

WEEPING

Written by Dan Heymann

(Copyright Bright Blue)

Performed by Josh Groban with Vusi Mahlasela

*I knew a man who lived in fear
It was huge, it was angry, it was drawing near
Behind his house, a secret place
Was the shadow of the demon he could never face
He built a wall of steel and flame
And men with guns, to keep it tame
Then standing back, he made it plain
That the nightmare would never ever rise again
But the fear and the fire and the guns remain*

***It doesn't matter now
It's over anyhow
He tells the world that it's sleeping
But as the night came round
I heard its lonely sound
It wasn't roaring, it was weeping***

*And then one day the neighbors came
They were curious to know about the smoke and flame
They stood around outside the wall
But of course there was nothing to be heard at all
"My friends," he said, "We've reached our goal
The threat is under firm control
As long as peace and order reign
I'll be damned if I can see a reason to explain
Why the fear and the fire and the guns remain"*

“Weeping,” written by Dan Heymann, is a famous protest song that emerged from the South African anti Apartheid movement during the mid-1980's, and this song of freedom has been recorded by many artists, including noted South African band Bright Blue and, more recently, Josh Groban, in a collaboration with Ladysmith Black Mambazo and Vusi Mahlasela, who has previously released a solo recording of this song of protest . The anti Apartheid lyrics Weeping contains are among the most-recorded freedom song lyrics of any protest song to have come out of South Africa. The Weeping song (rights to which are partially controlled by Muffled Music) led to a February, 2006, encounter between singer Josh Groban and songwriter Dan Heymann at New York City's Sony Studios, a legendary institution which has given many a song freedom to soar. It was a thrill for Dan to hear his anti Apartheid song being recorded by such a high-caliber team. Having been a musician in contact with various anti-Apartheid movements during the Freedom-Struggle in South Africa, when examining the Weeping lyrics, Dan was thrilled to feel the connection of his lyric to protest song tradition. When the time came to add backing vocals, nobody needed to teach Vusi Mahlasela lyrics to the Weeping song, having already performed it live so many times.

From Dan Heymann: “I've been asked many times about the symbolism in the ‘Weeping’ lyrics...The man referred to in the ‘Weeping’ lyrics is the late P. W. Botha, one of the last white leaders of South Africa before the end of the Apartheid regime. The ‘demon he could never face’ refers to the aspirations of the oppressed majority, while the ‘Weeping’ lyrics also refer to the neighbors, literally the journalists from other countries who were monitoring the situation in South Africa.”