The Promise of Liberty

An adaptation of “The New Colossus” by Emma Lazarus

for unison or two-part chorus
with optional descant
and optional piano or guitar accompaniment
Verse 1:

Winds blow fierce and foul storms rage. Safe shelter seems a hopeless dream.

But in the dark a promise beams, a beacon to a golden age.
Verse 1:

Give me your tired, your poor, your huddled masses yearning to be free. Give me the wretched from your teeming shore. Send these, the homeless, tempest tossed to me. I lift my lamp beside the golden door.

Verse 2:

So cries the strong heroic woman, raising her arm to light the way.

Chorus 1:

Come to me, I lift my lamp beside the golden door.
Her words ring out from day to day, to greet each wave of immigrants.

Chorus 2 & 3:

Give me your tired, your poor, your huddled masses yearning to be free. Give me the wretched from your teeming shore.

Optional Part 2
Verse 3:

Some crossed the sea in a tempest squall. More came by land up the hemisphere.

Chorus 3

Still there's room for every one here. The promise of liberty welcomes all.
Verse 4:
Winds still blow and storms still threaten the shelter we build in this new land.

But here we weave a fabric grand, made strong from many colored threads.

Chorus 4:
Conductor may invite audience to join in the 4th chorus

Give me your tired, your poor, your huddled masses yearning to be free. Give me the
The Promise of Liberty

Winds blow fierce and foul storms rage.  
Safe shelter seems a hopeless dream.  
But in the dark a promise beams,  
a beacon to a golden age.

[Chorus] "Give me your tired, your poor,  
Your huddled masses yearning to breathe free.  
Give me the wretched from your teeming shore.  
Send these, the homeless, tempest-tossed to me,  
I lift my lamp beside the golden door."

So cries the strong heroic woman,  
raising her arm to light the way.  
Her words ring out from day to day  
to greet each wave of immigrants.  [Repeat chorus]

Some crossed the sea in a tempest squall.  
More came by land up the hemisphere.  
Still there's room for everyone here.  
The promise of liberty welcomes all.  [Repeat chorus]

Winds still blow and storms still threaten  
the shelter we build in this new land.  
But here we weave a fabric grand  
Made strong from many colored threads.  [Repeat chorus]

Duration: 3 minutes

The text is by the composer. The chorus is adapted from the sonnet, “The New Colossus,” by Emma Lazarus (1883), written to raise money for the construction of the Statue of Liberty's pedestal. Since 1945, her poem has graced the entrance to the Statue of Liberty in New York harbor.

The piece is designed for maximum flexibility and may be sung unaccompanied or with piano or guitar accompaniment. The verses are all to be sung in unison. Repeats of the chorus may be sung in unison or in 2-part harmony. There is an optional descant for the final time through the chorus. The conductor may also invite the audience to join in the final chorus.

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