

In Praise of Darkness

for mezzo-soprano and piano

text by Kathleen Norris

music by Joel Matthys

The pianist should play in strict tempo, taking care not to accent the beginning of the patterns. Phrases between repeat signs are played an unspecified number of times, in tandem with the voice. Crescendos and decrescendos extend over the duration of a pattern.

The vocal line is sung unhurriedly, in the natural rhythms of speech, without reference to the pianists pulse. Open noteheads indicate notes that are somewhat longer than those with closed noteheads, but their exact durations are at the singer's discretion. Accidentals do not carry through a phrase, but apply to individual notes only.

“In Praise of Darkness” originally appeared in *Little Girls in Church* by Kathleen Norris. Published in © 1995 by the University of Pittsburgh Press. Used and performed by permission of the publisher.

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Strict time
♩ = 120

ca. 3" ca. 5" ca. 8"

p repeat ad lib.* create equal balance between LH & RH (dynamic changes carry over multiple repeats) *f*

♩ (open pedal throughout)

6 *mp*

ca. 5" *mp*

It does not fall, it ri - ses[†] out of crev - asse and ra - vine,

13 *mf*

to take the hills and moun - tains, and then em - brace the stars.

mf *p*

* All repeats are to be taken multiple times, at the performer's discretion. Each event in the piano part continues without interruption until the next event.

† Vocal line is sung unhurriedly, in the natural rhythms of speech. Melody should run concurrently with piano events but should not synchronize with the rhythm of the piano part.

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19

p

calm as the sea - rhy - thm in our veins, an - cient and sim -

This system contains measures 19 through 23. The vocal line begins with a piano (*p*) dynamic and a crescendo hairpin. The piano accompaniment features a steady eighth-note bass line in the left hand and a melody of eighth notes in the right hand, with some measures containing rests.

24

mp

ple as salt. Think of the eye form - ing in the womb;

This system contains measures 24 through 28. The vocal line starts with a mezzo-piano (*mp*) dynamic and a crescendo hairpin. The piano accompaniment continues with a similar pattern, featuring a steady bass line and a melodic right hand.

29

mf

f

the egg, the fish, the swim - mer.

This system contains measures 29 through 33. The vocal line begins with a mezzo-forte (*mf*) dynamic, followed by a crescendo hairpin leading to a forte (*f*) dynamic. The piano accompaniment mirrors this dynamic progression, with a steady bass line and a melodic right hand.

33

p *mp*

Think of fe - male mat - ter that phil - o - so - phers dis - dain,

37

mf

and johns in cheap ho - tel rooms fill with mon -

41

mp

ey, or them-selves, and fail and fail a - gain to re - turn to.

Fl.

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4

46

p

Think of the la - dies of the night.

50

mf

It does not fall, it ri - ses

55

like a ser - pent roused from sleep.

58

f

It shows it - self, a dou - ble he - lix, in the

This system contains measures 58 through 62. The vocal line is in treble clef with a key signature of one sharp (F#). The piano accompaniment consists of a left hand in bass clef and a right hand in treble clef. The piano part features a rhythmic pattern of eighth notes in the left hand and a more melodic line in the right hand, with some rests. The lyrics are: "It shows it - self, a dou - ble he - lix, in the".

63

dreams of a gen - et - i - cist who trans - lates the code of life.

sub.p

This system contains measures 63 through 67. The vocal line continues in treble clef. The piano accompaniment has a long rest in the right hand for measures 63-66, followed by a short melodic phrase in measure 67. The lyrics are: "dreams of a gen - et - i - cist who trans - lates the code of life.". The dynamic marking *sub.p* is placed below the piano part in measure 67.

68

*p**mf*

It simp - li - fies; it breaks all codes, turn - ing seed in - to corn,

mf

This system contains measures 68 through 72. The vocal line continues in treble clef. The piano accompaniment features a long rest in the right hand for measures 68-70, followed by a melodic phrase in measure 71. The lyrics are: "It simp - li - fies; it breaks all codes, turn - ing seed in - to corn, ". The dynamic marking *p* is placed above the vocal line in measure 68, and *mf* is placed above the piano part in measure 71.

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6

72

f

talk to wis-dom, as day un - to day takes up the sto - ry,

f *mf*

77

mf

night un - to night the mes - sage, with - out a word...

p

82

sotto voce *mp*

Lis - ten. Be still. Be as deep as the dark from which you came.

mp

88 *p*

Where we are is home: on - ly *mut*, *mut* - ter,

p

93

pray for us.

ca. 8"

p

*