

# Polyxena

Text and music by Philip Armstrong

## 1. A sky of lambent red

for female choir and dancers, with wind & brass octet, or with piano

**Dance 1:** The captives are led aboard the priests' ship. They show sorrow at leaving their homeland. Among them them is the queen (Polyxena's mother) who is grief-stricken at her loss.

Philip Armstrong

The musical score is written in 4/4 time with a tempo of quarter note = 82. It features a piano accompaniment and vocal parts for Soprano and Alto. The piano part begins with a *mf* dynamic, moving to *f* and then *p*. The vocal parts enter at measure 9 with a *mp* dynamic. The lyrics are: "A sky of lam-bent red is lit By bur-nings with-out a- The breast of pre-cious youth is pierced And man-gled\_ be-yond re-". The score includes a first ending bracket labeled 'A' at measure 9. The piano accompaniment continues with a *p* dynamic. The vocal parts continue with the lyrics: "quitt-al, Em-bers from the ci-ty of Troy. The anc-ient ways have passed; mi-ssion, Rup-tured by the a-rrows of war. The sca-ttered bones have scorched". The piano part features a triplet of eighth notes and a dynamic change from *p* to *f* and back to *p*.

**B**

Sop. *f*  
They are worth-less.  
And are flesh-less.  
The wind ri-ses to roar-ing gale  
The ships rea-dy the bill'-wing sails

Al. *f*  
They are worth-less.  
And are flesh-less.  
The wind ri-ses to roar-ing gale  
The priests' rea-dy the bill'-wing sails

Pno. *mf* *f*

**C**

Sop. *mp*  
And whips up the breakers.  
And haul in the anchors.  
The spoils of crush-ing\_  
Re-cast as bon-ded\_

Al. *mp*  
And whips up the breakers.  
And haul in the anchors.  
The spoils of crush-ing\_  
Re-cast as bon-ded\_

Pno. *mf* *p*

**C**

Sop. *mf*  
vic-t'ry, Spared the bloo-dy slaugh-ter, Bid fare-well with so-  
va-ssal, Claimed for na-ked in-dul-gence, Mur-m'ring la-men-ta-tion  
To the na-tive land they a-  
As they make to em-bark the

Al. *mf*  
vic-t'ry, Spared the bloo-dy slaugh-ter, Bid fare-well with so-  
va-ssal, Claimed for na-ked in-dul-gence, Mur-m'ring la-men-ta-tion  
To the na-tive land they a-  
As they make to em-bark the

Pno. *mf*

31 **D**

Sop. dore. shore. Last a-board  
Lin-ger-ing *f*

Al. dore. shore. Last a-board  
Lin-ger-ing *f*

Pno. *p* *f* *p* *mf* *f*

35

Sop. is with the queen her grief, Croak-ing gruff-ly, Har-b'ring mi-s'ry, A gutt-'ral rasp, A fee-ble gasp, Thick<sup>3</sup> in the throat.

Al. is with the queen her grief, Croak-ing gruff-ly, Har-b'ring mi-s'ry, A gutt-'ral rasp, A fee-ble gasp, Thick<sup>3</sup> in the throat.

Pno. *p*

39

Sop. Pi-ti-ful woe. Pi-ti-ful woe.

Al. Pi-ti-ful woe. Pi-ti-ful woe.

Pno. *p*

## 2. The wind is assuaged

for female choir and dancers, with wind & brass octet, or with piano

**Dance 2:** The calm sea is disturbed by a squall of wind. The voice of a ghost is heard. The captives are shocked that this otherworld visitant must receive a human sacrifice. Polyxena is stunned when she realises it must be her.

Phaedimus

43  $\text{♩} = 80$

Sop. *mp* *unvoiced (whisper)*  
The win - d-d-d-d-d-d-d-d

Al. *p* *unvoiced (whisper)*  
win - d

Pno. *p* *stroke strings inside piano with fingers*

48 *mp* *p*  
Sop. is a - ssua - g - ed - d - d - d - d - d - d, a - ssua - - ged, -

Al. *p*  
The win - d - d - d - d - d - d - d - d,

Pno.

52 **E** *mp* *mp*  
Sop. the sea be - calm - ed - d - d - d - d - d - d; The ships shall be

Al. *p*  
win - d

Pno. **E**

57 *mp* *p* unpitched whistling (like the wind) *p*

Sop. moor - ed-d-d-d-d-d-d un til a breeze is re - turn - ed-d-d-d-d-d-d. re - turn - ed.

Al. *p* *p* unpitched whistling (like the wind) *p*

win - d breeze re - turn - ed-d-d-d-d-d-d,

Pno.

64 *mf* **F**

Sop. But then a tem - pes - tuous flu - rry at the

Al. *mf* But then a tem - pes - tuous flu - rry at the

Pno. *p* *mf* **F**

70

Sop. wa - ter's edge, A su - dden squall of fire As if the bla - zing rage of A -

Al. wa - ter's edge, A su - dden squall of fire As if the bla - zing rage of A -

Pno.

75 G

Sop. *f*  
chi- lles\_\_\_\_\_ is re- kind - led from the dead, Fierce - ly a - da mant,

Al. *f*  
chi- lles\_\_\_\_\_ is re- kind - led from the dead, Fierce - ly a - da -

Pno. *f*

80 H

Sop. *mf* *mp*  
\_\_\_\_\_ Like the day he claimed the skin of Bri - seis. This

Al. *mf* *mp*  
mant, Like the day he claimed the skin of Bri - seis. This

Pno. *mf* *mp*

85 I *mf*

Sop. *mf*  
o - ther world - er vi - si - tant,\_\_\_ Vi - sion of the re - mo - te, Of a - stral realms, He in - tones of a shared de - sire,\_\_\_\_\_

Al. *mf*  
o - ther world - er vi - si - tant,\_\_\_ Vi - sion of the re - mo - te, Of a - stral realms, He in - tones of a shared de - sire,

Pno. *mf*

91

Sop. — And of mu - tual as - pir - a - tion to thrive and flour - ish, Of a ban - dy, Of a fan - cy, An

Al. And of mu - tual as - pir - a - tion to thrive and flour - ish, Of a ban - dy, Of a fan - cy, An

Pno.

97

Sop. ea - ger - ness for give and take, **J** *mp* Prøffer - ing the winds of fer - ti - li - ty and a bur - geo - ning pros - pe - ri - ty In e -

Al. ea - ger - ness for give and take, *mp* Prøffer - ing the winds of fer - ti - li - ty and a bur - geo - ning pros - pe - ri - ty In e -

Pno. *mp*

103 Solo Soprano (*a younger singer can be amplified*) **K** *mf* He says the wind shall not rise and the

Sop. *f* xac - tion for a por - tion of the pure and seem - ly. *mf*

Al. *f* xac - tion for a por - tion of the pure and seem - ly. *mf*

Pno. *f* *mf* *p* **K**

108

Solo  
ve - ssels not sail

Sop.  
Un - til this han - ker - ing is ful - fill - ed - d - d - d - d - d - d, Un-til the

Al.  
win - d

Pno.

112

Sop.  
be - lly gra - - ti - fie - d - d - d - d - d - d - d. ti - fie - - d.

Al.  
gra - ti - fie - d - d - d - d - d - d - d.

Pno.

115

Solo  
He shall have, He shall have \_\_\_\_\_ the mai - den Po - ly - xe - na.

Sop.  
He shall have the thigh of the mai - d - d - d - d - d - d - d.

Al.  
win - d

Pno.



### 3. The call from beyond

for female choir and dancers, with wind & brass octet, or with piano

**Dance 3:** Polyxena is removed from the grasp of the queen. She steps forward bold and fearless. She indicates to the priests that she accepts her fate and is willing. She walks bravely to the altar.

Phaedimus

121  $\text{♩} = 76$

Sop. *f*  
The call from be - yond is o - beyed, Po - ly - xe - na

Al. *f*  
The call from be - yond is o - beyed, Po - ly - xe - na

Pno. *f*

**L**

130

Sop. pulled from her mo - ther's clutch. The beau - teous girl in dis - robed glo - ry

Al. pulled from her mo - ther's clutch. The beau - teous girl in dis - robed glo - ry

Pno.

**L**

139

Sop. Per - ceives the sa - cred blade And walks brave - ly to the al - tar.

Al. Per - ceives the sa - cred blade And walks brave - ly to the al - tar.

Pno.

147 **M** *mf*

Solo Po - ly - xe - na Here... shall be no doom.

Sop. *mp* sets a fine pre - ce dent. no doom and de -

Al. *mp* sets a fine pre - ce dent. no doom and de -

Pno. *mp*

**N**

155

Sop. spair. She shall be bold be - fore this ob - li -

Al. spair. She shall be bold be - fore this ob - li -

Pno.

**N**

161

Sop. ga - tion, this ske - wer ing. She shall be fear - less as chan - tage for this a - ppa - ri - tion.

Al. ga - tion, this ske - wer ing. She shall be fear - less as chan - tage for this a - ppa - ri - tion.

Pno.

**O**  
167

Sop. She shall be va - lour - ous when de - voured by this pan - tas - m from the stars.

Al. She shall be va - lour - ous when de - voured by this pan - tas - m from the stars.

Pno.

**P**  
174

Sop. She shall be un - wav - er - ing be - fore the gusts im - pell - ing this

Al. She shall be un - wav - er - ing be - fore the gusts im - pell - ing this

Pno.

**P**  
179

Sop. pass - age to a mag - ni - fi - cent pro - mise.

Al. pass - age to a mag - ni - fi - cent pro - mise.

Pno.

183

Solo *mf*  
The cut, the dis-e ver, the

Sop. *f*  
Her cou- rage and de- vo- tion to du- ty, To the cleav- ing blows,

Al. *f*  
Her cou- rage and de- vo- tion to du- ty, To the cleav- ing blows,

Pno. *f* *mp*

191

Solo  
sun - der,

Sop. *f*  
Her de- fe- rence to the ble- ssed in- cur- sion Shall in- spire, shall in- spire all her kin- dred

Al. *f*  
Her de- fe- rence to the ble- ssed in- cur- sion Shall in- spire, shall in- spire all her kin- dred

Pno. *f*

198

Sop. *f*  
To the same path. She in - tones the con- se- cra- ted blade be wield - ed.

Al. *f*  
To the same path. She in - tones the con- se- cra- ted blade be wield - ed.

Pno. *f*

Q

207

Sop. — Take this re- vered ob- la- tion, — Strike and spill — this ga-llant

Al. — Take this re- vered ob- la- tion, — Strike and spill — this ga-llant

Pno.

216

Sop. blood! — Sheath the da- gger deep — in this gen- 'rous

Al. blood! — Sheath the da- gger deep — in this gen- 'rous

Pno.

222 *mf* — *mp* — *pp*

Sop. neck and throat.

Al. neck and throat.

Pno. *mf* *mp*

## 4. Polyxena turns one last time

for female choir and dancers, with wind &amp; brass octet, or with piano

**Dance 4:** Polyxena turns to her weeping mother and conveys her determination and pride. She becomes angry and contemptuous at the queen's wallowing in despair.

Phaedimus

229  $\text{♩} = 78$

Solo *mp* Do not weep for me, mo-ther. —

Sop. *mp* Po - ly - xe - na turns one last time: mo - ther. —

Al. *mp* Po - ly - xe - na turns one last time: mo - ther. —

Pno. *p* *mp* *p*

235 **R** *mp*

Solo Your own wre-tched life de-serves tears more than this off-'ring. — I do not

Sop. this off-'ring. —

Al. this off-'ring. —

Pno. *mp* *p* **R**

241

Solo — go to the sharp point a-gainst my will. I am no vic - tim. I am no

Pno.

The musical score is written for a female choir (Solo, Soprano, Alto) and piano. It is in 4/4 time with a tempo of quarter note = 78. The key signature has two sharps (F# and C#). The score is divided into three systems. The first system (measures 229-234) features the Soloist singing 'Do not weep for me, mother.' while the Soprano and Alto sing 'Polyxena turns one last time: mother.' The piano accompaniment is marked *p* and *mp*. The second system (measures 235-240) features the Soloist singing 'Your own wre-tched life de-serves tears more than this off-'ring. I do not' while the Soprano and Alto sing 'this off-'ring.' There are two rehearsal marks (R) in this system. The piano accompaniment is marked *mp* and *p*. The third system (measures 241-246) features the Soloist singing '— go to the sharp point a-gainst my will. I am no vic - tim. I am no'. The piano accompaniment continues with *mp* and *p* dynamics.

247 *mf*

Solo

slave. I am a proud\_ daugh-ter of man. I am of great-er va-lue than

Pno. *mf*

253

Solo

an - y of your he - roues. I was\_ born\_ and su-ckled by you for this blade. I long for this.

Pno.

**S**

259 *mf*

Sop.

What o - ther than con - tempt for your state, Tar - nished with mi - se - ry, I ab - hor this dis - dain.  
For me there is con - tent with this fate, Thrilled by the e - ffi - ca - cy, And no stooge of fair game.

Al. *mf*

What o - ther than con - tempt for your state, Tar - nished with mi - se - ry, I ab - hor this dis - dain.  
For me there is con - tent with this fate, Thrilled by the e - ffi - ca - cy, And no stooge of fair game.

**S**

Pno. *mf*

264 **T** *mp* *mp* *mp*

Sop. Yours is the cringe of the loath - some, A wa - llo - wing so shame - ful, A wa - llo - wing in self ob -  
 Mine is the blade of be - ne - fac - tion, A dedi - cation so de - light - ful, A de - st - ny of ab - ne -

Al. Yours is the cringe of the loath - some, A wa - llo - wing so shame - ful, A wa - llo - wing in self ob -  
 Mine is the blade of be - ne - fac - tion, A dedi - cation so de - light - ful, A de - sti - ny of ab - ne -

Pno. **T** *mp* *mp*

269 *mp* *mf* 1.

Sop. se - ssion, Be - smirched by de - ni - gra - tion, Ob - sessed with the  
 ga - tion, Re - vered as mighty ob - la - tion, Tri -

Al. se - ssion, Be - smirched by de - ni - gra - tion, Ob - sessed with the  
 ga - tion, Re - vered as mighty ob - la - tion, Tri -

Pno. *mf* 1.

272 2.

Sop. pe - tty. um - phant in — this for - tu - i - ty.

Al. pe - tty. um - phant in this for - tu - i - ty.

Pno. 2. *p*



**U**  
276 *mp*

Solo  
Will you send me la - den with such de - ri - sion, With the me - lan - cho - lic of un - just be -  
Will you see the me - rit of al - tru - i - sm, The pro - found pur - pose of this thank

Sop.  
*mp*  
de - ri - sion, of un - just be -  
tru - i - sm, of this thank

Al.  
*mp*  
de - ri - sion, of un - just be -  
tru - i - sm, of this thank

**U**

Pno.  
*mp* *p* *mp*

281

Solo  
li - ttling? You can - not now trade my youth - ful - ness  
off - 'ring? Will you see at last af - ter I

Sop.  
li - ttling?  
off - 'ring?

Al.  
li - ttling?  
off - 'ring?

Pno.

285

Solo  
— for gold. And sec - tioned, de - voured?  
— am cold

Pno.

## 5. With gladsome mind

for female choir and dancers, with wind & brass octet, or with piano

**Dance 5:** Polyxena is sacrificed in sacred ritual.

Phaedimus

290  $\text{♩} = 56$

Sop. *f* With glad - some mind,

Al. *f* With glad - some mind,

Pno. *f* *mf* *f*

299

Sop. With tears of good cheer The a - ssem - blage weeps with de - light at the mar - vel,

Al. With tears of good cheer The a - ssem - blage weeps with de - light at the mar - vel,

Pno.

309 V

Sop. Ov - er - joyed with won - der as the da - gger is raised, Im - pelled u - pon di -

Al. Ov - er - joyed with won - der as the da - gger is raised, Im - pelled u - pon di -

Pno. V

318

Sop. vine sa - cri - fice, E - xu - be - rant at the bent of the blade, And

Al. vine sa - cri - fice, E - xu - be - rant at the bent of the blade, And

Pno.

329 **W**

Sop. gasps in awe as steel is plunged to the breast, thrust to the heart,

Al. gasps in awe as steel is plunged to the breast, thrust to the heart,

Pno. **W**

339 **X**

Sop. *mp* The flesh un - re - sis - ting, — And plunged, and thrust, *f* And gasps as a

Al. *mp* The flesh un - re - sis - ting, — And plunged, and thrust, *f* And gasps as a

Pno. *mp* **X** *f*

Y

349

Sop. *mp*  
ghost par - takes u - pon the mi - ra - cle of this a - llure, As the

Al. *mp*  
ghost par - takes u - pon the mi - ra - cle of this a - llure, As the

Pno. *mp*

Y

359

Sop. *p*  
cos - mos in - gests u - pon sweet ra - di - ance, Gor - man - dis - es on pre - tti ness,

Al. *p*  
cos - mos in - gests u - pon sweet ra - di - ance, Gor - man - dis - es on pre - tti ness,

Pno. *p*

Z

370

Sop. *f*  
— And con - sumes the blood, Feed for a car - ni - vor - ous

Al. *f*  
— And con - sumes the blood, Feed for a car - ni - vor - ous

Pno. *f*

Z

**AA**

380

Sop. *mf*  
hun - ger. Jaws re - lish this vic - tual, The de -

Al. *mf*  
hun - ger. Jaws re - lish this vic - tual, The de -

Pno. *mf*

389

Sop. light of the lips, En - chant - ment of the teeth,

Al. light of the lips, En - chant - ment of the teeth,

Pno. *mf* *f*

**BB**

397

Sop. *mp* Rap - ture of the maw, Gu - zzled and in - gur - gi - ta - ted, *p* the

Al. *mp* Rap - ture of the maw, Gu - zzled and in - gur - gi - ta - ted, *p* the

Pno. *mf* *mp* *p*

406 *mf*

Sop. love - ly throat, E - la - tion of the gu - llet,

Al. love - ly throat, E - la - tion of the gu - llet,

Pno. *mf*

412

Sop. A bliss - ful be - lly,

Al. A bliss - ful be - lly,

Pno. *f*

**CC**

417 *mp* *p*

Sop. Fa - ding mind, The void \_\_\_\_\_ of \_\_\_\_\_ ob - li - vi -

Al. Fa - ding mind, The void \_\_\_\_\_ of \_\_\_\_\_ ob - li - vi -

**CC**

Pno. *mf* *f* *mp*

426

Sop. *DD*  
 on. \_\_\_\_\_ The pledge is hon-oured The a -

Al. *f*  
 on. \_\_\_\_\_ The pledge is hon-oured The a -

Pno. *f*

435

Sop. *EE* *mf*  
 vo - wal made true, The bond is re - newed. We must

Al. *mf*  
 vo - wal made true, The bond is re - newed. We must

Pno. *mf*

444

Sop.  
 feed this de - light With the fer - ti - li - ty of our bed. The

Al.  
 feed this de - light With the fer - ti - li - ty of our bed. The

Pno.

452

Sop. a - ppe - ten - cy shall be e - - ter - nal.

Al. a - ppe - ten - cy shall be e - - ter - nal.

Pno. *mf* *f*

461

Sop.

Al.

Pno.

465

Sop. *p* e - - ter - nal. *pp*

Al. *p* e - - ter - nal. *pp*

Pno. *pp*