

DT0026 | TRUMBORE | \$2.35
IN THE MIDDLE | SATB CHORUS & PIANO

IN THE MIDDLE

SATB Chorus & Piano
Text by Barbara Crooker

daletrumbore
c o m p o s e r

IN THE MIDDLE

of a life that's as complicated as everyone else's,
struggling for balance, juggling time.
The mantle clock that was my grandfather's
has stopped at 9:20; we haven't had time
to get it repaired. The brass pendulum is still,
the chimes don't ring. One day I look out the window,
green summer; the next, the leaves have already fallen,
and a grey sky lowers the horizon. Our children almost grown,
our parents gone, it happened so fast. Each day, we must learn
again how to love, between morning's quick coffee
and evening's slow return. Steam from a pot of soup rises,
mixing with the yeasty smell of baking bread. Our bodies
twine, and the big black dog pushes his great head between;
his tail, a metronome, 3/4 time. We'll never get there,
Time is always ahead of us, running down the beach, urging
us on faster, faster, but sometimes we take off our watches,
sometimes we lie in the hammock, caught between the mesh
of rope and the net of stars, suspended, tangled up
in love, running out of time.

Barbara Crooker

"In The Middle" by Barbara Crooker from *Radiance*.
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Barbara Crooker's poem *In the Middle* describes the struggle to connect in the rush of ordinary life. In this setting, the piano serves as an unreliable time-keeper, ebbing and flowing as our perception of time does. Sometimes, it pushes us on, frantic; sometimes, the pace relaxes in a moment of peace. The word "time" itself occurs over and over within the piece, serving as a sort of refrain, a reminder to slow down.

I first read this poem of Barbara's last summer, at the beach house where my family has gone since I was very young – an annual trip I'd missed, for one reason or another, for the last three years. There, the poem's metaphors were made real – a literal hammock in the backyard, a beach just across the street – and it seemed especially important to set this text. It is so easy to forget, in the context of everyday life, that time will ultimately catch up with all of us.

There's no antidote, but in the meantime, we should "take off our watches" more often,
finding ourselves "tangled up in love" with another or just with this life, and
granting time permission, if not to stop, then to slow.

In the Middle

for SATB Chorus & Piano

Text by Barbara Crooker

Music by Dale Trumbore

Quickly, almost frantic; $\text{♩} = \text{ca. 138 or even faster}$

SOPRANO
mf
In the mid-dle of a life that's as com - pli - ca - ted_ as ev-'ry one else - 's,____

ALTO
mf
In the mid-dle of a life that's as com - pli - ca - ted_ as ev-'ry one else - 's,____ strug-gling for

TENOR

BASS

Piano
mf
Ped.

6

S.
p *mf* *poco rit.*
jug-gl-ing time.

A.
mf *mf*
ba - lance, time. time.

T.
mf *mf*
time. time.

B.
mf *mf*
time. time.

Pno.
mp *mf* *mp* *poco rit.*
Ped.

2

The image displays a musical score for the song "The Mantle Clock." It includes staves for Soprano (S.), Alto (A.), Tenor (T.), Bass (B.), and Piano (Pno.). The Soprano and Alto parts are mostly rests. The Tenor and Bass parts have lyrics: "The mantle clock that was my grand - fa - ther's has stopped at nine -". The Piano part includes a tempo change to "A tempo" at measure 12. The score is in 2/4 time, with key changes to 4/4 and back to 2/4. Dynamics include *mf* and *p*. Performance markings include "poco" and "8".

The image displays a musical score for a piece titled "The Brass". It features four vocal parts (Soprano, Alto, Tenor, Bass) and a piano accompaniment. The score is in 4/4 time and begins with a key signature of one flat (B-flat major or D minor). The tempo is marked "poco rit." and "Slower; ♩ = ca. 80". The lyrics are: "we have-n't had time to get it re-paired. The brass". The piano part includes dynamic markings such as *p* (piano) and *mf* (mezzo-forte), and features a triplet of eighth notes in the right hand. The score is marked with a large "17" at the beginning of the vocal staves.

22 *mf* *poco* *p* *poco accel.* *f* **Tempo I**

S. pen - du - lum is still, the chimes don't ring.

A. pen - du - lum is still, the chimes don't ring.

T. pen - du - lum is still, the chimes don't ring.

B. pen - du - lum is still, the chimes don't ring.

Pno. *mf*

26 *molto rit.* (Freely, slowly) *Tenderly; freely* ♩ = ca. 60 or slower

Pno. *p* *mf* *p*

30 *mp*

S. One day, I look out the win-dow, green sum - mer, the

A. One day, I look out the win-dow, green sum - mer, the

T. green sum - mer, the

B. the

Pno. *p* *p*

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Here's the next page:

43 **Slow** *p* **accel.** **Tempo 1** (♩ = ca. 138 or faster)

S. gone.

A. gone, it hap - pened so fast. *pp* *mf*

T. gone, it hap - pened so fast. *pp* *mf*

B. gone, it hap - pened so fast. *pp* *mf*

Pno. *mf*

Red. 3

47 **molto rit.** **Freely; slowly** **Gently;** ♩ = ca. 80

Pno. *p*

51 *mp* *f* *mp*

S. Each day, we must learn a - gain how to love. be - tween

A. Each day, we must learn a - gain how to love. be - tween *mp*

T. Each day, we must learn a - gain how to love. *f*

B. Each day, we must learn a - gain how to love. *f*

Pno. *mp* *p* *mf*

In the Middle

6

55 *mf* **poco rit.** **Slower still** *mp*

S. *mf* *mp*
 morn-ing's quick cof-fee Steam from a pot of soup ri-ses,

A. *mf* *mp*
 morn-ing's quick cof-fee Steam from a pot of soup ri-ses,

T. *p*
 and eve-ning's slow re - turn.

B. *p*
 and eve-ning's slow re - turn.

Pno. *mp* *p* *pp* *mf* *pp*

61 $\text{♩} = \text{ca. } 80$ *p*

S. *p*
 mix-ing with the yeast - y smell of ba-king bread. Our bo - dies twine.

A. *p*
 mix-ing with the yeast - y smell of ba-king bread. Our bo - dies twine,

T. *p*
 Our bo - dies twine,

B. *p*
 Our bo - dies twine.

Pno. *p* *pp* *mp*

65 *mf* *p* *accel.* *p* *Slightly faster*

S. Ah, his tail a met-ro-nome.

A. *mf* *mf* *mp*
and the big black dog push-es his great head be-tween; three-four

T. *mf* *mf*
and the big black dog push-es his great head be-tween;

B. *mf* *p* *p*
Ah, his tail a met-ro-nome.

Pno. *p* *mp* *pp cresc.* *3*

Ped.

71 *mf* *rit.* *p* *mp*

S. time. time.

A. *mf* *p* *mp*
time. time.

T. *mf* *p* *mp*
time. time.

B. *mf* *p* *mp*
time. time.

Pno. *f* *mp* *mf* *p* *rit.* *3* *5* *5*

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82 **Expansive and rich; ♩ = ca. 60 or slower**

f *mp* *mp*

S. some - times we take off our watch - es, some - times we lie in the

A. some - times we take off our watch - es, some - times we lie in the

T. some - times we take off our watch - es, some - times we lie in the

B. some - times we take off our watch - es, some - times we lie in the

Pno. *f* *mf* *mp*

86 *mp* *mp* *mp* *mp* *rit.*

S. ham - mock, caught be - tween the mesh of rope and the net of

A. ham - mock, caught be - tween the mesh of rope and the net of

T. ham - mock, caught be - tween the mesh of rope and the net of

B. ham - mock, caught be - tween the mesh of rope and the net of

Pno. *p* *3* *5* *rit.*

In the Middle

10

Freely, slow
ff

S. stars, _____ ***mp*** tan-gled up in

A. stars, _____ ***mp*** < > sus - pen - ded, ***mp*** tan-gled up in

T. stars, _____ ***mp*** tan-gled up in

B. stars, _____ ***mp*** tan-gled up in

Pno. ***f*** ***p***

89

rit. ***f*** ***ff*** (long) **accel.** ***p*** ***mf*** **Tempo I** (♩ = ca. 138 or faster)

S. love, _____ run-ning out of time, _____ run-ning out of

A. love, _____ time, _____

T. love, _____ time, _____

B. love, _____ time, _____

Pno. ***f*** ***mf***

93

98 *mf* **A little slower** *p* *mf*

S. time, run-ning out of time, run-ning out of time, run-ning out of time, run-ning

A. *p* *mf* *p* *mf*
time, time,

T. *p* *mf* *mf*
time, run-ning out of time, run-ning out of time,

B. *p* *mf*
time, run-ning out of

Pno. 98 **A little slower** *mp* *Red.*

103 **poco a poco accel.**

S. out of time, run-ning out of time, run-ning out of time, run-ning run-ning run-ning run-ning run-ning run-ning run-ning

A. *p* *mf* *p*
time, run-ning out of time, run-ning out of time, run-ning

T. *p*
run-ning out of time, run-ning out of time, run-ning out of time, run-ning out of time, run-ning out of time.

B. *mf*
time, run-ning out of time, run-ning out of

Pno. 103 **poco a poco accel.** *mf*

In the Middle

12

107 **Tempo I**

S. *p* run - ning run - ning run - ning run - ning run - ning run - ning run - ning run - ning run - ning

A. *mf* out of time, run - ning out of time, run - ning out of time, *p* run - ning run - ning run - ning run - ning

T. *mf* *p* run - ning out of time, *mf* *p* run - ning, run - ning, run - ning, run - ning,

B. *mf* time,

Pno. **Tempo I**

110 **accel.**

S. *mf* run - ning run - ning run - ning run - ning run - ning run - ning run - ning run - ning run - ning *fff*

A. *mf* run - ning run - ning run - ning run - ning run - ning run - ning run - ning run - ning run - ning *fff*

T. *mf* run - ning, run - ning, run - ning, run - ning, run - ning, run - ning, run - ning, run - ning, run - ning, run - ning, *fff*

B. *mf* run - ning, run - ning, run - ning, run - ning, run - ning, run - ning, run - ning, run - ning, run - ning, run - ning, *fff*

Pno. **accel.**