

# SHIP OF DEATH

SONG CYCLE FOR BASS/BARITONE  
AND PIANO

POETRY BY D.H. LAWRENCE

MARTHA HELEN SCHMIDT



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## Ship of Death

Now it is autumn and the falling fruit  
and the long journey towards oblivion.

The apples falling like great drops of dew  
to bruise themselves an exit from themselves.

And it is time to go, to bid farewell  
to one's own self, and find an exit  
from the fallen self.

Have you built your ship of death, O have you?  
O build your ship of death, for you will need it.

The grim frost is at hand, when the apples will fall  
thick, almost thunderous, on the hardened earth.

And death is on the air like a smell of ashes!  
Ah! Can't you smell it?

And in the bruised body, the frightened soul  
finds itself shrinking, wincing from the cold  
that blows upon it through the orifices.

And can a man his own quietus make  
with a bare bodkin?

With daggers, bodkins, bullets, man can make  
a bruise or break of exit for his life;  
but is that a quietus, O tell me, is it quietus?  
Surely not so!

O let us talk of quiet that we know,  
that we can know, the deep and lovely quiet  
of a strong heart at peace!

How can we this, our own quietus, make?

Build then the ship of death, for you must take  
the longest journey, to oblivion.

And die the death, the long and painful death  
that lies between the old self and the new.

And everything is gone, the body is gone  
completely under, gone, entirely gone.

The upper darkness is heavy as the lower,  
between them the little ship  
is gone  
she is gone.  
It is the end, it is oblivion.

Wait, wait, the little ship  
drifting, beneath the deathly ashy gray  
of a flood-dawn.

Wait, wait! even so, a flush of yellow  
and strangely, O chilled wan soul, a flush of rose.

A flush of rose, and the whole thing starts again.

The flood subsides, and the body, like a worn sea-shell  
emerges strange and lovely.  
And the little ship wings home, faltering and lapsing  
on the pink flood,  
and the frail soul steps out, into her house again  
filling the heart with peace.

Swings the heart renewed with peace  
even of oblivion.

Oh build your ship of death, oh build it!  
for you will need it.  
For the voyage of oblivion awaits you.

**D. H. Lawrence**

Excerpts from *The Ship of Death*

# Ship of Death

## I. Bid Farewell

D. H. Lawrence

Martha Helen Schmidt

♩ = 44 - 52

*peaceful mp*

*pensive mp*

Now — it is au - tumn — and the fall - ing fruit and the long jour - ney — towards -

liv - i - on. — The ap - ples fall - ing like great drops of dew to

12

*tender mf*

bruise them-selves an ex - it from them-selves. And it is time to

12

*tender mf*

16

go, to bid fare-well to one's own self, and find an ex - it from the

16

20

*dim. pp*

fall - en self, the fall - en self.

20

*dim. poco rit.*

# Ship of Death

## II. Have you built?

D. H. Lawrence

Martha Helen Schmidt

♩ = 120 - 132 **Aggressive**

*ff*

Have you

built your ship of death, have you? O

build your ship of death, for you will need it.

The musical score is written for voice and piano. It features a key signature of two sharps (F# and C#) and a 4/4 time signature. The tempo is marked as 120-132 beats per minute, and the mood is 'Aggressive'. The score is divided into three systems. The first system shows the vocal line starting with 'Have you' and the piano accompaniment. The second system starts at measure 4 and includes the lyrics 'built your ship of death, have you? O'. The third system starts at measure 7 and includes the lyrics 'build your ship of death, for you will need it.' The piano part consists of a right hand with chords and moving lines, and a left hand with a steady bass line. Dynamics include fortissimo (ff) and accents.

10

The grim \_\_\_\_\_ frost \_\_\_\_\_ is at

13

hand, when the ap - ples will fall thick, al - most

16

thun - drous, on the hard - ead earth. \_\_\_\_\_ And death \_\_\_\_\_ is

19

*cresc.* on the air like a smell of ash - es! *ff*

19

*cresc.* *ff*

22 *molto rit.*

Ah! Can't you smell it?

22 *molto rit.* *a tempo* *f*

25 *ff*

28 *ff*

And in the bruised body, the

28

31

fright - ened soul finds it - self shrink - ing, winc - ing

31



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46 *f*

ex - it for his life; but is that a qui -

46

49 *molto rit.*

e - tus o tell me, is it qui - e - tus? Sure - ly not so!

49 *molto rit.*

52 *a tempo ff*

Sure - ly not so!

52 *a tempo ff* *8va*

55 *(8va)* *no rit.*

# Ship of Death

## III. A strong heart at peace

D. H. Lawrence

Martha Helen Schmidt

♩ = 58 - 66

Tranquil

*mp*

5 *mp*

O let us talk of \_\_\_\_\_ qui - et that know, \_\_\_\_\_ that

5

9 *poco cresc.* -----

we \_\_\_\_\_ can know, \_\_\_\_\_ the deep \_\_\_\_\_ and love - ly

9 *poco cresc.* -----

11

13

*mp*

qui - et of a strong heart at

13

*mp*

17

*mp*

peace! A

17

21

strong heart at peace!

21

25 *poco cresc.* ----- *dim.* -----

How can we this, \_\_\_\_\_ our own qui - e - tus,

25 *poco cresc.* ----- *dim.* -----

29 -----

make? \_\_\_\_\_

29 *mf* ----- *mp* -----

34

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# Ship of Death

## IV. The Longest Journey

D. H. Lawrence

Martha Helen Schmidt

♩ = 120 - 132 **Aggressive**

**ff**

Build \_\_\_\_\_ then the ship of death, \_\_\_\_\_

**ff**

4

for you must take the long - est

4

7

jour ney, to ob - li - vi - on. And die the

**f**

**f**

10

death, the long and pain - ful death that lies \_\_\_\_\_ be - tween the old self and the

14

*ff*

new, be - tween the self and the

17

new. \_\_\_\_\_

*no rit.*

# Ship of Death V. Oblivion

D. H. Lawrence

Martha Helen Schmidt

♩ = 48 - 54

Desolate and Dirge-like

*p*

And ev-ery-thing is gone, the bo-dy is gone com-

5

plete - ly un - der, gone, en - ti - re - ly gone, en -

5

8

ti - re - ly gone. The up - per dark - ness is

8

*mp*

*mp*



## Moving forward

*cresc.*

11

heav - y as the low - er, be - tween them the lit - tle ship is

## Moving forward

*cresc.*

11

14

***f***

Tempo I

***mp***

gone, she

14

***f****dim. and ri.*

17

is gone. It is the

Tempo I

***mp***

17

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# Ship of Death

## VI. Wait, wait!

D. H. Lawrence

Martha Helen Schmidt

♩. = 42 - 46

*mf*

Wait, wait, wait, wait, the lit - tle ship drift - ing, \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_ be - neath the death - ly as - y gray of a flood - dawn. \_\_\_\_\_

Wait, wait! \_\_\_\_\_ Wait, wait! \_\_\_\_\_ e - ven so, \_\_\_\_\_

*mf*

13 *molto rit.*

a flush of yel - low and strange-ly, O chilled wan soul, A

13 *molto rit.*

**Slow and Relaxed**

17 *p* *mf* *gentle*

flush of rose. A flush of rose, and the whole

17 **Slow and Relaxed** *p* *a tempo* *mf*

21 *rit.* **Tempo I** *p*

thing starts a gain.

21 *rit.* **Tempo I** *p* *rit.*

# Ship of Death

## VII. The soul steps out

D. H. Lawrence

Martha Helen Schmidt

♩ = 52 - 56    **Tranquil**

*mp*

The

4

flood \_\_\_\_\_ sub - sides, and the bo - dy, like a

*mp*

7

worn sea - shell e - merg - es strange and

10

love - ly.

*poco accel.* - - - - -

*mp*

13 ♩ = 76 - 84

*mp*

And the lit - tle ship wings home

16

*mf**MOLTO rit.**f*

fal - ter-ing and laps - ing on the pink flood,

**Tempo I Ethereal**

*mf* *MOLTO rit.* *f* *mp* *p*

19 *p* and the frail soul steps out, in - to <sup>3</sup> her

22 *mf* *f* *rit.* house a - gain fill - ing the heart with

25 *a tempo* *mp* peace.

25 *a tempo* *mp*

28 *mf*

The musical score is for a song, page 22. It features a vocal line and piano accompaniment. The key signature has one sharp (F#). The tempo and dynamics are marked throughout. A large 'Perusal Score Only' watermark is diagonally across the page.

Measure 19: Vocal line starts with a rest, then a half note F#4, quarter note G4, quarter note A4, quarter note B4, quarter note C5. Piano accompaniment: Treble clef has a half note F#4, quarter note G4, quarter note A4, quarter note B4, quarter note C5. Bass clef has a half note F#3, quarter note G3, quarter note A3, quarter note B3, quarter note C4. Dynamics: *p*.

Measure 22: Vocal line starts with a half note F#4, quarter note G4, quarter note A4, quarter note B4, quarter note C5. Piano accompaniment: Treble clef has a half note F#4, quarter note G4, quarter note A4, quarter note B4, quarter note C5. Bass clef has a half note F#3, quarter note G3, quarter note A3, quarter note B3, quarter note C4. Dynamics: *mf*, *f*, *rit.*.

Measure 25: Vocal line starts with a half note F#4, quarter note G4, quarter note A4, quarter note B4, quarter note C5. Piano accompaniment: Treble clef has a half note F#4, quarter note G4, quarter note A4, quarter note B4, quarter note C5. Bass clef has a half note F#3, quarter note G3, quarter note A3, quarter note B3, quarter note C4. Dynamics: *a tempo*, *mp*.

Measure 28: Vocal line starts with a half note F#4, quarter note G4, quarter note A4, quarter note B4, quarter note C5. Piano accompaniment: Treble clef has a half note F#4, quarter note G4, quarter note A4, quarter note B4, quarter note C5. Bass clef has a half note F#3, quarter note G3, quarter note A3, quarter note B3, quarter note C4. Dynamics: *mf*.

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# Ship of Death

## VIII. Voyage of oblivion

D. H. Lawrence

Martha Helen Schmidt

♩ = 120 - 132 Aggressive &amp; Unrelenting

*ff*

Oh \_\_\_\_\_ build your ship of death, \_\_\_\_\_ oh

build it! For you will need it. \_\_\_\_\_

For the

For the

12

voy - age of ob - liv - i - on \_\_\_\_\_ a - waits you, \_\_\_\_\_ a -

12

16

waits you. \_\_\_\_\_

16

20

20

*no rit.*