

Amber India Frost
Poem by: Thomas Hardy

The Darkling Thrush
for SATB Choir
(6'56")

The Darkling Thrush

Thomas Hardy (1900)

I leant upon a coppice gate
When Frost was spectre-grey
And Winter's dregs made desolate
The weakening eye of day.
The tangled bine-stems scored the sky
Like strings of broken lyres,
And all mankind that haunted nigh
Had sought their household fires.

The land's sharp features seemed to be
The century's corpse outleant,
His crypt the cloudy canopy,
The wind his death lament.
The ancient pulse of germ and birth
was shrunken hard and dry,
And every spirit upon earth
Seemed fervourless as I.

At once a voice arose among
The bleak twigs overhead.
In a full-hearted evensong
of joy illimited;
An aged thrush, frail, gaunt, and small,
In blast-beruffled plume,
Had chosen thus to fling his soul
Upon the growing gloom.

So little cause for carolings
of such ecstatic sound
Was written on terrestrial things
Afar or nigh around,
That I could think there trembled through
His happy good-night air
Some blessed Hope, whereof he knew
And I was unaware

The Darkling Thrush

Thomas Hardy

Amber India Frost

mf **Largo** ♩ = 62 *p*

SOPRANO
I leant up - on _____ a cop-pice gate, _____ When

ALTO
mf *div.* *p* *p*
I leant up - on _____ a cop-pice gate, _____ When

TENOR
mf *p*
I leant up - on _____ a cop-pice gate, _____ When

BASS
mf *div.* *p*
I leant up - on _____ a cop-pice gate, _____ When

4

S. *mf* *p*
Frost was spec-tre - grey, _ And Win-ter's dregs made _____

A. *mf* *p*
Frost was spec-tre - grey, _ And Win-ter's dregs made des - o - late

T. *mf* *p*
Frost was spec-tre - grey, _ And Win-ter's dregs made des - o - late

B. *mf* *p*
Frost was grey, des - o - late

7

S. *mf* > *p* *div.*
 The weak-ning eye of day. The tan - gled bine -

A. *mf* > *p* *div.*
 The weak-ning eye of day. The ahh bine -

T. *mf* > *p* *div.*
 weak-ning eye of day.

B.

12

S. *mf* > *p* *f* *mf*
 stems scored the sky Like strings of bro-ken ly -

A. *mf* > *p* *f* *mf*
 stems scored the sky Like strings of bro-ken ly -

T. *p* *f* *mf*
 scored the sky Like strings of bro-ken ly -

B. *mf* < *f* *mf*
 scored the sky Like strings of bro-ken ly -

17

S. *mp* *p*
 - res mm And all man-kind that haun- ted nigh

A. *mp* *p*
 - res mm And all man-kind that haun- ted nigh

T. *mp* *p*
 - res mm And all man-kind that haun- ted nigh

B. *f mp p*
 res, bro- ken ly - res, mm And all man-kind that haun- ted nigh

21

S. *pp mp*
 had sought their house - hold fires The

A. *p mp*
 had sought their house - hold fires The

T. *pp*
 had sought their house - hold fires

B. *p*
 had sought their house - hold fires

25

S. *p*
land's sharp fea-tures seemed to be

A. *p*
land's sharp fea-tures seemed to be His

T. *mp* *p*
The cen tu-ry's corpse out-leant

B. *mp* *p*
The cen - tu-ry's corpse out-leant

29

S. *mf* *p*
the wind la - ment.

A. *mf* *p*
crypt the clou-dy can-o - py, the wind his death la - ment.

T.

B. *p*
The

33

S. *mp* *p*
 an - cient pulse germ and birth

A. *mp* *p* *pp*
 an - cient pulse germ and birth was shrun-ken hard and dry_

T. *mp* *p* *pp* *p*
 an - cient pulse germ and birth was shrun-ken hard and dry_ And

B. *mf* *p* *p*
 an-cient pulse of germ__and birth,_ And

37

S. *pp* *mf*
 as I__ At

A. *pp* *mf* div.
 as I__ At

T. *mf* *pp* *mf*
 eve-ry spi - rit'pon__this earth__ seemed fer-vour-less as I as I__ At

B. *mf* *pp* *mf* div.
 eve-ry spi - rit'pon__this earth__ seemed fer-vour-less as I__ At

42

S. *p* *mf*
 once a voice__ a - rose a-mong__ the bleak twigs o-ver-head__

A. *p* *p* *mf*
 once a voice__ a - rose a-mong__ the bleak twigs o-ver-head__

T. *p* *mf*
 once a voice__ a - rose a-mong__ the bleak twigs o-ver-head__

B. *p* *mf*
 once a voice__ a - rose a-mong__ the bleak twigs o-ver-head

45

S. *p* *f*
 In a full_____ e - ven song_____

A. *mp* *p* *f*
 In a full_____ heart - ed e-ven-song e - ven song_ e-ven song__

T. *mp* *p* *f*
 In a full_____ heart - ed e - ven song__

B. *mp* *p* *f*
 In a full heart - ed e - ven_____ song_____

51

S. *ff*
 of joy ill - i - mi - ted

A. *ff*
 of joy of joy ill - i - mi - ted ill - i - mi - ted

T. *ff*
 joy of joy ill - i - mi ted ill - i - mi - ted

B. *ff*
 of joy of joy ill - i - mi - ted

56

S. *p*
 frail, gaunt, and

A. *p*
 frail, gaunt, and

T. *pp* *mf > p* *mf > p*
 An aged thrush,

B. *pp* *mf > p* *mf > p*
 An aged thrush,

63

S. *mf* small In_ blast be - ruff-led plume, *f* plume. *mf* Had cho-sen thus *cresc, e poco accel.*

A. *mf* small In_ blast be - ruff-led plume, *f* plume. *mf* Had cho-sen thus *cresc, e poco accel.*

T. *mf* In_ blast be - ruff-led plume, *f* plume. *mf* Had chos-en thus *cresc, e poco accel.*

B. *mf* In_ blast be - ruff-ledplume, *f* plume. *mf* chos-en thus *cresc, e poco accel.*

69

S. *ff* to fling, to fling his_ soul *mp* U - pon

A. *ff* to fling, to fling his_ soul *mp* U - pon the

T. *ff* to fling, to fling his_ soul *mp* U - pon

B. *ff* to fling, to fling his_ soul *mp* U - pon the

76

S. *p* the grow-ing gloom So lit-tle cause *pp* for

A. grow - ing gloom. *p* So lit-tle cause *pp* for

T. the grow-ing gloom So lit-tle cause *pp* for

B. grow - ing gloom. *p* So lit-tle cause *pp* for

80

S. *mf* ca-rol-ings of such ec-sta-tic sound was writ-ten on ter-

A. ca-rol-ings of such ec-sta-tic sound was writ-ten on ter-

T. ca-rol-ings of such ec-sta-tic sound was writ-ten on ter-

B. ca-rol-ings of such ec-sta-tic sound was writ-ten on ter-

rit.

83

S. *mf* > *p* *mf* > *p*
 res-tial things_ A - far or nigh a-round, That

A. *mf* > *p* *mf* > *p*
 res-tial things_ A - far_ or nigh a-round, That

T. *mf* > *p*
 rest-tial things_ nigh a-round, That

B. *mf* > *p*
 rest-tial things_ nigh_ a- round,_ That

89 ♩=55

S. I could think theretrem - bled through_ his_ hap - py good-night air_

A. I could think theretrem-bled through_ his_hap-py good - night air

T. I could think theretrem-bled through_ his hap-py good - night air

B. I could think theretrem-bled through_ his_ hap-py good-night air_

93

S. *mp* some bles - sed Hope, where-of he knew__ *p* And I _____ And

A. *mp* some bles - sed Hope, where-of he knew__ *p* And I _____

T. *mp* some bles - sed Hope, where-of he knew__ *p* And I _____

B. *mp* some bles - sed Hope, where-of he knew__ *p* And I _____ and

98

S. I _____ mm _____ and

A. I _____ mm was un - a - ware

T. I _____ mm was un - a - ware

B. I _____ mm was un - a - ware and

S. I was un - a - ware

A. I was un - a - ware

T. I was un - a - ware

B. I was un - a - ware

pp

The musical score consists of four staves, each representing a different voice part: Soprano (S.), Alto (A.), Tenor (T.), and Bass (B.). Each staff begins with a treble clef (except for the Bass part which has a bass clef) and a key signature of two sharps (F# and C#). The Soprano and Alto parts have a melodic line with a long note on 'I' followed by quarter notes for 'was', 'un', 'a', and 'ware'. The Tenor and Bass parts provide harmonic support with chords. A dynamic marking of *pp* (pianissimo) is placed above the final measure of each staff. The lyrics 'I was un-aware' are written below the notes.