

Michael Finnissy
Lyrics and Limericks (1982-84)
For Voice and Piano

Text by Edward Lear

1. **E**. The Enthusiastic Elephant,
who ferried himself across the water with the
Kitchen Poker and a New pair of Ear-rings.
2. There was an old man of **D**unrose;
A parrot seized hold of his nose.
When he grew melancholy, They said, 'His name's Polly,'
Which soothed that old man of Dunrose.
3. **W**. The Worrying Whizzing Wasp,
who stood on a Table, and played sweetly on a
Flute with a Morning Cap.
4. There was an old Man of th' **A**bruzzi,
So blind that he couldn't his foot see;
When they said, 'That's your toe,' he replied, 'Is it so?'
That doubtful old Man of th' Abruzzi.
5. **R**. The Rural Runcible Raven,
who wore a White Wig and flew away
with the Carpet Broom.
6. There was an old person of **D**over,
Who rushed through a field of blue Clover;
But some very large bees, stung his nose and his knees,
So he very soon went back to Dover.
7. **L**. The Lively Learned Lobster,
who mended his own Clothes with
a Needle and Thread.
8. There was an Old Person of **E**well,
Who chiefly subsisted on gruel;
But to make it more nice, he inserted some mice,
Which refreshed that Old Person of Ewell.
9. **A**. The Absolutely Abstemious Ass, who resided
in a Barrel, and only lived on Soda Water and
Pickled Cucumbers.
10. There was a Young Lady of **R**ussia,
Who screamed so that no one could hush her;
Her screams were extreme, no one heard such a scream,
As was screamed by that Lady of Russia.

To Jeannie Marsh

1. With wild energy [$\text{♩} = 138$]

f
Eee. The En-thu-

-si- as- tic E- le-phant, who fer- ried him- self

a- cross the wa- ter

f $7:5 \text{ } \delta$ $6:5 \text{ } \delta$

with the Kit- chen po- ker

2

f subito

3

mf subito 3

and a

mf subito

$5:3 \text{ } \delta$ *pp* subito

New pair of Ear-rings.

pp subito

2. Slowly, gently, hazily [$\text{♩} = 96$] = 48]

There was an

pp

7:6h

3

9:7h

3

5:3h

pp

7:6h

Detailed description: This system contains the first two lines of the musical score. The vocal line (top staff) begins with a piano (pp) dynamic and features a triplet of eighth notes. The piano accompaniment (bottom two staves) includes a triplet of eighth notes and various chordal textures. The lyrics 'There was an' are positioned below the vocal staff.

Sec. + una corda.

old man of

6:5h

7:6h

7:6h

6:5h

7:5h

3

Preview File Only

Detailed description: This system contains the second two lines of the musical score. The vocal line continues with the lyrics 'old man of'. The piano accompaniment features a triplet of eighth notes and various chordal textures. A large blue watermark 'Preview File Only' is overlaid diagonally across the score.

Dun- -rose;

6:5h

7:5h

9:8h

5:3h

3

3

7:6p

Detailed description: This system contains the final two lines of the musical score. The vocal line concludes with the lyrics 'Dun- -rose;'. The piano accompaniment includes a triplet of eighth notes and various chordal textures. The lyrics are split across the two vocal staves.

5:3 ♩ 8:5 ♩ *pp* A parrot seized

10:7 ♩ 3 6:5 ♩ 10:9 ♩

ped. + una corda

6:5 ♩ 7:6 ♩ hold of his nose. When

6:5 ♩ 10:9 ♩ 5:3 ♩

7:5 ♩ 3 he grew me-lan- -cho-ly,

9:8 ♩ 5:3 ♩ 6:5 ♩ 10:9 ♩ 5:3 ♩

They said,

His name's Polly,

Which soothed that old man of

pp

ped. + una corda

Musical score for the phrase "Dun-rose." in 4/8 time. The score consists of three staves: a vocal line and two piano accompaniment staves. The vocal line features a melodic phrase with a slur and a 7:5 interval marking. The piano accompaniment includes a bass line with a 9:8 interval marking and a treble line with a 7:5 interval marking. The key signature has one sharp (F#).

3. Erratic tempo [♩ fluctuates between 96 and 108]

Musical score for the phrase "Double You. The" in 4/8 time. The score consists of two staves: a vocal line and a piano accompaniment line. The vocal line is marked *mp* and includes slurs with interval markings of 5:3, 5:4, and 3. The piano accompaniment is marked *mp*, *flautando*, *dolce* and includes slurs with interval markings of 5:4, 7:6, 7:6, and 7:5. The key signature has one sharp (F#).

Musical score for the phrase "Worrying Whizzing Wasp, who" in 4/8 time. The score consists of two staves: a vocal line and a piano accompaniment line. The vocal line includes slurs with interval markings of 3 and 6:5. The piano accompaniment includes slurs with interval markings of 5:3 and 7:6. The key signature has one sharp (F#).

stood on a Ta-ble, and played sweet-ly

(mp) on a Flute with a Morning Cap.

4. Molto Vivace [♩. = 112]

molto lessiccio e staccato

mf molto staccato

There was an Old Man of th'A- bruzzi, So

blind that he could-n't his foot see;

(spoken)* When they said, 'That's your toe,' he re-plied, 'Is it so?' That

*in coarse imitation of the way Italians might pronounce these words: 'Zat's yo'rr tô'; 'Eet eet sô?'; and with 'appropriate' gestures.

doubtful old Man of th'A-bruz-zi.

mf. *allarg.* --- *a tempo* *molto*

mf. *subito*

5:3 p 5:4 5:4 A 5:4 p

p *subito* *pp*

5:4 7:6 4/4 4/4

5. Very Slow and melancholy [$\text{♩} = 48-50$]

espressivo, molto rubato e tranquillo

Musical score for the first system, measures 1-4. The top staff is in treble clef with a 4/4 time signature. It features a melodic line with a 5:3 triplet in measure 3 and a *più f* dynamic marking. The bottom staff is in bass clef with a 4/4 time signature, showing a *pp* dynamic marking and a long, expressive slur spanning measures 3 and 4.

Musical score for the second system, measures 5-8. The top staff continues the melodic line with various triplet markings (6:5, 5:3, 7:5) and dynamic markings (*più p*, *più f*). The bottom staff shows a complex accompaniment with a long slur and a *pp* dynamic marking.

Musical score for the third system, measures 9-12. The top staff features a melodic line with triplet markings (7:6, 6:5) and dynamic markings (*più p*). The bottom staff shows a complex accompaniment with a *pp* dynamic marking and a long slur.

same tempo [♩ = 96-100]

mp $7:6 \Delta$ $6:5 \Delta$ $5:4 \Delta$

The Ru-ral Runcible Ra-ven, who wore a White Wig and flew a-way with

p sempre

$6:5 \Delta$

the Car-pet Broom.

p *più p* $5:4 \Delta$ $5:3 \Delta$ *più f* *più p* *più f* *più p* $11:7 \Delta$

Ar. (Ar) (Ar) (Ar) (Ar) (Ar) (Ar)

pp sempre

8:5h *piu f* *piu p* 6:5h *piu p*

(Ar) (Ar) (Ar) (Ar) (Ar)

5 8 5 8 4 4

same tempo [$\text{♩} = 96-100$] or slightly slower

p *pp* 10:7h

9:7h

Handwritten musical score for the first system. It consists of a treble clef staff and a bass clef staff. The time signature is 5/8. The treble staff contains a melodic line with several slurs. Above the first slur is the time signature 7:6, and above the second slur is 11:9. The bass staff contains a bass line with a 5/8 time signature.

Handwritten musical score for the second system. It consists of a treble clef staff and a bass clef staff. The time signature is 2/4. The treble staff contains a melodic line with a slur and a 'ral.' (rallentando) marking. Below the slur is a 'y' marking. The bass staff contains a bass line with a 2/4 time signature. The system ends with a double bar line and the number 16.

6. [♩ = 92 ♩ = 184]

Handwritten musical score for the third system. It consists of a treble clef staff and a bass clef staff. The time signature is 3/16. The treble staff contains a melodic line with lyrics: "There was an old per-son". The word "per-son" is split across two notes. The treble staff also includes a piano (*p*) marking. The bass staff contains a bass line with a piano (*p*) marking. Above the bass line, there are time signatures 7:6, 5:3, and 5:4. The system ends with a double bar line and the number 16.

of Do- ver, Who

rushed

through a field of blue Clo-

-ver; But some

p

This system contains a vocal line and piano accompaniment. The vocal line starts with a treble clef and a key signature of two flats. It includes lyrics: "-ver; But some". A dynamic marking of *p* (piano) is placed above the vocal line. The piano accompaniment is written for the right and left hands on grand staff notation.

ve- ry large bees,

ff

p

15:11 A

This system continues the musical score. The vocal line has lyrics: "ve- ry large bees,". It features a dynamic marking of *ff* (fortissimo) above the vocal line and *p* (piano) below the piano accompaniment. The piano accompaniment includes a triplet of eighth notes and a section marked "15:11 A".

stung his nose and his knees,

p

5:4 A

7:5 A

5:3 A

12:11 B

This system concludes the musical score. The vocal line has lyrics: "stung his nose and his knees,". It includes dynamic markings of *p* (piano) above the vocal line and *p* (piano) below the piano accompaniment. The piano accompaniment features several sections with time signatures: "5:4 A", "7:5 A", "5:3 A", and "12:11 B".

So he ve- ry soon went back

(D) (F) (B) (D#)

5 16

5 16

5 16

5:3 7:5 10:7 5:4 3 3

to Do- ver.

5:4 3 5:9 9:7 10:7

5 16 3 8 7 5 16

5:4 3

(in tempo)

4 8

4 8

4 8

7. [$\text{♩} = 144 - 152$]

E11. The

9:7h 3 6:5h

7:6h 3 3

6:5p

Live-ly

7:5h 3 8:5h

7:5h 5:3h 3 5:4h

6:5p

Lear- ned Lob- ster, who mend- ed his

6:5h 6:5h 3 5:3h 7:5h

3 7:5h

6:5p

own Clothes with a Nee-

6:5

-dle and Thread.

6:5

6:5

Handwritten musical notation for the first system. The top staff is a treble clef with a key signature of one sharp (F#). The bottom staff is a bass clef. The music consists of two systems of notation. The first system has a treble staff with a bracket labeled $7:4$ and a bass staff with a bracket labeled $6:5$. The second system has a treble staff with a bracket labeled $6:5$ and a bass staff with a bracket labeled $6:5$. There are various accidentals and dynamic markings throughout.

Handwritten musical notation for the second system. The top staff is a treble clef with a key signature of one sharp (F#). The bottom staff is a bass clef. The music consists of two systems of notation. The first system has a treble staff with a bracket labeled 3 and a bass staff with a bracket labeled $6:5$. The second system has a treble staff with a bracket labeled $9:8$ and a bass staff with a bracket labeled $6:5$. There are various accidentals and dynamic markings throughout.

Handwritten musical notation for the third system. The top staff is a treble clef with a key signature of one sharp (F#). The bottom staff is a bass clef. The music consists of two systems of notation. The first system has a treble staff with a bracket labeled $7:5$ and a bass staff with a bracket labeled $6:5$. The second system has a treble staff with a bracket labeled $5:4$ and a bass staff with a bracket labeled $6:5$. There are various accidentals and dynamic markings throughout.

Handwritten musical score for piano, featuring a treble and bass staff. The treble staff contains a melodic line with triplets and a 6:5 interval. The bass staff contains a bass line with a 6:5 interval. The piece is in 1/2 time.

8. With unsuitable gravity, pomposity, and exaggerated clarity of utterance

[$\text{♩} = 63$]

There was an Old Per-son of

resc.

Handwritten musical score for voice and piano. The voice line is in 3/2 time and contains the lyrics "There was an Old Per-son of". The piano accompaniment is in 3/2 time. A "resc." marking is present above the voice line.

* slide evenly from one pitch to the other, neither being emphasised

Ew-ell,

same tempo [$\text{♩} = 63$]

tremolando rapido e furioso

Seb.

Handwritten musical score for voice and piano. The voice line is in 3/2 time and contains the lyrics "Ew-ell,". The piano accompaniment is in 3/2 time and features a tremolo. A "Seb." marking is present below the piano staff.

mf

Who chief-ly sub-sist-

f senza dimin.

Sec. *

-ed on gru-el

f

f

Sec.

f senza dimin.

Sec. *

mf But to make it more nice, *f* (slight hesitation) *ff*

p subito he in- sert- ed *mf* some

mice, *p marcato*

Which re- fished that Old

mf f subito

Per- son of Ew- ell.

mf subito

9. [♩. = 63 approximately]

strepitoso ff (F#) Ay.*

5:30

* as in 'say'

The Ab- so- lute- ly Ab-

-ste- mi- ous Ass,

who re- si-

-ded in a Bar-rel,

light staccato, supported by the Pedal.

and on-ly lived on So-da Wa-ter and

Pick-led Cu-cumbers.

(Sed. *)

10. [♩ = 104]

pp throughout
staccato
(= 8^{va} bassa)
3 7:5[♯] 3 6:5[♯]

This system contains the first two staves of the piece. The upper staff is a treble clef with a 2/4 time signature. The lower staff is a bass clef with a 2/4 time signature. The music is marked 'pp throughout' and 'staccato'. The lower staff is labeled '(= 8^{va} bassa)'. The first measure has a triplet of eighth notes. The second measure has a 7:5[♯] interval. The third measure has a triplet of eighth notes. The fourth measure has a 6:5[♯] interval.

3 6:5[♯] 6:5[♯]

This system contains the next two staves. The upper staff is a treble clef. The lower staff is a bass clef. The music continues with a triplet of eighth notes in the first measure, followed by a 6:5[♯] interval in the second measure, and another 6:5[♯] interval in the third measure.

6:5[♯] 7:5[♯]
loco (pp)
loco

This system contains the final two staves. The upper staff is a treble clef. The lower staff is a bass clef. The music continues with a 6:5[♯] interval in the first measure, followed by a 7:5[♯] interval in the second measure. The second measure is marked 'loco (pp)'. The lower staff has a 'loco' marking under the second measure.

[♩ = 114 - 116] Independently of the Piano
pp sotto voce (rather mysterious)

There was

A single vocal staff in treble clef with a key signature of two sharps (F# and C#). The notes are: G4 (quarter), A4 (quarter), B4 (quarter), C5 (quarter), B4 (quarter), A4 (quarter), G4 (quarter), F#4 (quarter), E4 (quarter), D4 (half).

[♩ = 104]

(pp) *sempre staccato*

Piano accompaniment for the first system. The right hand features complex rhythmic patterns with slurs and accents. The left hand has a steady bass line. A large blue watermark 'Preview File Only' is overlaid diagonally across the page.

a Young La-

A single vocal staff in treble clef. The notes are: G4 (quarter), A4 (quarter), B4 (quarter), C5 (quarter), B4 (quarter), A4 (quarter), G4 (quarter), F#4 (quarter), E4 (quarter), D4 (half).

Piano accompaniment for the second system. The right hand continues with complex rhythmic patterns. The left hand has a steady bass line.

-dy

A single vocal staff in treble clef. The notes are: G4 (quarter), A4 (quarter), B4 (quarter), C5 (quarter), B4 (quarter), A4 (quarter), G4 (quarter), F#4 (quarter), E4 (quarter), D4 (half).

Piano accompaniment for the third system. The right hand continues with complex rhythmic patterns. The left hand has a steady bass line.

3

of Rus- sia,

5:4 7:5 7:6

3 *pp* *ff* subito *pp* sotto voce 3

Who screamed so ... that no

3 5:3 6:5 7:5

(pp)

one could hush her;

Piano accompaniment for the first system, featuring complex rhythmic patterns with triplets and 7:5 and 6:5 time signatures.

Vocal line for the first system, ending with a triplet.

Piano accompaniment for the second system, continuing the complex rhythmic patterns.

pp *fff subito* Her screams *pp sotto voce* were ex-treme,

Piano accompaniment for the third system, including dynamic markings like (pp) and 5:4, 7:5, 5:4 time signatures.

(pp) 6:5 \uparrow

no one heard such a

5:3 6:5 \uparrow

ff subito

scream,

pp sotto voce

As was

6:5 \uparrow 6:5 \uparrow

(pp)

ff subito

screamed

sotto voce *pp*

by that La-

6:5 \uparrow 5:4 \uparrow 6:5 \uparrow

(pp)

-dy of

(=8^{va} alta) (pp staccato)

(=8^{va} alta)

Rus- sia.

port.

10:7 A

7:5 B

hold until the conclusion of the Piano-part

(pp)

Fine