

HL 08749149
US \$2.25

Eric Whitacre



The Seal Lullaby

Rudyard Kipling

SATB and piano

shadow water music

The Seal Lullaby

About the Work:

In the spring of 2004 I was lucky enough to have my show *Paradise Lost* presented at the ASCAP Musical Theatre Workshop. The workshop is the brainchild of legendary composer Stephen Schwartz (*Wicked*, *Godspell*), and his insights about the creative process were profoundly helpful. He became a great mentor and friend to the show and, I am honored to say, to me personally.

Soon after the workshop I received a call from a major film studio. Stephen had recommended me to them and they wanted to know if I might be interested in writing music for an animated feature. I was incredibly excited, said yes, and took the meeting.

The creative execs with whom I met explained that the studio heads had always wanted to make an epic adventure, a classic animated film based on Kipling's *The Seal Lullaby*. I have always loved animation (the early Disney films; Looney Tunes; everything Pixar makes) and I couldn't believe that I might get a chance to work in that grand tradition on such great material.

The Seal Lullaby is a beautiful story, classic Kipling, dark and rich and not at all condescending to kids. Best of all, Kipling begins his tale with the mother seal singing softly to her young pup:

Oh! hush thee, my baby, the night is behind us,
And black are the waters that sparkled so green.
The moon, o'er the combers, looks downward to find us
At rest in the hollows that rustle between.

Where billow meets billow, then soft by thy pillow;
Ah, weary wee flipperling, curl at thy ease!
The storm shall not wake thee, nor shark overtake thee,
Asleep in the arms of the slow-swinging seas.

I was struck so deeply by those first beautiful words, and a simple, sweet Disney-esque song just came gushing out of me. I wrote it down as quickly as I could, had my wife record it while I accompanied her at the piano, and then dropped it off at the film studio.

I didn't hear anything from them for weeks and weeks, and I began to despair. Did they hate it? Was it too melodically complex? Did they even listen to it? Finally, I called them, begging to know the reason that they had rejected my tender little song. "Oh," said the exec, "we decided to make *Kung Fu Panda* instead."

So I didn't do anything with it, just sang it to my baby son every night to get him to go to sleep. (Success rate: less than 50%). And a few years later the Towne Singers graciously commissioned this arrangement of it. I'm grateful to them for giving it a new life. And I'm especially grateful to Stephen Schwartz, to whom the piece is dedicated. His friendship and invaluable tutelage has meant more to me than I could ever tell him.

commissioned by The Towne Singers
THE SEAL LULLABY

Dedicated with love and gratitude to Stephen Schwartz

RUDYARD KIPLING

ERIC WHITACRE

Simply, with a little rubato ♩ = 66

SOPRANO
p Ooh, ooh, *mf* ooh,

ALTO
p Ooh, ooh, *mf* ooh,

TENOR
p Ooh, ooh, *mf* ooh,

BASS
p Ooh, ooh, *mf* ooh,

PIANO
p pedal generously throughout
loco *mf*

7

mp ooh, ooh, *mp* ooh,

mp ooh, ooh, *mp* ooh,

mp ooh, ooh, *mp* ooh,

mp ooh, ooh, *mp* ooh,

12

p Oh! hush thee, my ba - by, the

p Oh! hush thee, my ba - by, the

18

mp night is be - hind us, And black are the wa - ters that spark-led so

mp night is be - hind us, And black wa - ters spark - led so

mp And black wa - ters spark - led

mp And black wa - ters spark - led so

27

27

find us At rest in the hol - lows that rus - tle be - tween.

find us At rest in hol - lows that rus - tle be - tween.

find us At rest in hol - lows that rus - tle be - tween.

find us At rest. Where

p *pp*

32

Ah wea - ry wee

Ah wea - ry

Ah wea - ry

bil-low meets bil - low, there soft be thy_ pil - low; wea - ry

37

flip - per - ling curl at thy_ ease!

flip-per-ling curl at thy ease!

flip - per-ling curl at thy ease! The storm shall not

flip - per-ling curl at thy ease! The storm shall not

41

mp nor shark o - ver - take thee, *mf* A - sleep in the

mp nor shark o - ver - take thee, *mf* A - sleep in the

wake thee, A - sleep in the

wake thee, A - sleep in the

45

rit. arms of the slow - swing - ing seas, a - sleep in the

arms of the slow - swing - ing seas, a - sleep in the

arms of the slow - swing - ing seas, in the

arms of the slow - swing - ing seas, *rit.* in the

49 *mp* *p* *a tempo*

arms of the slow - swing - ing seas. ooh,

arms of the slow - swing - ing seas. ooh,

arms. ooh,

arms. ooh,

a tempo

The musical score for measures 49-53 consists of four vocal staves and a piano accompaniment. The vocal parts are in a soprano, alto, tenor, and bass arrangement. They all have the lyrics 'arms of the slow - swing - ing seas.' followed by 'ooh,'. The piano part provides a harmonic accompaniment. Dynamics include *mp* (mezzo-piano), *p* (piano), and *a tempo* (at the original tempo).

54

ooh,

ooh,

ooh,

ooh,

The musical score for measures 54-58 continues with four vocal staves and a piano accompaniment. The vocal parts have the lyric 'ooh,'. The piano part features a more complex rhythmic accompaniment with eighth and sixteenth notes. The key signature remains B-flat major (two flats).

59

The musical score for 'The Rose Tree' is presented on five staves. The first four staves are vocal parts for Soprano, Alto, Tenor, and Bass, each with a vocal line and a corresponding 'ooh,' lyric line. The fifth staff is the piano accompaniment, consisting of a right-hand melody and a left-hand bass line. The key signature is B-flat major (two flats) and the time signature is 4/4. The score is divided into two systems. The first system contains the first two measures of the piece, and the second system contains the next four measures. The vocal parts feature long, flowing lines with many ties, and the piano accompaniment provides a steady, rhythmic foundation.

63 *mp*

ooh,

mp

ooh,

mp

ooh,

mp

ooh

mf

[illegible]