

a clear cellophane  
I cannot crack

for solo harp / 2020

Shaye Poulton Richards

ns. Will it  
ers to grip, no tongue, my  
ng that loves me, pumps my two dust  
n and out, will not let me relapse  
the day outside glides by like ticker  
The night brings violets, tapestrie  
es, lights, the soft anonymous talker  
all right?" the starched, inaccessible  
st. Dead egg, I lie whole on a who  
ld I cannot touch, at the white, tig  
m of my sleeping couch photogra  
bit me - my wife, dead and flat, in  
rs, mouth full of pearls, two girl  
at as she, who whisper "we're  
ughters." the still waters wrap my  
yes, nose and ears, a clear celloph  
cannot crack. On my bare back I sm  
buddha, all wants, desire falling f  
ings hugging their lights. T  
k on its own

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c.2'30"

Programme Notes

An interpretation of Sylvia Plath's poem *Paralytic* from her magna carta poetry collection *Ariel*, published two years posthumously following Plath's death from suicide in 1963.

*Paralytic* depicts Plath's six-month experience living in a psychiatric institute following her first suicide attempt aged 21. She regards herself as an outside entity, watching the world - or in this case the hospital staff - who are trying to hold onto her when she herself has already let go.

Plath describes the doctors as being the 'starched, inaccessible breast', which could show that she felt they did not care for her and were only doing a job, and then goes on to discuss photographs, interpreted as inkblots, which hold the alternative life she once held, once wanted, but felt strenuous amounts of pressure to keep up with. A pressure which ultimately lead to her feeling drowned with no ability to fight back, describing the waters that were engulfing her as being 'still', showing no resistance.

We witness her acknowledging what she believes is her inevitable fate, feeling her wants and desires fall from her, and in the final stanza we see Plath - a now sharp and pointed weapon within a beautiful flower - unable to escape her own thoughts, and ultimately accepting that she 'Asks nothing of life', and in return wants to be asked nothing from it.

## Notation

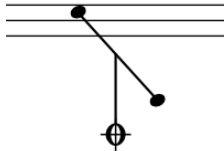
Notes:

Do not tune prior to performing.

Unless specified do not dampen notes.

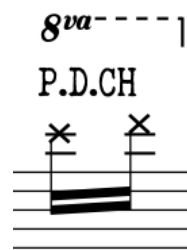
Harmonics are as written.

Rests during glissando sections are marked next to the gliss. when another is playing concurrently.

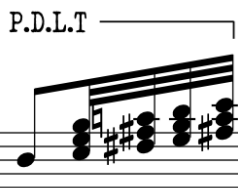


damp low notes

Dampen notes in a specific area.



Play next to the tuning pins.



Sounding techniques are stopped with a bracket.



Movement between sounding techniques is marked with an arrow.

B.D.L.C to ORD. →



String buzz with enough force to hit other strings and create a knock-on effect.

## Paralytic - Sylvia Plath

*From the poetry collection Ariel, published in 1965.*

It happens. Will it go on? -  
 My mind a rock,  
 No fingers to grip, no tongue,  
 My god the iron lung

That loves me, pumps  
 My two  
 Dust bags in and out,  
 Will not

Let me relapse  
 While the day outside glides by  
 like ticker tape.  
 The night brings violets,  
 Tapestries of eyes,

Lights,  
 The soft anonymous  
 Talkers: "You all right?"  
 The starched, inaccessible breast.

Dead egg, I lie  
 Whole  
 On a whole world I cannot touch,  
 At the white, tight

Drum of my sleeping couch  
 Photographs visit me -  
 My wife, dead and flat, in 1920  
 furs,  
 Mouth full of pearls,

Two girls  
 As flat as she, who whisper "We're  
 your daughters."  
 The still waters  
 Wrap my lips,

Eyes, nose and ears,  
 A clear  
 Cellophane I cannot crack.  
 On my bare back

I smile, a buddha, all  
 Wants, desire  
 Falling from me like rings  
 Hugging their lights.

The claw  
 Of the magnolia,  
 Drunk on its own scents,  
 Asks nothing of life.

PERUSAL SCORE

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Shaye Poulton Richards

Intense ♩ = 150

Harp

*fff* *f* *cresc.*  
hit lowest notes, L.V.

*fff* *f* *cresc.*  
sim.

*fff* *mp* *cresc.*  
sim.

*ff* *subito ppp*





31

*cresc. f* *A#* *dim. A# pp A# subito ff* *mf* *A#*

B.D.L.C

35

*cresc. f* *subito ff* *dim. mf cresc. f* *subito ff* string buzz, L.V.

B.D.L.C to ORD.

39

*mf* *f* *mf*

44

*f* *mf* *f* *mf*

48

*subito ff*

50

*pp cresc.*

*ff*

*fine*

L.V.

52

Calm ♩ = 80

damp middle notes

*f*

play just before ringing stops

PERUSAL SCORE