

William Susman

Scatter My Ashes

for Soprano and Piano

on poems by Sue Susman

Susman Music

### 1. Scatter My Ashes by Sue Susman

Scatter my ashes before I die.  
Let me blow and fade  
in the wind  
over water  
into nothing.  
Watch me dissolve in air.  
Scatter my old bones.  
I am keeping the young ones  
fresh, strong the blood circles  
and weaves me into a whole piece  
with long slender red thread  
buried under my skin.

### 2. The Night Tree by Sue Susman

In the distance in the dark  
I talk hard to an old tree.  
Winding round and round, I am  
a flame curling upwards  
and the tree welcomes me.  
I don't have to have a reason to be here.  
There is time enough to understand.  
I don't have to explain.  
My name is the sound of the wind blowing and  
my spirit is as old.  
Until the sky grows light, I will stay here  
wound tightly to the tree and  
listen to the way the dark feels.  
The fire in my throat burns more quietly now.  
I can hear the empty sound of dawn.

### 3. Even in the Dark by Sue Susman

The forest breathes in and out as I sleep and curl  
like a cat snuggled into a bigger sleeping body.  
Even in the dark  
I wake and see light from above,  
the moon burning into black earth;  
stars, glittering chips of glass  
scatter in a strange design.  
I keep my eyes open until morning.

### 4. Only Clear Space Inside by Sue Susman

Take off the old wood and burn it.  
I am leaving this part of me here.  
And as I light the match  
to start this fire, I feel the flames begin  
to jump out of me.  
I am burning myself up from the inside, and  
this fire burns clean, leaves no ashes,  
only clear space inside.  
Now the wind picks up.  
The flames grow higher.  
There is no pain.

### 5. Eternal Light by Sue Susman

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.

# Scatter My Ashes

for Soprano and Piano

Poetry by  
Sue Susman

Music by  
William Susman

## 1. Scatter My Ashes

Other worldly ♩ = 108

Soprano

Piano

*p*

Scat - ter my ash - es

*Red.* \* *Red.*

4

be - fore I die.

\* *Red.* \* *Red.*

8

Let me blow and fade

\* *Red.*

12

In the wind \_\_\_\_\_

\* *Leg.* \* *Leg.*

16

o - ver wa - ter \_\_\_\_\_ in - to noth - ing. \_\_\_\_\_

\*

20

sotto voce

Watch me dis - solve \_\_\_\_\_ in

*Leg.* \*

24

air.

And.

27

Sca - tter my old - bones.

\* And.

30

I am keep - ing the young

\* And.

33

ones fresh,

\* Ped.

36

strong the blood cir - cles

\* Ped.

39

and weaves me in - to a whole piece

\* Ped. \*

42

with long slender red

*8va*

*Ped.*

45

thread buried under

*8va*

*Ped.*

48

my skin.

*Ped.*

*Ped.*

51

let ring

## 2. The Night Tree

A distant echo ♩ = 72

*p*

In the dis - tance in the dark

*p*

Ped. \* Ped. \*

5

I talk hard to an old tree.

Ped. \* Ped. \*



9

Wind - ing round and round, I am

Ped. \*

12

a flame curl - ing up - wards

\* Ped. \*

15

and the tree wel - comes me.

Ped. \*

18

Musical score for measures 18-20. The vocal line (treble clef) contains the lyrics: "I don't have to have a". The piano accompaniment (grand staff) features a steady bass line of chords in the left hand and a melodic line in the right hand. A fermata is placed over the first measure. An asterisk and the marking "Ped." are located below the piano part at the start of measure 19.

21

Musical score for measures 21-23. The vocal line (treble clef) contains the lyrics: "rea - son to be here. There is time". The piano accompaniment (grand staff) continues with the same harmonic structure. An asterisk and the marking "Ped." are located below the piano part at the start of measure 23.

24

Musical score for measures 24-26. The vocal line (treble clef) contains the lyrics: "e - nough to un - der - stand." The piano accompaniment (grand staff) continues with the same harmonic structure. A fermata is placed over the final measure. An asterisk is located below the piano part at the end of measure 26.

27

I don't have \_\_\_ to ex - plain. My name

Ped. \* Ped. \*

31

is the sound \_\_\_ of the wind blow - ing \_\_\_

Ped. \* Ped.

34 *cresc. poco a poco*

\_\_\_ and my spir - it is \_\_\_ as old. \_\_\_

\* Ped. \* Ped.

38 *mf*

Un - til the sky grows light, I will stay here

*mf*

\* Ped. \*

42

wound tight - ly to the tree and List - en to the

\* Ped. \*

46

way the dark feels. The fi - re in

\* Ped. \*

49

my throat burns more quiet-ly now. I can

Ped. \*

53

hear the empty sound of dawn. let ring

Ped. \* Ped.

### 3. Even in the Dark

Gently breathing  $\text{♩} = 72$   
*pp*

The forest breathes in and out

*pp*

Ped. \* Ped. \* Ped.

5

as I sleep and curl

\* Ped. \*

9

like a cat snug-gled in-to a big-ger

Ped. \* Ped. \* Ped.

13

sleep-ing bo-dy. e-ven in the dark

\* Ped. \*

17

I wake and see light

*Red.* \* *Red.* \* *Red.*

21

(♩ = ♪)

from a - bove

\* *Red.* \*

25

the moon burn - ing in - to

*Red.* \* *Red.*

28

black earth; stars,

This system contains measures 28, 29, and 30. The vocal line features a melodic phrase starting on a half note 'black', followed by a dotted quarter note 'earth;', and a half note 'stars,' which is tied to the next measure. The piano accompaniment consists of chords and moving lines in both hands. Measure 28 is in a key with two flats (B-flat major or D minor). Measure 29 has a key signature change to one flat (F major or D minor). Measure 30 has a key signature change to two sharps (D major or F# minor).

\* *Ped.*

\*

31

glit - ter - ing

This system contains measures 31, 32, and 33. The vocal line has a whole note rest in measure 31, followed by a dotted quarter note 'glit -' and a quarter note 'ter -' in measure 32, and a dotted quarter note 'ing' in measure 33. The piano accompaniment continues with chords and moving lines. Measure 31 is in one flat (F major or D minor). Measure 32 is in two flats (B-flat major or D minor). Measure 33 is in one flat (F major or D minor).

*Ped.*

\* *Ped.*

34

chips of glass scat - ter in a strange de - sign.

This system contains measures 34, 35, and 36. The vocal line has a dotted quarter note 'chips of' in measure 34, a quarter note 'glass' in measure 35, a dotted quarter note 'scat -' and a quarter note 'ter' in measure 36, a dotted quarter note 'in a' in measure 37, a dotted quarter note 'strange' in measure 38, a dotted quarter note 'de -' and a quarter note 'sign.' in measure 39. The piano accompaniment continues with chords and moving lines. Measure 34 is in one flat (F major or D minor). Measure 35 is in two flats (B-flat major or D minor). Measure 36 is in one flat (F major or D minor). Measure 37 is in two sharps (D major or F# minor). Measure 38 is in one flat (F major or D minor). Measure 39 is in one flat (F major or D minor).

\* *Ped.*

\*



38

I keep my eyes o - pen un - til morn - ing.

let ring

Ped. \* Ped. \* Ped.

#### 4. Only Clear Space Inside

Burning flames ♩ = 160

*f*

Take off the old wood and

*mf*

5

burn it. I am leav - ing this

9

part of me here.

13

And as I light the match to start this

17

fi - re, I feel the flames be -

Ped. \* Ped. \*

21

gin to jump out \_\_\_\_\_ of

Red. \* Red. \*

25

me. I am burn - ing my - self up from the

*mf*

Red. \* Red. \*

29

in - side, \_\_\_\_\_ and this fi - re

Red. \* Red. \*

33

burns clean, leaves no ash - es, \_\_\_\_\_

Ped. \* Ped. \*

37

on - ly clear space in - side. \_\_\_\_\_

Ped. \* Ped. \*

sotto voce ----- normal

41

Now the wind picks up. \_\_\_\_\_

*p* *p*

Ped. \* Ped. \*

45

The flames grow high - er.

*ped.* \* *ped.* \*

49

normal ----- sotto voce

*p*

There is no pain.

*p*

*ped.* \* *ped.* \*

53

*ppp* let ring

*ped.*

### 5. Eternal Light

A shimmering light ♩ = 66

*pp*

Heart in the dark - ness hold - ing on to the light

*pp*

Ped. \* Ped. \* Ped. \* Ped. \*

Detailed description: This system contains the first four measures of the piece. The vocal line is in treble clef with a 2/4 time signature. The piano accompaniment is in grand staff (treble and bass clefs). The key signature has one sharp (F#). The first measure is a half rest, followed by a quarter note G4, quarter note A4, quarter note B4, quarter note C5, quarter note B4, quarter note A4, quarter note G4, and a half rest. The second measure is a quarter note G#4, quarter note A4, quarter note B4, quarter note C5, quarter note B4, quarter note A4, quarter note G4, and a half rest. The third measure is a quarter note G#4, quarter note A4, quarter note B4, quarter note C5, quarter note B4, quarter note A4, quarter note G4, and a half rest. The fourth measure is a quarter note G#4, quarter note A4, quarter note B4, quarter note C5, quarter note B4, quarter note A4, quarter note G4, and a half rest. The piano accompaniment consists of chords in the right hand and single notes in the left hand. Pedal points are marked with 'Ped.' and asterisks.

5

in - side. In - side there is a spark,

Ped. \* Ped. \* Ped. \* Ped. \* Ped. \* Ped. \* Ped. \* Ped. \*

Detailed description: This system contains measures 5 through 8. Measure 5 is a half note G#4, quarter note A4, quarter note B4, quarter note C5, quarter note B4, quarter note A4, quarter note G4, and a half rest. Measure 6 is a half rest, quarter note B4, quarter note A4, quarter note G4, and a half rest. Measure 7 is a quarter note G#4, quarter note A4, quarter note B4, quarter note C5, quarter note B4, quarter note A4, quarter note G4, and a half rest. Measure 8 is a quarter note G#4, quarter note A4, quarter note B4, quarter note C5, quarter note B4, quarter note A4, quarter note G4, and a half rest. The piano accompaniment continues with chords and single notes. Pedal points are marked with 'Ped.' and asterisks.

10

a light that burns and ne - ver goes

Ped. \* Ped. \* Ped. \* Ped. \*

Detailed description: This system contains measures 9 through 12. Measure 9 is a half rest, quarter note G#4, quarter note A4, quarter note B4, quarter note C5, quarter note B4, quarter note A4, quarter note G4, and a half rest. Measure 10 is a half note G#4, quarter note A4, quarter note B4, quarter note C5, quarter note B4, quarter note A4, quarter note G4, and a half rest. Measure 11 is a half rest, quarter note G#4, quarter note A4, quarter note B4, quarter note C5, quarter note B4, quarter note A4, quarter note G4, and a half rest. Measure 12 is a quarter note G#4, quarter note A4, quarter note B4, quarter note C5, quarter note B4, quarter note A4, quarter note G4, and a half rest. The piano accompaniment continues with chords and single notes. Pedal points are marked with 'Ped.' and asterisks.

14

out, nev-er grows dim but burns hard and bright

ped. \* ped. \* ped. \* ped. \* ped. \* ped. \* ped. \* ped. \*

19

in the dark void of un-end-ing night,

ped. \* ped. \* ped. \* ped. \* ped. \*

24

the vast emp-ty black-ness

ped. \* ped. \* ped. \* ped. \* ped. \* ped. \*

29

of my self where I can

Ped. \* Ped. \* Ped. \* Ped. \* Ped. \* Ped.

33

on - ly hear the e - cho of my ca-ver-ness soul

\* Ped. \* Ped. \*

36

and the sim-ple ca - dence of my

Ped. \* Ped. \*



40

health - y heart

Ped. \* Ped. \* Ped. \*

43

hurt - ing and heal - ing o - ver and

Ped. \* Ped. \*

45

o - ver pump - ing the life in - to my

Ped. \* Ped. \*

47 *mp*

veins \_\_\_\_\_ push - ing it \_\_\_\_\_ through and

*mp*

Ped. \* Ped. \* Ped.

50

\_\_\_\_\_ a - round so that I \_\_\_\_\_ am al - ways filled with it \_\_\_\_\_

*mp*

\* Ped. \*

53

\_\_\_\_\_ so that I \_\_\_\_\_ am al -

*mp*

Ped. \* Ped.

*decresc. poco a poco*

56

ways a-live to the light ev-en when I am

*decresc. poco a poco*

\* Ped. \*

59

lost, cold and wan-der-ing lone-ly in the

\* Ped. \* Ped. \* Ped. \*

*sotto voce*

62

dark.

Ped.