

PAUL WINCHESTER

THE BREATH  
UNHELD

SATB chorus unaccompanied

One breath  
Held inside your lungs as you wait for all the air to be well used  
The tension holds as your chest carries the heavy weight

One instant  
That breath is yours  
And the next it's ours  
As it's breathed anew by groups of expectant bodies  
Breathing deep

A sighing child gives her breath to the whole world  
Selflessly  
Just as we hold onto our own  
As though it were  
Our last

The cessation of air leaves us gasping and cracked

Yet now as we sing our bodies breathe together and we breathe out  
A renewed spirit that soars into life with its full nobility  
And whispers back into

One breath  
Not set apart or hollow  
But harmonious

Our inhalation  
Our unification

The breath unheld  
Holds all



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20

*rit.* *a tempo* *p*

a

a - new — by groups of — ex - pec - tant bo - dies breath - ing deep.

*pp* *p* *pp*

Ah groups of bo - dies breath - ing deep. (Mmm)

groups of bo - dies breath - ing deep. (Mmm)

*rit.* *a tempo*

25

*mf*

sigh - ing child gives her breath to the whole world — self - less - ly —

*p* *mf*

Ah

*p* *mf*

Ah

*p* *mf*

Ah

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39 *rit.* *mf* *a tempo* *f* *accel.* *mf* **Invigorated** ♩ = 80

gas - ping and cracked. Yet now as we sing, our bo - dies breathe to - ge - ther,

gas - ping and cracked. Yet now

gas - ping and cracked. Yet now

gas - ping and cracked. Yet now

*rit.* *a tempo* *accel.* **Invigorated** ♩ = 80

gas - ping and cracked. Yet now

44

— yet now, as we sing, our bo - dies breathe to - ge - ther, — Yet now, as we sing, our bo - dies breathe to - ge - ther, —

now, as we sing, our bo - dies breathe to - ge - ther, — yet now, as we sing, our bo - dies

Yet

— yet now, as we sing, our bo - dies

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55

breathe out a re - newed spi - rit that soars in - to life with its

breathe a re - newed spi - rit that soars in - to life with its

breathe out a re - newed spi - rit that soars in - to life with its

breathe out re - newed spi - rit that soars in - to life with its

60

*ff* *p* **As Before** ♩ = 66

full no - bi - li - ty and whis - pers back in - to

full no - bil - li - ty and whis - pers back in - to

full no - bi - li - ty and whis - pers back in - to

full no - bi - li - ty and whis - pers back in - to

*ff* *p* **As Before** ♩ = 66

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74

ca - tion - held holds

ca - tion un - held

ca - tion breath un - held

ca - tion the breath un - held

80

rit. a tempo

all.

holds all.

holds all.

holds all.

rit. a tempo

\*\* : Audible breath out