

Three Dreams at the End

Low Voice and Guitar

Henry McPherson

2017-19

Three Dreams at the End is a short cycle of three surreal songs for low voice and guitar, with spoken prologue, written for my dear friend Peter.

A wounded figure (perhaps a priest, a soldier, a father, a convict, an old man, a warrior) stumbles into an ancient wood.

As he waits for the end, three visions rise before him.

He greets them as old friends.

Prologue

Spoken:

Quickslip under the viperbell tongue
(the nettles by the brookedge wood) I ran
with dewy sparrow eyes in hawk to watchling while
and gathered by the treeroot's leafing down
a handcup dirt, full wet and claytrench gnarl and beetlebrown,
and calling tawny tones up into not cold skykites care
but forestflying breezes, marl, and through to ferning ground –
and something ancient smiled unlockingly,
and I well then have opened to a blossomcore
and cut in kernel flesh a deepening me forth earthdown grown
and waited, swaying shalefeel in the rusting leaves,
as into sweeting sapwells poured the barkash kin
of oldwhere and of whitecountry,
and crowning Bel there whisperlings adored,
and there my greening body birthing shyly
by the Duirtree crest to heal before my lord.

I

Moving

♩ = 130

Free recit., not in time with guitar

(| ♯ | | ♯)

p *gliss.*

and when we came in soft - en - ing to bow at moon-light, through fea - ther - test, and trem - ble and un - ty - ing my — lit - tle self

(Standard Tuning)

pp *pp*

∕ Maintaining pulse

∕ Maintaining pulse

5

(| ♯ | | ♯ | | ♯ | | ♯)

mf *gliss.*

and your eve - ry in - vi - ting tou - ches some - thing kin - dle - ing the new, and fin - ger shy — Hmm —

mf *mf*

11

5 3 3 3 3 5 3 3 3

mf *p* *mf* *f*

A — win - - king — at the no - vi - ces — hmm — all brea - thing spines, — hmm — hmm — with — fledge - ling sen - ses —

mf *p* *mf* *f*

mf *p* *mf* *f*

19 Slower ♩ = 65

rush in-to the reed-ing bed with fair-ies calm as brush-strokes Eve-ry piece_ of skin a drop of hon-ey-suck-le flit-ting blue_ and whis-pers

sub.p *mf* *pp* *mf* *mp*

T A B

sub.p *mf* *pp* *mf* *mp*

26 ♩ = 130

eyes_ si - lent - ly I I gift you all the sha - dow cen - tres of a sick - le moon, and lay - ing bright the pet - tal - ing_ of heart_

p *mf* *mp*

T A B

mf *mf*

31 ♩ = 90 ♩ = 50

all_ mine_ I feel love, love_ love_ I feel_ love_ I feel...

mp *p* *mf* *mf* *f* *p*

T A B

p *mf*

II

pp

You _____ who _____ brea - - - thing

Free, with rubato
♩ = c.60

pp *sempre pp*

pp *sempre pp*

With a sense of metre
♩ = c.60

(alternative)

soft a sigh- ing_ cra- dle - smile, and fin- gers li- ke the_ brit- tle

mp *p (sempre)* *mp*

skies their peace, with eyes_ of lit tle wa - - - ters, wea - ving_ soft a sigh ing_ cra- dle - smile, and fin- gers li- ke the_ brit- tle touch_ of rain, Give me your

mf *p* *mp* *p* *mp*

mf *p* *mp* *p* *mp*

poco accel. . . . Slightly faster
♩ = c.65

19

pp *p* *mf* *p*

hands, and be still. You who cared for pet-al songs, and mur - mur ings of or - chards bree-zing air and fair and

p *pp* *p* *mf* *p*

p *pp* *p* *mf* *p*

accel. . . . ♩ = c.100

rit. . . . Tempo primo ♩ = c.60

32

mf *sub.pp* *mf* *p*

love-li ness, love li-ness, now sound your wor - ries on - ly to the wind give me your hands, and be still. You, who

mf *sub.pp* *mf* *mf*

mf *sub.pp* *mf* *mf*

Faster

♩ = c.80

44 *f* *sub.p* *mp* *mf*

care - ful - ly, who care - ful - ly in me - lo dies and whi - s pers who was bo - dy less, bo - dy less, who cry - ing tore to o - pen me a -

p *f* *p* *fp* *mf* *f*

p *f* *p* *fp* *mf* *f*

poco rit.

pp

Free, with rubato

♩ = c.60

With a sense of tempo

♩ = c.60

mf

56 *f* *mf*

live take these my hands... And you who gave the stars their night,

p *f* *p* *pp* *mf*

p *f* *p* *pp* *mf*

(alternative) who made light all winter

mp with pro - mi - ses of au - tumn, who made light all win - ter wea - ri - ness *mf*

p *mp*

(alternative) reached to touch the sun on

pp and reached to touch the sun on e - very day *p* take now my hands and be still be still *sub.f* We are nought if not in-con-stant, and our pain lasts lit-tle long. *pp* Be still. *ppp*

pp *mp* *p* *sub.mf* *p* *ppp*

pp *mp* *p* *sub.mf* *p* *ppp*

c.5'00"
(attacca)

III

Slow
♩ = 60

Straight tone →

pp

In to the wil - der groves the sil - ver ga - zing and the twi - light hi - lls I break my bo - dy

TAB
0 0 0 0 0 0

pp
TAB
12 12 12 12 12 12

3 I break my bo - dy

p
TAB
12 12 12 12 12 12 12 12 12 12 12 12 12 12 12 12 12 12 12 12

12 *p* Un - der the half moon flow - s en - chan - ting, *mp* high on brit - tle wings spill I

TAB
12 12 12 12 12 12 12 14 12 14 12 14

17 *mp* *p*
my sigh - - - ing - - - sigh - - - ing - - - There is no road

mp *p*

25 *mf* *mf*
in - to the wil - der groves... un - der the dark-light's bin - ding (ng) I burn my

vib. con vib.

p cresc. *mf*

35 *f* *p* *sempre con vib.*
bo - dy! There is my kind - ness. Now I know

ff *sub.pp* *pp* *p* *pp*

43 ord. vib. → straight tone → *p* 5:6

and in my jew - el and in my e - - - - - very thing, this is the on - ly way

47

mp

53 *p*

p

* change tuning of string while playing

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Enquiries should be directed to:

info@henrymcpherson.org.uk

More scores are available at
www.henrymcpherson.org.uk

@HenryDMcPherson

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