

Michael Murray

Neutral Tones
Four Songs of Thomas Hardy

for baritone and viola

- I. The Self-Unseeing
- II. Looking Across
- III. The Robin
- IV. Neutral Tones

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I. The Self-Unseeing

Here is the ancient floor,
Footworn and hollowed and thin,
Here was the former door
Where the dead feet walked in.

She sat here in her chair,
Smiling into the fire;
He who played stood there,
Bowing it higher and higher.

Childlike, I danced in a dream;
Blessings emblazoned that day;
Everything glowed with a gleam;
Yet we were looking away!

II. Looking Across

It is dark in the sky,
And silence is where
Our laughs rang high;
And recall do I
That One is out there.

The dawn is not nigh,
And the trees are bare,
And the waterways sigh
That a year has drawn by,
And Two are out there.

The wind drops to die
Like the phantom of Care
Too frail for a cry,
And heart brings to eye
That Three are out there.

This Life runs dry
That once ran rare
And rosy in dye,
And fleet the days fly,
And Four are out there.

Tired, tired am I
Of this earthly air,
And my wraith asks: Why,
Since these calm lie,
Are not Five out there?

III. The Robin

When up aloft
I fly and fly,
I see in pools
The shining sky,
And a happy bird
Am I, am I!

When I descend
Towards their brink
I stand, and look,
And stoop, and drink,
And bathe my wings,
And chink and prink.

When winter frost
Makes earth as steel
I search and search
But find no meal,
And most unhappy
Then I feel.

But when it lasts,
And snows still fall,
I get to feel
No grief at all,
For I turn to a cold stiff
Feathery ball!

IV. Neutral Tones

We stood by a pond that winter day,
And the sun was white, as though chidden of God,
And a few leaves lay on the starving sod;
 - They had fallen from an ash, and were gray.

Your eyes on me were as eyes that rove
Over tedious riddles of years ago;
And some words played between us to and fro
 On which lost the more by our love.

The smile on your mouth was the deadest thing
Alive enough to have strength to die;
And a grin of bitterness swept thereby
 Like an ominous bird a-wing...

Since then, keen lessons that love deceives,
And wrings with wrong, have shaped to me
Your face, and the God-curst sun, and a tree,
 And a pond edged with grayish leaves.

Neutral Tones

I. The Self-Unseeing

Thomas Hardy

Michael Murray

Moderato ♩ = 96

2 3 4 5

mf *f* *mf*

6 7 8 9 10

Here is the an-cient floor, Foot-worn and hol-owed and

11 12 13 14 15

thin, Here was the for-mer door Where the dead

mf *mp*

16 17 18 19 20

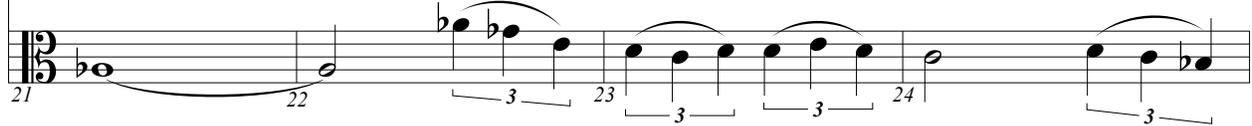
feet walked in. She

f *mp*

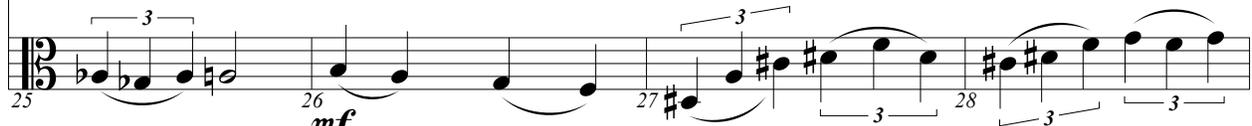
I. The Self-Unseeing

21  22 23 24

sat here in her chair, Smil - ing in - to the fire;

25  26 27 28

He who played stood there, bow-ing it high - er

29  30 31 32

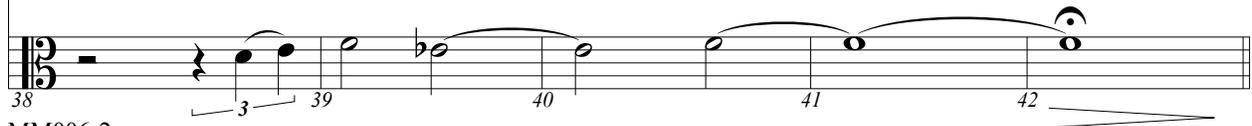
and high - er. Child - like, I danced in a

33  34 35 36 37

dream; Bless - ings em-blaz-oned that day; Ev-ery-thing glowed

38  39 40 41 42

with a gleam; Yet we were look - ing a - way!

38  39 40 41 42

MM006-2 *p*

mf **più mosso** ♩ = 104 *f* *mp* *p*

II. Looking Across

Thomas Hardy

Michael Murray

Con moto ♩ = 120

1 2 3 4 5

It is dark in the sky,

mf *mp*

6 7 8 9 10 11

And si - lence is where Our laughs rang high; And re -

mf *mp*

12 13 14 15 16 17

call do I That One is out there.

f *mf*

18 19 20 21 22

The dawn is not nigh,

f *mf*

II. Looking Across

23 *mp* 24 25 26 *p* 27

And the trees _____ are bare, And the

28 29 30 31

wat - er - ways sigh _____ That a year has drawn by, And

32 33 34 35 36 37

Two _____ are out there. The

38 39 40 41 42

wind drops _____ to die Like the phan - tom _____ of Care

mf *mp* *f*

Detailed description: This is a musical score for a piece titled "II. Looking Across". It consists of four systems of music, each with a vocal line and a piano accompaniment line. The key signature has two sharps (F# and C#), and the time signature is 3/4. The vocal line is written in a bass clef, and the piano accompaniment is in a bass clef. The score includes lyrics and dynamic markings. The first system (measures 23-27) features a vocal line with a slur over measures 24-25 and a fermata over measure 26. The piano accompaniment has a *mp* dynamic at measure 24 and a *p* dynamic at measure 26. The second system (measures 28-31) includes triplets in the vocal line at measures 29, 30, and 31. The piano accompaniment has a crescendo hairpin starting at measure 28. The third system (measures 32-37) shows a vocal line with a slur over measures 32-33 and a fermata over measure 34. The piano accompaniment has a crescendo hairpin from measure 32 to 33, a *f* dynamic at measure 34, a triplet at measure 35, and *mf* and *mp* dynamics at measures 36 and 37 respectively. The fourth system (measures 38-42) features a vocal line with a slur over measures 38-39 and a triplet at measure 41. The piano accompaniment has *mf* dynamics at measures 38 and 41, and a *f* dynamic at measure 42.

43 44 45 46 47 48

Too frail for a cry, _____ And heart brings _____ to eye

mf *mp*

49 50 51 52 53

That Three _____ are out there.

f *f*

54 55 56 57 58

This Life runs dry That

mf

59 60 61 62 63

once ran rare And ro-sy in dye, _____ And fleet the days fly,

mp *p*

II. Looking Across

64 *pp* *mp*

And Four _____ are out there.

meno mosso

69 *p*

Ti - red, ti - red am I Of this earth - ly

a tempo

75 *mf* *mp*

air, And my wraith asks: Why, _____ Since these calm

81 *f*

lie, Are not Five _____ out there?

III. The Robin

Thomas Hardy

Michael Murray

Spirightly ♩ = 132

2 3 4 5

f

6 7 8 9 10

When up a-loft I

mp

11 12 13 14 15

fly and fly, I see in pools The shin - ing sky, And a hap - py bird Am I,

11 12 13 14 15

16 17 18 19 20

am I! When I des - cend _____ To - wards their

16 17 18 19 20

p *f* *mp*

21 22 23 24 25
brink I stand, and look, And stoop, and drink,

21 22 23 24 25 *p*

meno mosso ♩ = 120

26 27 28 29 30
And bathe my wings, And chink and prink.

26 27 28 29 30 *mf* *f*

31 32 33 34 35
When win-ter frost Makes earth as steel I search and search

31 32 33 34 35 *mp*

36 37 38 39 40
But find no meal, And most un-hap-py Then I feel.

36 37 38 39 40

41 42 43 44

f

meno mosso ♩ = 108

45 46 47 48 49

But when it lasts, And snows still fall,

sul pont.

mp

50 51 52 53 54

I get to feel No grief at all, For I turn to a cold

ord.

ord.

55 56 57 58

stiff Feath - er - y ball!

molto rit.

f

IV. Neutral Tones

Thomas Hardy

Michael Murray

Andante ♩ = 84
without color

non vib., sul tasto

p

8 9 10 11 12 13 14 15

8 9 10 11 12 13 14 15

16 17 18 19 20 21

We stood by a pond that win-ter day, And the sun was white,

pp

22 23 24 25 26

as though chid-den of God, And a few leaves lay on the
ord.

mp

27 28 29 30 31 32

starv-ing sod; ————— They had fal-len from an ash, and were gray.

non vib., sul tasto

27 28 29 30 31 32

p *mp* *p*

33 34 35 36 37 38 39

Your eyes on me were as

pizz.

f

Angrily ♩ = 132

40 41 42 43 44

eyes that rove Ov-er te-di-ous rid-dles of years a-go; And

arco (ord.)

ff

45 46 47 48

some words played be-tween us to and fro On which lost the more by our

49 *b* 50 51 52 53

love. The smile on your

pizz. *f*

54 55 56 57

mouth was the dead - est thing A - live e nough to have strength to die;

58 59 60 61

arco And a grin of bit - ter-ness swept there - by Like an om - i - nous

ff

molto rit. **Andante** ♩ = 84
without color

62 63 64 65 66 67 68

bird a - wing...

non vib., sul tasto

p

69 Since then, keen les-sons that love *pp*

70 71 72 73 74

3

de - ceives, — And wrings with

75 wrong, — have shaped to me Your face, *mp*

76 77 78 79

3

and the God-curst sun, and a

ord.

80 tree, And a pond edged with gray - ish leaves. *pp*

81 82 83 84 85

non vib., sul tasto