

Lead, kindly light

Comments by Bruce Grouthorpe

John Henry Newman's lyrics highlight what could easily be contemporary fears. The '*circling gloom*', the '*dark night*' and the feeling of being '*far from home*' are familiar to anyone who watches the evening news. This beautiful hymn is one of trust and faith, building in confidence '*till the night is gone*.' This arrangement follows that line of confidence. The melody begins unaccompanied, which is to say '*alone*', and the eventual accompanying voices enter sombrely. Instead of a traditional final cadence, the '*leading of the light*' continues, using the first four notes of the hymn as a *motif* that leads to a second, more positive statement of the melody, underlined by a walking motion. The positivity grows and lasts through a final grand statement of the hymn. A short meditative coda follows, and the arrangement ends with a solo note of reflection.

The primary consideration in the solo line opening is balance and sonority. Note that the *pianissimo* dynamic does not change until section B, where the first four notes of the hymn begin a motivic accompaniment, which lasts until section F. The marked crotchets, in the Euphonium and Basses at section B, should be played loudly, etched to convey the feeling of walking or consistent movement. At no point in this arrangement is the entire tune played by any one group of instruments, so it will be necessary to keep a tight rein on balance when a phrase is given to another group, such as happens two bars before E in the Cornets.

Section E is the final walk through darkness to the light of section F and should be construed as a long build. Rather than taking the first beat of section F as the arrival point of the build, however, the entire section up until G serves as the arrival. Section H serves as a coda, but rather than build to a great final chord, the piece becomes more personal and finishes in quiet contemplation.

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A

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B more energy, but no faster
Muted (straight)

Muted (Harmon)

C

Solo mf p

All

Open

p

mf legato

mf legato

Glock.

Tubular Bells

Sus. Cym.

B.D.

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31

D Open f

dim.

E brooding p Two All mf

f dim. p

f p

f p

f

f dim. p

f dim. p

f dim. p

f p

f dim. p

f p

f dim. p

f p

f

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55

G

One *p*

One *p*

H

All *f*

All *mf*

All *p*

I

Three *pp*

J

K

L

M

N

O

P

Q

R

Solo

T

U

V

W

X

Y

Z

mf < *f*

p

< *f*

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