



September, Just Septembers

9 songs to words of Emily Dickinson

Peter Seabourne

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- I. They dropped like Flakes -
They dropped like Stars -
Like Petals from a Rose -
When suddenly across the June
A wind with fingers goes -

They perished in the Seamless Grass -
No eye could find the place -
But God can summon every face
On his Repealless List.
- II. I showed her Heights she never saw -
"Wouldst Climb," I Said?
She said - "Not so" -
"With me." I said - "With me?"
I showed her Secrets - Morning's Nest-
The Rope the Nights were pul across -
And now - "Wouldst have me for a Guest?"
She could not find her Yes-
And then, I brake my life - And Lo,
A Light, for her, did solemn glow,
The larger, as her face withdrew -
And *could* she, further, "No"?
- III. Wild Nights - Wild Nights!
Were I with thee
Wild Nights - should be
Our luxury!

Futile - the Winds -
To a Heart in port,
Done with the Compass,
Done with the Chart!

Rowing in Eden -
Ah, the Sea!
Might I but moor - Tonight
In Thee!
- IV. Midsummer, was it when They died -
A full, and perfect time -
The Summer closed upon itself
in Consumated Bloom -

The Corn, her furthest kernel filled
Before the coming Flail -
When These - leaned into Perfectness
Through Haze of Burial -
- V. Nobody knows this little Rose -
It might a pilgrim be
Did I not take it from the ways
And lift it up to thee.
Only a Bee will miss it-
Only a Butterfly,
Hastening from far journey -
On its breast to lie -
Only a Bird will wonder -
Only a breeze will sigh -
Ah Little Rose - how easy
For such as thee to die!
- VI. She bore it till the simple veins
Traced azure on her hand -
Till pleading, round her quiet eyes
The purple Crayons stand.

Till Daffodils had come and gone
I cannot tell the sum,
And then she ceased to bear it -
And with the Saints sat down.

No more her patient figure
At twilight soft to meet -
No more her timid bonnet
Upon the village street -

But Crowns, instead, and Courtiers -
And in the midst so fair,
Whose but her shy - immortal face
Of whom we're whispering here?
- VII. Whether my bark went down at sea -
Whether she met with gales -
Whether to isles enchanted
She bent her decile sails -

By what mystic mooring
She is held today -
This is the errand of the eye
Out upon the Bay.
- VIII. The Sky is low - the Clouds are mean.
A Travelling Flake of Snow
Across a Barn or through a Rut
De-bates if it will go -

A Narrow Wind complains all Day
How someone treated him
Nature, like Us is sometimes caught
Without her Diadem.
- IX. There's a certain slant of light,
Winter Afternoons -
That oppresses, like the Heft
Of Cathedral Tunes -

When it comes, the Landscape listens -
Shadows - hold their breath -
When it goes, 'tis like the Distance
On the look of Death.
- Composer's note re IX: I originally composed parts of this cycle in the 1980s. The copy of "Winter Afternoons" I had found was, unknown to me, truncated, two verses being omitted. I only afterwards discovered my error. However, the song seemed complete and so when the whole cycle was completely re-composed, and expanded the anomaly was allowed to remain. My apologies, Emily.....
- Emily Dickinson's original punctuation (sometimes quirky) is retained.

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Emily Dickinson

I

Peter Seabourne
2002

Allegretto ♩=112

Musical score for the first system, measures 1-4. The music is in 2/4 time and features a melody in the right hand and accompaniment in the left hand. The dynamic marking is *mf*.

Musical score for the second system, measures 5-8. The music continues with the same melodic and accompanimental lines. The dynamic marking is *mf*.

Musical score for the third system, measures 9-12. The music includes lyrics and a triplet. The dynamic marking is *mf* for the first part and *sub. p* for the triplet. The lyrics are: "They dropped like Flakes- They dropped like Stars-".

15

Like Pe - - tals from a

19 *sub. mp*

Rose- When sud- den-ly a - cross the June A wind with

24

fin - gers goes-

27

3 3 3

8va

pp

3

32 *p* *mp*

They pe - rished in the Seam- less Grass- No eye

mp

36 *mf*

— could find the place- But God can sum mon e very face On

mf

42

his Re - peal - less List.

pp *mp* non rit.

II

Still $\text{♩} = 72$ *p*

mp

I showed her Heights she ne-ver saw— "Would'st Climb?" I Said—

5 *p*

mp

She said—"Not So" "With me—" I said—"With

10 *mf*

mf

me?" I showed her se - crets— Mor ning's Nest—

14

The Rope the Nights_were put a - cross- And

16

ff

now- "Would'st have me for_ a Guest?"

ff

sub. mp

18 *sub. mp* *cresc. mollo* *ff*

She could not find her Yes— And then I brake my life—

21 *sub. p* *rubato (not too rigid)* *mf*

And Lo, A Light for her, did so-lemn glow, The

24 *sub. p ten.*

lar - ger, as her face with drew And

27

could_ she_____ fur- ther,_____ "No"?

sub. p

Detailed description: This musical score consists of a vocal line and a piano accompaniment. The vocal line is written in a treble clef with a 4/4 time signature. It begins with a melodic phrase: a quarter note G4, a quarter note A4, a quarter note B4, and a quarter note C5, all beamed together. This is followed by a triplet of eighth notes: G4, A4, and B4. The tempo then changes to 3/4 time, indicated by a double bar line with a 3/4 time signature below it. The vocal line continues with a dotted quarter note C5, a dotted quarter note B4, and a dotted quarter note A4. The piano accompaniment is written in a grand staff (treble and bass clefs) with a 4/4 time signature. It features a 'sub. p' (subito piano) dynamic marking. The piano part consists of sustained chords and single notes, with a triplet of eighth notes in the bass line corresponding to the vocal triplet. The score concludes with a double bar line.

III

Con fuoco ♩=100

fff

Wild Nights- Wild

5

Nights! Were I with thee Wild

8

Nights- should be our lu - xu - ry.

12 *f*

Fu - tile- the Winds- to a

16 *fff*

Heart in port, Done with the Com - pass,

19

Done with the Chart.

21 *sub. f*

Ro - wing in E - den- Ah, _____

sub. f *ff sub. f*

Ped. Ped. Ped.

24

the Sea! Might I but

ff sub. f

Ped.

27

moor to - night in Thee.

(8) *(secco)*

Ped.

IV

Largo ♩=52

p 3

Mid-sum- mer,

p

3 3 3 3 5

3 3 5

6

sub. pp 3 *p*

— was it — when They died — A full, and

3 3 3 3 3

10

mp ♩ = 44 3

per - fect time- The Sum - mer —

3 3 3 3 3

simile 3 3 3 3

Ped.

13

— closed u - pon it - self in Con - su - ma - ted Bloom -

16

$\text{♩} = 52$

p

The Corn, her fur - thest ker - nel filled

20

Be - fore the co - ming of the Flail - When these -

23 *mf* ♩ = 44 17

leaned in - to per - - - - - fect - ness. Through

mf

ped.

26

Haze of Bu - ri - al.

V

Insistent, listless $\text{♩} = 72$

mf *sub. p* *mf*

5

mf

No-bo-dy knows this

sub. p *mf*

9

lit - tle Rose - It might a pil - grim

L.H.

12

be Did I not take it from the ways And lift it up

15

to thee. On - ly a Bee will miss it-

18

On - ly a But - ter - fly, Has te - ning from far jour ney On its breast to lie-

21 *mf*

On - ly a Bird will won - der, On - ly a breeze will sigh -

24 *f* *sub. mp*

Ah Lit - tle Rose how ea - sy for

27 *p* *non rit.*

such as thee to die!

Semplice $\text{♩} = 44$

p
She bore it till the

mf *p*

Red.

pp *p*

sim - ple veins Traced a - zure on her hand Till plea - ding, round her

pp *p*

Red.

mp

qui - et eyes The pur - ple Cra - yons stand. Till Daf fo - dils

pp *mp*

Red.

16

had come—and gone— I can-not tell—the sum,— And then she ceased

mf *pp*

mf *ppp*

una corda

Ped.

21

— to bear it— And with the Saints— sat— down—

tre corde *p* *mp*

26

No more her pa-tient fi-gure At twi-light soft to meet No more her li-mid

mp *p* *cresc.*

p *cresc.*

30 *f* *dim.*

bon net U-pon the vil-lage street- But Crowns, in-stead, and Cour-tiers

Ped.

35 *p* *pp*

And in the midst so fair, Whose but her shy im-mor-tal face Of

una corda

ppp

39

whom we're whis-pering here?

tre corde

Ped.

VII

Allegretto ♩ = 66

mf *p*

This block shows the piano introduction for section VII. It consists of two staves: a treble clef staff and a bass clef staff. The music is in 6/8 time, with a tempo marking of *Allegretto* and a metronome marking of ♩ = 66. The key signature has one sharp (F#). The introduction features a melodic line in the treble staff with a *mf* dynamic and a bass line with a *p* dynamic. The piece concludes with a final chord in 6/8 time.

5

mf 3

Whe-ther my bark went down at sea

pp *mf*

This block contains the first line of the vocal melody and piano accompaniment. The vocal line starts at measure 5 and includes a triplet of eighth notes. The piano accompaniment features a treble staff with an *8va* marking and a bass staff. Dynamics include *mf* and *pp*. The time signature changes from 6/8 to 3/4.

9

mf 3 *sub. mp* *mf* 3

Whe ther she met with gales- Whe ther to isles en -

f *mf*

This block contains the second line of the vocal melody and piano accompaniment. The vocal line starts at measure 9 and includes two triplet markings. The piano accompaniment features a treble staff with an *8va* marking and a bass staff. Dynamics include *mf*, *sub. mp*, *f*, and *mf*. The time signature changes from 3/4 to 5/8.

12

chan - ted She bent her do - cile sails—

15

mf *p*

19

p legato By what mys - tic moo - ring She—

mf *pp (legato)* *mp*

24

is held _____ to day _____ This is the er - rand

p *pp* *p* *mp* *p* *p*

28

of the eye Out _____ u - pon the Bay.

mp *mf* *mp* *pp*

8^{va}

31

15^{ma} non ril.

p *pp* *ppp*

VIII

Andante con moto ♩=80

5 *mp* 3 *p* *mp*

The Sky is low- the Clouds are mean. A

9 3 3 3

Tra - vel - ling Flake of Snow A cross a Barn or though a

13 = *mp*

Rut De - bates if it will go A

18

Nar - row Wind com-plains all Day How some - one

21

Irea - ted Him Na - ture, like Us, is

p

25

some-times caught without her Di-a-dem.

pp

IX

Lontano ♩=44
una corda (like imaginary harmonics)

pp < *ppp* *ppp* *pp* <

8vb Ped. 8vb

6

pppp *ppp* *pppp*

(8)

10 *pp* 3 5 3

There's a cer-tain slant of light, Win-ter Af-ter- noons— That op-

13

p

pres - ses, like the Heft Of Ca - the - dral Tunes

p

tre corde

una corda

ppp

pp Ped.

17

mp

When it comes

poco

p

21

p

the Land - scape lis - tens Sha dows hold their breath

tre corde

pp

pp

8vb Ped.

24 *pp*

When it goes, 'tis like the dis - tance on the look of

(8).....

26

Death.

pp tre corde al fine

pp una corda al fine LH

pp < ppp

*

8vb

* rehold without resounding

