

TWELVE POEMS
OF
EMILY DICKINSON

Set to Music by
AARON COPLAND

Voice and Piano

The composer has supplied the following information about *Twelve Poems of Emily Dickinson*:

"These twelve songs were composed at Sneden's Landing, New York, at various times during the period from March 1949 to March 1950. They are the first works the composer has written for solo voice and piano since 1928.

"The poems centre about no single theme, but they treat of subject matter particularly close to Miss Dickinson: nature, death, life, eternity. Only two of the songs are related thematically, the seventh and twelfth. Nevertheless, the composer hopes that, in seeking a musical counterpart for the unique personality of the poet, he has given the songs, taken together, the aspect of a song cycle. The twelve songs are dedicated to twelve composer friends."

1. Nature, the gentlest mother
2. There came a wind like a bugle
3. Why do they shut me out of Heaven?
4. The world feels dusty
- ✓ 5. Heart, we will forget him
6. Dear March, come in!
7. Sleep is supposed to be
8. When they come back
9. I felt a funeral in my brain
10. I've heard an organ talk sometimes
11. Going to Heaven!
12. The Chariot

M
1621
.4
.C67
.T9
C.2

Texts from Poems by Emily Dickinson.

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1. Nature, the gentlest mother

Music by
AARON COPLAND

Quite slow (♩ = circa 60) *poco rit.*

VOICE

PIANO

mf (crystalline) *p* *mp* *espress.* *p* *mp* *poco rit.*

a tempo

p *a tempo* *p* *mp* *mf*

mp (freely)

Na-ture the gent-lest mo-ther..... Im-pa-tient

pp *p* *pp* *sust. 2nd.*

moving forward - - - (♩ = 69)

of no child The feeblest... or the wayward-est

poetically *p*

* Red. * Red. * Red. * Red.

hold back - - - *mf*

Her admonition mild In forest and the hill By

mf

* Red. *

moving forward

traveller is heard Re - strain - ing rampant

mp

Red. * Red. * Red. *

squirrel or too im - pet - u - ous

p

Red. * Red. *

Hold back (♩ = 63) - - - - *moving forward*
(pastoral-like)

bird.

mf *mp*

Red. *

mp *Faster* (♩ = 92)

How fair her con-ver-sa-tion A summer af-ter-

p *mp* *p*

*

more brightly *mf*

- noon. Her house-hold, her as-sem-bly

mp *p* *mf*

*

And when the sun goes down Her

p *mf*

*

voice a - mong the aisles In - cites the tim - id prayer Of

the mi - nu - test crick - et The most un - wor - thy

flower.

molto rit.

As at first ($\text{♩} = 60$) *p* moving forward ($\text{♩} = 69$)

When all the chil - dren sleep, She turns as long a - way, As will suf -

hold back - - - - *mp* *moving forward* - -

- fice to light her lamps..... Then, bend - ing from the sky, With

mp

* *Red.* *

- - - - - (♩ = 69)

in - fi - nite af - fec - tion And in - fi - ni - ter

Red. * *Red.* * *Red.* *

gradually slower *, p a tempo (♩ = 69)*

care Her gold - en fin - ger on her lip Wills si - lence

Red. * *Red.* * *Red.* * *Red.* *

pp

ev - 'ry - where, Wills si - lence ev - 'ry - where. 8

pp *p* *ppp*

(no *Red.*) *Red.* * *Red.* *

2. There came a wind like a bugle

Music by
AARON COPLAND

Quite fast (♩ = 104)

VOICE

f freely

There came a wind like a

PIANO

f *rit.*

(♩ = 112)

bu - gle,

p

It quiv-ered through the

ff *mp*

grass,
(non legato)

And a green chill up - on the heat so

f *dim.* *mp*

mp

mp

sim.

om - i - nous *did* *pass.* *We*

f *rit.* *somewhat slower* *(short)* *f*

cresc. *marc.* *(short)*

with emphasis *barred the win-dow and the doors As from an emerald ghost*

f *(faster - - -)* *l.h.*

mp freely *mf* *ff* *The doom's e - lec - tric moc - ca - sin that ve - ry in - stant*

f mp *ff*

a tempo (♩ = 112) *mp*

passed. On a

ff marc. *dim.* *mp*

Red. * *Red.* * *Red.* * *Red. sim.*

strange mob of pant - ing trees and fen - ces fled a - way.

(♩ = 104) *mf*

And riv - ers where the

mp (blurred)

Sba. *Red.*

hous - es ran the liv - ing looked that day,

ff *8va.* *8va.* ***ff*** (clangorous)

* *Red.* * *Red.* *

f

The bell... with - in... the stee - ple wild... The

8va *8va* *8va* *8va* *8va* *8va*

Red. simile

As at first

fly - ing ti - dings whirled...

rit. - - - Broadly f with emphasis

How much can come And

Red. *

ff

much can go And yet a - bide the world.....

Red. *

8ba

(Duration 1 min 30 sec)

3. Why do they shut me out of Heaven?

Music by
AARON COPLAND

Moderately (♩ = 76)

VOICE

ff (rit. - - -)

Why do they shut me out of Hea - ven Did I sing too

PIANO

ff

loud? But I can sing a lit - tle min - or, Tim - id as a bird.

short mp

p

sub. p

Slower (♩ = 56)

short p

Would - n't the an - gels try me just once more Just see if I

mp press forward

pp

mp

Somewhat
faster (♩ = 88)

mf *f*

trou - bled them.... But don't shut the door, don't shut the door.

mp

Oh if I were the gen-tle-men in the

white robes and they were the lit-tle hand that knocked, KT

poco sf

freety accel. - - - - *rit.* - - - -

Could I for-bid, could I for-bid, could I for-bid.....

sf

As at first *short rit.* - - -)

1/2 step *f* *mf*

Why do they shut me out of Hea-ven, Did I sing too loud?....

poco sf

Somewhat faster (♩ = 88)

p *sub. f* *mp* *p* *mp* *poco sf* *rit.*

4. The world feels dusty

Music by
AARON COPLAND

VOICE *Very slowly* (♩ = circa 52) *mp* (darkly colored)

The world feels dus - ty, when we

PIANO *p* *expressively*

stop to die We want the dew then Hon - ors taste

mf

mp

f *press forward* - - - *trifle faster* *ff*

dry. Flags vex a dy - ing

f *ff* *mf* *ff* *mf*

face But the least fan..... stirred by a friend's hand Cools...

mf *pp* *f* *mp* *mf* *p* *mf* *p*

Tempo I (very slowly)

..... like the rain Mine be the

mf *mp* *espress.*

min - is - try when thy thirst comes..... Dews of thy - self to fetch

and ho - ly balms.....

poco sf *rit* *poco sf* *mp* *p* *pp*

(*sf*) *rit*

moving forward - -

When you have done, pray tell me,

* *And* * *And* * *And sim.*

f *ff faster* *rit. e dim. (gradual)*

That I my thoughts may dim

ff molto marc. *f* *mf*

return to - - a tempo)

Haste..... lest while you're lag - ging, I

p *mp*

..... may re - mem - ber him.

p *pp* *pp*

6. Dear March, come in!

Music by
AARON COPLAND

With exuberance (♩ = 118-120)

VOICE

PIANO

Dear March.... come in

How glad I am I

looked for you be - fore.....

Put down your hat

You must have walked...

How out of breath..... you are.

f *cresc.* *r.h.* *

Dear March, how are you?.....

f *

And.... the rest?.....

ff *meno f* *

Did you leave Na - ture well?..... Oh, March come right up -

sub. mp *poco a poco cresc.*

- stairs with me I have so much to tell.

f *ff marc.*

(cresc.)

* *Red.* *

poco rit. - - - - - ($\text{♩} = 112$)

dim. molto *mp* *p*

Red. * *Red.* * *Red. dim.* *Red.*

I got your let-ter and the bird's

p *mp*

* *Red.*

The ma-ples ne-ver knew..... that you were com-ing,.....

mp *p*

* *Red.*

..... I..... de - clare How red their fac - es grew,

poco sf *p*

* Red.

..... But March for - give me.

mf *mp*

* Red.

And all those hills you left for me to hue, There

f *poco sf* *p* *mp*

* Red. * Red.

freely - - slowing up *mf* *rit.*

was no pur - ple suit - a - ble, You took it all with

*

Tempo I (♩ = 116-120)

you.....

ff marc.

Red. * *Red.* * *Red.* * *Red.*

Who knocks? that A-pril?

sub. ff *mf*

Lock the door,..... I will not be pur - sued..... He stayed away a

ff *mf*

Red. * *Red.* * *Red.* *sim.*

year,..... to call when I am oc-cu-pied.....

relax the tempo

f *ff* *dim. molto*

Red.

mp - *Broaden somewhat*

But tri - fles look so tri - vi - al As

mp *p*

* Red.

soon as you have come And blame is just as dear as praise

mp *p*

* Red.

..... And praise as mere as

p

* Red. *

blame.

p (indifferent)

delicately

mp

no Red. *

7. Sleep is supposed to be

Music by
AARON COPLAND

Moderately slow—*with dignity* (♩ = circa 66)

VOICE

PIANO

mp with great calm

Sleep is supposed to be,

By souls of

san-i-ty,

The shut-ting of the eye

f Sleep is the sta-tion grand *mf* Down which on

mp *Red.* * *Red.* * *Red.*

ei-ther hand The hosts of wit-ness stand *p* Morn

p *poco* *p*

* *Red.* * *Red.*

is supposed to be, By peo-ple of de-gree

* *Red.* *

mp The break - ing of the day, *ff* with emphasis Morn - ing

mp *ff* *ff marc.*

Red. * *Red.*

has not oc-curred That shall au-ror-a be

East of E - ter-ni - ty One with the

(clangorous) *f marc. non legato*

ban-ner gay One in the red ar-ray

f slower That is the break of day. *(long fermata)*

8. When they come back

Music by
AARON COPLAND

VOICE Moderately (beginning slowly) *mp* When they come

PIANO *mf* quietly expressive *p*

(rubato)

p back if blos-soms do,..... *mp* I al-ways feel a doubt if *gradually faster*

faster blos-soms can be born a - gain When once the art is out.....

Rather fast ($\text{♩} = 126$)

When they be - gin if rob - ins

sub. p

* mark the l.h.

do I al - ways had a fear I did not tell it

was their last Ex - per - i-ment last year.....

f *ff*

f *ff* *f*

Red. * *Red.* * *Red.* *

When it is May,

..... if May re - turn.

*

mf

Has no - bo - dy a pang that on a face so beau - ti -

mp

- ful we might not look a - gain.

p

poco marc. f

f

more deliberate

rit. molto - - - *p calmly* (♩ = 84)

If I am

f

mp

ritardando

there, one does not know.....

p *mp*

mp (gradual return to tempo)

..... what par - ty one may be to - mor - row,

p hold back - - - *mf* **Tempo I**

..... But if I am there, I take back all I

p

Red. *

say!

mf *mp* *p*

9. I felt a funeral in my brain

Music by
AARON COPLANDRather fast ($\text{♩} = 80$)*heavy, with forboding (blurred, uneven)*

PIANO

Ped. on each beat

f heavily
I felt a fu-ner-al in my brain,.....

..... And mourn-ers to and fro,.....

rit. - - - broader
..... Kept tread-ing, tread-ing, tread-ing till it seemed

*ritardando*Slower ($\text{♩} = 63$)

..... that sense was break - ing through (exaggerate the

ff (thud-like)

mf ($\text{♩} = 60$)

(first beat of each measure) And when they all were seat - ed A ser-vice like a

mf, ma marc.

8.....: (secco) 8.....: 8.....:

drum Kept beat - ing, beat - ing, beat - ing till I thought my

8.....: 8.....:

mind was go - ing numb. And then I heard them

più f

sostenuto

più f

8.....: 8.....: 8.....: 8.....:

lift a box, And creak a - cross my soul With those same

boots of lead a - gain, Then space be-gan to toll
(bell-like)
f-mf (poco marc.)
(mp) *(mp)* *(sim.)*

..... As all the hea-vens were a bell And Be-ing but an
f

ear. And I and si - lence
p
(p)
f-f-p
sostenuto
(the l.h. thud-like) *(mf- sempre)*

some strange race Wrecked
mf

soi - i - tar - y here. rit -
mp *p*
p *pp*

10. I've heard an organ talk sometimes

Music by
AARON COPLANDGently flowing ($\text{♩} = 68-69$)

PIANO

mp *legato, simply**mf* *simply*

I've heard an or - gan talk some - times

f *sonore*

In a ca - the - dral aisle

f *sonore**meno f**mf*

And un - der - stood no word it said.

p

Yet held my breath the while

mf *p* *mf* *p* *mp* *p* *mp*

mp

And ris - en up and gone a - way, *mf* A more Ber -

- nard - ine girl And know not what was done to me.....

f *sonore*

f (broadening) *ff*

In that old hal - lowed..... aisle.

(broadening) *f* *rit.* *mf*

11. Going to Heaven!

Music by
AARON COPLAND

Fast (♩ = 116)

VOICE

Go - ing to Hea - ven! Go - ing to Hea - ven!

PIANO

f

Go - ing to Hea - ven!

f non legato

> marc.

meno f

mp 2

..... I don't know when Pray

sub. p

*ped. (mark the l.h. lightly) * ped.*

do not ask me how..... In-deed I'm too as - ton - ished to think of

5. 4. 3. 1. 3. 2. 1. 4. 3. 1.

** ped. * ped. **

an-swer-ing you Going to

non legato

sub. f marc. *f*

8

Heaven! Going to Hea-ven! How dim it

rit.

sub. pp

Red. *

8

- *a tempo*

sounds..... And yet it will be

p *delicately*

Red. 5 4 2 1 4 2 1 2 1 4

done..... As sure as flocks go home at night Un - to the shepherd's arm!

Red. *

Red. 5 4 2 1 2 1 2 1

Slower (*freely*)

Per-haps you're going too!

mf

f

*a tempo**mf* [2]

..... Who knows?

If

sub. f *impetuous* *f-mp*

you should get there first Save just a lit-tle place for me, Close

sim. *ff sf*

..... to the two

I

lost

mf *f sf* *mp* *mf sf* *p*

mp

The smallest "robe" will fit me.... and

mp *p*

Red. * *Red.* * *senza Red.*

just a bit of "crown" for you know we do not mind our dress when we

Red.

..... are go-ing home.

Red. * *Red.* *

f freely

Going to

sub. ff non legato *f*

Red. *

*slowing up**Broadly - recitative style*

Hea-ven, Go-ing to Hea-ven! I'm glad I don't be-lieve it.... For

it would stop my breath And I'd like to look a lit-tle more at

such a cu-ri-ous earth.....

Slower, freely (♩. = 80)

I am glad they did be-lieve it.....

Whom I have nev - er found

mp

p

Since the migh - ty au - tumn af - ter -

(*poco accel.* - - - - *rit.* - -)

mf

- noon, I left them in the

(*with subdued emphasis*)

p

mp

rit.

poco sf

ground.

as at first (♩ = 116)

poco sf

mf (sf)

pp

sust. Ped.

12. The Chariot

Music by
AARON COPLAND

With quiet grace ($\text{♩} = 72-76$)

VOICE

PIANO

mp

mf

mp

Because I would not stop for Death,.....

p

mp

mf

..... He kind-ly stopped for me. The carriage

mp

held but just our - selves and Im - mor - tal - i - ty We

mf

p *mf*

slow - ly drove He knew no haste and I had put a - way...

mf

..... My la - bour and my lei - sure too For his ci - vil - i - ty

poco f *mp*

poco f *mp*

As at first (♩ = 76)

p *mp*

We passed the school where children

p *mp* *mp*

trifle faster (♩ = 88)

played, Their les-sons scarcely done We passed the fields of

mf

gaz - ing grain We passed the

f *ff*

cresc. *f* *ff*

Tempo I (♩ = 76)

set - ting sun, We paused be -

poco sf *p* *mp calm*

sostenuto, calm

poco sf *mp* *p*

sust. Ped.

- fore a house that seemed a swell - ing of the ground The

mf

poco sf *mp*

sust. Ped.

roof was scarce - ly vis-i-ble... the cor-nice but a mound,

mf

sust. Ped.

a trifle broader (♩ = 68)

mf

..... Since then 'tis cen-tu-ries but each feels

p *mf* *(sf)* *(sf)*

Ped. * *Ped.* *

short-er than the day, I first sur - mised The hors-es' heads were

(sf)

(♩ = 72) *poco rit.*

toward e-ter - ni - ty.....

p *p* *mp*

#8