Edward Nesbit

Pursuing the Horizon

Nine Settings of Stephen Crane for Soprano and Piano

PURSUING THE HORIZON

EDWARD NESBIT

© 2013 by Edward Nesbit

CONTENTS

I - p. 1 II - p. 2 III - p. 4 IV - p. 6 V - p. 8 VI - p. 10 VII - p. 12 VIII - p. 13 IX - p. 17

Duration c. 9'

PROGRAMME NOTE

Pursuing the Horizon is a cycle of nine short settings of the nineteenth-century American poet Stephen Crane. The songs are all brief - sometimes extremely brief - in duration, and attempt to capture the diverse moods of the poems as directly as possible.

I

Many red devils ran from my heart And out upon the page, They were so tiny The pen could mash them. And many struggled in the ink. It was strange To write in this red muck Of things from my heart.

Π

Three little birds in a row Sat musing. A man passed near that place. Then did the little birds nudge each other. They said, "He thinks he can sing." They threw back their heads to laugh, With quaint countenances They regarded him. They were very curious, Those three little birds in a row.

III

"Think as I think," said a man, "Or you are abominably wicked; "You are a toad." And after I had thought of it, I said, "I will, then, be a toad."

IV

If I should cast off this tattered coat, And go free into the mighty sky; If I should find nothing there But a vast blue, Echoless, ignorant, -What then? I saw a man pursuing the horizon; Round and round they sped. I was disturbed at this; I accosted the man. "It is futile," I said, "You can never" -"You lie," he cried, And ran on.

VI

I stood upon a high place, And saw, below, many devils Running, leaping, And carousing in sin. One looked up, grinning, And said, "Comrade! Brother!"

VII

There was set before me a mighty hill, And long days I climbed Through regions of snow. When I had before me the summit-view, It seemed that my labor Had been to see gardens Lying at impossible distances.

VIII

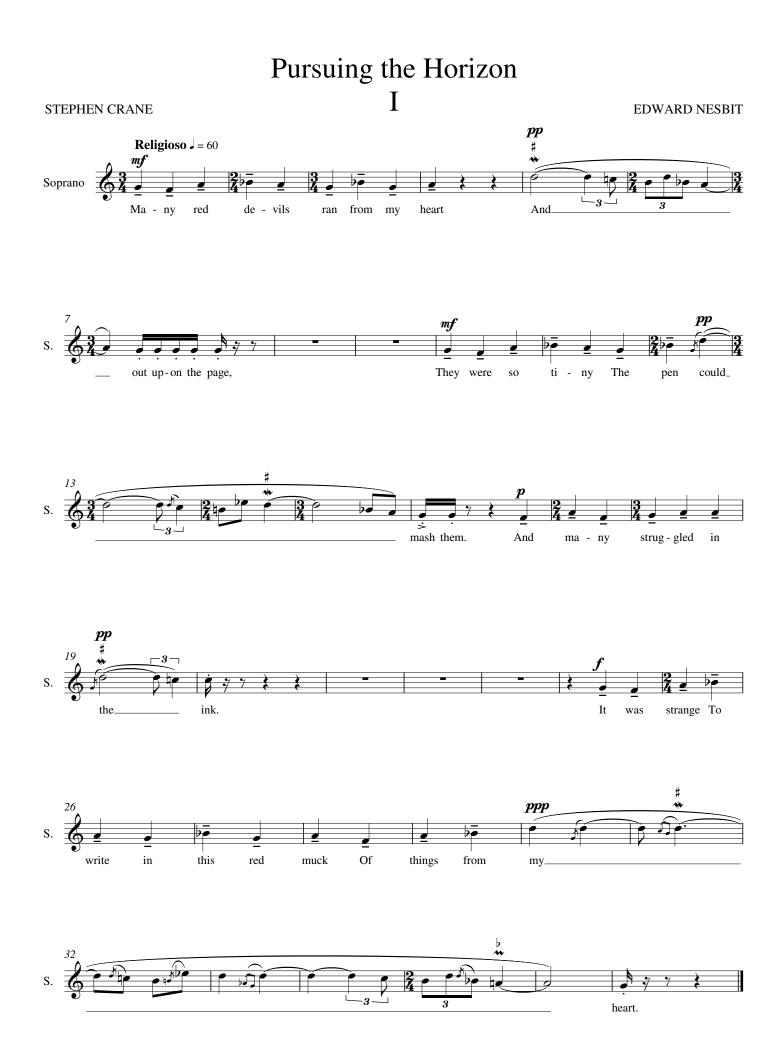
Friend, your white beard sweeps the ground, Why do you stand, expectant? Do you hope to see it In one of your withered days? With your old eyes Do you hope to see The triumphal march of Justice? Do not wait, friend Take your white beard And your old eyes To more tender lands.

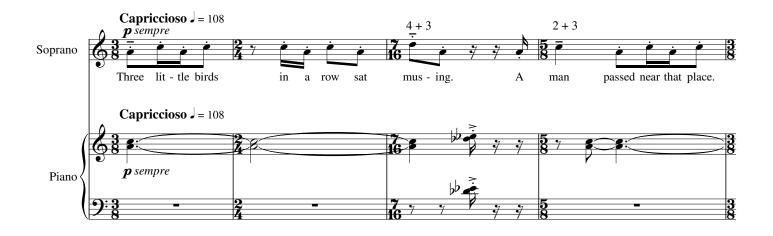
V

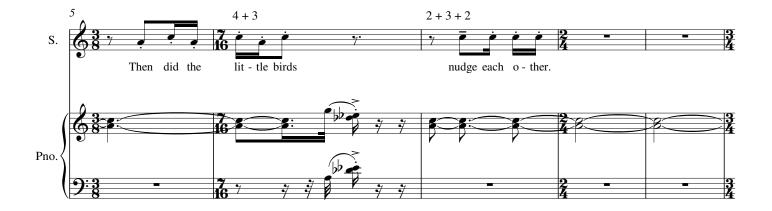
IX

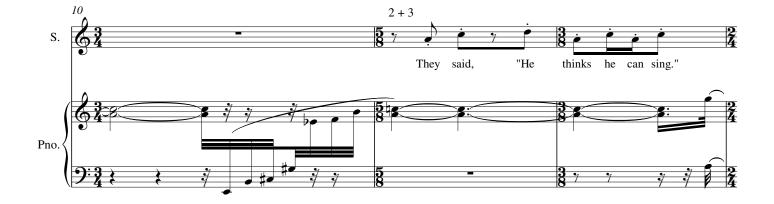
A spirit sped Through spaces of night; And as he sped, he called, "God! God!" He went through valleys Of black death-slime, Ever calling, "God! God!" Their echoes From crevice and cavern Mocked him: "God! God! God!" Fleetly into the plains of space He went, ever calling, "God! God!" Eventually, then, he screamed, Mad in denial, "Ah, there is no God!" A swift hand, A sword from the sky, Smote him, And he was dead.

Stephen Crane

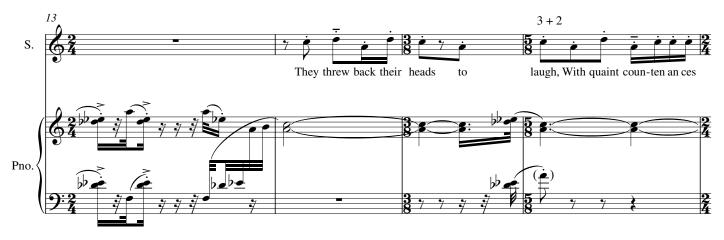


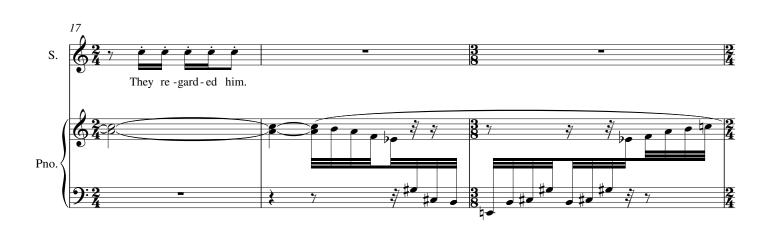


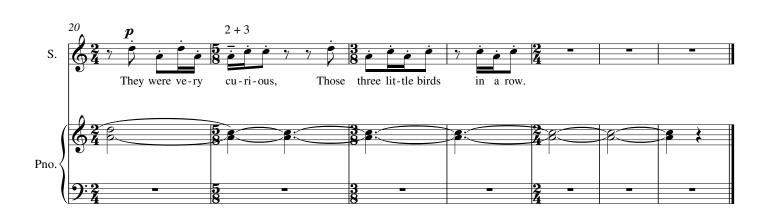




Π

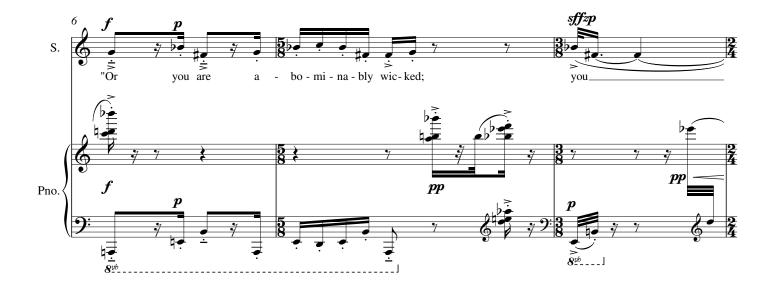


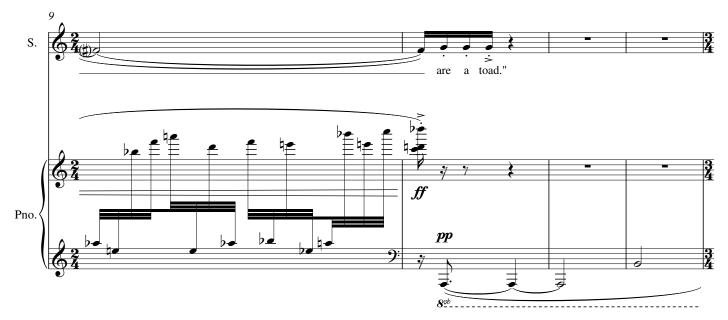


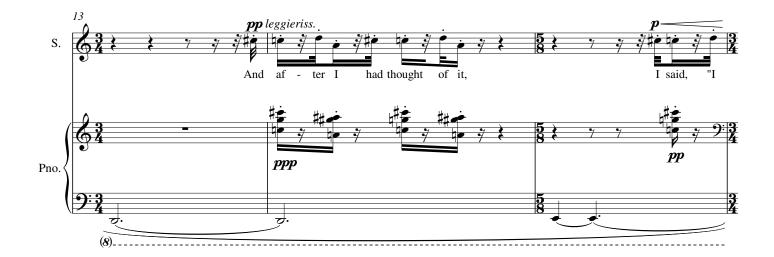


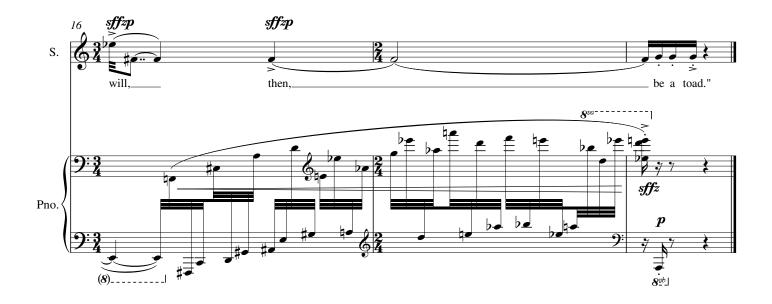
III



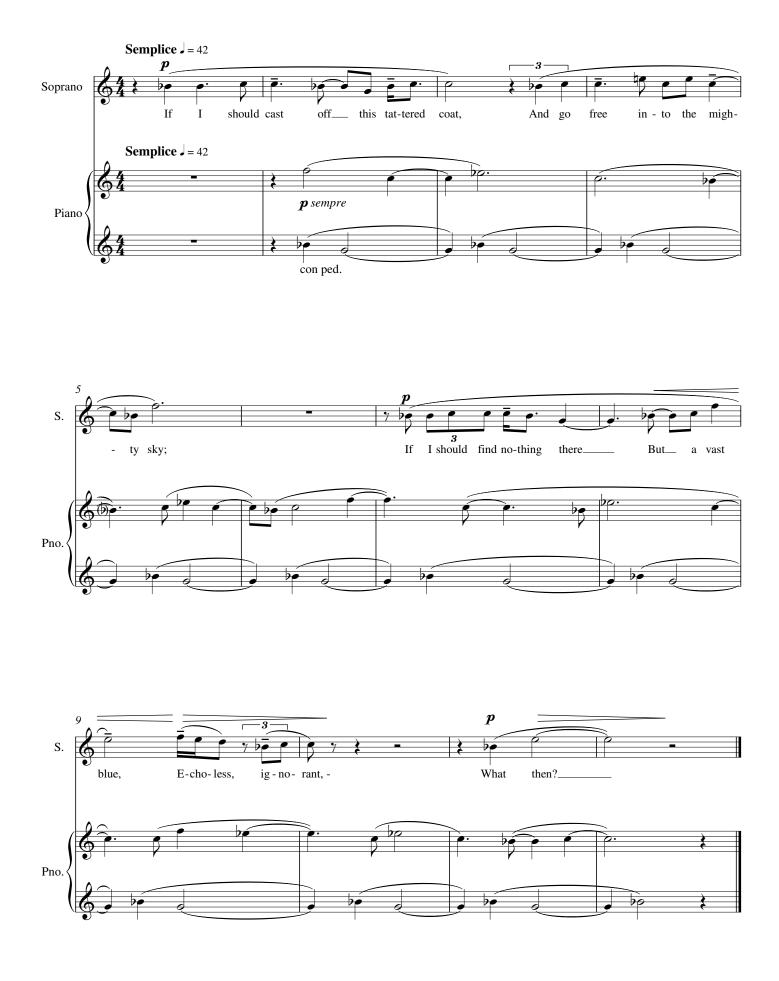


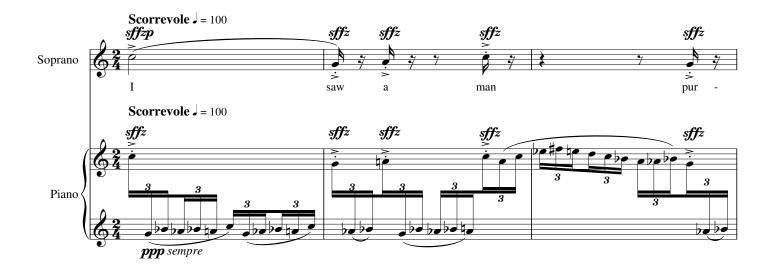




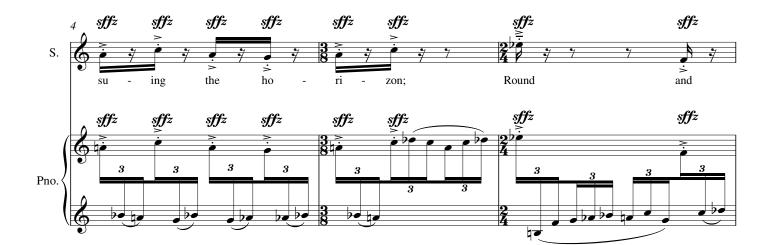


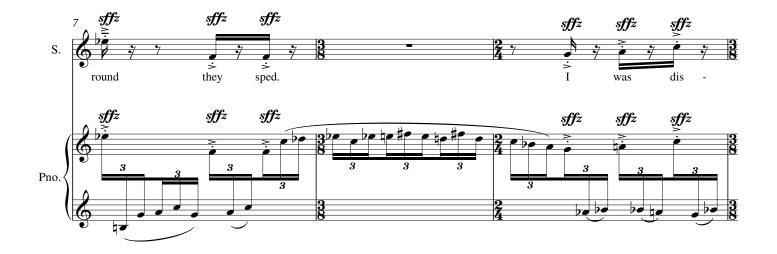


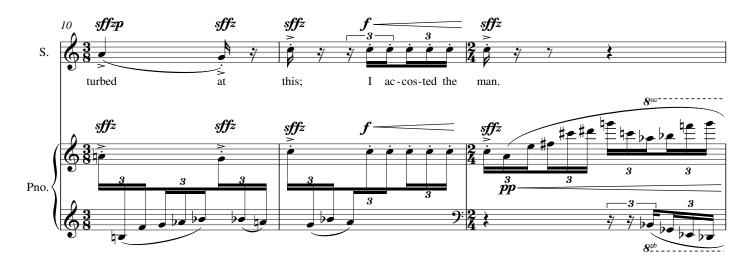


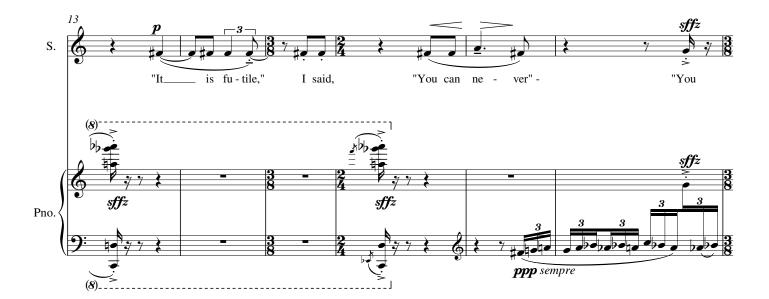


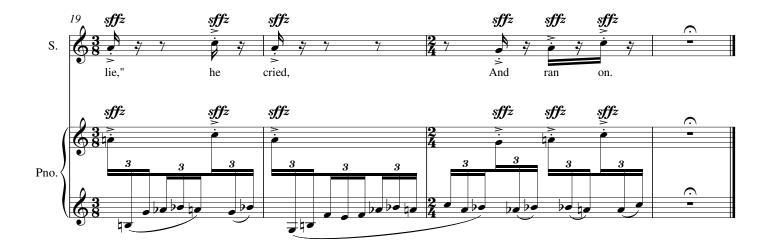
V





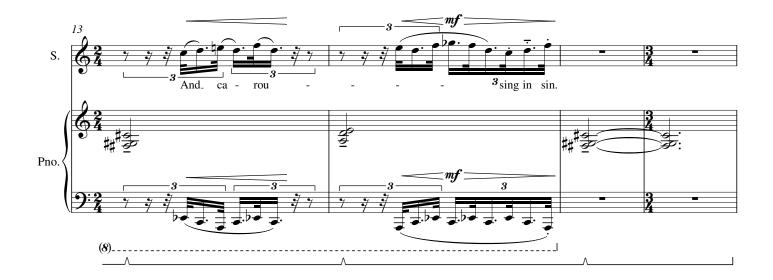


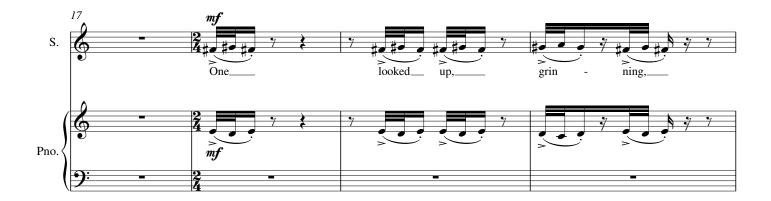


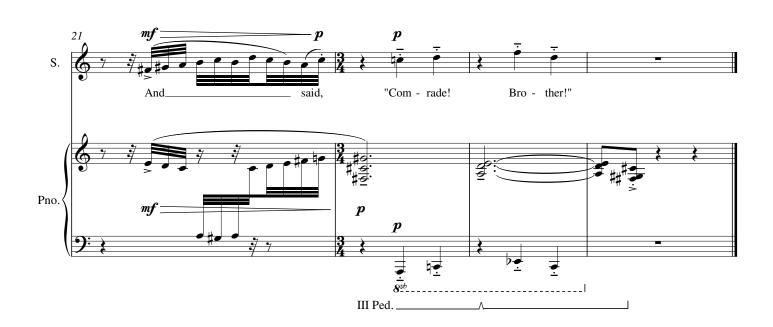




VI



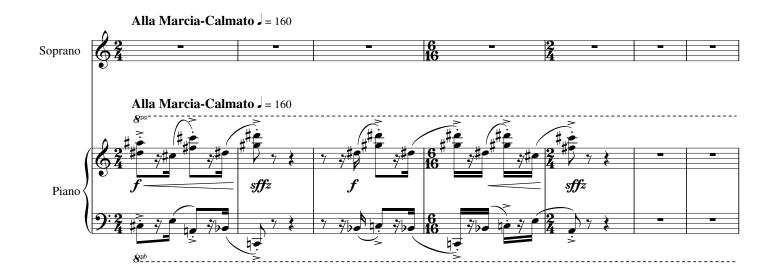


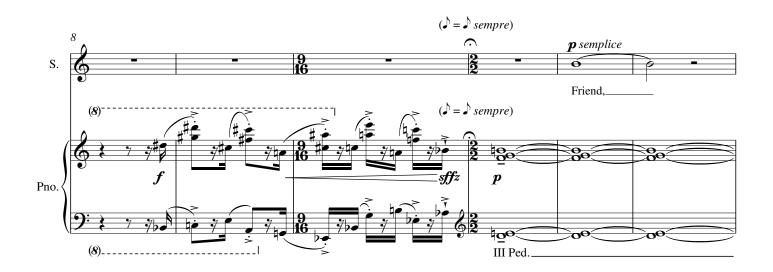


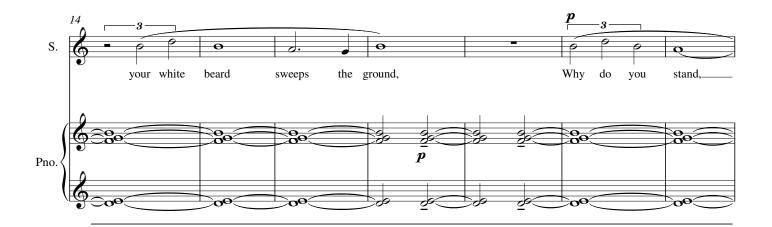
VII

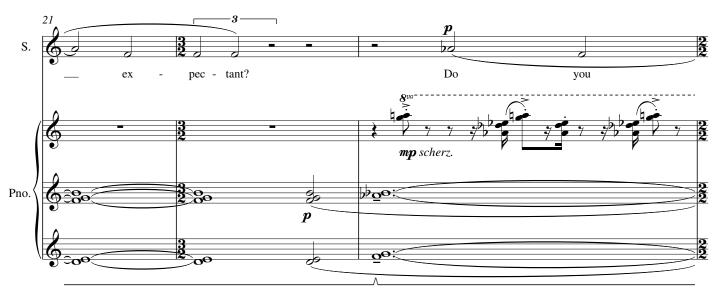


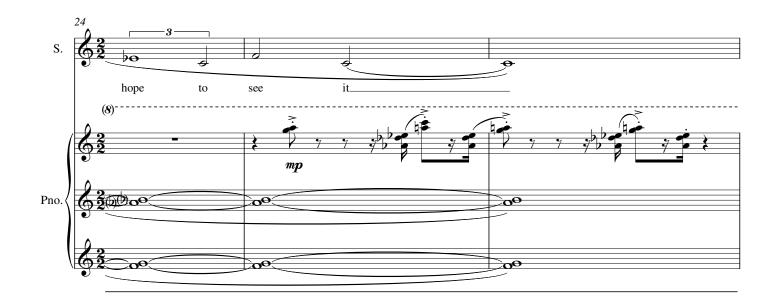
VIII

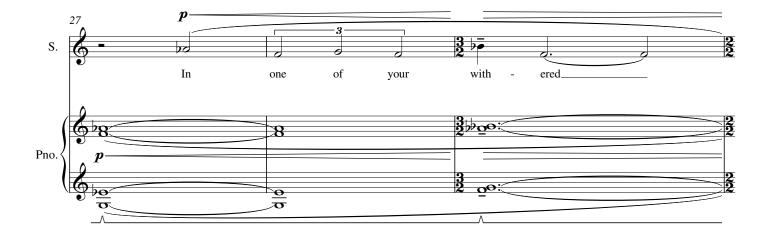


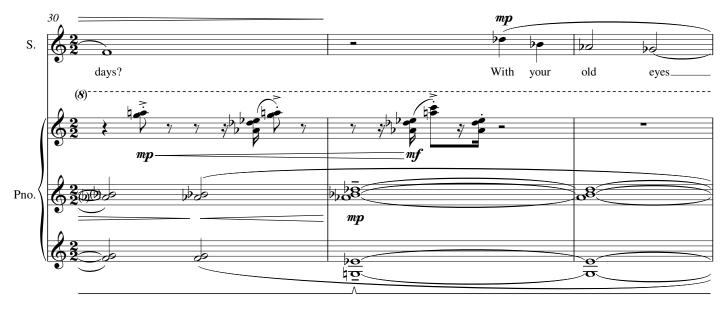


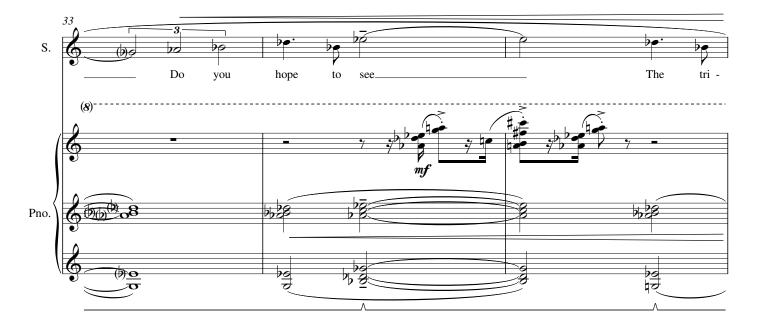


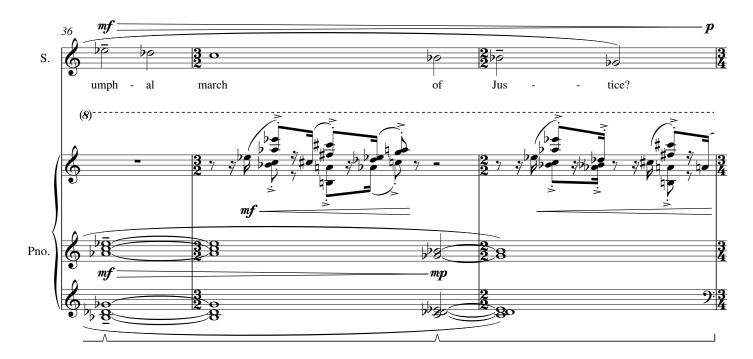




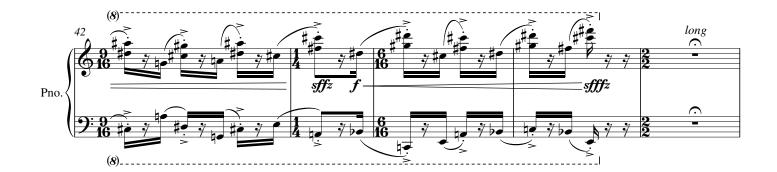


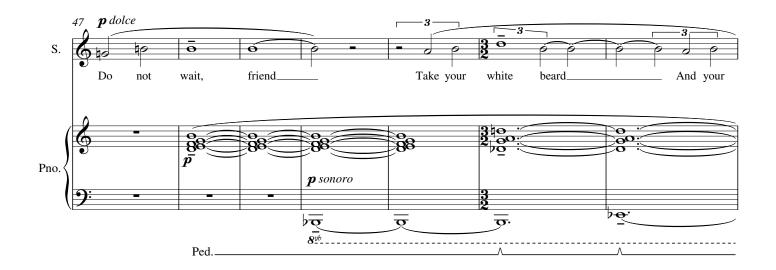


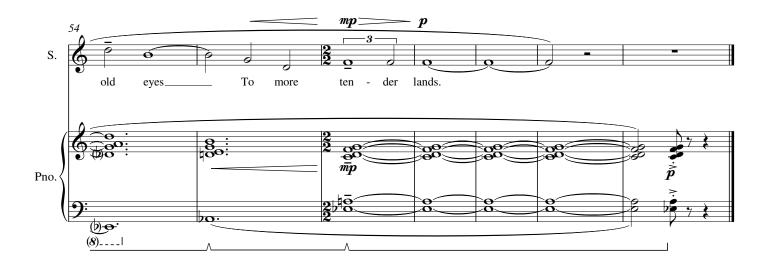


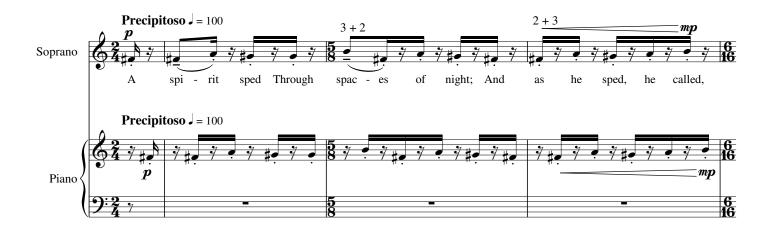


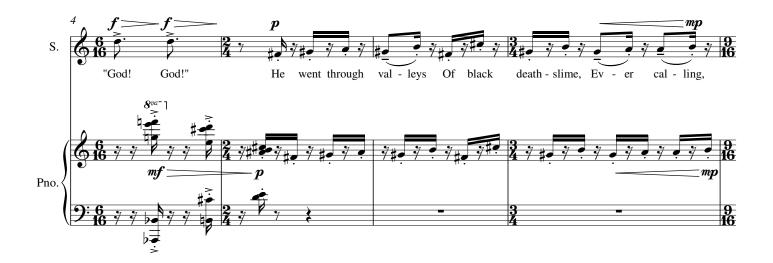














IX

