

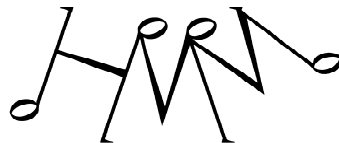
Evening Music: Five Sarton Poems

~ for SATB chorus, a cappella ~

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Music by Christopher J. Hoh

Texts by May Sarton



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Evening Music

We enter this evening as we enter a quartet.
Listening again for its particular note
The interval where all seems possible,
Order within time when action is suspended
And we are pure in heart, perfect in will.
We enter the evening whole and well-defended
But at the quick of self, intense detachment
That is a point of burning far from passion —
And this, we know, is what we always meant
And even love must learn it in some fashion,
To move like formal music through the heart,
To be achieved like some high difficult art.

We enter the evening as we enter a quartet
Listening again for its particular note
Which is your note, perhaps, your special gift,
A detached joy that flowers and makes bloom
The longest silence in the silent room —
And there would be no music if you left.

The Clavichord

She keeps her clavichord
As others keep delight, too light
To breathe, the secret word
No lover ever heard
Where the pure spirit lives
And garlands weaves.

To make the pure notes sigh
(Not of a human grief, too brief)
A sigh of such fragility
Her fingers' sweet ability
Must hold the horizontal line
In the stern power of design.

The secret breathed within
And never spoken, woken
By music; the garlands in
Her hands no one has seen.
She wreathes the air with green
And weaves the stillness in.

Eine Kleine Snailmusik

What soothes the angry snail?
 What's music to his horn?
 For the "Sonata Appassionata,"
 He shows scorn,
 And Handel
 Makes the frail snail
 Quail,
 While Prokofieff
 Gets no laugh,
 And Tchaikovsky, I fear,
 No tear.
 Piano, pipe, and harp,
 Dulcet or shrill,
 Flat or sharp,
 Indoors or in the garden,
 Are willy-nilly
 Silly
 To the reserved, slow,
 Sensitive
 Snail,
 Who prefers to live
 Glissandissimo,
 Pianissimo.

Girl With 'Cello

There had been no such music here until
 A girl came in from falling dark and snow
 To bring into this house her glowing 'cello
 As if some silent, magic animal.

She sat, head bent, her long hair all aspill
 Over the breathing wood, and drew the bow.
 There had been no such music here until
 A girl came in from falling dark and snow.

And she drew out that sound so like a wail,
 A rich, dark suffering joy, as if to show
 All that a wrist holds and that fingers know
 When they caress a magic animal.
 There had been no such music here until
 A girl came in from falling dark and snow.

Song

Now let us honor with violin and flute
A woman set so deeply in devotion
That three times blasted to the root
Still she grew green and poured strength out.

Still she stood fair, providing the cool shade,
Compassion, the thousand leaves of mercy,
The cherishing green hope. Still like a tree she stood,
Clear comfort in the town and all the neighborhood.

Pure as the tree is pure, young
As the tree forever young, magnanimous
And natural, sweetly serving: for her the song,
For her the flute sound and the violin be strung.

For her all love, all praise,
All honor, as for trees
In the hot, summer days.

May Sarton

Evening Music

May Sarton

Christopher J. Hoh

Pensively (♩ = 64)

f

Sop./Alto

Ten./Bass

5

9

13

We en - ter this ev'n - ing as we en - ter a quar -
tet, list'n - ing a - gain for its par - ti - cu - lar
note, the in - ter - val — where all — seems pos - si -
ble, — or - der with - in time — when ac - tion is sus -

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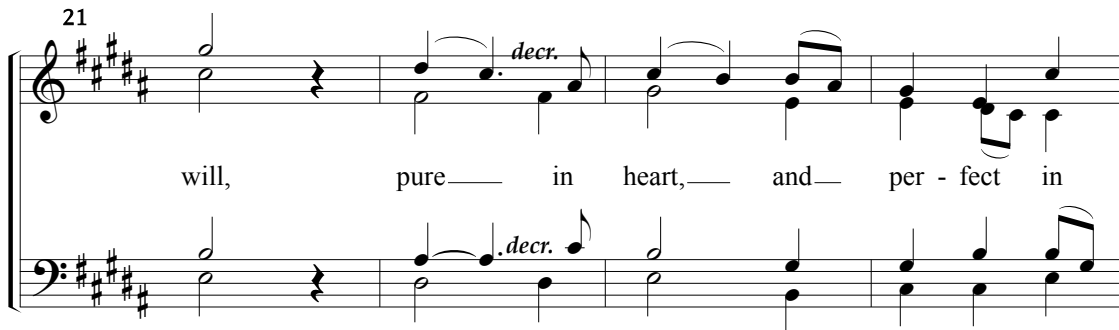
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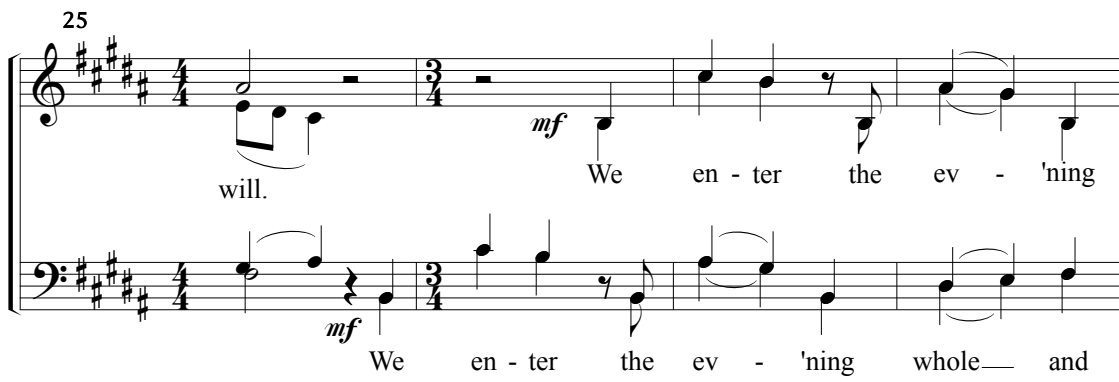
pen-ded, and we are pure in heart, per-fect in

21



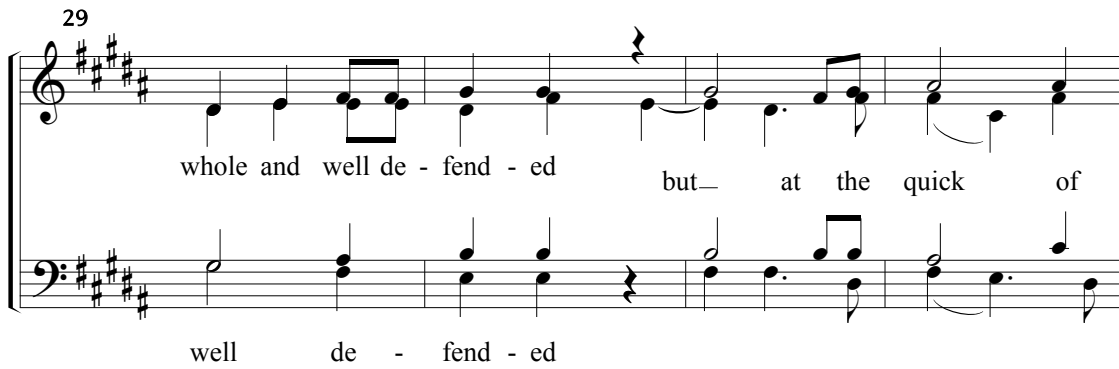
will, pure in heart, and per-fect in

25



will. We en-ter the ev-'ning whole and

29



whole and well de-fend-ed but at the quick of
well de-fend-ed

33

self, in-tense de - tach - ment that is a point — of burn - ing

Detailed description: This system contains measures 33 through 36. It features a grand staff with a treble and bass clef. The key signature has four sharps (F#, C#, G#, D#). The time signature changes from 4/4 to 3/4. The lyrics are: "self, in-tense de - tach - ment that is a point — of burn - ing".

37

far — from pas - sion, (and this we know) is what we al - ways

Detailed description: This system contains measures 37 through 40. It features a grand staff with a treble and bass clef. The key signature has four sharps (F#, C#, G#, D#). The time signature changes from 3/4 to 4/4. The lyrics are: "far — from pas - sion, (and this we know) is what we al - ways".

41

cresc.

meant, and ev - en love — must learn — it in — some

cresc.

Detailed description: This system contains measures 41 through 44. It features a grand staff with a treble and bass clef. The key signature has four sharps (F#, C#, G#, D#). The time signature changes from 4/4 to 3/4. The lyrics are: "meant, and ev - en love — must learn — it in — some". The word "cresc." is written above the treble staff and below the bass staff.

45

div. f*

fash - ion, to move like for - mal mus - ic

div. f*

Detailed description: This system contains measures 45 through 48. It features a grand staff with a treble and bass clef. The key signature has four sharps (F#, C#, G#, D#). The time signature changes from 3/4 to 4/4. The lyrics are: "fash - ion, to move like for - mal mus - ic". The word "div.* f" is written above the treble staff and below the bass staff.

* Divide voices relatively evenly among the six parts.

49

through the heart, to be a - chieved — like some high —

unis.

53

dif - fi - cult art. — We en - ter this

decr. *mf*

57

ev'n - ing as we en - ter a quar - tet, list'n - ing a -

61

gain for its par - ti - cu - lar note, which is

64

your note, per - haps, — your spe - cial gift, —

68

a de - tached joy — that flo - wers and makes

71

bloom — the long - est si - lence in the

74

si - lent room — and there would be — no —

78

mu - sic if you left; and there would be — no

81

be — no mus - ic, no mus - ic
mus - ic, no mus - - - ic if —
and there would be — no mus - ic, no
and there would be — no

84

if — you, if you left. *a tempo*
you, — if you left. We
mus - ic if — you — left.
mus - ic, no mus - ic if you left. *poco rit.*

88

en - ter list'n - ing, a - - gain. —