

From The Song of Songs

Texts edited and compiled by
Julie Dalton Williamson



Image copyright © 2007 by Julie Dalton Williamson Used with permission

1998

Gary Bachlund

From the Song of Songs

Five songs for soprano or mezzo soprano and piano

I am black, but comely

Biblical texts edited by Julie Dalton-Williamson

Gary Bachlund

quasi improvviso, con rubato a piacere ♩ = 50

1. *f* *quasi arpa* I am

4 black but come - ly, daugh - ters of Je - ru - sa - lem; Dark as the

7 de - sert tents of Ke - - dar, Beau - ti - ful, beau - ful as the

10 cur - tains of So - lo - mon. Beau - ti - ful as the

12

cur - tains of So - lo - mon.

14

I have stripped off my dress; Must I put it on a - gain?

16

I have washed my feet; Must I soil them a - gain?

18

Who am I, ri - sing as the

20

musical score for measures 20-21. The vocal line is in treble clef with a key signature of three flats. The lyrics are: "dawn? Fair as the moon?". The piano accompaniment consists of two staves, with the right hand playing a melodic line and the left hand providing harmonic support. There are triplets in both hands.

22

musical score for measures 22-23. The vocal line continues with the lyrics: "Clear as the sun? Ter - ri - ble as an ar - my with". The piano accompaniment continues with triplets in both hands.

24

musical score for measures 24-25. The vocal line continues with the lyrics: "ban - - - ners? Tell me, you whom my soul loves,". The piano accompaniment continues with triplets in both hands.

26

musical score for measures 26-27. The vocal line continues with the lyrics: "tell me, where will you lead your flock". The piano accompaniment continues with triplets in both hands.

28

— to graze? ————— Where will_ you rest at

30

meno mosos e quasi improvviso, con rubato a piacere

noon? —————

mf

32

I am black, but come - ly, daugh - ters of Je - ru - sa - lem. —————

35

ritardando e diminuendo al fine

circa 3' 00"

My Love

♩. = 50

2. *molto legato* My love, _____ my love, you are whol - ly

mf

simile

4 beau - ti - ful, _____ my love, _____

7 Beau - ti - ful and with - out ble - mish. _____ Beau - ti - ful, beau - ti - ful

10 love. _____ My love, _____ my love you ra - vish me

13

heart with a sin-gle one of your glan - ces.

16

molto ritardando ♩ = 30 (or less)

Your lips are as a

mp

19

thread of scar - let, scar - let, a thread of scar - let,

22

Ho - ney and milk are un - der your tongue, ho - ney and milk.

25

— The scent of your gar - ments is the scent of Le - ba-non and of

28

ce - dar. Whol - ly beau - ti - ful, my love.

molto ritardando

31

My love, my love, you are whol - ly

mf

Red. simile

34

beau - ti - ful, my love,

37

Love, _____ my _____ love. _____

40

_____ My love, _____ my love. _____

43

_____ *lunga* _____

I am sick with love

$\text{♩} = 60$

3. *mp*

While I slept _____ by night on my bed, _____

4
my heart was a - wake. _____ I

7
dreamed that my love _____ had turned a - way, _____ and gone by. _____

10
I rose _____ and went through the ci - ty, _____ a - mong the streets _____ and through the broad

13

ways. I rose and went through the ci - ty, a - mong the streets

mf

16

and broad ways. I sought him, whom my soul loves;

18

I sought him but did not find him.

20

a piacere

I called to him, but he gave no an - swer.

mp

23 $\text{♩} = 60$

To the watch-men, ³I said, "Have you seen him, whom my soul

26 $\text{♩} = 120$

loves?" ...whom my soul loves?" _____ They

29

smote me, they wound-ed me. The keep - ers of the walls

32 *molto deliberato ten.* $\text{♩} = 60$ *quasi recitativo*

took my veil _____ from me. _____ I charge you, daugh-ters of Je-

36

ru - sa-lem, if you should see my love, — tell him_ that I am

col canto

39

sick with love.

ritardando

42

come prima

While I slept_ by night on my bed, — my heart was a_

mf

8vb

45

wake. I dreamed that my love_

8vb

48

had turned a - way, and gone by.

8vb

51

I found him, I held him and would not let him

mp

8vb

54

go. While I slept...

57

While I slept...

ritardando espressivo

8vb

Return!

$\text{♩} = 40$ *quasi improvviso* $\text{♩} = 50$

4. *mf* *mp* *3*

My love is mine, and I am

5 his; he de - lights in the li - es.

8 Be - fore the dawn wind ri - ses, be -

11 fore the sha - dows flee, re - turn! Re -

8vb

14

turn, and be my love, as the ga-zelle, the young stag on the

17

hills of Be-ter, where the cin-na-mon grows.

20

My love is mine, and I am

sub

24

poco ritardando

his; I am his, his; I am his.

A Seal Upon Your Heart

♩ = 84 *con rubato a piacere*

5. *f*

The piano introduction consists of two staves. The right hand starts with a treble clef, a key signature of one flat (B-flat), and a 3/4 time signature. It features a series of chords and melodic fragments, including a triplet of eighth notes. The left hand starts with a bass clef and a 3/4 time signature, playing a series of chords and a melodic line with a triplet of eighth notes. The piece begins with a forte (*f*) dynamic.

5 *ritardando espressivo* *a tempo*

Set me as a seal up - on your

This system contains the first line of the vocal melody and piano accompaniment. The vocal line begins at measure 5 with a treble clef and a 3/4 time signature. The tempo marking changes from *ritardando espressivo* to *a tempo*. The lyrics are "Set me as a seal up - on your". The piano accompaniment continues with chords and melodic lines, including a triplet of eighth notes. The dynamic is marked *mf*.

9 heart; _____ Close your heart _____ to ev' - ry love _____ but

This system contains the second line of the vocal melody and piano accompaniment. The vocal line begins at measure 9 with a treble clef and a 3/4 time signature. The lyrics are "heart; _____ Close your heart _____ to ev' - ry love _____ but". The piano accompaniment continues with chords and melodic lines, including a triplet of eighth notes.

13 mine. _____ Set me as a seal up - on your arms; _____

This system contains the third line of the vocal melody and piano accompaniment. The vocal line begins at measure 13 with a treble clef and a 3/4 time signature. The lyrics are "mine. _____ Set me as a seal up - on your arms; _____". The piano accompaniment continues with chords and melodic lines, including a triplet of eighth notes.

17

— hold no one in your arms, — hold no one in your arms —

Musical score for measures 17-20. The vocal line is in treble clef with a key signature of one flat. The piano accompaniment is in bass clef. Measure 17 starts with a whole rest. Measures 18-20 contain the vocal line and piano accompaniment. The piano part features a triplet in measure 20.

21

— but me. — Hold no one in your

Musical score for measures 21-24. The vocal line continues in treble clef. The piano accompaniment is in bass clef. Measures 21-24 contain the vocal line and piano accompaniment. The piano part features triplets in measures 22, 23, and 24.

25

arms but me. — For

ritardando

Musical score for measures 25-29. The vocal line is in treble clef. The piano accompaniment is in bass clef. Measures 25-29 contain the vocal line and piano accompaniment. The piano part features a triplet in measure 26. The tempo marking *ritardando* is present above the staff.

30

love is as strong as death; — for

a tempo

Musical score for measures 30-33. The vocal line is in treble clef. The piano accompaniment is in bass clef. Measures 30-33 contain the vocal line and piano accompaniment. The piano part features a rhythmic pattern of eighth notes. The tempo marking *a tempo* is present above the staff.

34
love is as strong as death; _____ and

38
pas - sion re - lent - less as the grave. _____

42
Pas - sion, re - lent - less as the _____ grave. _____ *ritardando espressivo*

46 *poco più mosso*
It bursts in - to flames, and burns... _____ It

The musical score is written for voice and piano. It consists of four systems of music. Each system includes a vocal line and a piano accompaniment. The piano accompaniment features a rhythmic pattern of eighth notes in the right hand and chords in the left hand. The score includes various musical notations such as slurs, ties, and dynamic markings like *p.* (piano) and *f.* (forte). The lyrics are written below the vocal line, with some words connected by hyphens and others by long lines indicating they span across measures. The piece concludes with a double bar line and repeat dots.

50

bursts. It burns and burns

This system contains measures 50 through 53. The vocal line begins with a rest, followed by a quarter note G4, a quarter rest, and a quarter note B4. A slur covers the next two measures: a quarter note D5 and a quarter note C5. The final measure of the system has a slur over a quarter note E5, a quarter note D5, and a quarter note C5. The piano accompaniment features a steady eighth-note pattern in the right hand and a bass line with chords in the left hand.

54

as the ra - - - ging fire. For

This system contains measures 54 through 57. The vocal line starts with a quarter note G4, a quarter note A4, and a quarter note B4. A slur covers the next two measures: a quarter note C5 and a quarter note B4. The final measure of the system has a slur over a quarter note A4, a quarter note G4, and a quarter note F4. The piano accompaniment continues with the eighth-note pattern in the right hand and chords in the left hand.

58

ma - ny wa-ters can - not quench love,

This system contains measures 58 through 61. The vocal line begins with a quarter note G4, a quarter note A4, and a quarter note B4. A slur covers the next two measures: a quarter note C5 and a quarter note B4. The final measure of the system has a slur over a quarter note A4, a quarter note G4, and a quarter note F4. The piano accompaniment continues with the eighth-note pattern in the right hand and chords in the left hand.

62

Nei - ther can the floods drown it.

This system contains measures 62 through 65. The vocal line starts with a quarter note G4, a quarter note A4, and a quarter note B4. A slur covers the next two measures: a quarter note C5 and a quarter note B4. The final measure of the system has a slur over a quarter note A4, a quarter note G4, and a quarter note F4. The piano accompaniment continues with the eighth-note pattern in the right hand and chords in the left hand.

66

Ma - ny wa - ters can - not quench love,

70

nei - ther can the floods drown it.

74

a piacere

come prima

Love is strong as death.

78

ritardando espressivo

82 *a tempo*

Set me as a seal up - on your heart; _____ Close your heart_

This system contains measures 82 through 85. The vocal line is in 3/4 time with a key signature of one flat. The lyrics are: "Set me as a seal up - on your heart; _____ Close your heart_". The piano accompaniment features a triplet of eighth notes in the right hand and sustained chords in the left hand.

86

_____ to ev' - ry love _____ but mine. _____ Set me as a

This system contains measures 86 through 89. The lyrics are: "_____ to ev' - ry love _____ but mine. _____ Set me as a". The piano accompaniment continues with a triplet of eighth notes in the right hand and sustained chords in the left hand.

90

seal up - on your arms; _____ hold no one in your arms, _____

This system contains measures 90 through 93. The lyrics are: "seal up - on your arms; _____ hold no one in your arms, _____". The piano accompaniment features a triplet of eighth notes in the right hand and sustained chords in the left hand.

94

_____ hold no one in your arms _____ but me. _____

This system contains measures 94 through 97. The lyrics are: "_____ hold no one in your arms _____ but me. _____". The piano accompaniment features a triplet of eighth notes in the right hand and sustained chords in the left hand.

98

Hold no one in your arms but me.

102 $\text{♩} = 66$ *ritardando*

Hold no one in your arms but me.

circa 4' 00"

i. I am black but comely

I am black but comely, daughters of Jerusalem;
 Beautiful as the desert tents of Kedar,
 Beautiful as the curtains of Solomon.
 I have stripped of my dress;
 Must I put it on again?
 I have washed my feet;
 Must I soil them again?
 Who am I, rising as the dawn?
 Fair as the moon?
 Clear as the sun?
 Terrible as an army with banners?
 Tell me, you whom my soul loves,
 Where will you lead your flocks to graze?
 Where will you rest at noon?

ii. My Love

You are wholly beautiful, my love,
 Beautiful and without blemish.
 You ravish my heart
 With a single one of your glances.
 Your lips are as a thread of scarlet,
 Honey and milk are under your tongue.
 The scent of your garments
 Is the scent of Lebanon
 And of cedar.

iii. I am sick with love

While I slept by night on my bed,
 My heart was awake.
 I dreamed that my love had turned away,
 And gone by.
 I rose and went through the city,
 Among the streets and
 through the broad ways.
 I sought him, whom my soul loves;
 I sought him, but did not find him.
 I called him,
 but he gave no answer.
 To the watchmen, I said,
 "Have you seen him,
 whom my soul loves?"
 They smote me; they wounded me.
 the keepers of the walls
 took my veil from me.
 I charge you, daughters of Jerusalem,
 If you should see my love,
 Tell him I am sick with love.
 While I slept by night on my bed,
 My heart was awake.
 I dreamed that my love had turned away,
 And gone by.
 I found him; I held him and
 Would not let him go.

iv. Return!

My love is mine, and I am his;
 He delights in the lilies.
 Before the dawn wind rises,
 Before the shadows flee, return!
 Return, and be, my love,
 As the gazelle,
 The young stag
 On the hills of Beter,
 Where the cinnamon grows.

v. A Seal Upon Your Heart

Set me as a seal upon your heart;
 Close your heart to every love but mine.
 Set me as a seal upon your arms;
 Hold no one in your arms but me.
 For love is strong as death;
 And passion, relentless as the grave.
 It bursts into flames, and burns
 As the raging fire.
 For many waters cannot quench love.
 Neither can the floods drown it.
 Set me, then, as a seal upon your heart;
 Close your heart to every love but mine.
 Set me as a seal upon your arms;
 Hold no one in your arms but me.