

25 Winter Solstice

RESOURCES ► CD track 27 ► Warm ups: Nos. 10*b*, 11*b*, 12*b*, 13*b*, 42

Information

‘Winter Solstice’ is another new creation for *Voiceworks at Christmas*, and was written in December 2003 by Katherine Lucas, who runs Charlbury Worldsong. This group of amateur music-lovers meets regularly to sing and share songs from around the world, and the winter solstice is an important date in their calendar. Katherine says about this song:

The thread of life, and its potential, though elusive, continues through the stillness of winter after the period of dying and loss during the Autumn. What is potential? What is hidden? How much of our own potential are we hiding? Addressing the stranger is confronting the place where we feel insecure, the unknown, yet it is the place for new growth. It’s a risk, and trust is necessary to unfold our potential to the outside world. Within the darkness we are not alone; the rhythms of life accompany us. When all is at its most still, the dream is there, and if we can bring ourselves to whisper the name of our dreaming we are allowing the new in, creating a space in the fullness for the spring to come.

The waltz represents the eternal dance that goes on whatever happens to us, and when it is sung as a canon, the challenge is to stay on your own path, but in harmony with those around you! The piano accompaniment is deliberately simple, leaving the piece open to your own arrangement and interpretation.

Starting

- Stand in a circle; create a feeling of calm and stillness with slow breathing and gentle stretching.
- Hum long notes and sing slow descending scales; focus on a resonant sound.
- Sing the upper notes of the piano introduction in a slow crotchet rhythm as a warm up for the melody.

Teaching and rehearsing

- Everyone must learn the melody, phrase by phrase, and should be comfortable with it, singing confidently. Leave the waltz for the moment.
- Try the melody as a canon, singing parts 1 and 2 as written. This helps independence, and can strengthen the unison singing.
- Add the descant line in bars 13–22 (two five-bar phrases!). This should be very light and just float above the melody.

- Learn the waltz next (bars 31–5); take care with the octave leap in the middle (bar 33). Float over the top and aim for the F in bar 34 as a destination; then the top C shouldn’t stick out. Sing this in canon when the singers are confident—keep it quiet. Voices should enter at the * signs as indicated in bar 36.
- All the time be expressive with the words and keep the long notes (e.g. ‘shroud’ in bar 7) sustained for their full length, growing in strength towards the tied note.

Ideas

- Smooth and sustained singing can be supported by singing the melody to ‘loo’, keeping the ‘ooh’ sound continuous and using a light tongue to articulate the rhythm.
- Experiment with some improvisation in the waltz. Set it going and keep repeating it; once it has settled down let singers find their own path within the sound by adding passing-notes, sustaining longer notes, or adding higher or lower notes, etc.—whatever they feel is right for them.
- Notes can be added to the descant part in bars 13–22 to create stronger harmony too; try singing the right hand of the piano part to a soft scat syllable.
- Try some movement or gentle dancing as appropriate—perhaps in the waltz.

Listen out

- Many of the phrases begin with an upbeat or pick-up (anacrusis). Breathe in good time and be fully prepared; the upbeat quavers (e.g. bar 6) should be relaxed and not rushed.
- Keep an ear on the tuning, as rising phrases may be flat if singers are tired or not listening carefully.
- Bar 25 needs care—the large leaps can be unfocused; practise slowly at first.

Performing

- Whatever arrangement is chosen, this song must be performed with commitment and feeling, with its beauty and simplicity to the fore. Perform to each other in a circle, or closely grouped if sharing with an audience.
- Add instrumentalists to support the harmonies or to improvise their own lines; try guitar instead of piano. Try an a cappella version, and certainly sing the waltz canon without backing.
- Above all—enjoy!

25 Winter Solstice

Words and Music: Katherine Lucas
arr. Peter Hunt

Gently flowing ♩ = 106

1

Piano

mf legato

mp

What

Red. * *Red.* * *Red.* * *Red.* *

5

1 lies with-in a seed? With-in a shroud a but-ter -

2 What lies with - in a seed? With-in a shroud

mp

Red. * *sim.*

8

- fly. What sings with-in a reed? With-in its

a but-ter-fly. What sings with - in a reed?

Red. * *sim.*

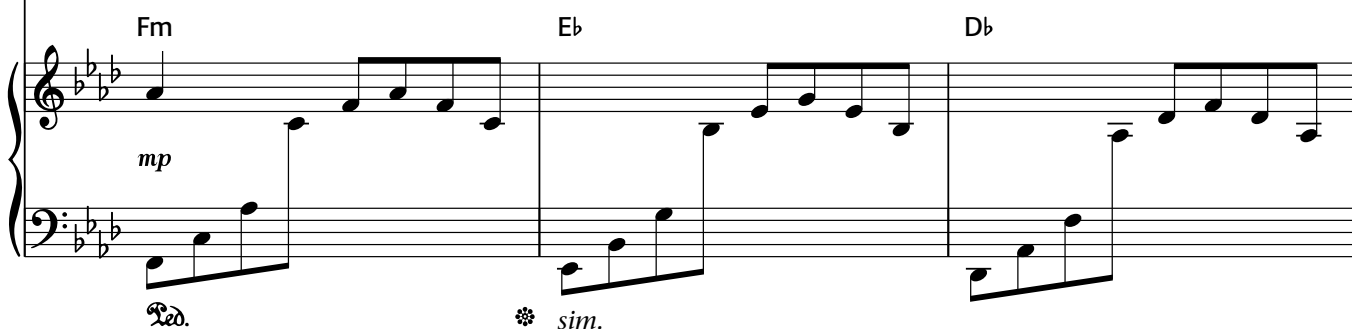
23



dark - ness_____ and in the full - ness the_ moon_____ knows you are
 dark - ness_____ and in the full - ness the_ moon_____ knows you are



1. And in the dark - ness_____ and in the full - ness the_ moon_____
 2. And in the dark - ness_____ and in the full - ness the_ moon_____



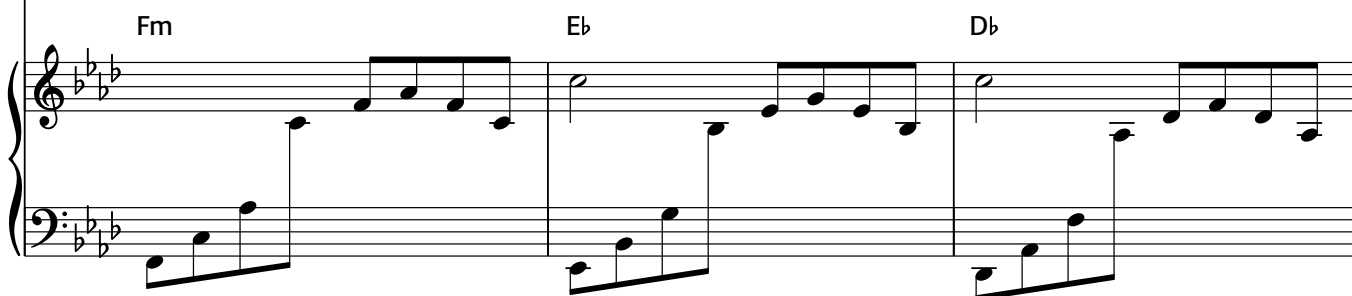
26



weep - ing. And in the dark - ness_____ and in the full - ness
 dream - ing. And in the dark - ness_____ and in the still - ness



knows you are weep - ing. And in the dark - ness_____ and in the full - ness_____
 knows you are dream - ing. And in the dark - ness_____ and in the still - ness____



2nd time **to Coda** ⊕

29

hold the child that is weep - ing.
whis - per name of your dream - ing. la

— hold the child that is weep - ing.
— whis - per name of your dream - ing.

Cm7 Db Eb Fm

p

f

Led. * *Led.* * *Led.* *

D.S. al Coda

32

la la la la la la la la la la, la la

Fm Eb Db Cm7 Fm Fm

mf

f

1 2

⊕ **CODA**

36

la la la la la la la la la la, la la

f * *f* * *mf*

repeat ad lib. *last time*

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1 *mp*

What lies with-in a seed? With-in a shroud____ a but-ter-

2

What lies with - in a seed? With-in a shroud____

8

- fly. What sings with-in a reed? With-in its sound____ a lul-la -

____ a but-ter-fly. What sings with - in a reed? With-in its sound____

12 *mf*

- by. Stran-ger, have you the grace to see the an-cient things I hold in my

p

____ a lu-la-by. Ah____

17

hands? Stran-ger, _ have you the grace to hold the an-cient things soft - ly in your

____ ah____

22 *mp*

hands? 1. And in the dark - ness_____ and in the full - ness the____
 2. And in the dark - ness_____ and in the full - ness the____

_____ 1. And in the dark - ness_____ and in the full - ness
 2. And in the dark - ness_____ and in the full - ness

25

moon_____ knows you are weep - ing. And in the dark - ness_____ and in the
 moon_____ knows you are dream-ing. And in the dark - ness_____ and in the

the____ moon_____ knows you are weep - ing. And in the dark - ness_____
 the____ moon_____ knows you are dream - ing. And in the dark - ness_____

28 2nd time **to Coda** ⊕

full - ness hold the child that is weep-ing. *p*
 still - ness whis - per name of your dream-ing. *la*

_____ and in the full - ness_____ hold the child that is weep-ing._____
 _____ and in the still - ness_____ whis - per name of your dream-ing._____

32 **D.S. al Coda**

1 2

la la la la la la la la la la la, la la

⊕ **CODA**

36 * *

la la la la la la la la la la la, la la.

repeat *ad lib.* last time