

Jim Neat - Five Poems

Mary Oliver

Music by Judith Bailey

Queenie and I Strike a Deal, London 1904

First there was Fred the Recluse then Victor, who died, followed by five prim girls,

p SLOW

Ped

each one primmer than the one before.

p Rit----- *pp* (Rpt ad lib)

Ped

What a dive our house must have been till Queenie arrived

Waltz *p*

(Rpt ad lib)

pretty as a picture and belle of the ball.

(Rpt ad lib)

Then me, all crippled and congested, operated on year after year with insufficient chloroform,

mf SLOWER

Rit e dim-----

our Mam so scared she nearly died.

Musical notation for the first system. The piano part is in 3/4 time, marked *SLOW p*. The melody consists of a series of eighth notes in the right hand and a similar pattern in the left hand. A fermata is placed over the final chord. The text "Rpt ad lib" is written above the staff with a long horizontal line indicating a repeat.

Queenie it was who cared for me most, promised to fight the bullies
amused by my surgical boot, who lay in wait to topple me -

Musical notation for the second system. The piano part is in 3/4 time, marked *Waltz p*. The melody is a waltz-like tune. The dynamics change from *p* to *mf* and then to *Rit* (ritardando). A fermata is placed over the final chord.

"so long" she said, "as you promise to keep my secrets every one -"

Musical notation for the third system. The piano part is in 3/4 time, marked *SLOW p*. The melody is a waltz-like tune. The dynamics change from *p* to *Dim* (diminuendo) and then to *Rit* (ritardando). A fermata is placed over the final chord.

Musical notation for the fourth system. The piano part is in 3/4 time. The melody is a waltz-like tune. The dynamics change from *p* to *Dim* (diminuendo) and then to *Rit* (ritardando). A fermata is placed over the final chord.

and I do ..

Musical notation for the fifth system. The piano part is in 3/4 time, marked *Very slow pp*. The melody is a waltz-like tune. The dynamics change from *pp* to *Rit* (ritardando). A fermata is placed over the final chord.

Play to Win, London 1916

INTRO. ♩ = 60

Ped
Fred refused to come down from the attic. "Stay up here little brother,
with me," he'd say, "Learn the savage art of bare-knuckle boxing

like Bill Neat, The Bristol Butcher, our famous fighting grandfather."

He'd dust me up: "Come on Jim, defend yourself, Your Country needs you!"

Stay on the balls of your feet, spin ! spin !"

Late into the night I practised my jab, my left hook and my footwork.

quick *mf*

This system contains measures 1 to 3. The treble clef staff has a melody of eighth and quarter notes. The bass clef staff has a sustained chord of F#4, A4, and C5. A fermata is placed over the final measure.

Ped |

Our Mam in tears,

SLOW Rit *pp*

This system contains measures 4 to 6. The treble clef staff has a melody of eighth and quarter notes. The bass clef staff has a sustained chord of Bb3, D4, and F#4. A fermata is placed over the final measure.

Ped |

We'd switch sometimes, to chess, "Come on Jim" he'd say, "it's all the same, play to win, fight to the end."

MARCH *mf*

This system contains measures 7 to 10. The treble clef staff has a melody of eighth and quarter notes. The bass clef staff has a sustained chord of F#4, A4, and C5. A fermata is placed over the final measure.

31

accel e cresc Rit

This system contains measures 11 to 14. The treble clef staff has a melody of eighth and quarter notes. The bass clef staff has a sustained chord of Bb3, D4, and F#4. A fermata is placed over the final measure.

36

SLOW *p*

This system contains measures 15 to 18. The treble clef staff has a melody of eighth and quarter notes. The bass clef staff has a sustained chord of Bb3, D4, and F#4. A fermata is placed over the final measure.

Ped |

Imaginary Widow, December 1926, Lumber Camp, North Saskatchewan

♩ = c 80

f *mf* Rpt. *p* - slow down ---

Electro-chainsaws arrived last week from Germany. "The job'll be kids' stuff now" boss said

♩ = 80

f *p* *f* *p* *mf* Free

That was a lie. A man was killed the first day -

SLOW *mf* Dim e Rit

a dead branch fell out of the tree he was ripping into.

mf poco accel Rit e dim

Widowmakers they're called.

SLOW *mf* *pp* Dim e rit Ped

How I long for the woman who'll be widowed if one falls on me.

$\text{♩} = 80$

SLOW *p*

poco accel ----- *poco rit..... e dim*

piu mosso

Rit e dim

mf

Undressing the dead, Vancouver 1929

Introduction:

Lento

p

Hold-----

Men of the jungle we sit in silence on the shore of Burrard Isle.
Too weak to protest -

mf

we just groan about the mess
Prime Minister Bennett has made
how we'd manage the affairs of state

CON MOTO

Repeat ad lib and fade

a bloody sight better if we had his millions, his private education -

p

Hold... We sit poking small fires, sharing stews
and narcotics to numb the pain.

I look round. These men have given up.
I have to get out..

f

Rpt ad lib and fade

Ped

But I need a coat. I root through a bundle of clothes on a trailer
It's solid...

mf con moto Rall *p* It's a man,
already dead.

SLOW

Hold I undress him.

Postlude

Lento

p *mf*

(long pause)

Ped

"Mary's Psalm"

INTRO

f Slow (quasi recit)

The man's hands freeze riding the rails,
The skin splits and his nails turn black.

Ped

p *Rall* ----- *p* *echo*

Ped

Ped

The boy leaps out of those hands,
falls to the ground, lopes off
And is lost to the night.

SLOW

mf *cresc e accel* ---

The man's Saskatchewan lover dies in a dust-storm,
their prairie daughter lost to locusts

Rall e dim
8ve down *pp*

Rpt. ad lib during verse and fade

mf

Years later the man's daughter in Cornwall
has left it too late to hold his hand.

Ped Hold

her fingers over the laptop waver ----

Ped Hold

The story told, she wonders
if the dead can read.

POSTLUDE ... free -- quasi recit e espressivo

Ped *f* Ped

f *mp* *p* *pp*

slow

Ped Ped