

Lucia Birzer  
**Afterwards**

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Soprano solo, Mezzosoprano solo, Alto solo  
Coro (SSMsMsAA)

award-winning at *females featured* competition



Carus 9.286/50

## Vorwort

Sara Teasdale wurde 1884 in St. Louis geboren und gehörte in der Zeit nach dem ersten Weltkrieg bis zu ihrem Freitod 1933 in New York City zu den bekanntesten US-Dichter\*innen. 1918 gewann sie den Columbia Poetry Price (Vorläufer des Pulitzer Preises). Ihre Gedichte haben eine hohe Emotionalität und erzeugen eine hypnotisierende Sogwirkung. Beide für die Komposition verwendeten Gedichte beschreiben eine Zeit „danach“. Während *Afterwards* eine sehr persönliche, individuelle Geschichte erzählt, thematisiert das bekanntere Gedicht *There will come soft rains* den Gedanken an eine Zeit nach der Menschheit. Obwohl Teasdale hier ursprünglich Erfahrungen aus dem Ersten Weltkrieg beschreibt – die Zeit, in der die Menschheit zum ersten Mal drohte, sich selbst auszulöschen – ist der Inhalt heute aktuell. Statt eines dramatischen, apokalyptischen Szenarios zeichnet Sara Teasdale idyllische Ruhe und Friedlichkeit der Natur, in der nur übrig gebliebener Stacheldrahtzaun an unser Dasein erinnert. So wie das Leben weitergeht, wenn eine Liebe geht, so würde auch die Erde sich nach dem Verschwinden der Gattung Mensch irgendwann wieder erholen.

Mit der Komposition ist ein Vorschlag für die Choraufstellung und -bewegung verbunden. Das erste Bild ist eine weit gefächerte Position des Chores in gemischter Stimmaufstellung mit den drei Solist\*innen in der Mitte. In Takt 5–10 weichen die Solist\*innen zurück; der Chor bewegt sich nach vorne und kommt – für den Großteil des Stückes – in eine normale, kompakte Choraufstellung. Die gemischte Stimmaufstellung kann optional beibehalten werden. Ab Takt 68 löst sich diese Ordnung auf und alle Sänger\*innen bewegen sich rückwärts nach außen und entfernen sich. Abhängig von den örtlichen Gegebenheiten kann der Chor während des Singens auch ganz abtreten, so dass die Bühne leer zurückbleibt.

Im Februar 2024

Lucia Birzer

## Foreword

Sara Teasdale was born in St. Louis in 1884 and was, until her suicide in New York City in 1933, one of the best-known US poets during the period after the First World War. She won the Columbia Poetry Prize (forerunner of the Pulitzer Prize) in 1918. Her poems are highly emotional and exert a mesmerizing allure. Both of the poems set in the composition describe a time “after.” Whereas *Afterwards* tells a very personal, individual story, the better-known poem *There will come soft rains* deals with the idea of a time after the existence of mankind. Even though Teasdale originally described experiences from the First World War – the time when mankind, for the first time, was in danger of annihilating itself – the content is relevant today. Instead of a dramatic, apocalyptic scenario, Sara Teasdale depicts the idyllic tranquility and peacefulness of nature, in which only a barbed wire fence remains as a reminder of our existence. Just as life continues when love comes to an end, the earth would eventually recover after the disappearance of the human species.

A suggestion for the choir’s positioning and movement accompanies the composition. The first image presents a widely-spread positioning of the choir with the voices mixed and the three soloists in the center. In measures 5–10, the soloists move backwards; the choir moves forward into a normal, compact choir position for the largest part of the piece. Retaining the mixed voice arrangement is optional. From measure 68 onwards, this order is dissolved and all singers move backwards, outwards and away. Depending on the actual concert situation, the choir may also walk offstage completely while singing, leaving the stage empty.

February 2024

Lucia Birzer

Translation: Gudrun and David Kosviner

### Afterwards

I do not love you now,  
Nor do you love me,  
Love like a splendid storm  
Swept us and oassed.

Yet while the distance  
And days drift between us,  
Little things kinger  
To make me remember,

As the rain’s fragrance  
Clings when the rain goes  
To the wet under leaves  
Of the verbena,

As the clear rain-drops  
Cling to the cobwebs,  
Leaving them lightly  
Threaded with stars.

### There will come soft rains (War Time)

There will come soft rains and the smell of the ground,  
And swallows circling with their shimmering sound;

And frogs in the pools singing at night,  
And wild plum trees in tremulous white,

Robins will wear their feathery fire  
Whistling their whims on a low fence-wire;

And not one will know of the war, not one  
Will care at last when it is done.

Not one would mind, neither bird nor tree  
If mankind perished utterly;

And Spring herself, when she woke at dawn,  
Would scarcely know that we were gone.

Sara Teasdale (1884–1933)



*f* nor do you love me, love like a splen-did storm swept us and passed.

*f* I do not love you now, nor do you love me, love like a splen-did storm swept us and passed.

*f* I do not love you now, nor do you love me, love like a splen-did storm swept us and passed.

*pp* There will come soft rains, *mp*

*pp* There will come soft rains,

*pp* There will come soft rains,

*pp* There will come soft rains,

There will come soft rains,

*mf* in the dis-tance and days drift be-tween us, lit-tle things lin-ger to make me re-

*f* Yet while in the dis-tance and days drift be-tween us, lit-tle things lin-ger to make me re-

in the dis-tance and days drift be-tween us, lit-tle things lin-ger to make me re-

*p* will come soft, soft rains.

*p* will come soft, soft rains.

*p* will come soft, soft rains.

*p* will come soft, soft rains.

will come soft, soft rains.

mem - ber, re - mem - ber, re - mem - ber, re -  
 mem - ber, re - mem - ber, re - mem - ber, re -  
 mem - ber, re - mem - ber, re - mem - ber, re -

*cresc.* There will \_\_\_\_\_ come, will come, \_\_\_\_\_  
*cresc.* There will \_\_\_\_\_ come, will co  
*cresc.* There will \_\_\_\_\_ come, will  
*cresc.* There will \_\_\_\_\_ come, will \_\_\_\_\_

8 mem - ber, re - mem - ber, re - mem - ber ...  
 ber, mem - ber, re - mem - ber ...  
 mem - ber, re - mem - ber, re - mem - ber ...

will come, will \_\_\_\_\_ come  
 will come, will \_\_\_\_\_ come ...  
 will come, will \_\_\_\_\_ come ...  
 will come, will \_\_\_\_\_ come ...

very soft and cloudy ♩ = ca. 60

11 *mp*

soft, there will come soft, and the smell, and

*mp*

soft rains, there will come soft rains, and the smell of, and

*p* *mp*

rains, there will come soft rains, and the smell of the ... and

*p* *mp*

rains, there will come rains, and the smell of the ... and

*p* *mp*

rains, there will, rains, and the, round

*p* *mp*

rains, there, rains, ground

15

... with the ... there will come soft rains, and the

... l-lows cir with shim - mer - ing there will come rains, and the

swal-lows cir-cling shim - mer - ing sound; there will, rains, and the

swal-lows cir - cling shim\* sound; there, rains, and the,

cir - cling shim\* sound; rains, and

cir - cling with shim\* sound; rains,

accel. . . . .

19

smell of, \_\_\_\_\_ and swal - lows cir - cling and swal - lows cir - cling and  
 smell of the ground and swal - lows cir - cling, swal - lows cir - cling,  
 smell \_\_\_\_\_ swal - lows cir - cling, swal - lows cir - cling,  
 \_\_\_\_\_ the \_\_\_\_\_ swal - lows, swal - lows cir - cling,  
 \_\_\_\_\_ swal - lows, swal - lows cir - cling,  
 \_\_\_\_\_  
 ground, swal - lows cir - cling,

22

swal with their shim - mer - ing sound. And  
 vs cir - cling h shim - mer - ing sound. And  
 swal - lows cir - cling shim - mer - ing sound. And  
 swal - lows cir - cling shim - mer - ing sound. And  
 swal - lows cir - cling shim - mer - ing sound. And  
 swal - lows cir - cling shim - mer - ing sound. And

iridescent, but dense ♩ = ca. 60 (flexible)

25

*p*  
frogs in the pools sing-ing at night and wild plum trees in tre-mu-lous white, ro-bins will wear their

*p*  
frogs in the pools sing-ing at night and wild plum trees in tre-mu-lous white, ro-bins will wear their

*p*  
frogs in the pools sing-ing at night and wild plum trees in tre-mu-lous white, ro-bins will wear their

*p*  
frogs in the pools sing-ing at night and wild plum trees in tre-mu-lous white, ro-bins will wear their

*p*  
frogs in the pools sing-ing at night and wild plum trees in tre-mu-lous white, ro-bins will wear their

*p*  
frogs in the pools sing-ing at night and wild plum trees in tre-mu-lous white, ro-bins will wear their

more and more pulsating

30

*mp*  
whis-tling their whims on a low fence-wire; and not one will know of the

*mp*  
feath-er-y fire, whis-tling their whims on a low fence-wire; and not one will know of the

*mp*  
feath-er-y fire, whis-tling their whims on a low fence-wire; and not one will know of the

*mp*  
feath-er-y fire, whis-tling their whims on a low fence-wire; and not one will know of the

*mp*  
feath-er-y fire, whis-tling their whims on a low fence-wire; and not one will know of the

*mp*  
feath-er-y fire, whis-tling their whims on a low fence-wire; and not one will know of the



accel.

34

war not one will care at last when it is done, not one would mind, nei-ther bird nor tree if

war not one will care at last when it is done, not one would mind, nei-ther bird nor tree if

war not one will care \_\_\_\_\_ when it is done, not one would mind, nei-ther bird nor tree if

war not one will care \_\_\_\_\_ when it is done, not one would mind, nei-ther bird nor tree if

war, not one will care at last when it is done, not one would mind, nei-ther bird nor tree if

war, not one will care at last when it is done, not one would mind, nei-ther bird nor tree if

$\text{♩} = 48$

39

kind pe-ri-shed ut-ter-ly; Not one will know, not one will care at last when

kind pe-ri-shed ut-ter-ly; Not one will know, not one will care at last when

man - kind ut-ter-ly; Not one will know, not one will care at last when

man - kind ut-ter-ly; Not one will know, not one will care at last when

man - kind pe-ri-shed ut-ter-ly; Not one will know, not one will care at last when

man - kind pe-ri-shed ut-ter-ly; Not one will know, not one will care at last when

*molto rit.* . . . . . *ff*

44

aah man - kind pe-rished ut - ter - ly; *ff*

aah man - kind pe-rished ut - ter - ly; *ff*

aah man - kind pe-rished ut - ter - ly; *ff*

it is done, not one would mind, nei-ther bird nor tree if man - kind pe-rished ut - ter - ly; *ff*

it is done, not one would mind, nei-ther bird nor tree if man - kind pe-rished ut - ter - ly; *ff*

will care, not one will know, man kind pe-rished ut - ter - ly; *ff*

49

Spring her-self when she woke at dawn would scarce - ly know that we were gone, *f*

and Spring her-self when she woke at dawn would scarce - ly know that we were gone, *f*

and Spring her-self when she woke at dawn would scarce - ly know that we were gone, *f*

and Spring her-self when she woke at dawn would scarce - ly know that we were gone, *f*

and Spring her-self when she woke at dawn would scarce - ly know that we were gone, *f*

and Spring her-self when she woke at dawn would scarce - ly know that we were gone, *f*

we were gone. uuh

we were gone. uuh

we were gone. And Spring her-self, when she woke at dawn would scarce-ly know that

we were gone. And Spring her-self, when she woke at dawn would scarce-ly know that

gone, were gone. uuh

gone, were gone. uuh

We were gone, we were gone

We were gone, we were gone

we were gone. We were gone, we were gone

We were gone, we were gone

We were gone, we were gone

gone, gone, gone, gone, gone, gone, gone, gone,

gone. gone. gone. gone. gone. gone. gone. gone.

CM

