

Hervararkviða

(The Incantation of Hervor)

Melissa Dunphy



for mezzo-soprano, violin, and pedal harp
12 min

2016



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Front image: Suontaka sword, 11th century, found in a woman's grave in Suontaka, Finland. National Museum of Finland, Helsinki

Hervararkviða

(The Incantation of Hervor)

Text adapted from the Icelandic saga *Hervarar saga ok Heiðreks* by Melissa Dunphy

I. To my mother

Mother, make haste,
hide my hair,
cut me a cloak and kirtle.
Wisest of women,
prepare me as you would a son.
The truth I seek is only in dreams.
There is no peace for me here.
I will seek out my slain kinsmen
I will claim their riches
as rightful heir,
if I survive.
Mother, make haste,
when morning comes,
I must depart.
No longer Hervor,
My name is Hervarth.
There is no peace for me here.

II. To a stranger

Shepherd, no, I shall not flee!
Shelter I'll deny.
Bring me to the burial mounds
where the sons of Arngrím lie.

I command a viking ship.
Hervarth is my name, my
crew and vessel bide off-shore.
Shepherd, no, I shall not fly!

Ghostly grave-fires fright' me not,
though your island blazes.
Long dead men shall never see
Hervarth quit or quaver!

Shepherd, here's a necklace dear—
I will give it to thee.
Guide me to the graveyard here.
Wherefore do you run from me?

Shepherd, fly! I shall not flee.
Coping with this coward
but serves to embolden me.
Brave, I seek my destiny!

III. To my father

Awaken, Angantýr!
I am Hervor,
the only daughter of you and my mother.
Give me the sword Tyrfinn
which the dwarves once made for Svafrlami.

Hervarðr, Hjörvarðr, Hrani, Angantýr!
Sons of Arngrím,
men of evil,
Speak to me.
Prove yourselves
of stronger stuff
than mold and dust
beneath this mound.

Hervarðr, Hjörvarðr, Hrani, Angantýr!
Bring me the sword
that Dvalinn forged,
or I will curse you
with mounds of worms
and stinging ants
that swarm your flesh.
Who are dead men
to keep such a blade?

Hell's gate is lifting!
The grave yawns bright!
No infernal fire
will daunt my courage.
My father's ghost!
Give me the sword!
I will guard and wield it.
The flames subside...

I return to my ship,
the sword in hand.
I care not at all
how my sons shall strive beneath its burden.
May you all be at peace,
for I must depart.
I exist between worlds
when grave-fires burn around me.

Hervararkviða (The Incantation of Hervor)

I. To my mother

Melissa Dunphy

Andante ♩ = 58

Mezzo-soprano

Violin

Harp

p

Moth er, make haste, hide

pp espressivo

8

Vln.

Hp.

my hair, cut me a cloak and kir - tle. Moth er, make

16

Vln.

Hp.

haste, hide my hair, cut me a cloak and kir - tle.

24

Wis-est of wo - men, pre - pare me as you would

Vln.

Hp.

Detailed description: This system contains measures 24 through 31. The vocal line (top staff) begins with a whole note rest, followed by a melodic phrase starting on a half note. The violin (Vln.) and piano (Hp.) accompaniment consists of a steady eighth-note pattern in the right hand and a simple harmonic accompaniment in the left hand. Dynamics are indicated by hairpins.

32

a son. Wis-est of wo - men, pre - pare me

Vln.

Hp.

Detailed description: This system contains measures 32 through 39. The vocal line continues with a melodic phrase starting on a half note. The violin and piano accompaniment remains consistent with the previous system. Dynamics are indicated by hairpins.

40

as you would a son.

Vln.

Hp.

mp *mf* *tr* *tr* *tr*

Detailed description: This system contains measures 40 through 47. The vocal line continues with a melodic phrase starting on a half note. The violin and piano accompaniment remains consistent with the previous system. Dynamics are indicated by hairpins, and the violin part includes trills (tr) in measures 45-47.

48

p *mf*

The truth I seek is on - ly in dreams. There is no

Vln. *pp* *p* *mf* *p*

Hp. *p*

58

p

peace for me here. The truth I seek is

Vln. *p*

Hp. *p*

68

mf *p*

on - ly in dreams. There is no peace for me

Vln. *mf* *p*

Hp. *mf*

77

here.

Vln.

Hp.

Poco piu mosso

86

p

I will seek out my slain kinsmen. I will claim

Hp.

94

their riches as right-ful heir if

Hp.

102 *rit.* *Andante* ♩ = 58 *p*

I sur - vive. Moth - er makehaste, when

Vln.

Hp. *mf* *ppp espressivo* *p*

110 *mf*

morn - - ing comes, I must de - part. Moth - er make

Vln.

Hp. *mf*

118

haste, when morn - - ing comes, I must de - part.

Vln.

Hp. *mf*

125

mp

No long-er Her - vor, my name is

colla voce

mp

132

mf

Her - varth. No long-er Her - vor, my

mf

mf

138

name is Her - varth, Her - varth.

p

145

p

There is no peace for me

Vln.

p

Hp.

153

rit.

here. There is no

gliss.

Vln.

Hp.

159

peace for me here.

Vln.

Hp.

II. To a stranger

Con brio ♩=92

1

Vln. *f* swashbuckling *fp*

Hp. *f* swashbuckling *gliss.*

6

Vln. *f* swashbuckling

Hp. *p*

Shep-herd, no, I shall not flee! Shelt-er I'll de-ny. Bring me to the bur-ial mounds

9

Vln. *f*

Hp. *sub.f* *gliss.*

where the sons of Arn-grím lie.

13

f
I command a__ vik ing ship. Her-varth is my name. My_

Vln. *fp*

Hp. *mf*

16

crew and ves sel_ bide off - shore. Shep-herd, no, I shall not fly!_

Vln. *p* *f*

Hp. *f*

19

Vln. *fp*

Hp.

22

Ghost - ly_ grave fires fright me not though your is-landblaz-es. Long dead men shall nev - er see

Vln.

Hp.

p

25

Her-varth quit or quav - er!

Vln.

Hp.

f

28

Shep-herd, no, I shall not flee! Shelt-er I'll de ny_

Vln.

Hp.

p

sub.pp
bisbigl.

sub.pp

32

Bring me_ to the_bur-ial_ mounds where the sons of Arn-grím lie.

Vln.

Hp.

sub.f

35

Shep-herd, here's a neck-lace dear—

Vln.

Hp.

f

pizz.

mf

39

I will give it to thee. Guide me_ to the_grave yard here

Vln.

Hp.

arco

f

42 *p* *ff*

Where-fore do you run from me? ya! ha ha ha ha ha ha ya! ha ha ha ha ha ha ha ha

Vln. *sub. pp* *ff*

Hp. *pp* *ff*

45 *tr* *tr* *tr* *tr* *tr* *tr* *tr* *tr*

ya! ha ya ha ha ya ha ya ha ya, ha!

Vln.

Hp.

48 *f* *f*

Vln. *f*

Hp. *f*

51

f

Shep herd, fly! I shall not flee. Cop-ing with this cow-ard

Vln.

fp

Hp.

p

54

but serves to em-bold en me. Brave, I seek my

Vln.

f

fp

Hp.

f

57

des-ti-ny!

Vln.

f

ff

Hp.

ff

gliss

III. To my father

Lento, molto rubato

pp *misterioso* *p* *mf*

sul Mm. mm. mm. A - wak - en, An - gan - tyr! I am Her - vor,

Vln.

Hp. *pp* (□ = tremolo with soft mallets)

p *mf* *mp*

the on - ly daugh - ter of you and my moth - er. Give me the sword Tyrf ing which the dwarves once

Vln.

Hp.

p *molto*

made for Svafr - la - mi. A - wak - en, An - gan - tyr! (harm. gliss.)

Vln.

Hp.

2 Tempo giusto ♩=60

f

Her - - varðr, Hjör - - varðr,

Vln. *ord. trm* *f* *trm* *trm*

Hp. *ff* thunder gliss. *f*

6

Hra - ni, An - gan - týr! Sons of Arn-grím, men of e - vil,

Vln. *p*

Hp. *ff* *f*

10

Speak to me. Prove your-selves of stron - ger stuff than

Vln. *p*

Hp. *f*

13

mold and dust be-neath this mound. Her *trm* varðr,

Vln. *f* *trm*

Hp. *ff* *f*

17

Hjör - varðr, Hra - ni, An - gan - týr! Bring me the sword that

Vln. *p*

Hp. *f*

21 **Piu mosso**
p harsh

Dva-linn forged, or I will curse you with mounds of worms and stinging ants that swarm your

Vln. *p* sul pont.

Hp. scratch string vertically with fork

25 *mf* *f* A tempo ♩=60

flesh. Who are dead men to keep such a blade?

Vln. ord. *tr*

Hp. with guitar pick *f* *ff*

29 *f*

Her - varðr, Hjör - varðr, Hra - ni, An - gan - týr!

Vln. 4

Hp.

34

Her - varðr, Hjör - varðr, Hra - ni, An gan - týr! Hell's
sul pont.

Vln. *8* *tr* *tr* *fp*

Hp. *mf* *ff*

40

gate is lift-ing! The grave yawns bright!

(a screech)

Vln. *ff* *p*

Hp. *ff*

46

No in - fer - nal fire will daunt my cour-age. My fath-er's ghost! Give me the

Vln. *ff* *p*

Hp. *ff* *ff* *ff*

52

sword! I will guard it and wield it! The flames_____

Vln.

Hp.

ff

Detailed description: This block contains the musical score for measures 52 through 57. It features three staves: a vocal line in treble clef, a violin line in treble clef, and a piano line in grand staff (treble and bass clefs). The vocal line has lyrics: "sword! I will guard it and wield it! The flames_____". The piano part begins with a dynamic marking of *ff* and includes a fermata over the first measure. The violin part consists of sustained chords with a crescendo and decrescendo hairpin.

58

sub - side...

Vln.

Hp.

(pick up mallets)

stip

Detailed description: This block contains the musical score for measures 58 through 62. It features three staves: a vocal line in treble clef, a violin line in treble clef, and a piano line in grand staff. The vocal line has lyrics: "sub - side...". The piano part includes the instruction "(pick up mallets)" and a dynamic marking of *stip* (staccato piano) at the end. The violin part has sustained chords with a decrescendo hairpin.

Lento, molto rubato

P

I re-turn to my ship, the sword in hand. I care not at all how my sons shall strive

Vln. sul pont.

pp

Hp. *pp*

Detailed description: This block contains the musical score for measures 63 through 67. It features three staves: a vocal line in treble clef, a violin line in treble clef, and a piano line in grand staff. The tempo is marked "Lento, molto rubato" and the dynamic is *P*. The vocal line has lyrics: "I re-turn to my ship, the sword in hand. I care not at all how my sons shall strive". The violin part is marked "sul pont." and the piano part is marked *pp*. Both violin and piano parts have long horizontal lines with arrows indicating sustained notes.

be-neath its bur - den. May you all be at peace, for I must de-part.

Vln.

Hp.

Detailed description: This system contains the first system of music. It features a vocal line on a treble clef staff with lyrics: "be-neath its bur - den. May you all be at peace, for I must de-part." Below the vocal line are two piano accompaniment staves: a Violin (Vln.) staff on a treble clef and a Harp (Hp.) staff on a bass clef. Both piano parts consist of solid black horizontal lines with arrowheads at the end, indicating sustained notes.

I ex - ist be - tween worlds, I ex - ist be -

Vln.

Hp.

Detailed description: This system contains the second system of music. It features a vocal line on a treble clef staff with lyrics: "I ex - ist be - tween worlds, I ex - ist be -". Below the vocal line are two piano accompaniment staves: a Violin (Vln.) staff on a treble clef and a Harp (Hp.) staff on a bass clef. Both piano parts consist of solid black horizontal lines with arrowheads at the end, indicating sustained notes.

tween worlds when grave-fires burn a - round me.

Vln.

Hp.

niente

niente

Detailed description: This system contains the third system of music. It features a vocal line on a treble clef staff with lyrics: "tween worlds when grave-fires burn a - round me." Below the vocal line are two piano accompaniment staves: a Violin (Vln.) staff on a treble clef and a Harp (Hp.) staff on a bass clef. The Vln. part shows a melodic line with a sharp upward inflection at the end, labeled with the word *niente*. The Hp. part shows a rhythmic pattern of vertical lines, also labeled with the word *niente*.