

Nay, Speak No Ill

Earnestly ♩ = 76-96

The musical score is written for a four-part vocal ensemble (Soprano, Alto, Tenor, Bass) in treble and bass clefs. The key signature is one sharp (F#) and the time signature is 3/4. The melody is primarily in the soprano part, with harmonization in the other parts. The lyrics are printed below the staves.

1. Nay, speak no ill; a kind - ly word Can nev - er leave a sting be - hind;
2. Full oft a bet - ter seed is sown By choos - ing thus the kind - er plan,
3. Give me the heart that fain would hide, Would fain a - no - ther's faults ef - face.
4. No, let us reach a high - er mood, A no - bler es - ti - mate of man;

And, oh, to breathe each tale we've heard Is far be - neath a no - ble mind.
For, if but lit - tle good is known, Still let us speak the best we can.
How can it please the hu - man pride To prove hu - man - i - ty but base?
Be ear - nest in the search for good, And speak of all the best we can.

5. Then speak no ill, but lenient be
To others' failings as your own.
If you're the first a fault to see,
Be not the first to make it known,

6. For life is but a passing day;
No lip may tell how brief its span.
Then, oh, the little time we stay,
Let's speak of all the best we can.

Text: Anonymous, ca. 1853

Music: William J. Kirkpatrick, 1885

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