

HOLD ON

SATB Voices with Piano and Optional Percussion

Traditional Spiritual
Arranged by Dan Davison

BriLee Music
Part-by-Part



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Ranges:

Soprano		Alto	
Tenor		Bass	

Language: English
Use: General/Festival
Time: Approx. 2:50
*Difficulty: Moderate

BriLee Music
the Voice of Choral Music

Notes

Hold On is a spiritual that comes out of the slave culture of the American South. Most spirituals are considered to be “traditional,” meaning that the composer is not known. Rather, the song was passed from one generation to the next through oral tradition. While most spirituals refer to topic of religious faith, some others include coded meanings that would help slaves who were escaping to freedom in the North.

The piece calls for a brake drum. This instrument is actually a heavy metal disk brake from a car that is hit with a hammer. Some school bands have this instrument in their percussion cabinet. If an actual disk brake cannot be found, you might try using a large, cast-iron fry pan and hammer. Whatever instrument is chosen, the outcome should be a metallic sound that sounds like a railroad tie being driven into the ground. The idea to be conveyed is that keeping your faith requires hard, consistent work.

There are plenty of places in the song where singers are asked to hold notes for two whole notes. In all these cases, do not make the mistake of holding a single dynamic for the entire note. Instead, all long notes should have a dynamic arch added to them.

Letter E is all about the counterpoint. The idea in counterpoint is to bring out your part when your part is moving, but then to soften on the held notes, providing an opportunity for the other part to be spotlighted.

In general, articulations in this piece are to be exaggerated. Staccatos are to be very short, and more importantly, accents are to be sung so as to “pop.” Likewise, dynamics should be exaggerated, especially the dynamic change at letter G.

Care has been taken to limit the ranges in the tenor and bass parts, making this song accessible for a wide range of choirs.

About the Arranger

Dan Davison directed choirs at Ballou Junior High in Puyallup, Washington from 1979 - 2019. His responsibilities included working with mixed ensembles, tenor-bass ensembles, treble ensembles, and jazz choir.

Dan was born in 1956 in Sacramento, California, but has lived in the greater Seattle area since 1965. Since 1979, he has resided in Puyallup, Washington with his wife, Cathy, who was also an educator. He attended Pacific Lutheran University in Tacoma, Washington, where he received his Bachelor’s degree, studying music under Maurice Skones. He continued his education with a Master’s in Music from Western Washington University, studying with Bruce Pullan.

Hold On

3

for SATB Voices with Piano and Optional Percussion

Traditional Spiritual
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Piano

$\text{♩} = 80$

f

Pedal sparingly. Let rests be heard.

**Brake Drum
(or other
perc.)**

$\text{♩} = 80$

(Brake drum plays through m. 107)

mf

dim.

Soprano ***mf*** **A**

Alto ***mf***

Tenor ***mf***

Bass ***mf***

No - ah, No-ah, let ___ me come in.

No - ah, No-ah, let ___ me come in.

No - ah, No-ah, let ___ me come in.

No - ah, No-ah, let ___ me come in.

mp

mf

12 13 14 15

The doors all fast-ened and the win-dows pinned. _____

The doors all fast-ened and the win-dows pinned. _____

The doors all fast-ened and the win-dows pinned. _____

The doors all fast-ened and the win-dows pinned. _____



16 17 18 19 20

Keep your hand on - a that plow. _____ Hold

Keep your hand on - a that plow. _____ Hold

Keep your hand on - a that plow. _____ Hold

Keep your hand on - a that plow. _____ Hold



21 *p* 22 *f* 23 24

on, hold on, hold on! _____

on, hold on, hold on! _____

on, hold on, hold on! _____ *mf* No-ah said: _

on, hold on, hold on! _____ *mf* No-ah said: _

p *f*

B 26 *mp* 27 28

No-ah said, _____ No-ah said. _____

No-ah said, _____ No-ah said. _____

____ "You done lost your track. _____ Can't plow

____ "You done lost your track. _____ Can't plow

B *mp*

29 30 *mf* 31 *p* 32

Don't look back! ___ Don't look back! ___

mf *p*

Don't look back! ___ Don't look back! ___

straight and keep a-look-in' back." ___ Keep your

straight and keep a-look-in' back." ___ Keep your

33 34 35 *cresc.* 36 *mf* 37 *p*

Keep your hand on that plow. Hold on, hold

cresc. *mf* *p*

Keep your hand on that plow. Hold on, hold

p

hand on - a that plow. Hold on, hold

hand on - a that plow. Hold on, hold

p

38 *f* 39 40 *mp* C *cresc.* 42

on, hold on! _____ Hold on, _____ hold

f *mp* *cresc.*

on, hold on! _____ Hold on, hold on, hold

f *mp* *cresc.*

on, hold on! _____ Hold on, _____ hold

f *mp* *cresc.*

on, hold on! _____ Hold on, hold on, hold

C *mp* *cresc.*

43 44 *ff* 45 46 *mf*

on, hold on! Keep your hand on - a that plow. Hold

ff *mf*

on, hold on! Keep your hand on - a that plow. Hold

ff *mf*

on, hold on! Keep your hand on - a that plow. Hold

ff *mf*

on, hold on! Keep your hand on - a that plow. Hold

f *mf*

D

47 *f* *mp* 50 51

on, hold on! Mar-y had a gold-en chain.

on, hold on! Mar-y had a gold-en chain.

on, hold on! Mar-y had a gold-en chain.

on, hold on! Mar-y had a gold-en chain.

f *mp* *p* *mp*

Ev - 'ry link was in my Je - sus name.

Ev - 'ry link was in my Je - sus name.

Ev - 'ry link was in my Je - sus name.

Ev - 'ry link was in my Je - sus name.

D

52 53 54 55

Ev - 'ry link was in my Je - sus name.

Ev - 'ry link was in my Je - sus name.

Ev - 'ry link was in my Je - sus name.

Ev - 'ry link was in my Je - sus name.

p

Ev - 'ry link was in my Je - sus name.

Ev - 'ry link was in my Je - sus name.

Ev - 'ry link was in my Je - sus name.

Ev - 'ry link was in my Je - sus name.

56 *p* 57 58 59 60 *pp*

Keep your hand on - a that plow. Hold

p *pp*

Keep your hand on - a that plow. Hold

p *pp*

Keep your hand on - a that plow. Hold

p *pp*

Keep your hand on - a that plow. Hold

p

[illegible]

66 *p*low - in' _____ and don't you tire. _____ Ev - 'ry
 _____ and don't you tire. _____ Ev - 'ry round *>* goes _____
*p*low - in' _____ and don't you tire. _____ Ev - 'ry
 _____ and don't you tire. _____ Ev - 'ry round *>* goes _____

70 round *>* goes _____ high - er and high er. _____ Keep your
 _____ high - er and high er. _____ Keep your hand _____
 round *>* goes _____ high - er and high er. _____ Keep your
 _____ high - er and high er. _____ Keep your hand _____

74

hand _____ on - a that plow. Hold

_____ on - a that plow. _____ Hold

hand _____ on - a that plow. Hold

_____ on - a that plow. _____ Hold

75

76

77 *mp* 78 *p* 79 80 *pp*

on, hold on, hold on! _____ If you want to go to

mp *p* *pp*

on, hold on, hold on! _____ If you want to go to

mp *p* *pp*

on, hold on, hold on! _____ If you want to go to

mp *p* *pp*

on, hold on, hold on! _____ If you want to go to

p

F

82 83

heav-en, let me tell you how: Got to keep your hand on the gos - pel

heav-en, let me tell you how: Got to keep your hand on the gos - pel

heav-en, let me tell you how: Got to keep your hand on the gos - pel

heav-en, let me tell you how: Got to keep your hand on the gos - pel

F

pp

84 85 86

plow. Got to keep your hand on - a that plow. Hold

plow. Got to keep your hand on - a that plow. Hold

plow. Got to keep your hand on - a that plow. Hold

plow. Got to keep your hand on - a that plow. Hold

87 *ff* **G** 88 90

on! _____ If that plow stays in your hand, — gon - na land you

on, hold on! _____ If that plow stays in your hand, — gon - na land you

on! _____ If that plow stays in your hand, — gon - na land you

on, hold on! _____ If that plow stays in your hand, — gon - na land you

ff **G**

91 92 93 94

straight in the prom-ised land. — Keep your hand on - a that plow. Hold

straight in the prom-ised land. — Keep your hand on - a that plow. Hold

straight in the prom-ised land. — Keep your hand on - a that plow. Hold

straight in the prom-ised land. — Keep your hand on - a that plow. Hold

95 **H** *cresc.* 96 *mp* 98

on! Hold *mp* on, _____ hold
cresc.
 on! Hold *mp* on, hold on, hold
cresc.
 on! Hold *mp* on, _____ hold
cresc.
 on! Hold on, hold on, hold

H *cresc.*

99 100 *ff* 101 102 *mf*

on, hold on! Keep _____ your hand on - a that plow. Hold *mf*
ff
 on, hold on! Keep _____ your hand on - a that plow. Hold *mf*
ff
 on, hold on! Keep _____ your hand on - a that plow. Hold *mf*
ff
 on, hold on! Keep _____ your hand on - a that plow. Hold

ff *mf*

cresc. poco a poco

I

104 105 106

on! _____

cresc. poco a poco

on, oh, broth - er hold on! Oh, sis - ter hold on!

cresc. poco a poco

on, oh, broth - er hold on! Oh, sis - ter hold on!

cresc. poco a poco

on, oh, broth - er hold on! Oh, sis - ter hold on!

I

cresc. poco a poco

107 *molto rit.* *ff* $\text{♩} = 72$ *rit.* 108 109 110

on! _____ Hold on! _____

ff You got - ta hold on! Hold on! _____

ff You got - ta hold on! Hold on! _____

ff You got - ta hold on! Hold on! _____

ff You got - ta hold on! Hold on! _____

molto rit. $\text{♩} = 72$ *rit.* 8va- -1

slowly and deliberately

BriLee Music

the Voice of Choral Music

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