Aurora of the Soul
SSAA, piano

Music by Sheena Phillips

Lyrics based on a poem by Dinah Craik (1826 – 1887)

The *aurora borealis* (also known as the Northern Lights – or, in the southern hemisphere, the Southern Lights) can be seen only in the darkest places on earth: at high latitudes, during winter. This piece, based on words by the 19th century English poet and novelist Dinah Craik, uses unusual vocal harmonies – created by spacing the parts at equal distances from each other – to portray the “strange”, “ghostly”, and “beauteous” light of the aurora. The slightly eerie intervals of a minor third and a minor second also thread throughout the music, both in the constantly shifting piano part and in the movement of the vocal lines. For “one bright hour” in the midst of the long, dark winter, we can enjoy and marvel at something beautiful, and our spirits revive.

Duration c. 3:00

Perusal score – not for rehearsal or performance

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**Aurora of the Soul**

strange soft gleam,
ghostly dawn
that never brightens into day

beauteous light,
light that fills
the whole heav’n like a dream of morn

    let us look out beyond the gray

shine, soft gleam!
in our sight
the long night vanishes in light

    strange light I know thou will not stay

one bright hour!
shadows roll,
while bursts on unaccustomed eyes
the glad Aurora of the soul!

Lyrics based on the poem *An Aurora Borealis* by Dinah Craik (which can be viewed online at www.blackcatpoems.com/c/an_aurora_borealis.html)

Dinah Craik’s original poem is in the public domain.
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aurora of the soul 2

dawn that ne-ver bright-ens in- to

daught that ne-ver bright-ens in- to

daught that ne-ver bright-ens in- to

daught that ne-ver bright-ens in- to

day

day

day

day

day

day

day

aurora of the soul 2
aurora of the soul 4

Moderato $\cdot \cdot = 90$

let us look out, let us look out beyond the gray,

let us look out, let us look out
let us look out, let us look out beyong the gray,

let us look out, let us look out beyong the gray,

let us look out!

let us look out!

let us look out,

let us look out,

let us look out,

let us look out!
let us look out, let us look out beyond the gray,

gray, shine, soft gleam!

...
in our sight the long night vanishes in

light shine,

aurora of the soul
aurora of the soul 8

S1

p close to 'm'

bright gleam!

S2

p close to 'm'

bright gleam!

A1

, mp

ghostly dawn

A2

, mp

ghostly dawn

Pno.

72 a tempo

strange light, I know thou will not stay

PP

strange light, I know thou
aurora of the soul 9

will not stay strange light, I know thou will not

will not stay strange light, I know thou will not

(major 3rd below S2 / minor 3rd below A1)

will not stay strange light, I know thou will not

I know thou will not stay strange light, I know thou will not

I know thou will not stay strange light, I know thou will not
aurora of the soul 10

86

S1
\(\begin{array}{c}
\text{major 3rd below S2} \\
\text{minor 3rd below A1}
\end{array}\)

\begin{align*}
\text{strange light,} & \\
\text{I know thou will not stay} & \\
\text{one bright}
\end{align*}

S2

\begin{align*}
\text{strange light,} & \\
\text{I know thou will not stay} & \\
\text{one bright}
\end{align*}

A1

\begin{align*}
\text{will not stay} & \\
\text{thou will not stay} & \\
\text{one bright}
\end{align*}

A2

\begin{align*}
\text{will not stay} & \\
\text{thou will not stay} & \\
\text{one bright}
\end{align*}

Pno.

\begin{align*}
\text{will not stay} & \\
\text{thou will not stay} & \\
\text{one bright}
\end{align*}
aurora of the soul II

96
S1
hour! 
shadows roll, while
mf

S2
hour! 
shadows roll, 

A1
hour! 
shadows roll, 

A2
hour! 
shadows roll, 

Pno.

102 poco accel.

S1
bursts on uncustomed eyes the glad Aurora

S2
while bursts on uncustomed eyes the glad Au

A1
while bursts on uncustomed eyes the

A2
while bursts on eyes the

Pno.
aurora of the soul 12

S1

of

S2

ro - ro - ra

of

A1

glad Au - ro - ra

glad Au - ro - ra

A2

Pno.

soul!

soul!

soul!

soul!

soul!

soul!