

Daylight Saving

Song cycle for soprano and piano

Music by Joseph N. Rubinstein

Text by Melisa Tien

About the cycle

Waiting can be an intense and even surreal experience. In *Standing by* - , a woman's partner has deployed to war, and she doesn't know when - or if - she'll hear from them again. As time drags on, she waits at home for news and experiences various emotions, ranging from frustration, to nostalgia, to resignation. This song cycle explores these various emotional stages in five movements, each of which corresponds to a consecutive month of her partner's departure and prolonged absence.

Duration: 18 minutes

Texts

November: Deployment

Seventy –
Seventy minutes to go!
Eight pairs of bras should be fine, don't you think?
And nine sets of briefs.
Socks for two weeks.
I'm packing your hairbrush,
Your mirror,
Your razor,
Your khakis,
your blazer,
Your sneakers and jeans.
Three tanks and three clean t-shirts.

Every last day where you'll be looks the same,
From now to next week –
Rainy and gray.
So I'm packing your sweaters,
Your thermals,
Your beanie,
Your parka,
Your gloves and
your new Kevlar vest.
Hoping you barely use it.

Maybe you'll need something cozy at night?
I'll pack you a scarf –
one of my own.
Your uniform's clean and
it's here on
the bed by
your boots, wait
Where are they?
Where are they?
They're here.
Boots that I shined this morning.

Seventy –

Seventy seconds to go—
The car is out front
Are you ready?
You're ready to go?
I guess it's goodbye?
Are you ready?

December: Silence

No more birds
No more birdseed
In a rush
Stinging air
Lost my grasp
Scattered seeds
Against
Our
Driveway

There are no
more warnings
of storms,
rude mornings
bombarding
me
since
I
unplugged
myself.

I'm freezing in here
While the squirrels out there
Scavenge
Once they all leave
I can't tell how much seed they've left
Can't be much.

Some day soon
I'll turn on the news
There will be snow--
Or half-signal, half-static
"Today in---
There was a-----
Thirty----confirmed-----
That's all we know."

I'll sweep the driveway clear.

January: Birthday

One cup of oil,
Two cups of flour,

Two cups of sugar,
Three large eggs.

One cup of oil,
Two cups of flour,
Two cups of sugar,
Three large eggs.

Sorry,
I couldn't write you yesterday.
I'm sorry,
I was too busy baking.
I'm kidding.

I was too busy thinking
Of what I should say.
How's it going?
How's the weather?
What's it like there?
Is it scary?
Sorry,

One cup of oil,
Two cups of flour,
Two cups of sugar,
You are there.

You went when they sent you;
Didn't care where they sent you,
Did you?

Happy birthday to you.
Happy birthday.

Where you are,
Feels so far
While I'm home
On my own.

One cup of oil
Two cups of flour
Two cups of sugar
Three large eggs

Golden Hour

Golden-hour haze
The slow summer days
Heart and skin ablaze

Jars of fireflies
Quiet star-filled skies

The stars in your eyes

Vanilla ice cream
A night swim, the cold stream
Your dark hair a gleam

A far-off ringing chime
The sun on its slow climb
So low on time

The water of wine
Your fingers in mine
Life suddenly fine

Late sun on bare skin
Night-blooming jasmine
The vast world within

March: A homecoming

I wake up to light.
I think it is night
for a moment
but it isn't.
That is a ray of day-
light lashing my eye.
I thought it might be a flashlight;
it isn't.
So, full of delight,
I rise, I stand
on my feet to greet
the sun.
I run,
or think I'm running
into the street.
I run,
or think I'm running
out to greet the sun
out to greet the sun
out to greet the sun
in bare feet.

I notice a sound.
It's only around
for a moment
then it's quiet.
I call out your name.
I breathe, I step
round to our backyard
and know. You're home.
You hear me calling,
calling your name.

You're home!
You hear me calling
out your name
out your name
out your name
without shame.

But where? Are you
There?
I know I'm not alone.
I can feel
something nearby.
Soft and slow,
Almost like snow.
A fox,
brown as dry grass
right before my eyes,
right before my eyes.
I can see it now.
The day has begun.

Daylight Saving

November: Deployment

MELISA TIEN

JOSEPH N RUBINSTEIN

Energetic ♩ = c.a. 76

f You've done this before, but still excited and slightly nervous

Soprano

Sev-en - ty Sev-en - ty min-utes to go!

Energetic ♩ = c.a. 76

Piano

f

4

S.

Eight pairs of bras should be fine, don't you think? And

Pno.

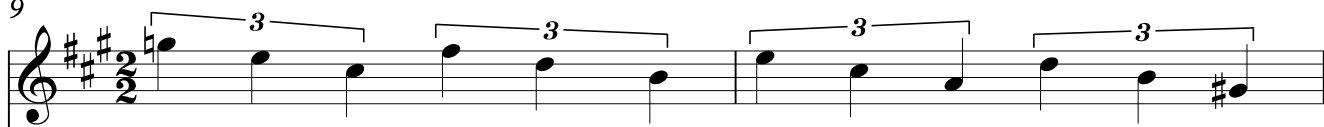
7

S.

nine sets of briefs Socks for two weeks. I'm

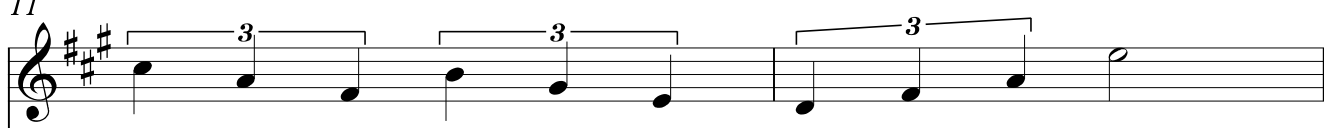
Pno.


9

S.  pack - ing your hair - brush, Your mir - ror, Your ra - zor, Your


Pno. 

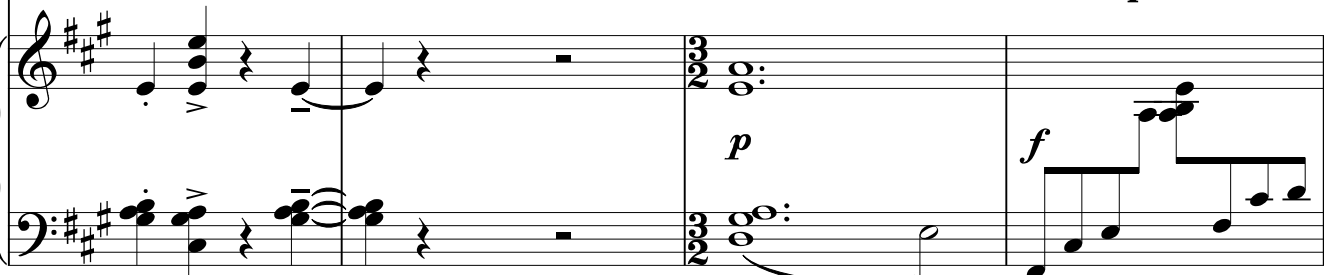
11

S.  khak - is, Your bla - zer, Your sneak - ers and jeans.

Pno. 

13

S.  Three tanks and three clean T shirts.

Pno. 

piu p **slightly slower** **a tempo**

slightly slower **a tempo**

p *f*

17 *f*

S. Ev - ery last day where you'll be looks the same, from

Pno.

20

S. now to next week: Rain-y and gray. So I'm pack-ing your sweat-ers, Your

Pno.

23

S. ther-mals, Your bean - ie, Your par - ka, Your gloves and your new Kev-lar vest.

Pno.

slightly slower

26

a little afraid *dim.*

S.

Hop - ing you bar - ely use it.____

slightly slower

Pno.

a tempo

30

mp intimate

S.

May - be you'll need some-thing co - zy at night? I'll pack you a scarf,

a tempo

Pno.

33

S.

one of my own. Your u - ni-form's clean and it's here on the bed by your

Pno.

36 *cresc.* *f relieved*

S. *3* *3* *3*

boots, wait Where are they? Where are they? They're___

Pno. *cresc.* *mf*

Ped. *

40 *dim.* **slightly slower** *lovingly*

S. here. Boots that I shined this morn ing. *3*

Pno. *f* **slightly slower** *p*

Ped. *

44 **a tempo** *f* *3* *3*

S. Sev-en-ty Sev-en-ty sec-onds to go! The

Pno. **a tempo** *f*

Ped. *

48

S. car is out front Are you read - y?

Pno.

Leg. * *Leg.* *

52

S. You're read-y to go?

Pno.

sim.

dim.

3

57

S. I guess it's good

Pno.

rit. **Slower** ♩ = c.a. 63 *p* mournful

rit. **Slower** ♩ = c.a. 63 *mp*

5

5

61

S. *mp*
bye Are you

Pno.

65

S.
read - y?

Pno. *mf*

70

S.

Pno. *p*

Daylight Saving

December: Silence

MELISA TIEN

JOSEPH N RUBINSTEIN

Slowly (♩ = 54)
mf languid

Soprano

No more birds No more bird seed_ In a rush Sting-ing air Lost my

irritated **accel.**

Slowly (♩ = 54)
f piercing, intense

Piano

9

rit. **As before, but faster** (♩ = 80)
mf languid

S.

grip Scat-tered seeds_ A-gainst our drive-way. There are no more war-nings of

rit. **As before, but faster** (♩ = 80)

Pno.

mf

15

S. *irritated* *dim.*

storms rude morn-ings bom - bar-ding me since I

Pno.

20 *easing* **Slower** ($\text{♩} = 58$) *p cold*

S. un-plugged my - self I'm freez-ing in here while the

Pno. *mp* *p cold* **Slower** ($\text{♩} = 58$)

24 *rit.*

S. squirrels out-side scav- enge — Once they all leave — I can't tell how much

Pno. *rit.*

28 **a tempo**

S. *seed is left_ Can't be_ much_*

Pno. **a tempo**
pp

8va

33 **Quite Slow** (♩ = 48)

S. *—*

Pno. **Quite Slow** (♩ = 48)
piercing, intense
ff

6

Ped. * *sim.*

36 **Moving forward** (♩ = 86)
f fearful

S. *Some day soon I'll turn on the news*

Pno. **Moving forward** (♩ = 86)
f

6

Ped. * Ped. * Ped. *

40

S. *ff*

There will be snow or half - sig- nal, half stat- ic "To -

Pno.

Ped. * *Ped.* * *Ped.* * *Ped.* * *Ped.* *

44

S. *f* *mournful*

day in... There was a...

Pno. *ff* *f*

rall.

49

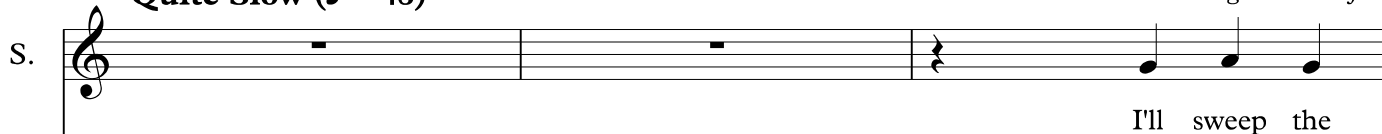
S. *mf* *mp*

Thir-ty con - firmed... That's all we know."

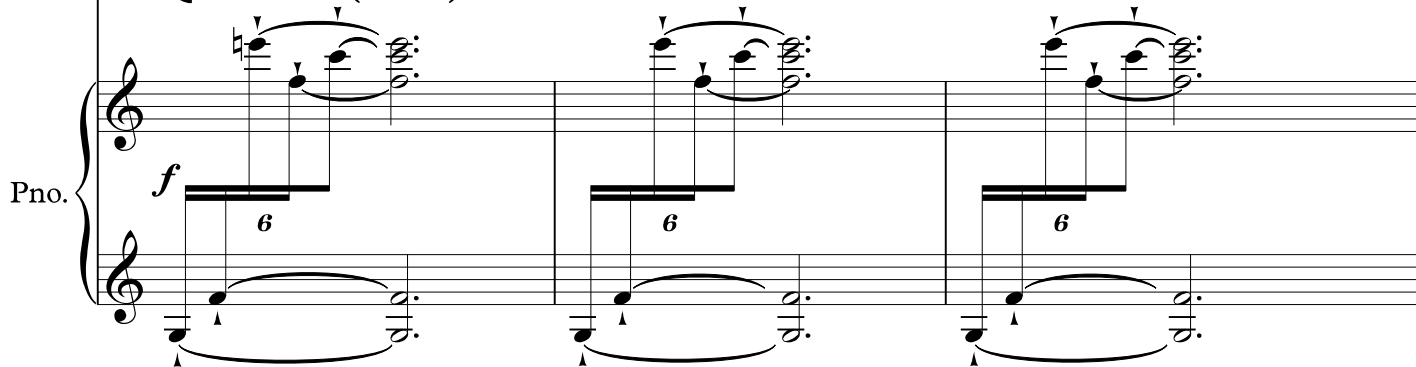
Pno. *mf* *mp*

mf composing yourself;
deciding to move forward

55 **Quite Slow** (♩ = 48)

S. 

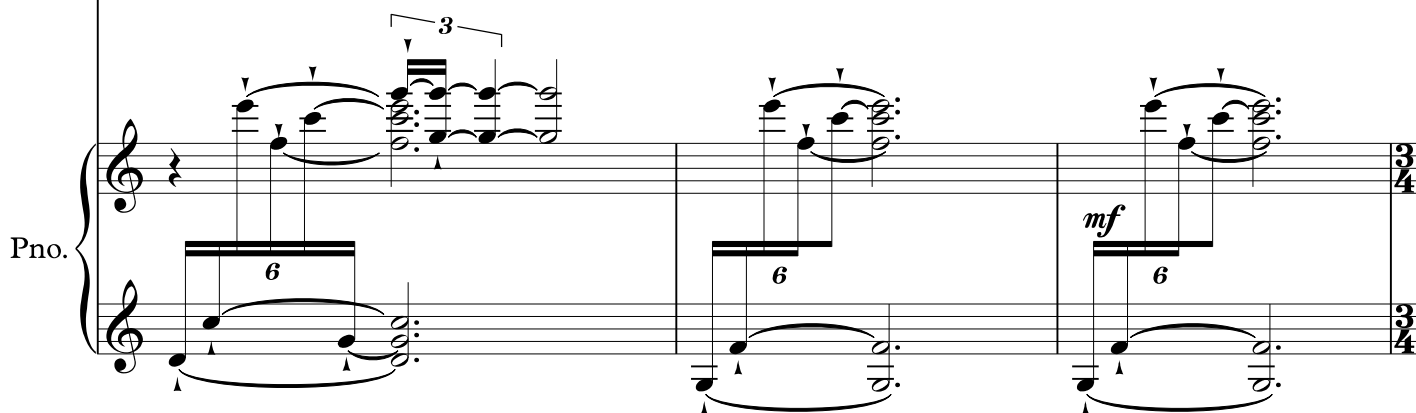
Quite Slow (♩ = 48)

Pno. 

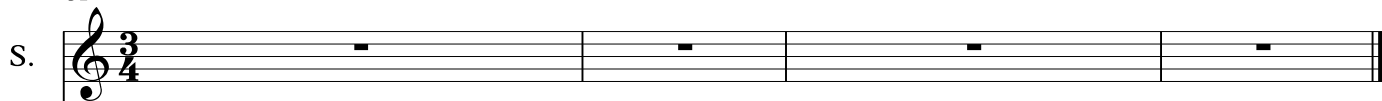
58

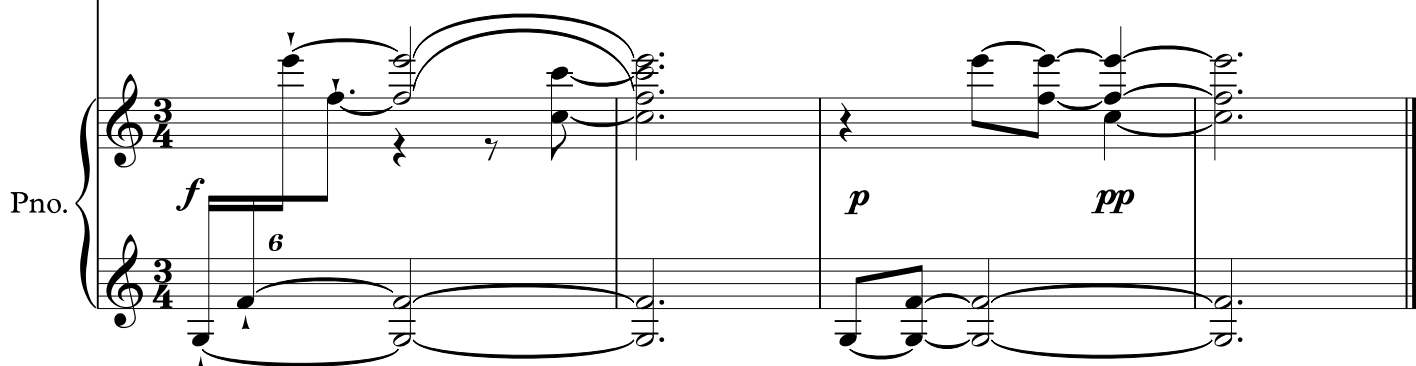
non troppo

S. 

Pno. 

61

S. 

Pno. 

Daylight Saving

January: Birthday

MELISA TIEN

JOSEPH N RUBINSTEIN

Dolorous ♩ = 60

Soprano

p *baking; going through the motions*

One cup of oil, Two cups of flo-ur,

Piano

p

senza ped.

Suddenly fast ♩ = 152

5

S.

losing focus mf annoyed at yourself

Two cups of su-gar, Three large eggs. — One cup of oil, Two cups of flour,

Suddenly fast ♩ = 152

Pno.

mf

10

S.

molto rit. f molto dim. trailing off

Two cups of su-gar, Three large eggs. —

molto rit.

Pno.

f mp pp

14 **as before** *p* *thinking out loud*

S. *So - rry I could-n't write you yes-ter day..*

Pno. **as before** *p*

*Ped. * sim.*

18 *sigh* *with regret* *deep breath*

S. *I'm so-rry, I was too bus-y bak- ing... Not reall-y. — I was*

Pno.

21 *attempting to be casual; becoming more personal*

S. *too bu-sy think ing_ Of what_ I should say. How's it go- ing? How's wea- ther?*

Pno. *p*

ped. every beat

24 **a little slower** *pp* *embarrassed* **Dragging** ♩ = 56 *mf* trying again

S. What's it like there? Is it sca- ry? So - rry. One cup of oil,

a little slower **Dragging** ♩ = 56

Pno. *pp* *mf*

28 *dim.* *imagining, trailing off*

S. Two cups of flo-ur, Two cups of su-gar, You are there.

Pno. *dim.*

31 **Faster** ♩ = 92

S. *f* *with rising anger*

You went where they sent you; Did-n't

Pno. *f* *angry*

34

S. care where they sent you, Did-n't care where they sent you, Did

Pno.

36 **Slower** ♩ = 72

S. *rit.* *ff* *bitter and sad*

Ha-ppy birth day to you. Ha-ppy birth day. Where you

Pno. *rit.* **Slower** ♩ = 72

ff

39 **poco rit.** *dim.* **a tempo**

S. are feels so far, while I'm home on my own. —

Pno. **poco rit.** *mp* **a tempo** *sva* *p* *Red.* *

44 *p exhausted*

S. One cup of oil, Two cups of flo-ur, Two cups of su gar,—

Pno. (8) *sim.*

48 **rall. al fine**

S. Three large eggs. Three large eggs.

Pno. (8) **rall. al fine**

Daylight Saving

Golden Hour

MELISA TIEN

JOSEPH N RUBINSTEIN

Hushed ♩ = 66
p with longing and nostalgia

Soprano

Gold - en ho-ur haze_____ The slow_____ sum-mer

Piano

Hushed ♩ = 66

p

4

S.

days Mm_____ Heart and skin a-blaze

Pno.

pp *sfz*

9

S.

Jars_____ of fi-re flies_____ The qui - et star filled

Pno.

p

12

S. *piu f* *float* *p*

skies Ah The stars in your eyes Va -

Pno. *pp* *p* *mp*

8^{vb}

16

S. **meno mosso** **a tempo**

nil-la ice cream A night swim, the cold stream Your dark hair a -

Pno. **meno mosso** **a tempo**

sub p

20

S. **Slightly slower** *pp*

gleam A far off ring-ing chime The

Pno. **Slightly slower** *ppp* *pp*

23

S. *p* *dim.*
 sun on its slow climb Ooh

Pno. *p*
 8^{vb}

26

S. *pp* *f* **a tempo**
 So low on time The wat-er of wine Your

Pno. *pp* *molto* *f* **a tempo**
 8^{vb}

29

S. *mf easy* *dim gradually*
 fin-gers in mine Life sud-den-ly fine

Pno. *mf* *dim gradually*

32

S. *p*

Late

Pno. *p*

36

S. *ten.* *pp* *p expansive*

sun on bare skin Night-bloom-ing jas mine. The vast world_ with

Pno. *ten.* *expansive* *loco*

8va

R.H.

L.H.

8vb

Ped.

39 *molto*

S. in

Pno.

R.H. R.H. L.H.

8va

Ped.

Detailed description of the musical score: The score is for measures 39-42. The vocal line (S.) is in treble clef with a key signature of two sharps (F# and C#). It begins with a whole note 'in' in measure 39, followed by rests in measures 40, 41, and 42. The piano accompaniment (Pno.) consists of four staves. The upper two staves are for the right hand (R.H.), and the lower two are for the left hand (L.H.). The piano part starts in measure 39 with a half note chord (F#4, C#5) and a half note bass line (F#2, C#3). In measure 40, the right hand has a half note chord (F#4, C#5) and a half note bass line (F#2, C#3). In measure 41, the right hand has a half note chord (F#4, C#5) and a half note bass line (F#2, C#3). In measure 42, the right hand has a half note chord (F#4, C#5) and a half note bass line (F#2, C#3). The piano part ends in measure 42 with a whole note chord (F#4, C#5) and a whole note bass line (F#2, C#3). The score includes a 'molto' dynamic marking at the beginning, an '8va' marking above the piano part in measure 41, and a 'Ped.' marking below the piano part in measure 41. There are also some performance instructions like 'in' and 'R.H.'.

Daylight Saving

March: Homecoming

MELISA TIEN

JOSEPH N RUBINSTEIN

Hushed ♩ = 72

Soprano

p 3

I wake up__ to light. I

Hushed ♩ = 72

Piano

p

3 *float* 3

S.

think it is night for a mom-ent But it is - n't_____

Pno.

5

S.

That is a ray of day - light__ lash-ing my

Pno.

poco f *sub p*

The musical score is written in 4/4 time with a key signature of two flats (B-flat and E-flat). It consists of three systems. The first system shows the Soprano part starting with a rest, followed by a triplet of eighth notes (G4, A4, B4) marked *p*, and a half note (C5). The piano accompaniment begins with a rest, followed by a continuous eighth-note pattern starting on G4, marked *p*. The second system continues the Soprano line with a triplet of eighth notes (C5, B4, A4) marked *float*, followed by a quarter note (G4), a quarter note (F4), and a quarter note (E4). The piano accompaniment continues with the eighth-note pattern. The third system shows the Soprano part with a rest, followed by a quarter note (D4), a quarter note (E4), a quarter note (F4), and a triplet of eighth notes (G4, A4, B4). The piano accompaniment continues with the eighth-note pattern, marked *poco f* and *sub p*.

7 *f* *p* 3

S. eye. I thought it might be a flash - light; it

Pno. *f* *p*

9 *f* *sub mp*

S. is - n't. _____

Pno. *f* *sub mp*

$\text{♩} = 46$

12 *mp* gathering energy *piu f* 3

S. So, full of de light, I rise, I stand on my feet to greet the

Pno. *cresc. poco a poco*

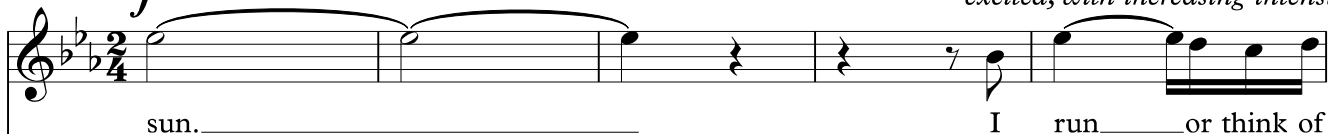
accel. *poco rit.*

♩ = 80

15

f

excited, with increasing intensity

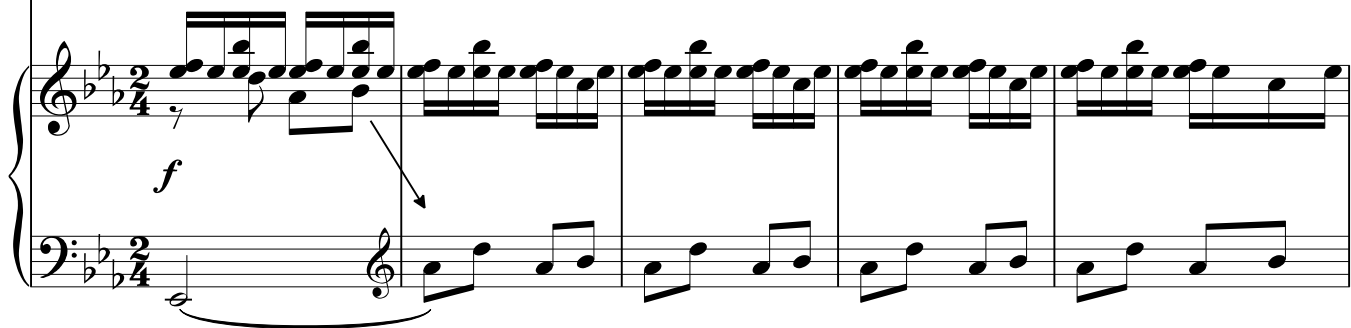
S. 

sun. _____ I run _____ or think of

♩ = 80

Pno.

f



20

S. 

runn-ing in-to the street. _____ I run _____ or think of runn-ing out to

Pno.

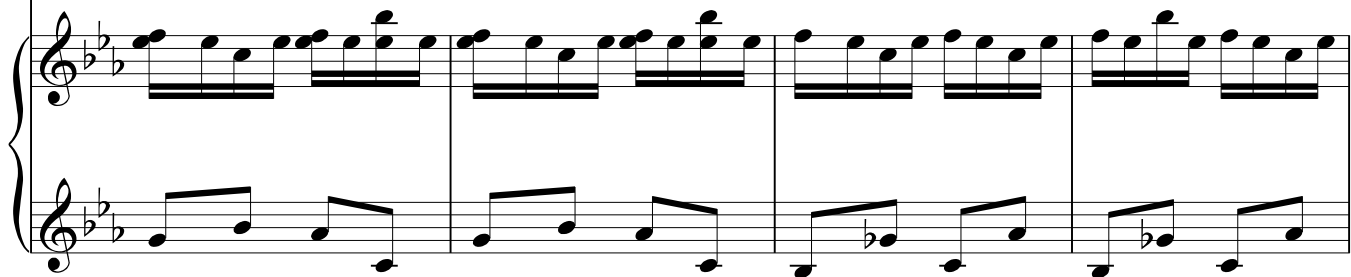


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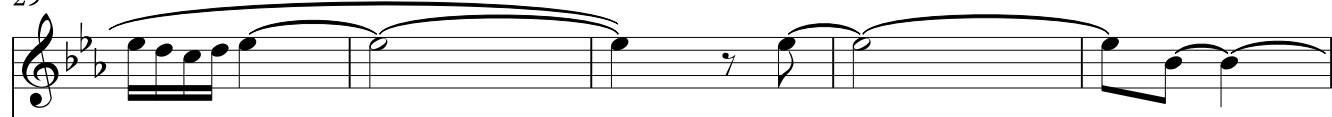
S. 

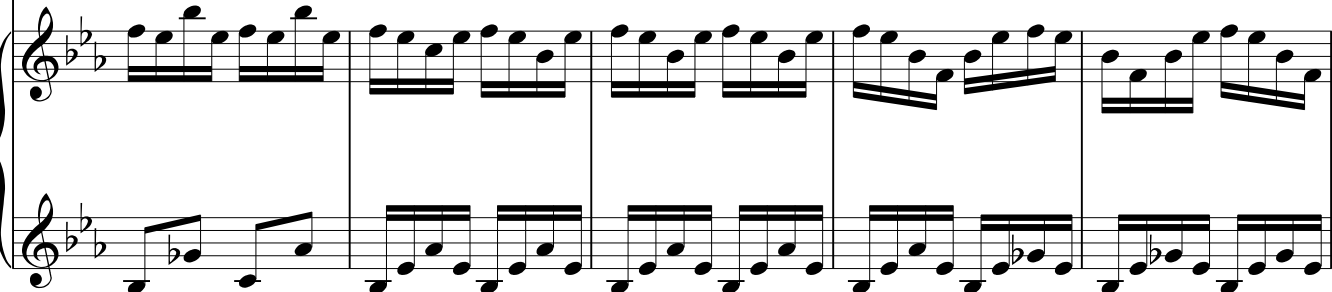
greet the sun, out to greet the sun, out to greet the sun _____

Pno.



29

S. 
in bare

Pno. 

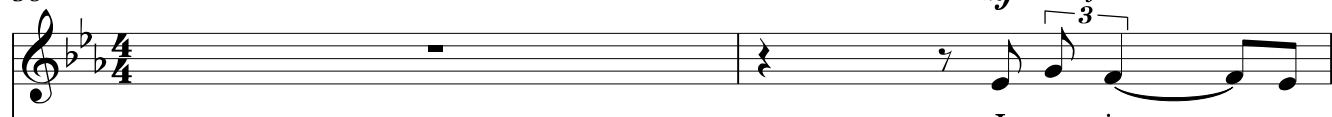
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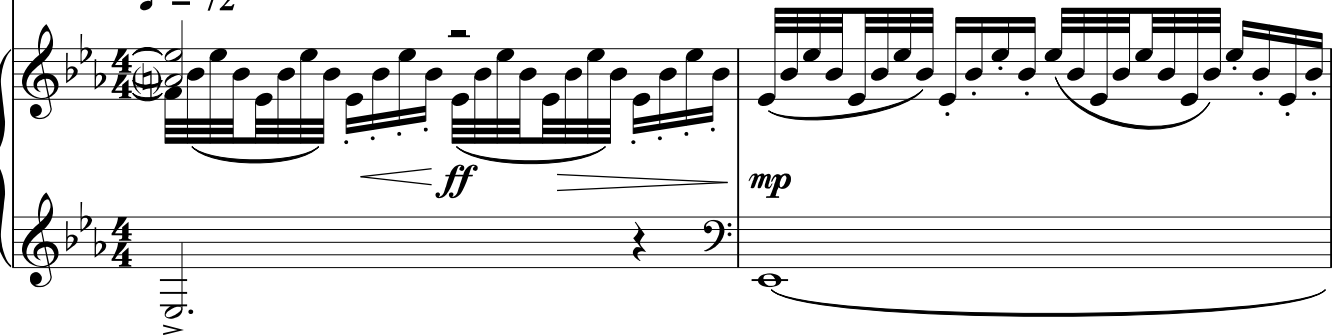
S. 
feet.

Pno. 

38

mf as before

S. 
I not - ice a

Pno. 

40 *pp* *p* *float* 3 3

S. sound. It's on - ly a-round for a mom-ent then it's

Pno.

42 *poco rit.* *a tempo* ♩ = 46 *pp*

S. qui-et Ah

Pno.

45 *accel.* *p with anticipation* *piu f*

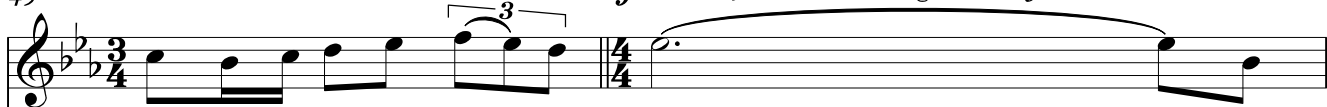
S. I call out your name. I breathe, I


Pno.

accel. *cresc. poco a poco*


6

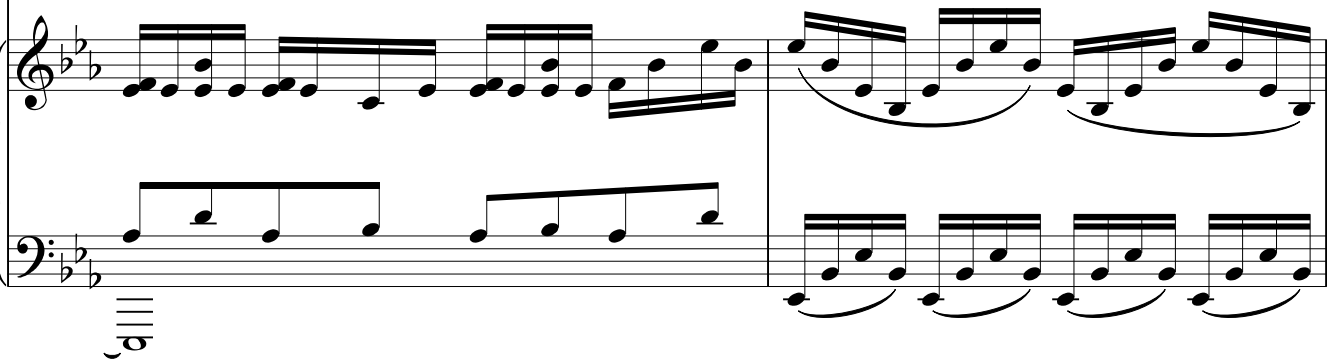
49 **poco rit.** $\text{♩} = 80$
f excited, with increasing intensity

S. 
 step round to our back- yard_ and know. _____ You're


Pno. 

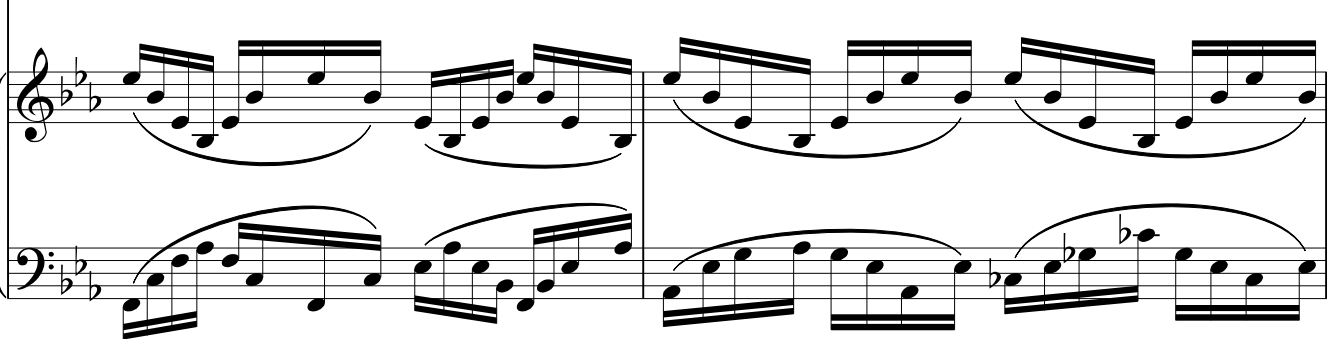
51

S. 
 home. You hear me call - ing, call-ing yourname! You're

Pno. 

53

S. 
 home. You hear me call-ing, call-ing out_ your_name, call-ing out_ your_name, call-ing

Pno. 

55

S. *out* *your* *name*

Pno.

57

S. *With - out* *shame.*

Pno. *ff*

60 $\text{♩} = 66$

S.

Pno. *ff* *mp*

Ped.

63 *mp* puzzled
S. But where?

Pno. *ff* *mp* *col canto*

sim.

66 *piu f* *f*
S. Are you there? I know I'm not a-lone.

Pno. *f*

♩ = 72

68 *mf*
S. I can feel some-thing near- by. Soft and slow,

Pno. *mf*

70

S. *Al - most like snow.*

Pno. *mp* *tr* *p* *pp*

74

S. *p disillusioned*
A fox brown as dry grass

Pno. *p*

76

S. *Right be- fore_ my_ eyes, right be- fore_ my_ eyes, I can*

Pno.

78

S. *pp*
see it now. The day has be -

Pno. *pp*

80

S. *rit.*
gun.

Pno. *rit.*