

Refugees

by Pamela J. Marshall
for SATB chorus



Refugees

music and text by Pamela J. Marshall

It was not safe. To avoid
the next attack, we had to leave.
We wandered, wondered what would happen next.

Left foot leading, then the right;
Interminable travel in the darkness,
searching for some kind of light.

We lost our way; we could not ask for help.
We had no guide to show us
green pastures of goodness and mercy.

We could have stayed,
it was not safe
we feared to die
we chose to go

Now we wander,
it is not safe
we wonder where
we might find a home.

Composer's Notes

I wrote Refugees in response to a call for scores with the theme of the "road not taken". For Syrian refugees in 2015, they could stay or leave their country, both dangerous and difficult choices. I was led to write this poem by a radio story about refugees from Syria, Eritrea, and elsewhere, in roadside camps in Calais, France, trying to cross the channel or go through the Channel Tunnel on the underside of lorries, for what might be a better life in Great Britain, especially for the children.

Usually, the "road not taken" implies what-if, a pleasant musing about other possibilities. But, for a refugee, what might have befallen the narrator if they chose a different path? If they choose to stay put, they are chancing the dangerous environment of war. If they choose the path of the refugee, that road is also full of risk, with little aid from the rest of the world. In my poem, one road, staying home in the war zone, is more certain — death for some or all of them. The road they do take is hard, but it might, just might, turn out better.

--- *Pamela J. Marshall*

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Cover image of refugees on foot adapted from Freepik.com

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Adagio ♩=72

SOPRANO
Safe Safe Safe

ALTO
it was not

TENOR
it was not it was not

BASS
it was not it was not

Reh. Piano (optional)

7

S.
Safe Safe not safe safe not safe_

A.
it was not not safe safe not safe

T.
it was not safe not safe not safe

B.
it was not safe not safe not safe not safe_

Pno.

rit. *p*

12 *mp*

S. To a-void the next at-tack To a-void the next at tack

A. *mp* To a-void the next at-tack, to a - void the next at-tack To a-void the next at

T. *mp* To a - void the next at-tack To a-void the next at

B. *mp* To a-void the next at - tack

Pno.

16 *mf* *poco accel.* *p* **Moderato** ♩=92

S. we had to leave. We wan - dered,

A. *mf* tack we had to leave. *mp* We wan-dered

T. *mf* tack we had to leave. *p* We wan - dered,

B. *mf* we had to leave. *p* We wan - dered,

Pno. *poco accel.* **Moderato** ♩=92

23

S. wan - dered wan - dered won - dered wan - dered won - dered what would

A. wan - dered, wan - dered wan - dered won dered what would

T. wan - dered. wan - dered, wan - dered. wan - dered, won - dered what would

B. wan - dered. wan - dered, we won - dered what would

Pno.

Poco allegro ♩=110

29

S. hap - pen, hap-pen next. left foot lead-ing, *f* *mp*

A. hap - pen, hap-pen next. left foot lead-ing, *f* *mp*

T. hap - pen, hap-pen next. *f*

B. hap-pen next. *p* In - ter-min-a-ble tra-vel in dark, in - ter-min-a-ble

Pno. **Poco allegro** ♩=110

34

S. then the_ right. left foot lead-ing,

A. then the right. left foot lead-ing,

T. *mp* in - ter - min-a - ble tra - vel dark - ness, dark -

B. *mp* tra-vel in dark, in - ter min-a - ble__ tra-vel in dark-ness, in - ter min-a - ble__ tra-vel in dark-ness, in

Pno.

39

S. then the_ right. *mf cresc.* In - ter-min-a - ble__ tra-vel in dark-ness, in - ter-min-a - ble__

A. then the right. *mf cresc.* In - ter-min-a - ble tra-vel in dark-ness, in - ter-min-a - ble

T. *mf cresc.* ness, dark dark-ness, tra-vel in dark-ness, tra-vel in dark-ness, in - ter-min-a - ble__

B. *mf cresc.* ter-min-a - ble__ tra-vel in dark-ness, tra-vel in dark-ness, tra-vel in dark-ness, in - ter-min-a - ble__

Pno.

44

S. tra - vel in dark - ness, in - ter - min - a - ble _____ tra - vel in dark - ness,

A. tra - vel in dark - ness, in - ter - min - a - ble tra - vel in dark - ness,

T. tra - vel in dark - ness, in - ter - min - a - ble tra - vel in dark - ness,

B. tra - vel in dark - ness, in - ter - min - a - ble _____ tra - vel in dark - ness,

Pno.

47

S. search - ing for _____ some kind of light. *f*

A. search - ing for _____ some kind of light. *f*

T. search - ing for _____ some kind of light. *f*

B. search - ing for _____ some kind of light. *f*

Pno.

51

pp *cresc.*

S. We lost our way; we lost our way; we lost our

pp *cresc.*

A. We lost our way; we could not ask we could

pp *cresc.*

T. We lost our way; we could not ask could

pp

B. We lost our way; we could not ask

Pno.

55

S. way; we could not ask not ask for help.

A. not ask could not ask for not ask for help.

T. not ask for not ask for help not ask for help.

cresc.

B. we lost our way we could not ask not ask for help.

Pno.

59 **molto rit.** *mf* **Adagio** ♩=72

S. *mf*
We had no guide to show us green pas - tures of good - ness and mer - cy.

A. *mf*
We had no guide to show us green pas - tures of good - ness and mer - cy.

T. *mf*
We had no guide to show us green pas - tures of good - ness and mer - cy.

B. *mf*
We had no guide to show us green pas - tures of good - ness and mer - cy,

Pno. **molto rit.** **Adagio** ♩=72

63 **Poco meno allegro** ♩=100 **rit.**

S. *mp*
We could have stayed; it was not safe; we feared to die; we

A. *mp*
We could have stayed; it was not safe; we feared to die;

T. *mp*
We could have stayed; it was not safe; we feared to die;

B. *mp* *mp*
Oh, we could have stayed; it was not safe; we feared to die;

Pno. **Poco meno allegro** ♩=100 **rit.**

68

Adagio ♩=72
mf

S. chose to go. Now we wan - der. It is not

A. we chose to go. Now we wan - der. It is

T. we chose to go. Now we wan - der. It

B. we chose to go. Now we wan - der. Now we

Pno.

72

S. safe, and we won - der where we might find a home.

A. not safe, and we won - der where we might find a home.

T. is not safe, and we won - der where we might find a home.

B. wan - der, and we won - der where we might find a home.

Pno.

Spindrift

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Selected Music by Pamela J. Marshall

Chorus & Solo Voice

Birding in Winter for SATB chorus
Deepest Shade for SATB chorus
The Future of Life for SATB chorus, trombone, piano
Bee-Song for SSAA or SATB chorus, piano
Grand grand mother is returning for SSAA or SATB chorus, piano
How Spiders Came to Hawaii for SATB, trombone, piano
Shepherds and Angels for SATB chorus, violin, harp, tamborine
Songs from a Quaker Heart for SATB chorus, piano
Weaving the World for SATB chorus, oboe, piano
Windshine for SATB chorus and cello
Wordless Prayer for SATB chorus

Body and Soul Vol.1 for mezzo-soprano and string trio
Body and Soul Vol.2 for soprano, flute, cello, piano
Ariel's Songs for high or medium voice and piano
Remember the Old Songs for high voice and piano
Sky's Mirror for voice and cello
A chill wind in autumn for voice and piano

Keyboard

Suite for harpsichord or piano
For piano: Daydream, Stomp, Imagine That Time Stops
Wordless Prayer for piano or organ
Playbook (Pacem Student Composing Project) for piano

Strings

Arcanum for violin
Elusive Sleep for cello and piano
Pascal's Theorems for cello and doublebass
Truth Becoming for string quartet
Soliloquy for cello
Rising for viola or cello
Quinteto sobre las poemas de Carlos Pintado for violin, viola, cello, doublebass, piano
Through the Mist for flute, violin, harp or guitar

Winds & Brass

Poetry-Inspired solos for flute, oboe, clarinet, bassoon, horn
Enchanted for oboe and chamber orchestra or piano
Wanderer for brass quintet
Resonances for alto saxophone, trumpet, 2 trombones, percussion
Waves and Fountains for oboe, horn, piano
"wild horn whose voice the woodland fills" for 8 horns
Black Bear Dance for horn quartet (or choir) and drums
Zoa for flute and harp

Orchestra

Triptoe Suite (2222-4221, 1pc, timp, strings) in 4 mvts
Through the Mist (2222-2220, harp, 3pc, timp, strings) in 3 mvts
A chill wind in autumn (solo voice, 2222-4221-3pc, strings)
Traditional Christmas (treble chorus or soloist, 2222-4221, harp, 3pc, timp, strings)
Three Appalachian Carols (2222-4231, harp, 2pc, timp, strings)

Recordings

Through the Mist on Ravello Records: chamber music for winds, strings, harp
Ruminations on Bandcamp: electro-acoustic
Visit www.spindrift.com for complete list. Demos available for many titles

Marshall
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