

# A Noiseless, Patient Spider

Commissioned by Head Royce School, Oakland California  
for the Colla Voce choir, Robert Wells, director

Words by Ralph Waldo Emerson

Music by Mitchell Covington (ASCAP)

**Patiently** ♩ = 72

The musical score is for a choir and piano. It features five vocal parts: Soprano 1, Soprano 2, Alto, Tenor, and Bass, along with a Piano accompaniment. The music is in 3/4 time and B-flat major. The tempo is marked 'Patiently' with a quarter note equal to 72 beats per minute. The lyrics are: 'A noise - less a noise - Noise - less, noise - less, Noise - less,'. The Soprano 1 part begins with a piano (*pp*) dynamic. The Soprano 2 and Alto parts also have piano dynamics. The Tenor and Bass parts are mostly silent. The Piano accompaniment is marked 'Patiently' and features a simple, rhythmic accompaniment.

Walt Whitman (1819 – 1892) was an American poet, essayist and journalist. Often called the father of free verse, Whitman is among the most influential and controversial American poets.

"A Noiseless Patient Spider" is a short poem by Walt Whitman, published in an 1891 edition of *Leaves of Grass*. The poems of *Leaves of Grass* are loosely connected and each represents Whitman's celebration of his philosophy of life and humanity. This book is notable for its delight in sensual pleasures during a time when such candid displays were considered immoral.

As he observes the efforts of a spider to spin its web, Whitman comments on the theme of isolation in society and humankind's efforts to find belonging in the universe and to secure an anchor for the soul.

6 *p* *mp*

S 1 less, a noise - less, pat - ient

S 2 pa - tient, *p* pa - tient spi - der

A *p* noise - less pa - tient,

T 8 *mp* spi - der

B *p* *mp* noise - less,

12 *mp*

S 1 pa - tient sp - der.

S 2 *mp* pa - tient, pa - tient spi - der.

A noise - less pa - tient spi - der

T 8 spi - der, spi - der

B tient, pa - tient spi - der.

*In the style of chant*

16 *mp*

S 1 I mark'd, where, on a little promontory,\* it stood, i - so-lat - ed; \_\_\_\_\_

S 2 I mark'd, where, on a little promontory,\* it stood, i - so-lat - ed; \_\_\_\_\_

A I mark'd, where, on a little promontory,\* it stood, i - so-lat - ed; \_\_\_\_\_

T I mark'd, where, on a little promontory,\* it stood, i - so-lat - ed; \_\_\_\_\_

B I mark'd, where, on a little promontory,\* it stood, i - so-lat - ed; \_\_\_\_\_

20 *mf*

S 1 Mark'd how, to explore the va - cant, vast sur - round - ing.

S 2 Mark'd how, to explore the va - cant, vast sur - round - ing, \_\_\_\_\_

A Mark'd how, to explore the va - cant, vast sur - round - ing, \_\_\_\_\_

T Mark'd how, to explore the va - cant, vast sur - round - ing,

B Mark'd how, to explore the va - cant. vast sur - round - ing,

\*Promontory: A high point of land

Piu Mosso ♩ = 88

24 *p* *mp*

S 1 It launched forth fil-a - ment, fil-a - ment,

S 2 It launched forth fil-a - ment

A Fil-a - ment,

T 8 launched forth fil-a - ment,

B It launched forth

24 Piu Mosso ♩ = 88

28 *mf*

S 1 fil-a - ment out of it - self, out of it - self, out of it -

S 2 fil-a - ment out of it - self, out of it - self, out of it -

A fil-a - ment out of it - self, out of it - self, out of it -

T 8 fil-a - ment out of it - self,

B *mp* *mf* fil-a - ment out of it - self, out of it - self, out of it -

28

Spinning  $\text{♩} = 52$ 

32 *f*

S 1 self. Ev - er un - reel - ing,

S 2 self. Ev - er un - reel - ing ev - er tire - less - ly

A self. Ev - er un - reel - ing ev - er tire - less - ly,

T 8 Ev - er un - reel - ing ev - er tire - less - ly,

B self. Ev - er un - reel - ing ev - er tire - less - ly,

32 *f*

37

S 1 Tire - less - ly speed - ing, Ev - er un -

S 2 Ev - er speed - ing and un - reel - ing, Ev - er un - reel - ing

A Ev - er speed - ing and un - reel - ing, Ev - er un - reel - ing

T 8 Ev - er speed - ing, and un - reel - ing, Ev - er un - reel - ing

B Ev - er speed - ing, and un - reel - ing, - Ev - er un - reel - ing

37

43

S 1 *mf* reel - ing, reel - ing, *mp* reel - ing.

S 2 *mf* ev - er tire - less-ly ev - er tire - less-ly *mp* tire - less-ly

A *mf* ev - er tire - less-ly, ev - er tire - less-ly, *mp* tire - less-ly

T *mf* ev - er tire - less-ly, ev - er tire - less-ly, *mp* tire - less-ly

B *mf* ev - er tire - less-ly, ev - er tire - less-ly, *mp* tire - less-ly

43  $\text{♩} = \text{♩} (= 52)$

49 *rit.* speed - ing them, speed - ing them, speed - ing them. A noise - less,

S 2 *rit.* speed - ing them, speed - ing them, speed - ing them. A noise - less,

A *rit.* speed - ing them, speed - ing them, speed - ing them. A noise - less,

T *rit.* speed - ing them, speed - ing them, speed - ing them. A noise - less,

B *rit.* Speed - ing them, speed - ing them, speed - ing them. A noise - less,

49  $\text{♩} = 72$

54 *rit.*

S 1 pa - tient, pa - tient, pa - tient spi - der.

S 2 pa - tient, pa - tient, pa - tient, spi - der.

A pa - tient, pa - tient, pa - tient, spi - der.

T 8 pa - tient, pa - tient, pa - tient, spi - der.

B pa - tient, pa - tient, pa - tient spi - der.

With reverence  $\text{♩} = 72$

58 *p*

S 1 And you, — O my soul, — O my soul. — where you

S 2 *p* And you, — O my soul, — O my soul, — where you

A *p* And you, — O my soul, — O my soul, — where you

T 8 *p* And you, — O my soul, — O my soul, — where you

B *p* And you, — O my soul, — O my soul, where you

With reverence  $\text{♩} = 72$

*accel. et cresc. poco a poco*

62

S1 stand, where you stand, sur - round - ed, de-tached, in

S2 stand, sur - round - ed, de - tached, sur - round - ed, in

A stand, sur - round - ed, de-tached, in

T stand. sur - round - ed de - tached sur - round - ed, in

B stand, sur - round - ed where you stand, sur - round - ed, de-tached, in

66

S1 meas-ure - less o - ceans of space. *f* Cease - less - ly mus - ing, *mf*

S2 meas-ure - less o - ceans of space. *f* Cease - less - ly mus - ing, *mf*

A meas-ure - less o - ceans of space. *f* Cease - less - ly mus - ing, *mf*

T meas-ure - less o - ceans of space. *f* Cease - less - ly mus - ing, *mf*

B meas-ure - less o - ceans of space. *f* Cease - less - ly mus - ing, *mf*

*f* *mf*  $\text{♩} = 96$



70 *poco rit.* *a tempo*

S 1  
ven-tur-ing, — throw-ing, — throw-ing, — throw-ing, —

S 2  
ven-tur-ing, — throw-ing, — throw-ing, — throw-ing,

A  
ven-tur-ing, — throw-ing, — throw-ing, — throw-ing,

T  
8 ven-tur-ing, — throw-ing, — throw-ing, — throw-ing,

B  
ven-tur-ing, — throw-ing, — throw-ing — throw-ing

76 *legato*

S 1  
throw-ing, — seek-ing the spheres to con-nect them; Till the

S 2  
throw-ing, — seek-ing the spheres to con-nect them; Till the

A  
throw-ing, — seek-ing the spheres to con-nect them; Till the

T  
8 throw-ing, — seek-ing the spheres to con-nect them; Till the

B  
throw-ing, — seek-ing the spheres to con-nect them; Till the

81

S 1  
bridge you will need be form'd, till the duct - ile\* an - chor hold, — till the

S 2  
bridge you will need be form'd, till the duct - ile\* an - chor hold, — till the

A  
bridge you will need be form'd, till the duct - ile\* an - chor hold, — till the

T  
8  
bridge you will need be form'd, till the duct - ile\* an - chor hold, — till the

B  
bridge you will need be form'd till the duct - ile\* an - chor hold, — till the

85

S 1  
duct - ile an - chor hold, — Till the gos - sa - mer thread you fling catch — *mp*

S 2  
duct - ile an - chor hold, — Till the gos - sa - mer thread you fling

A  
duct - ile an - chor hold, — Till the gos - sa - mer thread you fling

T  
8  
duct - ile an - chor hold, — Till the gos - sa - mer thread you fling

B  
duct - ile an - chor hold, — Till the gos - sa - mer thread you fling

*Ductile: Capable of being pulled or stretched*

89

S 1  
— some-where, some-where, some-where, catch

S 2  
catch some - where, — some-where, some-where, some - where,

A  
catch, *mp* catch some - where, some - where

T  
catch, *mp*

B  
catch,

95

S 1  
— some - where, *mf* rit. al fine O my soul!

S 2  
some-where, some-where, *mf* rit. al fine O my soul! —

A  
some-where, some-where, rit. al fine O my soul!

T  
*mp* some-where, some-where rit. al fine O my soul!

B  
*mf* rit. al fine O my soul!