

DT0082 | TRUMBORE | \$2.35
IN THE MIDDLE | SSAA CHORUS & PIANO

IN THE MIDDLE

SSAA Chorus & Piano
Text by Barbara Crooker

The logo for Dale Trumbore, featuring a stylized musical note above the letter 'd' in the word 'daletrumbore'. Below the main text, the word 'composer' is written in a smaller, lowercase font, with each letter spaced out.
c o m p o s e r

IN THE MIDDLE

of a life that's as complicated as everyone else's,
struggling for balance, juggling time.
The mantle clock that was my grandfather's
has stopped at 9:20; we haven't had time
to get it repaired. The brass pendulum is still,
the chimes don't ring. One day I look out the window,
green summer; the next, the leaves have already fallen,
and a grey sky lowers the horizon. Our children almost grown,
our parents gone, it happened so fast. Each day, we must learn
again how to love, between morning's quick coffee
and evening's slow return. Steam from a pot of soup rises,
mixing with the yeasty smell of baking bread. Our bodies
twine, and the big black dog pushes his great head between;
his tail, a metronome, $3/4$ time. We'll never get there,
Time is always ahead of us, running down the beach, urging
us on faster, faster, but sometimes we take off our watches,
sometimes we lie in the hammock, caught between the mesh
of rope and the net of stars, suspended, tangled up
in love, running out of time.

Barbara Crooker

"In The Middle" by Barbara Crooker from *Radiance*.
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Barbara Crooker's poem *In the Middle* describes the struggle to connect in the rush of ordinary life. In this setting, the piano serves as an unreliable time-keeper, ebbing and flowing as our perception of time does. Sometimes, it pushes us on, frantic; sometimes, the pace relaxes in a moment of peace. The word "time" itself occurs over and over within the piece, serving as a sort of refrain, a reminder to slow down.

I first read this poem of Barbara's last summer, at the beach house where my family has gone since I was very young – an annual trip I'd missed, for one reason or another, for the last three years. There, the poem's metaphors were made real – a literal hammock in the backyard, a beach just across the street – and it seemed especially important to set this text. It is so easy to forget, in the context of everyday life, that time will ultimately catch up with all of us.

There's no antidote, but in the meantime, we should "take off our watches" more often, finding ourselves "tangled up in love" with another or just with this life, and granting time permission, if not to stop, then to slow.

This score can be found at GraphitePublishing.com.

Commissioned by the Young New Yorkers' Chorus,
Michael Kerschner, director

In the Middle

for SSAA Chorus & Piano

Text by Barbara Crooker

Music by Dale Trumbore

Quickly, almost frantic; ♩ = ca. 138 or even faster

SOPRANO
mf
In the mid-dle of a life that's as com-pli-ca - ted_ as ev-'ry one else -'s,_____

ALTO
mf
In the mid-dle of a life that's as com-pli-ca - ted_ as ev-'ry one else -'s,_____ strug-gling for

Piano
mf
Red.

S.
p *mf* *poco rit.*
jug-gling time.

S.
p *mf* *mf*
jug-gling time. time.

A.
mf *mf*
ba-lance, time. time.

A.
mf *mf*
ba-lance, time. time.

Pno.
mp *mf* *mp* *poco rit.*
Red.

In the Middle

2

11 **A tempo**

mf *poco* *p*

S. The man - tle clock. that was my grand - fa - ther's. has stopped at nine -

S. The man - tle clock. that was my grand - fa - ther's. has stopped at nine -

A. The man - tle clock. that was my grand - fa - ther's. has stopped at nine -

A. The man - tle clock. that was my grand - fa - ther's. has stopped at nine -

Pno. *mf* *poco* *p*

11 **A tempo**

Ped.

16 *p* *poco rit.* **Slower; ♩ = ca. 80**

S. twen - ty; we have-n't had time to get it re - paired. The brass

S. twen - ty; we have-n't had time to get it re - paired. The brass

A. twen - ty; we have-n't had time to get it re - paired. The brass

A. twen - ty; we have-n't had time to get it re - paired. The brass

Pno. *p* *mf* *p*

16 *poco rit.* **Slower; ♩ = ca. 80**

In the Middle

4

33 *Slightly faster; ♩ = ca. 80*

S. *mf* *p* *p*
 next, the leaves have al-read - y fal - len, and a grey sky

S. *mf* *p* *p*
 next the leaves have al-read - y fal - len, and a grey sky

A. *p* *p* *p*
 next the leaves have al-read - y fal - len, and a grey sky lo - wers the ho -

A. *mf* *p* *p*
 next the leaves have al-read - y fal - len, and a grey sky lo - wers the ho -

Pno. *mp* *pp* *p* *mp* *p*
 Ped.

38 *pp* *mp* *rit.*

S. (nn), Our child - ren al - most grown, our pa - rents

S. ri - zon.* (nn) Our child - ren al - most grown, our pa - rents

A. ri - zon.* (nn) Our child - ren al - most grown, our pa - rents

A. ri - zon.* (nn) Our child - ren al - most grown, our pa - rents

Pno. *pp* *p* *rit.*
 Ped.

*Close slowly to "nn" over three beats.

In the Middle

42 **Slow** *p* **accel.** **Tempo 1** (♩ = ca. 138 or faster)

S. gone. *pp* *mf*
gone, it hap - pened so fast.
gone, it hap - pened so fast.
gone, it hap - pened so fast.

Pno. *mf*

46 **molto rit.** **Freely; slowly** **Gently;** ♩ = ca. 80

Pno. *p*

50 *mp* *f* *mp*
Each day, we must learn a - gain how to love. be-tween
Each day, we must learn a - gain how to love. be-tween
Each day, we must learn a - gain how to love. be-tween
Each day, we must learn a - gain how to love. be-tween

Pno. *mp* *p* *mf*

In the Middle

64 *mf* *p* *accel.* *Slightly faster*

S. Ah, _____

S. Ah, _____

A. and the big black dog push-es his great head be - tween; his tail a met - ro - nome. three - four

A. and the big black dog push-es his great head be - tween; his tail a met - ro - nome.

Pno. *p* *mp* *pp cresc.* *3*

70 *mf* *p* *mp* *rit.* *mp*

S. time. _____

S. time. _____

A. time. _____

A. time. _____

Pno. *f* *mp* *mf* *p* *rit.*

In the Middle

74 ♩ = ca. 80

S. *p* We'll ne - ver get there, *mf* Time is al - ways a - head of us, *mf* run - ning down the

S. *p* We'll ne - ver get there, *mf* Time is al - ways a - head of us, *mf* run - ning down the

A. *p* We'll ne - ver get there, *mf* Time is al - ways a - head of us, *mf* run - ning down the

A. *p* We'll ne - ver get there, *mf* Time is al - ways a - head of us, *mf* run - ning down the

Pno. *p* *mf*

Red. 3

77 *accel.* *molto rit.*

S. beach, ur - ging us on, fast - er, fast - er, but

S. beach, ur - ging us on, fast - er, fast - er, but

A. beach, ur - ging us on, fast - er, fast - er, but

A. beach, ur - ging us on, fast - er, fast - er, but

Pno. *f*

In the Middle

10

Freely, slow

S. *ff* stars, *mp* tan-gled up in

S. *ff* stars, *mp* sus - pen - ded, *mp* tan-gled up in

A. *ff* stars, *mp* tan-gled up in

A. *ff* stars, *mp* tan-gled up in

Pno. *f* *p*

92 **rit.** *f* *ff* *p* *mf* **Tempo I** ($\text{♩} = \text{ca. } 138 \text{ or faster}$)

S. love, run-ning out of time, run-ning out of

S. love, time,

A. love, time,

A. love, time,

Pno. *f* *mp* **Tempo I** ($\text{♩} = \text{ca. } 138 \text{ or faster}$)

Red.

97 *mf* **A little slower** *p* *mf*

S. time, run-ning out of time, run-ning out of time, run-ning out of time, run-ning

S. *p* *mf* *p* *mf*
time, time,

A. *p* *mf*
time, run-ning out of

A. *p* *mf* *mf*
time, run-ning out of time, run-ning out of time,

Pno. *mp* *ped.*

102 **poco a poco accel.**

S. out of time, run-ning out of time, run-ning out of time, run-ning run-ning run-ning run-ning

S. *p* *mf* *p*
time, run-ning out of time,

A. *mf*
time, run-ning out of time,

A. run-ning out of time, run-ning out of time, run-ning out of time, run-ning out of time,

Pno. *mf* **poco a poco accel.**

