

CRAIG BOHMLER

Love Letters

Mezzo-Soprano and Piano

words by
Elie H. Haddad

Table of Contents

The Spring in Lebanon	5
Departure	8
In Paris	10
As I Leave Lebanon	13
Unconditional Love	15
The Proposal	22

Texts

The Spring in Lebanon

You are my flowers, my roses, my grass, my trees, my spring.
You are my lakes, my rivers, my skies, my stars, the oceans, and seas.

They say that spring is beautiful for it brings new life.
They say the red flowers of Lebanon blossom in the spring
To reveal the love of Adonis for his Ishtar.

I say, "Let them keep their spring!"
I have you and you are my spring.
You are my flowers and my life.

Departure

Your tears are raindrops
That water the golden grass
In the desert of my soul.

My face may look radiant and my eyes joyful
But I have no heart.

I give it to you for twenty-six days.

Please be careful
For it is fragile
And may melt in your tears.

In Paris

The city of arts.
You are my art.
The city of beauty.
You are my beauty.
The city of lights.
You are my light
The city of romance.
You are my love.

As I Leave Lebanon

I am afraid to show my soul to those I leave behind,
For my naked soul would betray the joy I feel.
Your eyes are getting closer and your warmth stronger,
So let my face frown and let my lips droop,
For my soul is happy.

Unconditional Love

For you, I could drink a bottle of champagne and a bottle of wine
And not get a hangover
Because your love sobers me.

For you, I can eat a four-pound chicken, a salad, and three potatoes baked in butter
And not get a stomach ache
Because your love soothes me.

For you, I can sleep and snore through the night
Unaffected by the little nudges you give me
Because your love comforts me.

For you, I could get up and pee in the other bathroom
So the noise does not bother you
Because your love guides me.

For you are the most sober, soothing,
Most comforting, most guiding light
In the world.

The Proposal

Whisper the hymn of eternity in my ears.
Indwell in me your essence and erase my fears.
Like a bow missing an arrow that has lost its aim,
Life shall be for a heart with no beats and no tears.

Yellow are leaves that shiver in the winter snow.
Old are the clouds that summon for the winds to blow
Upon the hill where the olive tree speaks the truth.

Miracles bloom in the cold wherever your eyes glow.
Ask me where did I find the strength to arm my soul?
Repeat the same words of wisdom that make me whole.
Right and love are but sounds if heard or seen.
You make the world. You make the bells of heaven toll.

Must I say more, or should the words find a closed door?
End of the line. You love me. I love you more.

Program notes

The first five poems in this cycle are part of twenty-six that I wrote for Layna before going on a long trip to Lebanon—one piece per day, sequenced, and each sealed in its own envelope. The final poem, “The Proposal,” was written upon my return. Twenty-two years later, two kids, and a lifetime of adventures, my hair is greyer, but the love remains young and new. Layna, you are the air I breathe and the blood in my veins.

—Elie H. Haddad

Copying is illegal
Review copy only

For Layna Chianakas Haddad

Love Letters

for Mezzo-Soprano and Piano

Elie H. Haddad

Craig Bohmler (BMI)

The Spring in Lebanon

Charming, slightly flirtatious ♩ = 132

5

You are my flow - ers, my ros - es, my grass, my trees, my spring.

9

You are my lakes, my riv - ers, my skies, my stars, the o - ceans and

Text: © Copyright 1996 by Elie H. Haddad. All rights reserved. Used by permission.

Music: © Copyright 2020 by Ione Press, Inc.,
a division of ECS Publishing. www.ecspublishing.com
All rights reserved.

13

seas. They say that spring is beau - ti - ful for it brings new life. .

mf

This system contains measures 13 through 16. The vocal line begins with a whole rest in measure 13, followed by a melodic line in measures 14, 15, and 16. The piano accompaniment features a rhythmic pattern of eighth notes in measures 13 and 14, then shifts to chords in measures 15 and 16. The key signature is one sharp (F#), and the time signature changes from 6/4 to 4/4 to 3/4.

17

They say the red flowers of Leb - a - non

p

This system contains measures 17 through 19. The vocal line starts with a half note in measure 17, followed by a melodic line in measures 18 and 19. The piano accompaniment consists of chords in measure 17 and a melodic line in measures 18 and 19. The key signature is one sharp (F#), and the time signature changes from 4/4 to 5/4 to 4/4.

20

blos - som in the spring to re - veal the love of A - do - nis for his

This system contains measures 20 through 22. The vocal line continues with a melodic line in measures 20, 21, and 22. The piano accompaniment features a complex rhythmic pattern with eighth and sixteenth notes in measures 20 and 21, and chords in measure 22. The key signature is one sharp (F#), and the time signature changes from 4/4 to 3/4.

23

Ish - tar. I say, "Let them keep their spring!"

f *sfz*

This system contains measures 23 through 25. The vocal line begins with a half note in measure 23, followed by a melodic line in measures 24 and 25. The piano accompaniment features a complex rhythmic pattern with eighth and sixteenth notes in measures 23 and 24, and chords in measure 25. The key signature is one sharp (F#), and the time signature changes from 3/4 to 4/4 to 3/4.

Departure

Elie H. Haddad

Craig Bohmler (BMI)

Adagio mesto ♩ = 72

p blurry

Adagio mesto ♩ = 72

Ped.

5
Your tears are rain - drops ___ that wa - ter the gold - en grass _

9
___ in the des - ert of my soul.

13
mp warmly
My face ___ may look ra - di - ant and my eyes

8va

8vb

Ped.

Text: © Copyright 1996 by Elie H. Haddad. All rights reserved. Used by permission.

Music: © Copyright 2020 by Ione Press, Inc.,
a division of ECS Publishing. www.ecspublishing.com
All rights reserved.

In Paris

Elie H. Haddad

Craig Bohmler (BMI)

Animated, joyfully $\text{♩} = 56$

The

Animated, joyfully $\text{♩} = 56$

f

This system contains the first four measures of the piece. The vocal line begins with a whole rest in the first three measures, followed by a half note G4 in the fourth measure with the lyric 'The'. The piano accompaniment starts with a forte (*f*) dynamic, featuring a rhythmic pattern of eighth notes and chords in the right hand, and a bass line of eighth notes in the left hand.

5

cit - y of arts. _____ You are my art. _____

mf

This system contains measures 5 through 8. The vocal line continues with the lyrics 'cit - y of arts.' and 'You are my art.' with a line indicating the text continues. The piano accompaniment continues with a mezzo-forte (*mf*) dynamic, maintaining the rhythmic accompaniment.

9

The

f

This system contains measures 9 through 12. The vocal line begins with a whole rest in the first three measures, followed by a half note G4 in the fourth measure with the lyric 'The'. The piano accompaniment continues with a forte (*f*) dynamic, featuring a melodic line in the right hand and a bass line in the left hand.

Text: © Copyright 1996 by Elie H. Haddad. All rights reserved. Used by permission.

Music: © Copyright 2020 by Ione Press, Inc.,
a division of ECS Publishing. www.ecspublishing.com
All rights reserved.

13

cit - y of beau - ty. You are my

mf

16

beau - ty. The

f

Ped.

21

cit - y of lights. You are my

mp

26

light. The

As I Leave Lebanon

Elie H. Haddad

Craig Bohmler (BMI)

Legato semplice ♩ = 66

The first system of the score consists of a vocal line and a piano accompaniment. The vocal line is written in a 3/4 time signature and begins with a whole rest. The piano accompaniment is in 3/4 time and features a flowing eighth-note pattern in both the right and left hands, with a dynamic marking of *p* (piano). The key signature has one flat (B-flat).

5

I am a-fraid to show my soul to those I leave be - hind, For my

The second system continues the vocal line and piano accompaniment. The vocal line begins with the lyrics "I am a-fraid to show my soul to those I leave be - hind, For my". The piano accompaniment continues with the same eighth-note pattern. A dynamic marking of *p* is present.

9

na - ked soul would be - tray the joy I feel.

pp *mp*

The third system continues the vocal line and piano accompaniment. The vocal line begins with the lyrics "na - ked soul would be - tray the joy I feel.". The piano accompaniment continues with the eighth-note pattern. Dynamic markings of *pp* (pianissimo) and *mp* (mezzo-piano) are indicated. A *8va* marking is present above the piano part.

Text: © Copyright 1996 by Elie H. Haddad. All rights reserved. Used by permission.

Music: © Copyright 2020 by Ione Press, Inc.,
a division of ECS Publishing. www.ecspublishing.com
All rights reserved.

Unconditional Love

Elie H. Haddad

Craig Bohmler (BMI)

Molto allegro e goioso ♩ = 138

Molto allegro e goioso ♩ = 138

mp

3

For

5

you, I could drink a bot - tle of cham - pagne and a bot - tle of wine _____

Text: © Copyright 1996 by Elie H. Haddad. All rights reserved. Used by permission.

Music: © Copyright 2020 by Ione Press, Inc.,
a division of ECS Publishing. www.ecspublishing.com
All rights reserved.

7

and not get a hang - o - ver be - cause your love so - bers

9

me. For you I can eat a four - pound chick - en,

11

a sal - ad, and three po - ta - toes baked in but - ter

The Proposal

Elie H. Haddad

Craig Bohmler (BMI)

Adagio profondo ♩ = 44

Adagio profondo ♩ = 44

p molto rubato

5

Whis - per the hymn of e - tern - i - ty in my

p

9

ears. In - dwell in me your es - sence and e - rase my fears. _____

Text: © Copyright 1996 by Elie H. Haddad. All rights reserved. Used by permission.

Music: © Copyright 2020 by Ione Press, Inc.,
 a division of ECS Publishing. www.ecspublishing.com
 All rights reserved.

13 *poco in tempo*

Like a bow miss - ing an ar - row that has lost its

17

aim, life shall be for a heart with no beats and no

21 *Poco più mosso*

tears. Yel - low are leaves that

Poco più mosso

mf *p colla voce*

25

shiv - er in the win - ter snow. Old are the clouds that sum - mon for the winds to blow