

WILLIAM SUSMAN

Eternal Light

for
SATB

William Susman
Eternal Light
on three poems by Sue Susman

1. Eternal Light

Heart in the darkness
holding on to the light inside.
Inside there is a spark, a light that burns
and never goes out, never grows dim but
burns hard and bright
in the dark void of unending night,
the vast empty blackness of my self
where I can only hear the echo of my cavernous soul and
the simple cadence of my healthy heart
hurting and healing over and over
pumping the life into my veins
pushing it through and around
so that I am always filled with it
so that I am always alive to the light
even when I am lost, cold and wandering
lonely in the dark.

2. An Old, Old Woman

An old, old woman
crackles like a gramophone disc,
the tune still audible, though the words are fading.
She smiles, with watery eyes
at unfamiliar faces,
family members, whose names she has forgotten.
The visits are so few.
Despite contented rocking,
the hideous clamor will not be calm.
It speaks with when she talks, describing memories.
The past will not die for her, but
continues to the present.
The grooves deepen with each turn,
the needle point grows dull,
but sound keeps coming forward.
She gives advice, the story unwinds.
Old friends, now dead, still talk to her sometimes.
She remembers back to a time before the circle broke and
she went pacing wearily
to catch the straying end.

3. The Peace Unseen

The sun rises like a lover
pulling the covers off the sleeping city
naked in her bed.
I seek the peace of dreams
like a shawl to wrap myself in.
A way out
a way in,
something better
something unseen
but always present,
like a shawl wrapped loose around my shoulders
to cover me as I walk on.

Because there is no protection.
The wind will burn and
the rain will cut
and the sun,
ever the jealous lover,
will chase his rivals and grow dark with rage.
Only the quiet voice,
the peace of dreams that lives within,
can cover me,
can sing to me,
the lullaby of life,
the peace unseen
but always there.

Eternal Light

for SATB

poetry by
Sue Susman

music by
William Susman

1. Eternal Light

Slowly with great expression ♩ = 72

6

pp molto legato *rit.* *a tempo*

Soprano
Heart in the dark - ness hold-ing on to the light in-side. In - side

Alto
Heart in the dark ness hold-ing on to the light in-side. In - side

Tenor
Heart in the dark - ness hold-ing on to the light in-side. In - side

Bass
Heart in the dark - ness hold-ing on to the light in-side. In - side

pp molto legato *rit.* *a tempo*

(for rehearsal only)

7

there is a spark, a light that burns and ne - ver goes out, ne - ver grows

there is a spark, a light that burns and ne - ver goes out, ne - ver grows

8 there is a spark, a light that burns and ne - ver goes out, ne - ver grows

there is a spark, a light that burns and ne - ver goes out, ne - ver grows

14

rit. **a tempo**

pp

dim but burns hard and bright in the dark void of un-end-ing night, the

pp

dim but burns hard and bright in the dark void of un-end-ing night, the

pp

dim but burns hard and bright in the dark void of un-end-ing night, the

pp

dim but burns hard and bright in the dark void of un-end-ing night, the

rit. **a tempo**

pp

rit.

a tempo

21

vast e - mpty black - ness of my self where I can on - ly hear the e -

vast e - mpty black - ness of my self where I can on - ly hear the e -

vast e - mpty black - ness of my self where I can on - ly hear the e -

vast e - mpty black - ness of my self where I can on - ly hear the e -

rit.

a tempo

28

- cho of my cav-ern-ous soul and the sim - ple ca-dence of my heal - thy

- cho of my cav-ern-ous soul and the sim - ple ca-dence of my heal - thy

- cho of my cav-ern-ous soul and the sim - ple ca-dence of my heal - thy

- cho of my cav-ern-ous soul and the sim - ple ca-dence of my heal - thy

Eternal Light

36

37

heart hurting and heal - ing o - ver and o - ver pumping the life in - to my veins ____

heart hurting and heal - ing o - ver and o - ver pumping the life in - to my veins ____

heart hurting and heal - ing o - ver and o - ver pumping the life in - to my veins ____

heart hurting and heal - ing o - ver and o - ver pumping the life in - to my veins ____

44

push - ing it through ____ and a - round so that I am al - ways filled with it

push - ing it through and a - round so that I am al - ways filled with it

push - ing it through and a - round so that I am al - ways filled with it

push - ing it through and a - round so that I am al - ways filled with it

Eternal Light

50

allargando

cresc. poco a poco

so that I am al-ways a - live to the light

cresc. poco a poco

so that I am al-ways a - live to the light

cresc. poco a poco

so that I am al-ways a - live to the light

cresc. poco a poco

so that I am al-ways a - live to the light

allargando

cresc. poco a poco

57

a tempo

rit.

pp

e - ven when I am lost, cold and wan-der - ing lone-ly in the dark.

pp

e - ven when I am lost, cold and wan-der - ing lone-ly in the dark.

pp

e - ven when I am lost, cold and wan-der - ing lone-ly in the dark.

pp

e - ven when I am lost, cold and wan-der - ing lone-ly in the dark.

a tempo

rit.

pp

2. An Old, Old Woman

Quasi rubato with great expression $\text{♩} = 54$ *rit.***a tempo**

p

An old, old wo-man cra-ckles like a old, old
gra - ma - phone disc, the tune still aud - i - ble,
old, old, wo - - -

Quasi rubato with great expression $\text{♩} = 54$ *rit.***a tempo**for
rehearsal
only

p

She smiles, with wa - ter - y eyes at un - fa - mil - iar fa - ces, fami - ly
wo - - - man fami - ly mem - bers,
old wo - man cra - kles

5

rit.

man cra - - - ckles

rit.

Eternal Light

8

a tempo

rit.

a tempo

mem - bers The vis - its are so few. De - spite con - tent - ed rock - ing,
 whose names she has for - got - ten. gra - ma - phone disc,
 like a gra - ma - phone disc,

like

a

gra - - -

a tempo

rit.

a tempo

the tune sill aud - i - ble, when she talks, —
 that hi - de - ous cla - mor will not be calm. It speaks with her old, old
 the tune sill aud - i - ble, old, old
 ma - - - phone disc, old, old

13

11

rit.

a tempo

the tune sill aud - i - ble, when she talks, —
 that hi - de - ous cla - mor will not be calm. It speaks with her old, old
 the tune sill aud - i - ble, old, old
 ma - - - phone disc, old, old

rit.

a tempo

rit. **a tempo**
mp *mp*

15 de - scrib-ing me - mo - ries. The past will not die for her, but con - tin - ues to the
 wo - man The past will not die for
 wo - man The past will not die for
 wo - man The past will not die for

rit. **a tempo**
mp

rit. **a tempo**
f *pp*

19 pre - sent. old, old
 her, The grooves deep - en with each turn,
 her, The grooves deep - en
 her, old, old

rit. **a tempo**
f *pp*

23

the needle point grows dull, but sound keeps coming forward. old,
woman old, She gives advice,
The grooves deep - en The grooves
wo - man old, old

26 *rit.* 27 *a tempo* *rit.* *f*

rit. 27 *a tempo* *rit.* *f*
woman Old friends, now dead, still talk to her some-times.
the sto-ry un - winds. Old friends, now dead,
deep - en Old friends, now dead,
wo - man Old friends, now dead,
rit. *a tempo* *rit.* *f*

Eternal Light

30

a tempo

rit.

p

She re - mem - bers back to a time be - fore the cir - cle broke and
 old, old wo - - - man
 old, old wo - - - man
 old, old wo - - - man

a tempo *rit.*

32

niente

she went pac - ing wear - i - ly to catch the stray - ing end. _____
 old, old wo - - - man
 old, old wo - - - man
 old, old wo - - - man

niente

3. The Peace Unseen

Slowly with great expression ♩ = 66

7

S. div.

lov-er ci-ty na-
lov-er ci-ty -ked

A. div.

a sleep-ing in
like off the in

T. div.

ri-ses co-vers her
sun the her

B. div.

The pull-ing bed.
The pull-ing bed.

Slowly with great expression ♩ = 66

for rehearsal only

ppp < pp < p < mp < mf > p

13

10

pp *pp* *pp* *pp*

dreams like a A

pp *pp* *pp* *pp*

of like a A

pp *pp* *pp* *pp*

peace shawl way

pp *pp* *pp* *pp*

peace to out

pp *pp* *pp* *pp*

the wrap a

pp *pp* *pp* *pp*

the my-self way

pp *pp* *pp* *pp*

seek in in

pp *pp* *pp* *pp*

I in in

pp *pp* *pp* *pp*

19

25

some - *pp* *mf* *mf*
 -thing *pp* *mf* *mf*
 - sent. (loose

bet-ter *pp* *mp* *mf*
 - e - wrapped
 bet-ter *pp* *mp* *mf*
 pre - wrapped

some-thing *pp* *p* *mf*
 - ways shawl
 some-thing *pp* *p* *mf*
 al - a

un - *pp* *pp* *mf*
 but like
 - seen *pp* *pp* *mf*
 but like

pp *pp* *p* *mp* *mf* *mf*

27

ders walk on. I shoul - as my - ver me round co - a - - - to

mf *f* *mf* *f* *mf* *mf* *mf* *mp* *mp* *mf* *p* *mf* *mp* *p* *mp* *mf* *f*

(♩ = 84)

34

subito p

Be-cause there is no shield. The wind will burn and the rain the sun

subito p

no shield The wind the rain will cut and the sun e - ver

subito p

Be-cause there is no shield. The wind will burn and the rain the sun

subito p

no shield The wind the rain will cut and the sun e - ver

(♩ = 84)

subito p

38

rit.

the jea-lous lo - ver, will chase his ri - vals grow dark with rage.

lo - ver ri - vals and grow dark with rage.

the jea-lous lo - ver, will chase his ri - vals grow dark with rage.

lo - ver ri - vals and grow dark with rage.

rit.

Eternal Light

(♩ = ♪) a tempo

accel.

pp

On - ly the qui - et voice the _____ peace of _____ dreams that _____ lives with - in,

pp

On - ly the qui - et voice the _____ peace of _____ dreams that _____ lives with - in,

pp

On - ly the qui - et voice the _____ peace of _____ dreams that _____ lives with - in,

pp

On - ly the qui - et voice the _____ peace of _____ dreams that _____ lives with - in,

(♩ = ♪) a tempo

pp

accel.

a tempo

48 *mf* *rit.* *pp*

can _____ co - ver me. can sing to me, the lull - a - by

mf *pp*

can _____ co - ver me. can sing to me, the lull - a - by

mf *pp*

can _____ co - ver me. can sing to me, the lull - a - by

mf *pp*

can _____ co - ver me. can sing to me, the lull - a - by

mf *rit.* *a tempo*

