

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.*

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

5

I talk hard to an old tree.

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 system includes a vocal line and a piano accompaniment. The vocal line has lyrics: "I don't have to have a". The piano accompaniment features a steady bass line and a melodic line in the right hand. A fermata is placed over the first measure. A piano dynamic marking "p" is present at the start of the second measure, and a first ending bracket spans the final two measures. An asterisk and the word "Ped." are located below the piano part in the second measure.

21

Musical score for measures 21-23. The system includes a vocal line and a piano accompaniment. The vocal line has lyrics: "rea - son to be here. There is time". The piano accompaniment continues with a steady bass line and a melodic line in the right hand. A piano dynamic marking "p" is present at the start of the second measure. An asterisk and the word "Ped." are located below the piano part in the third measure.

24

Musical score for measures 24-26. The system includes a vocal line and a piano accompaniment. The vocal line has lyrics: "e - nough to un - der - stand." The piano accompaniment continues with a steady bass line and a melodic line in the right hand. A fermata is placed over the final measure. An asterisk is located below the piano part in the final measure.

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. *

3. Even in the Dark

Gently breathing $\text{♩} = 72$
pp

The forest breathes in and out

pp

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 G4, moving to F4, then E4, and ending with a quarter rest. The piano accompaniment consists of chords and moving lines in both hands. Measure 28 has a key signature of two flats. Measure 29 has a key signature of one flat. Measure 30 has a key signature of one sharp.

* *Ped.*

*

31

glit - ter - ing

This system contains measures 31, 32, and 33. The vocal line has a whole rest in measure 31, followed by a half note G4 in measure 32, and a half note F4 in measure 33. The piano accompaniment continues with chords and moving lines. Measure 31 has a key signature of one flat. Measure 32 has a key signature of one flat. Measure 33 has a key signature of one flat.

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 quarter note G4 in measure 34, a quarter note F4 in measure 35, a quarter note E4 in measure 36, and a quarter rest in measure 37. The piano accompaniment features a more active bass line with eighth notes. Measure 34 has a key signature of one flat. Measure 35 has a key signature of one flat. Measure 36 has a key signature of one flat. Measure 37 has a key signature of one flat.

* *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

Led. * Led. *

25

mf

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

Led. * Led. *

29

in - side, _____ and this fi - re

Led. * Led. *

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

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 markings are placed below the bass line.

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 G4, 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 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 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 markings are placed below the bass line.

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 markings are placed below the bass line.

14

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

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 _____

* Ped. *

53

_____ so that I am al -

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. *

sotto voce

62

dark.

Ped.