

Love Is Strong

Text from the Song of Songs
Refrain 8: 6b-7a, alt. Verse One 3: 1-2a Verse Two 2: 7 Verse 3 8: 2 Verse Four 8: 5b-6a
For David

Ellen Oak ©2003.
Composed 1996. Revised 2003.

♩ = 92

These first entrances quiet as a heartbeat, quiet as a heart's desire

Soprano *pppp*
Love Love Love

Alto *pppp*
Love Love Love

Tenor *pppp*
Love Love

S. *pp*
Love Love Love as

A. *pp*
Love is

T. *pp*
Love death

B. *ppp*
For love is strong as death,

S. *f*
as Love death: strong

A. *f*
Love death is: strong

T. *f*
is as death: strong

B. *f*
For love is strong as death: strong

20 *mf* *p* *mf* *f* *mf*

S. *strong* *strong* *strong* as death as love -

A. *mf* *p* *mf* *f* *mf*

T. *strong* *strong* *strong* as death *strong* as *mf*

B. *strong* *strong* *strong* as death *strong* as death *mf*

strong *strong* *strong* as death, death,

25 *p* *sotto voce al niente* *slightly faster* ♩ = 120

S. *p* *ppp*

A. *p* *ppp*

T. death *p* as *ppp* love *p* *intense*

B. as love *p* *ppp* *sotto voce al niente* For love is strong as

strong *as* *death* *as* *love*

31 *mp*

T. *death,* *p* *urgent* Its flash - es are flash - es of

B. *pas - sion* *fierce* *as* *the* *grave.*

36 *mf* *f* *mf* *mf*

T. *fire,* *mf* *f* *mf* *mf* No flood can quench love, no

B. *its* *fires* *are* *rag - ing* *flames.* *mf* *mf* *mf* *mf* No flood can quench love, no

T. *f* *f* *ff*

41 (3+2+2) (3+3+2)

tor - rents drown love. Come, my be - lov - ed, let me hear your voice!

B. *f* *ff*

(3+2+2) (3+3+2)

tor - rents drown love. Come, my be - lov - ed, let me hear your voice! -

Tempo and phrasing extremely liquid; each phrase beginning gently, speeding up and intensifying in the middle, and tapering at the end. Repeated notes pulsed on the breath. Portamento light and sexy. Savor the text in your singing.

45

Women

U - pon my bed at night

46

Women

I sought him whom my soul loves:

47 *mp*

Women

I sought him, but found him not;

48 *mp*

Women

I called him, but he gave no ans - wer.

49 *mf* *mf accel., and more rhythmic* *rall.*

Women

I will rise now, and go a - bout the ci - ty, in the streets and in the squares;

50 *p* *pp* *p*

Women

I will seek him whom my soul loves.

51

S. *p* *urgent* pas - sion fierce as the grave. *mp*

A. *p* *intense* For love is strong as death, its

T. *p* Come, my be - lov - ed

B. *p*

56

S. *mf* *f* its fires are ra - ging flames.

A. flash - es are flash - es of fire, *mf*

T. *p* Come, my be - lov - ed, let me, let me, let me hear *mf*

B. *p* Come, my be - lov - ed, let me, let me, let me hear

62

S. *mf* *f* *f* No flood can quench love, no tor - rents drown love Come, my be - lov - ed, let me

A. *mf* *f* *f* No flood can quench love, no tor - rents drown love. Come, my be - lov - ed, let me

T. *mf* *mf* *mf* your voice, your voice, come, come, let me

B. *mf* *mf* *mf* your voice, your voice, come, come, let me

ff

S. *ff*
A. *f*
T. *f*
B.

hear your voice! *ff*
hear your voice! *f*
hear your voice! *f*
hear your voice!

p-mf throughout. Very light, playful, seductive. Sing into word accents; enjoy the irregular rhythm they create.

Men *40*
4

I charge you, O daught - ers of Je - ru - sa - lem,

Men *68*

by the ga - zelles and the wild does,

Men *69*

by the spi - rits and god - des - ses of the field,

Men *70*

Do not stir up or a - wak - en love un - til it is rea - dy.

71 *pp*

S. A - wak - en love love, it is read - y

A. *p* For love is strong as death, *mp* Its flash - es are

T. *p* pas - sion fierce as the grave.

B. *pp*

love a - wak - en love, it is read - y

77 *mp* *mf*

S. read - y read - y read - y a - wak -

A. flash - es of fire, *mf* No flood can quench love, no

T. *mp* its fires are rag - ing flames. *mf* No flood can quench

B. *mp*

read - y read - y read - y a - wak -

83 *mf* *f* *ff* *f*

S. en a - wake, a - wak - en, - a - wak - en, - let me, O let me hear your voice!

A. tor - rents drown love: *f* Come, my - be - lov - ed, let me hear your voice! *ff*

T. love, no tor - rents drown love: *f* Come, my be - lov - ed, let me hear your voice! *ff*

B. *mf* *f*

en, a - wake, - a wak - en, a - wak - en, let me, O let me hear your voice!

87
Women
I would lead you and bring you in - to the house of my mo - ther,

88
Women
and in - to the cham - ber of the one who bore me.

89
Women
I would give you spiced wine to drink,

90
Women
the juice of my po - me - gran - ates.

91 *mp With singleness of heart*
S. For love is strong as - death, pas-sion fierce as the grave. Its flash-es are
A. *mp With singleness of heart* For love is strong, - pas-sion fierce as the grave. Its flash-es are
T. *mp With singleness of heart* For love is fierce as the grave. Its flash-es are
B. *mp With singleness of heart* For love is fierce as the grave. Its flash-es are

For love the grave. Its flash-es are

97 *mf*
S. flashes of fire, its fires are rag - ing flames. No flood can quench love, no
A. *mf* flashes of fire, its fires are rag - ing flames. No flood can quench love, no
T. *mf* flashes of fire, its fires are rag - ing flames. No
B. *mf* flashes of fire, its fires are rag - ing flames. No

flashes of fire, its fires are rag - ing flames. No

103

S. *f* tor - rents down love: Come, my be - lov - ed, let me hear your voice!

A. *f* tor - rents down love: Come, my be - lov - ed, let me hear your voice!

T. *f* tor - rents down love: Come, my be - lov - ed, let me hear your voice!

B. *f* tor - rents down love: Come, my be - lov - ed, let me hear your voice!

mp 107 *with tender sweetness, each phrase tapering into pure resonance*

Men Un - der the ap - ple tree I a - wak - ened you.

108

Men There your mo - ther was in la - bor with you,

109

Men there she who bore you was in la - bor.

110 *slowly, like a ritual drum* *rall.*

Men Set me as a seal u - pon your heart, as a seal u - pon your arm.

♩ = 96
Like gregorian chant: with luminous, fluid passion *p*

S. pas - sion fierce as the grave. Its flash - es are flash - es of

Like gregorian chant: with luminous, fluid passion *p*
T. For love is strong as death, pas - sion fierce as the grave. Its flash - es are flash - es of

Like gregorian chant: with luminous, fluid passion *p*
B. Its flash - es are flash - es of

119

S. *sempre p*
 fire, its fires are rag - ing flames. No flood can quench love, no

A. *p*
 its fires are rag - ing flames. No *sempre p*

T.
 fire its fires are rag - ing flames.

B.
 fire, its fire fires are rag - ing flames.

124

S. tor - rents down love. Come, my be - lov - ed, let me hear your voice...

A. tor - rents down love. Come, my be - lov - ed, let me hear your voice... *sempre p*

T. Come, my be - lov - ed, let me hear your voice...

B. *sempre p*

Let me hear your voice...

128

S. *p* as savoring a memory *soften* , *sotto voce al niente*
 Come, my-be-lov - ed, let me hear your voice!

A. *p* as savoring a memory *soften* , *sotto voce al niente*
 Come, my-be-lov - ed, let me hear your voice!

T. *p* as savoring a memory *soften* , *sotto voce al niente*
 Come, my-be-lov - ed, let me hear your voice!

B. *p* as savoring a memory *soften* , *sotto voce al niente*
 Come, my be-lov - ed, let me hear your voice!

Improvise with pitches you have known and loved, free rhythm and dynamics, and this text:

Beloved your voice

To last 20-30 seconds. Let it fade, listen for the glimpse of ever-present silence, then go on:

♩ = 80