had sorted her bills and papers, and even written a letter to her nephew. Everyone was delighted.

‘Of course,’ Madame Jequier added ruefully, ‘one can’t tell how long it will last, hélas!’ And then Daddy came in; he looked as if he would burst. Mother took his hand. They all waited. ‘I’ve got the form, the pattern, as it were’, he said at last. ‘All the rest is flowing in.

No. 44

Crocus and Laburnum,  
Love the names and learn ‘em,  
All my yaller flowers are  
Seeded from a yaller star.

Golden Gorse shines up the hill,  
Primroses are near you,  
Cowslips ring their starry bells  
Ev’rywhere to cheer you!

Jinny had already been into the fields, picking yellow flowers, which were now in bowls everywhere, and she was singing of them as her mother came in.

Mother seemed rejuvenated somehow.

The truth was that the nocturnal efforts of the three children and Henry, who all now appeared for breakfast, had finally succeeded in getting both parents ‘out’.

The book was beginning to take shape and John Campden was drawing great support from his wife – they had not been so close for many years.

Henry had also taken a trip into Neuchatel and visited the bank.

The reason for this now became apparent as Madame Jequier burst into the room and flung her arms round his neck. The Pension was saved; how could she ever thank and repay him? His embarrassment was fortunately short-lived as the widow’s other news came tumbling out.

No. 45

‘My main idea is this: that the sources of our life lie hid with beauty very, very far away, and that our real, big, continuous life is spiritual – out of the body, as I shall call it. The waking-day life uses what it can bring over from this enormous, under-running sea of universal consciousness where we’re all together, splendid, free, untamed; where thinking is creation and we feel and know each other face to face.’

The room was held in a kind of awed silence.

Was it Henry’s ever-active imagination or did the tall figure of a lamplighter at that moment pass by? It was certainly the wrong time of day!
It was late evening on the day of his arrival; the children were in bed and the three grownups were sitting comfortably together in the den.

Henry had dozed and awoke with a start. He had dreamt that he stood outside a cave in the forest; a shadowy figure carrying a long pole with a star at its end had approached him and whispered in his ear.

And, in the instant of waking, he remembered its words:

'Send it down in action,
Scatter it in thought,
Sympathy and kindness
Bring the whole world out.
Sow it. Plant it.
Millions want it.
Half the world is
Crying in its sleep.'

John Campden stood up and, somewhat self-consciously, took a portfolio from his desk. 'I thought you might like to hear what your last visit brought to us all', he said. Mother put down her knitting as he began to read. It was a tale of Starlight and Star Caves, and ever increasing numbers of Starlight Expresses with their Sprite passengers and the people they recruited to bring back to the world what
He felt, if possible, even more attached to those Sprites now than he had been as a boy – the Gardener, the Sweep – and the children’s favourite, the disreputable Tramp. Henry himself was there too – named Orion. Somehow his cousin had blended everything together; the boundaries between fantasy and so-called reality had become blurred. It was remarkable.

The author had paused while his wife went to fetch him some tea – Henry, from the fatigue of his journey and the warmth of the room, nodded off again.

Immediately he was back at the cave and the Laugher was singing.

Laugher

Laugh a little ev’ry day,
At yourself, that is to say.

And then another voice:

‘Plant it. Seed it. Millions need it. Half the world...’

Mother was back with the tea, balancing the tray precariously as she came through the door. The men hurried to help. When they were all comfortably settled again she said, ‘I have a question; is it allowed for me to have a favourite Sprite?’ ‘Of course’ they
Daddy now resumed his reading and once again they were drawn in by the profound simplicity of the tale, which seemed as familiar as something read in childhood long ago, and only half forgotten.

Henry had the feeling that its message was already being borne by the blue winds of night into the northern forests, across southern seas, into the farthest corners of the earth wherever there were receptive hearts.

And suddenly he remembered an extraordinary conversation he had had with Miss Waghorn just before his departure in the Spring:

They were sitting together in the Pension after supper and talking about sleep. 'I look forward to it,' she said, 'it unties knots. I am old and lonely and I need the best –'. Without thinking, he took her up: 'The rest, the common stuff –', 'Is good enough', she chimed in, 'For Fräulein, or for Baby, or for Mother', he laughed, she: 'or any other', he: 'who needs a bit of dust', she: 'but yet can do without it', then both together: 'if they must!' 'Well, I never!' she exclaimed, 'if that's not a nursery rhyme of my childhood that I've not heard for sixty years and more!' But how had she known the rhyme? He had heard it one night in the forest. Do we all think the same things? No, but maybe our dream worlds have common images and every dream that comes to us has been dreamt before.

Organ-grinder
They’re all soft-shiny now, The time draws near; Their hearts are dusted And the path’s swept clear! The tide of stars is setting All one way; Bring on the dawn, Yet not the dawn of Day!
As though reading his cousin's mind, Daddy closed the portfolio and rose from his chair. 'It's not my own idea,' he said, 'I'm convinced of that. It's all flocked into me from some other mind that thought it long ago, but couldn't write it, perhaps. No thought is ever lost, you see. I've written this poem to end the book:

'Now sinks to sleep the clamour of the day,
And, million-footed, from the Milky Way,
Falls shyly on my heart the world's lost
Thought —
Shower of primrose dust the stars have taught
To haunt each sleeping mind,
Till it may find
A garden in some eager, passionate brain
That, rich in loving-kindness as in pain,
Shall harvest it, then scatter forth again
Its garnered loveliness, from heaven caught.'

No. 49

All three children, perhaps sent back from their nocturnal enterprises by the Sprites, had waked and were now standing in the room, listening. Without a word being said everybody went out into the night; the sky was ablaze with stars.

The whole creation seemed to glow, as though waiting to be kindled into flame. The promise of new hope was everywhere around them, and the stars themselves seemed to be calling:

The Interfering Sun has set!
Now Sirius flings down the Net!
See, the meshes flash and quiver,
As the golden, silent river
Clears the dark world's troubled dream.
Takes it sleeping,
Gilds it weeping
With a star's mysterious beam.

Soprano
Oh, think Beauty!
It's your duty!
In the Cave you work for others,
All the stars your little brothers;
Think their splendour,
Strong and tender;
Think their Glory
In the Story
Of each day your nights redeem!

Soprano
Ev'ry loving, gentle thought
Of this fairy brilliance wrought.
Every wish that you surrender,
Every service that you render
Brings its tributary stream!
And sow earth's little gardens of unrest
With joy and trust;
For ev'ry hour
A golden flower:
Love, Laughter, Courage, Hope,
And all the rest.

Organ-grinder
Hearts must be soft-shiny dressed
With your softest, sweetest best...

Laugher
With your softest, sweetest best
Dust that comes from very far.
Ah! Hearts must be soft-shiny dressed
With your softest, sweetest golden dust
For the rising of the star.

Organ-grinder
Daddy's pattern, heart and brain,
Sprinkle with the golden, golden rain,
With your softest, sweetest best dust.
For the rising of the star.

And a star of tremendous brilliance was rising
in the East, heralding the dawn.

11
Jinny said, with her characteristic
gravity, 'I believe that star first appeared to
announce the birth of a child'. Jimbo added
quietly, 'Only children and Very Wise Men know
what it means'.

FINIS

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Three Songs from 'The Starlight Express'

I. The Organ-grinder's Song

Then children, I pray you sing low to me,
And cover my eyes with your hands.
O kiss me again till I sleep and dream
That I'm lost in your fairylands;
For the grown-up folk are a troublesome folk,
And the book of their childhood is torn!
Is blotted, and crumpled, and torn!
For the grown-up folk...

II. The Dustman's Song

The busy Dustman flutters down the lanes;
He's off to gather star-dust for your dreams.
He sweeps the Constellations for his sack,
Finding it thickest in the Zodiac,
But sweetest in the careless meteor's track;
That he keeps only
For the old and lonely
(And is very strict about it),
Who sleep so little that they need the best;
The rest –
The common stuff –
Is good enough
For Fräulein, or for Baby, or for Mother,
Or any other
Who likes a bit of dust,
And yet can do without it
If they must!
The busy Dustman hurries through the sky;
The kind old Dustman's coming to your eye!
III. The Gardener's Song

Golden Gorse shines up the hill,
Primroses are near you,
Cowslips ring their starry bells
Ev'rywhere to cheer you!

Crocus and Laburnum,
Love the names and learn 'em,
All my yaller flowers are
Seeded from a golden star.

Stars are seeding in the air
(If only you could know);
They'll bless your garden ev'rywhere
(If you'll only let them grow).

Dandelions, Daffodils,
Streets o' yaller Roses,
Golden Rod and Marigold,
Buttercups for Posies!
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Microphones

Thuresson: CM 402 (main sound)
Schoeps: MK22 / MK4 / MK6
DPA: 4006 & 4011
Neumann: UB9

CM 402 microphones are hand built by the designer, Jörgen Thuresson, in Sweden.
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**Sound engineer** Ralph Couzens  
**Assistant engineer** Jonathan Cooper  
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**A & R administrator** Sue Shortridge  
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COMPACT DISC ONE
premiere recording in this version
The Starlight Express, Op. 78*

☐ - ☐ Act I 20:29
☐ - ☐ Act II 37:30
TT 58:03

COMPACT DISC TWO

☐ - ☐ Act III 28:47

Sir Edward Elgar (1883 – 1968)
premiere recording

☐ - ☐ Three Songs from 'The Starlight Express'† 6:03
Orchestrated by Sir Andrew Davis

Sir Edward Elgar
premiere recording

☐ - ☐ Suite from 'The Starlight Express'‡ 44:57
Arranged by Sir Andrew Davis
TT 80:05

Clive Carey (1883 – 1968)
premiere recording

☐ - ☐ Elin Manahan Thomas soprano
(Laugher / Jane Anne)*
Roderick Williams baritone
(Organ-grinder / Gardener)*†‡
Simon Callow narrator*†‡
Scottish Chamber Orchestra
Peter Thomas leader

Sir Andrew Davis