

From A Window

Three Emily Dickinson Songs

1. I'll Tell You How the Sun Rose
2. A Poor Torn Heart
3. A Little Boat Adrift!

Joseph Eidson
(2009)

Duration:

Mvt. 1 – approximately 1 minute, 40 seconds

Mvt. 2 – approximately 2 minutes

Mvt. 3 – 1 minute, 15 seconds

Total – approximately 4 minutes, 55 seconds

- Score (SSA) -

Program Note

Emily Dickinson (1830-1886) gained a reputation in the latter part of the twentieth century as one of America's greatest poets, although her work was originally thought to be flawed and unfit for publication by her peers and family. Her poetry is full of vivid – and often morbid – images of life, nature, time, and death. These images are enhanced through her reclusive nature and the ability to observe the world from her small room above the family home in Amherst, Massachusetts.

The music is arranged in three movements that portray a single day in the life of our reclusive author. Upon waking, she sees a sunrise and observes children at play until they are ushered indoors by a schoolmaster. Movement two finds her reminiscing about a lost love; the chantlike music is arranged around a central pitch that frequently returns to represent this love. The work ends with a tumultuous sea shanty about a boat adrift – perhaps our author – who feels lost in a stormy sea of emotions. Rather than give in to grief she resolves to end the day in an exultant, triumphal fashion.

Performance Notes

Movement 1 – Dickinson frequently uses words that are unfamiliar to the vernacular of poetry in her time, or simply makes up words to fit her particular topic. Below are a few words that may be unfamiliar in their meaning or pronunciation:

Bobolink [bób-uh-lingk] – North American songbird

Stile [stáhyl] – Arrangement of steps to climb over a fence

Dominie [dóm-uh-nee, dóh-muh-nee] – Clergyman or schoolmaster

Movement 2 – All accidentals should carry through the bar in measures 1-4. Cautionary accidentals are included several times for clarity.

Movement 3 – The conducting pattern should not change from measure 39 going into measure 40. The final stanza should be very broad and expressive.

Texts

I.

I'll tell you how the sun rose, –
A ribbon at a time.
The steeples swam in amethyst,
The news like squirrels ran.

The hills untied their bonnets,
The bobolinks begun.
Then I said softly to myself,
"That must have been the sun!"

But how he set, I know not.
There seemed a purple stile
Which little yellow boys and girls
Were climbing all the while

'Till when they reached the other side,
A dominie in gray
Put gently up the evening bars,
And led the flock away.

II.

A poor torn heart, a tattered heart,
That sat it down to rest,
Nor noticed that the ebbing day
Flowed silver to the west,
Nor noticed night did soft descend
Nor constellation burn,
Intent upon the vision
Of latitudes unknown.

The angels, happening that way,
This dusty heart espied;
Tenderly took it up from toil
And carried it to God.
There, – sandals for the barefoot;
There, – gathered from the gales,
Do the blue havens by the hand
Lead the wandering sails.

III.

Adrift! A little boat adrift!
And night is coming down!
Will no one guide a little boat
Unto the nearest town?

So sailors say, on yesterday
Just as the dusk was brown,
One little boat gave up its strife,
And gurgled down and down.

But angels say, on yesterday,
Just as the dawn was red,
One little boat o'erspent with gales
Retrimmed its masts, redecked its
sails
Exultant, onward sped!

for my friend Ryan Fox - au demain!

From A Window

Emily Dickinson (1830-1886)

Joseph Eidson (ASCAP)
(2009)

1. I'll Tell You How the Sun Rose

Tranquil (♩ = 72)

optimistic
p *f* *div.* *mp* **stringendo**

Soprano 1
I'll tell you how the sun rose, a rib - bon

optimistic
p *f* **stringendo** *mp*

Soprano 2
I'll tell you how the sun rose, a

optimistic
p *f* **stringendo** *mp*

Alto
I'll tell you how the sun rose, a rib -

For Rehearsal Only

7

5 **rallentando** **a tempo** **Energetic** (♩ = 66)

S1. *mf*
at a time. The stee - ples swam in am - e - thyst, the

rallentando **a tempo** *mf*

S2. rib - bon at a time. The stee - ples swam in am - e - thyst, the

rallentando **a tempo** *mf*

A. - bon at a time. The stee - ples swam in am - e - thyst, the

11

9

S1. news like squirrels ran. *mp* *mf*

S2. news like squirrels ran. The hills un-tied their bonnets, the *mp* *mf*

A. news like squirrels ran. The hills un-tied their bonnets, the *mp* *mf*

13

S1. The hills un-tied their bonnets. *mp* *mf* *mp*

S2. bob-o links begun. Then I said softly to myself, "That *p* *reflective*

A. bob-o links begun. Then I said softly; *p* *reflective*

21

18

S1. "That must have been, that must have been the sun, the sun, the *mp* *mf* *f joyful div.*

S2. must have been, must have been, must have been the sun, the sun, the *mp* *mf* *f joyful*

A. "That must have been, that must have been, that must have been the sun, the sun, the *p* *mp* *mf* *f joyful*

25

22

S1. sun, the sun, the sun, the sun!" But how he set I

S2. sun, the sun!" But how he set I

A. sun, the sun!" I'll tell you... I'll tell you, but how he set I

mp *mf* *mp*

26

S1. know not, there seemed a pur - ple stile.

S2. know not. There seemed a pur - ple stile which lit - tle yel - low

A. know not. There seemed a pur - ple, which lit - tle yel - low

mf *mf* *mf*

30

S1. Yel - low boys and girls were climb - ing, climb - ing all the while.

S2. boys and girls were climb - ing, climb - ing, climb - ing all the while.

A. boys and girls were climb - ing, climb - ing, climb - ing all the while. I'll tell you

div. *f* *mf* *f* *mf* *mp*

35

34

mp *somber*

S1. 'Till when they reached the oth - er side, a dom - i - nie in

mp *somber*

S2. 'Till when they reached the oth - er side, a dom - i - nie in

mp *somber*

A. how the sun... A dom - i - nie in

38

mf

S1. gray. Put gen - tly up the eve - ning bars and led the flock a -

mf

S2. gray. Put gen - tly up the eve - ning bars and led the flock a -

mf , *p*

A. gray. Put gen - tly up the eve - ning bars and led the flock. I'll

42

p *rallentando al fine*

S1. way. I'll tell you how the sun rose... *mp* *div.*

p *rallentando al fine*

S2. way. I'll tell you how the sun rose... *mp* *div.* Rose...

p *rallentando al fine*

A. tell you how the sun rose... *mp* *div.* Rose...

2. A Poor Torn Heart

Slowly, as plainchant (♩ = ca. 60)

p plainly

S1. A poor torn heart, a tat - - - tered heart that sat it down_____ to rest.

S2.

A.

2

S1.

S2.

A. *p* plainly

Nor no-ticed that the ebb - - - ing day flowed sil - ver to_____ the__ west.

3

S1. *mf*

S2. *mf*

A. *mf*

Nor no-ticed night did soft-ly de - - - scend, nor con-stel - la-tion burn.____

Nor no-ticed night did soft-ly de - - - scend, nor con-stel - la-tion burn.____

Nor no-ticed night did soft-ly de - - - scend, nor con-stel - la-tion burn.____

4

mp *mf* *mp*

S1. In - tent up - on the vi - sion of lat - i - tudes un - known.

S2. In - tent up - on the vi - sion of lat - i - tudes un - known.

A. In - tent up - on the vi - sion of lat - i - tudes un - known.

5

Più mosso, espressivo (♩ = 72)

mp *sweetly* *mf*

S1. The an - gels, hap - pen - ing that way, this dust - y heart es - pied.

mp *sweetly* *mf* *div.*

S2. The an - gels, hap - pen - ing that way, this dust - y heart es - pied.

mp *sweetly* *mf*

A. The an - gels, hap - pen - ing that way, this dust - y heart es - pied.

8

mp *p* *div.*

S1. Ten - der - ly took it up from toil and car - ried it to God.

mp *p*

S2. Ten - der - ly took it up from toil and car - ried it to God.

mp *p*

A. Ten - der - ly took it up from toil and car - ried it to God.

12

mp tenderly San-dals for the bare-foot. *mf* Gath-ered from the gales do the *mp*

p There; *mp* There; *mf* the gales,

p There; *mp* There; *mf* the gales,

17

blue ha - vens by the hand lead the wan - - d'ring sails. *mf*

mp Blue ha - vens by the hand lead the wan - d'ring sails. *mf*

mp Blue ha - vens by the hand lead the wan - d'ring sails. *mf*

20

Tempo I, as plainchant (♩ = ca. 60)

mp A poor torn heart, a tat - - - - - tered heart.

p (stagger breathing) Ah

p (stagger breathing) Ah

3. A Little Boat Adrift!

Tempestuous (♩. = 108)

mf driving and brash

S1. A - drift! A - drift! A - drift! A - drift! A -

mf driving and brash

S2. A - drift! A - drift! A - drift! A -

f driving and brash

A. A - drift! A - drift! A lit - tle boat a - drift!

The first system of the musical score is in 6/8 time. It features three vocal parts (S1, S2, A) and a piano accompaniment. The vocal parts are marked with dynamics *mf* and *f*, and the instruction "driving and brash". The lyrics are "A - drift! A - drift! A - drift! A - drift! A -" for S1 and S2, and "A - drift! A - drift! A lit - tle boat a - drift!" for the Alto part. The piano accompaniment consists of chords in the right hand and a rhythmic pattern in the left hand.

5

S1. drift! A - drift! A - drift! A - drift! Will

S2. drift! A - drift! A - drift! Will

A. A - drift! A - drift! And night is com - ing down! Will

The second system continues the vocal parts. S1 and S2 end with "Will". The Alto part has the lyrics "A - drift! A - drift! And night is com - ing down! Will". The piano accompaniment continues with the same rhythmic pattern.

9

S1. no - one guide a lit - tle boat un - to the near - est town? A -

S2. no - one guide a lit - tle boat un - to the near - est town? A - drift!

A. no - one guide a lit - tle boat un - to the near - est town?

The third system begins with a measure rest of 9 measures. The vocal parts are marked with dynamics *p*. S1 and S2 end with "A -" and "A - drift!" respectively. The Alto part has the lyrics "no - one guide a lit - tle boat un - to the near - est town?". The piano accompaniment continues with the same rhythmic pattern.

15

13

S1. drift! A lit - tle boat a-drift! drift, A- drift! drift, A- drift!

S2. A - drift! A lit - tle boat a - drift! A- drift! A drift!

A. A - drift! A - drift! A

17

S1. A lit - tle boat a - drift! Will

S2. A lit - tle boat a - drift! Will no - one guide

A. lit - tle boat a - drift! Will no - one guide a

23

20

S1. no-one guide a lit - tle boat un - to the near - est town? *with a lilt mp*

S2. a lit - tle boat un - to the near - est town? So

A. lit - tle boat un - to the near - est town? *p* (hum - m)

24

S1.

S2. sail - ors say on yes - ter - day just as the dusk was brown, one

A. Ah

28

S1. So *with a lilt*
mp

S2. lit - tle boat gave up its strife and gur - gled down and down.

A. (hum - m) *mp*
Down and down and down.

32

S1. sail - ors say on yes - ter - day just as the dusk was brown, one *mp*

S2. So sail - ors say on yes - ter - day just as the dusk was brown, *mp with a lilt*

A. So sail - ors say on yes - ter - day just as

36

sweetly
mf

S1. lit - tle boat gave up its strife and gur - gled down and down. But

S2. one lit - tle boat gave up its strife and gur - gled down and down.

A. the dusk was brown;— went down— and down— and

40

L'istesso tempo (♩. = ♩ = 108)

S1. an - gels say on yes - ter - day just as the

mf *sweetly*

S2. an - gels say on yes - ter - day just as the

mf *sweetly*

A. an - gels say on yes - ter - day just as the

loco

45

S1. dawn was red, one lit - tle boat o'er - spent with

S2. dawn— was red, one lit - tle boat o'er - spent with

A. dawn was red, one lit - tle boat o'er - spent with

50

S1. *f* gales, re - trimmed its masts, re - decked its sails. Ex - *mf*

S2. *f* gales, re - trimmed, re - decked.

A. *f* gales, re - trimmed, re - decked.

55

S1. *ff* ult - ant on - ward, on - ward, on - ward sped!

S2. *mf* Ex - ult - ant on - ward, on - ward sped! *ff*

A. *mf* Ex - ult - ant on - ward sped! *ff*