

Ryan Laney

On the Beach at Night

for Soprano and Piano

Text by Walt Whitman

(2017)

“On the Beach at Night,” by Walt Whitman*

On the beach at night,
Stands a child with her father,
Watching the east, the autumn sky.

Up through the darkness,
While ravening clouds, the burial clouds, in black masses spreading,
Lower sullen and fast athwart and down the sky,
Amid a transparent clear belt of ether yet left in the east,
Ascends large and calm the lord-star Jupiter,
And nigh at hand, only a very little above,
Swim the delicate sisters the Pleiades.

From the beach the child holding the hand of her father,
Those burial-clouds that lower victorious soon to devour all,
Watching, silently weeps.

Weep not, child,
Weep not, my darling,
With these kisses let me remove your tears,
The ravening clouds shall not long be victorious,
They shall not long possess the sky, they devour the stars only in apparition,
Jupiter shall emerge, be patient, watch again another night, the Pleiades shall emerge,
They are immortal, all those stars both silvery and golden shall shine out again,
The great stars and the little ones shall shine out again, they endure,
The vast immortal suns and the long-enduring pensive moons shall again shine.

Then dearest child mournest thou only for Jupiter?
Considerest thou alone the burial of the stars?

Something there is,
(With my lips soothing thee, adding I whisper,
I give thee the first suggestion, the problem and indirection,
Something there is more immortal even than the stars,
(Many the burials, many the days and nights, passing away,
Something that shall endure longer even than lustrous Jupiter
Longer than sun or any revolving satellite,
Or the radiant sisters the Pleiades.

* For musical purposes, some words have been changed or omitted in the setting of this text

On the Beach at Night

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Ryan Laney

Warm and still ($\text{♩} = 66$) *p* somewhat freely poco rit. . . .

On the beach, at night, stands a child, with her fa- ther, watch- ing the east, the aut-umn

Warm and still ($\text{♩} = 66$) *p* *colla voce* poco rit. . . .

⑤ a tempo *mp* with a little more movement

sky. On the beach, at night, stands a child, with her fa- ther,

a tempo

⑧ poco rit. a tempo

watch- ing the east, the aut-umn sky.

poco rit. a tempo *mp* *più p*

12 Same tempo, moving forward little by little (♩. = 48)

p Up through the dark- ness, Up through the dark- ness, *mp* Up through the dark-ness, while rav-en-ing clouds, the

Same tempo, moving forward little by little (♩. = 48)

16

accel.

bur - i - al clouds, in black mas - ses

accel.

p

ppp intentionally a bit muddy, with a lot of pedal

19

spread ing, spreading,

22

Dark, with motion (♩. = 72)

mf

Low - er, sul - len and fast, a -

Dark, with motion (♩. = 72)

mf (not too loud) *simile*

p *ossia*

25

thwart and down the sky

fp

28

più p

spread - ing, spread - ing,

fp

30

low - er,

32

mf

mf

Low - er sul - len and fast, a -

ossia

35

fp

thwart and down the sky

38

ff p

this passage should have the effect of getting continuously slower (don't play it exactly in time)

41

mp con poco rubato

A-mid a trans - par-ent clear belt___ of

pp colla voce

44

p a piacere

eth-er, A-mid a trans - par-ent clear belt___ of e-ther yet left in the

p mp p pppp

48 A bit faster (♩. = 72) *mp* poco rit. . . . Receding a little (♩. = 60) *p* con poco rubato

east As cends large and calm, the lord star Ju - pi - ter; And nigh at

A bit faster (♩. = 72) poco rit. . . . Receding a little (♩. = 60)

p *mf* *p* *colla voce*

ppp

53 *flautando*

hand, on-ly a ve-ry lit-tle a- bove. Swim the de-li-cate sis- ters the

pp *ppp*

8va *8va*

57 Tempo I

Plei - ad - es

Tempo I (8)-----1

p *pp*

62 **Faster than Tempo I** (♩ = 76)

p *somewhat freely*

From the beach, the child, hold-ing the hand of her fa- ther, those bur-i - al clouds. that low-er, vic-

Faster than Tempo I (♩ = 76)

65 *poco rit.*

tor - i - ous, soon to dev - ou - r all,

poco rit.

mp

68 **a tempo**

From the beach, the child, hold - ing the hand of her fa - ther,

a tempo

pp

70 *held back a little* *poco rit.* **a tempo** *rit.*

Watch - ing, sil - ent - ly weeps.

poco rit. **a tempo** *rit.*

mp *più p*

73

Tenderly, with movement, like a lullaby (♩. = 60)

mp

Weep not, child, _____

Tenderly, with movement, like a lullaby (♩. = 60)

p

Weep not, my dar - ling, _____ With these kis - ses, _ let me re-move your

77

tears; _____ The

mf

79

ra-ven-ing clouds shall not long _____ be vic - tor - i - ous, _____

p *mf* *8va*

81

11

cresc.

They shall not long — pos - sess the sky —

83

mf

Ju - pi-ter shall e- merge — be pat - ient, — watch a-

85

gain a-noth-er night, — The Plei - ad - es shall e- merge, —

They are im-mor - tal, — All those stars, — both sil - ver-y and

89

gol - den, shall shine out a - gain

f *più p*

mf *cresc.*

91

The

mf

f

94

great stars and the lit - tle ones,

p

The great stars shall

cresc.

96

shine out again,

f *più p*

mf *cresc.*

They en -

fmp *mp*

feel free to jump in and out of ossia staff as desired throughout the next passage

100

Musical score for measures 100-101. The score is in G major and 12/8 time. It features a vocal line and a piano accompaniment. The vocal line starts with a whole note chord (G4, B4, D5) and continues with a half note (G4) and a quarter note (B4). The piano accompaniment consists of a steady eighth-note bass line and a treble line with a descending eighth-note pattern. Dynamics include *mf* and *p*. The word "dure;" is written below the vocal line.

101

Musical score for measures 101-102. The score continues from the previous system. The vocal line has a whole note chord (G4, B4, D5) and a half note (G4). The piano accompaniment continues with the same rhythmic pattern. Dynamics include *mf*. The lyrics "They en - dure;" are written below the vocal line.

103

Musical score for measures 102-103. The score continues from the previous system. The vocal line has a whole note chord (G4, B4, D5) and a half note (G4). The piano accompaniment continues with the same rhythmic pattern. Dynamics include *fp* and *cresc.*. The lyrics "They en - dure;" are written below the vocal line. A double bar line with repeat dots is present at the end of the system.

rit. A touch slower, without a strong sense of time
p *mp*

They en - dure; The

rit. A touch slower, without a strong sense of time
8^{va}

(8)

dim. *pp colla voce*

ppp

mf *a piacere*

vast im - mor - tal suns, the long en - dur - ing pen - sive moons, will a - gain

mp

110

With renewed intensity (♩. = 57)

shine.

With renewed intensity (♩. = 57)

f

112

mp

Then, dear-est child,

p

114

A little slower (♩. = 52)

mourn - est thou on - ly for Ju - pi - ter? Con - sid-er-est thou a-lone the bur-i-al

A little slower (♩. = 52)

colla voce

116

molto rit. *p a piacere* a tempo *molto rit.*

of the stars?

molto rit. a tempo *molto rit.*

118

a tempo *molto rit.*

a tempo *molto rit.*

Tempo I

A little faster (♩. = 54)

Some-thing there is, _____

8va-----|

Tempo I

mp

pp

p

A little faster (♩. = 54)

quasi recit.

124

don't fully release the pedal; sound should always be at least partially sustained

126

a tempo

rit.

Some-thing there is more im-mor- tal, _____ Some-thing there is more im-mor-tal ev-en than the stars _____

a tempo

p

mp

rit.

mf

p

Pushing forward a bit (♩. = 60)

129

mp

rit.

Some-thing there is more im-mor - tal _____ ev - en than the stars _____

Pushing forward a bit (♩. = 60)

mp

cresc.

ff

p

rit.

132 quasi recit.

Musical score for measures 132-135. The vocal line is in a recitative style with a flat key signature and a 9/8 time signature. The piano accompaniment consists of simple chords and single notes.

135 a tempo Pushing forward little by little (♩. = 66)

p Some-thing that shall en dure. *mp* Some-thing that shall en- dure. lon-ger than lust-rous Ju - pi ter,--

a tempo Pushing forward little by little (♩. = 66)

pp *mf/p* *f*

Musical score for measures 135-138. The vocal line is in a 12/8 time signature with a key signature of one sharp. The piano accompaniment features a steady eighth-note bass line and chords. Dynamic markings include *pp*, *mf/p*, and *f*.

139 *mf cresc. poco a poco*

lon-ger than lust-rous Ju - pi - ter,-- long-er than Ju - pi ter,-- than lust-rous Ju - pi-ter

mp cresc.

Musical score for measures 139-142. The vocal line is in a 15/8 time signature. The piano accompaniment features a complex rhythmic pattern with a crescendo. Dynamic markings include *mf cresc. poco a poco* and *mp cresc.*

(♩. = 84) *fff, euphoric* Gently receding (♩. = 72)

142 *mf dim.*

Lon - ger than the sun, or an-y re-volv-ing

(♩. = 84) Gently receding (♩. = 72)

fff, euphoric

Musical score for measures 142-145. The vocal line is in a 6/8 time signature. The piano accompaniment features a complex rhythmic pattern with a crescendo and a tempo change. Dynamic markings include *fff, euphoric* and *mf dim.*

sat-tel - lite, _____ Or the

mp *delicate* *colla voce*

Placid, shimmering (♩. = 60)

rad - i - ant sis - ters, _____ the Plei - ad - es. _____

p *a piacere*

Placid, shimmering (♩. = 60)

Tempo I

Tempo I

p

On the beach, at night, stands a child, with her fa- ther, watch- ing the east, _ the aut-umn sky. _____

p *poco rit.* *pp*