RICH CAMPBELL

WINTER STARS

for a cappella SSA Women's Choir



Winter Stars

by Sara Teasdale

I went out at night alone;
The young blood flowing beyond the sea
Seemed to have drenched my spirit's wings—
I bore my sorrow heavily.

But when I lifted up my head From shadows shaken on the snow, I saw Orion in the east Burn steadily as long ago.

From windows in my father's house,
Dreaming my dreams on winter nights,
I watched Orion as a girl
Above another city's lights.

Years go, dreams go, and youth goes too, The world's heart breaks beneath its wars, All things are changed, save in the east The faithful beauty of the stars.

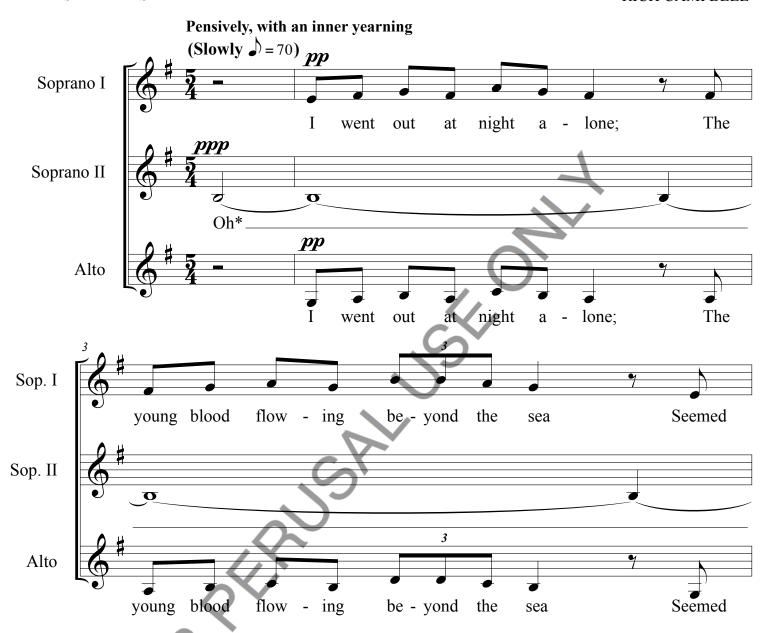
Source: Flame and Shadow (1920) This text is in the public domain.

"Winter Stars" was written by Pulitzer Prize winning American poet Sara Teasdale (1884-1933) and was first published in 1920 in the collection "Flame & Shadow." She grew up in St. Louis, Missouri, found acclaim while living in New York City, and became disillusioned in her later years. Perhaps she was writing this poem with WW I in mind; it rings as true today with our current wars. In basic language she addresses universal themes. The poem's optimism doesn't fully resonate until the last verse, indeed the last line. The poem touched me in several ways. The music develops from the melody in the first verse, heard in sixths, in Em, around a pedal tone: the constancy of the heavens. The melody is heard again, but this time simultaneously inverted. When the stars are mentioned, we move from minor to major. In the 3rd verse, about the innocence of childhood, all voices move together into three-part harmony in major keys (with a subtle key shift in the third line). The last verse includes the lyric "All things are changed, save in the east.." It begins with all voices singing the inverted melody in harmony; it goes from E major, to G major, and concludes with the melody un-inverted, in E major.

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SARA TEASDALE

RICH CAMPBELL



*Soprano II "Oh"-- stagger breathing

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