

Edward Nesbit

# Pursuing the Horizon

*Nine Settings of Stephen Crane  
for Soprano and Piano*

PURSUING THE HORIZON

EDWARD NESBIT

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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.

## II

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?

## V

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.

## 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



# Pursuing the Horizon

## I

STEPHEN CRANE

EDWARD NESBIT

**Religioso** ♩ = 60  
*mf*

Soprano

Ma - ny red de - vils ran from my heart

And

7

S.

— out up-on the page, They were so ti - ny The pen could\_

13

S.

\_\_\_\_\_ mash them. And ma - ny strug - gled in

19

S.

the\_\_\_\_\_ ink. It was strange To

26

S.

write in this red muck Of things from my\_\_\_\_\_

32

S.

\_\_\_\_\_ heart.

## II

**Capriccioso** ♩ = 108  
*p sempre*

Soprano

Three lit - tle birds in a row sat mus - ing. A man passed near that place.

Piano

5

S.

Then did the lit - tle birds nudge each o - ther.

Pno.

10

S.

They said, "He thinks he can sing."

Pno.



13

S.  $\frac{2}{4}$   $\frac{3}{8}$   $\frac{3}{8}$   $\frac{2}{4}$   $\frac{3}{8}$   $\frac{3}{8}$   $\frac{3}{8}$   $\frac{2}{4}$   $\frac{3}{8}$   $\frac{3}{8}$   $\frac{3}{8}$   $\frac{2}{4}$

They threw back their heads to laugh, With quaint coun-ten an ces

Pno.  $\frac{2}{4}$   $\frac{3}{8}$   $\frac{3}{8}$   $\frac{2}{4}$   $\frac{3}{8}$   $\frac{3}{8}$   $\frac{3}{8}$   $\frac{2}{4}$   $\frac{3}{8}$   $\frac{3}{8}$   $\frac{3}{8}$   $\frac{2}{4}$

17

S.  $\frac{2}{4}$   $\frac{3}{8}$   $\frac{3}{8}$   $\frac{2}{4}$   $\frac{3}{8}$   $\frac{3}{8}$   $\frac{3}{8}$   $\frac{2}{4}$

They re - gard - ed him.

Pno.  $\frac{2}{4}$   $\frac{3}{8}$   $\frac{3}{8}$   $\frac{2}{4}$   $\frac{3}{8}$   $\frac{3}{8}$   $\frac{3}{8}$   $\frac{2}{4}$   $\frac{3}{8}$   $\frac{3}{8}$   $\frac{3}{8}$   $\frac{2}{4}$

20

S.  $\frac{2}{4}$   $\frac{3}{8}$   $\frac{3}{8}$   $\frac{2}{4}$   $\frac{3}{8}$   $\frac{3}{8}$   $\frac{3}{8}$   $\frac{2}{4}$   $\frac{3}{8}$   $\frac{3}{8}$   $\frac{3}{8}$   $\frac{2}{4}$

They were ve-ry cu-ri-ous, Those three lit-tle birds in a row.

Pno.  $\frac{2}{4}$   $\frac{3}{8}$   $\frac{3}{8}$   $\frac{2}{4}$   $\frac{3}{8}$   $\frac{3}{8}$   $\frac{3}{8}$   $\frac{2}{4}$   $\frac{3}{8}$   $\frac{3}{8}$   $\frac{3}{8}$   $\frac{2}{4}$

# III

## Scherzando ♩ = 152

Soprano *sfz*  
"Think (k) as (s)  
*sfz*  
Piano *f* *pp legg.* *f* *p*  
8<sup>vb</sup> 8<sup>vb</sup>

4 S. *sfz* *sfz* *p leggiero*  
I think," said a man,  
Pno. *pp* *p* *pp* *f* *pp* *mf* *p*  
(8) 8<sup>vb</sup>

6 S. *f* *p* *sfz* *p*  
"Or you are a - bo - mi - na - bly wic - ked; you  
Pno. *f* *p* *pp* *pp* *p*  
8<sup>vb</sup> 8<sup>vb</sup>

9

S. *are a toad."*

Pno. *ff* *pp*

8<sup>vb</sup>

13

S. *pp leggieriss.* *p*  
And af - ter I had thought of it, I said, "I

Pno. *ppp* *pp*

(8)

16

S. *sfz-p* *sfz-p*  
will, then, be a toad."

Pno. *8<sup>va</sup>* *sfz* *p*

(8) 8<sup>vb</sup>

## IV

Semplice ♩ = 42

*p*

Soprano

If I should cast off this tat-tered coat, And go free in - to the migh-

Piano

*p sempre*

con ped.

5

S.

- ty sky; If I should find no-thing there But a vast

*p*

Pno.

9

S.

blue, E-cho-less, ig - no - rant, - What then? \_\_\_\_\_

*p*

Pno.



## V

Scorrevole ♩ = 100

*sffz* *sffz* *sffz* *sffz*

Soprano

I saw a man pur -

Scorrevole ♩ = 100

*sffz* *sffz* *sffz* *sffz* *sffz*

Piano

*ppp* sempre

4 *sffz* *sffz* *sffz* *sffz* *sffz* *sffz* *sffz* *sffz*

S.

su - ing the ho - ri - zon; Round and

*sffz* *sffz* *sffz* *sffz* *sffz* *sffz* *sffz* *sffz*

Pno.

7 *sffz* *sffz* *sffz* *sffz* *sffz* *sffz* *sffz*

S.

round they sped. I was dis -

*sffz* *sffz* *sffz* *sffz* *sffz* *sffz* *sffz*

Pno.

10 *sfz*<sup>*p*</sup> *sfz* *sfz* *f* *sfz*

S. *tur*bed *at* *this*; I *ac-cos*-ted the *man*.

Pno. *sfz* *sfz* *sfz* *f* *sfz*

*pp*

8<sup>va</sup>

8<sup>vb</sup>

13 *p* *sfz*

S. "It is fu-tile," I said, "You can ne-ver" - "You

Pno. *sfz* *sfz* *sfz*

*ppp sempre*

(8)

19 *sfz* *sfz* *sfz* *sfz* *sfz* *sfz* *sfz*

S. lie," he cried, And ran on.

Pno. *sfz* *sfz* *sfz* *sfz* *sfz* *sfz* *sfz*

## VI

Grotesco ♩ = 66

*p*

Soprano

I stood up - on a high place, And

Piano

Grotesco ♩ = 66

*p non troppo pesante*

8<sup>vb</sup>

III Ped. \_\_\_\_\_

5

S.

saw, be - low, ma - ny de - vils

*mp*

Pno.

3 3

8

III Ped. \_\_\_\_\_

9

S.

Run - ning, leap - ing,

*p*

Pno.

*p*

8

III Ped. \_\_\_\_\_



13

S. *mf*  
And. ca - rou - - - - - 3 sing in sin.

Pno. *mf*

(8).....

17

S. *mf*  
One — looked up, grin - ning, —

Pno. *mf*

21

S. *mf* *p* *p*  
And said, "Com - rade! Bro - ther!"

Pno. *mf* *p* *p*

III Ped. ....

# VII

**Espressivo** ♩ = 60

Soprano *p*

There was set be - fore me a migh-ty hill, And long

S. 8

days I climbed Through re-gions of snow. When I had be - fore me the

Pno. *p*

Ped.

S. 14

sum - - mit-view, It seemed that my la - bor Had been to see gar-dens Ly - ing at im

Pno. *mp*

S. 19

pos - - - - si-ble dis-tan ces.

Pno. *pp*

## VIII

Alla Marcia-Calmato  $\text{♩} = 160$ 

Soprano

Piano

*f* *sfz* *f* *sfz*

8<sup>va</sup>

8<sup>va</sup>

(♩ = ♩ *sempre*)

8

S.

*p semplice*

Friend, \_\_\_\_\_

(8)

(♩ = ♩ *sempre*)

Pno.

*f* *sfz* *p*

(8)

III Ped. \_\_\_\_\_

14

S.

your white beard sweeps the ground, Why do you stand, \_\_\_\_\_

Pno.

*p*

21

S. *p*  
ex - pec - tant? Do you

Pno. *mp scherz.*  
*p*

24

S. *p*  
hope to see it

Pno. *mp*

27

S. *p*  
In one of your with - ered

Pno. *p*

30

S. *mp*  
days? With your old eyes\_\_\_\_\_

Pno. *mp* *mf* *mp*

33

S. Do you hope to see\_\_\_\_\_ The tri -

Pno. *mf*

36

S. *mf* *p*  
umph - al march of Jus - - tice?

Pno. *mf* *mp*

39 *f* *ffz* *f*

Pno.

8<sup>va</sup>

42 *ffz* *f* *fffz* *long*

Pno.

8

47 *p dolce*

S. Do not wait, friend. Take your white beard And your

Pno.

*p* *p sonoro*

Ped.

8<sup>va</sup>

54 *mp* *p*

S. old eyes To more ten - der lands.

Pno.

8

## IX

**Precipitoso** ♩ = 100

Soprano *p* *mp*

A spi - rit sped Through spac - es of night; And as he sped, he called,

Piano *p* *mp*

4 *f* *f* *p* *mp*

S. "God! God!" He went through val - leys Of black death - slime, Ev - er cal - ling,

Pno. *mf* *p* *mp*

8 *f* *f* *p* *sfz* *sfz*

S. "God! God!" Their e - choes From cre - vice and

Pno. *mf* *p* *sfz* *sfz*

12 (non cresc.) *f* *p* <sup>3+2</sup>

S. ca - vern Mocked him: "God! God! God!" Fleet - ly in - to the

Pno. *sfz* *p non cresc.* *mf ma legg.* *sfz* *p* *mf* *sfz*

8<sup>vb</sup> 8<sup>vb</sup>

15 <sup>2+3</sup> *mp* *f* *f*

S. plains of space He went, ev - er cal - ling, "God! God!"

Pno. *sfz* *p* *mf* *p* *mp* *mf* *mf*

8<sup>vb</sup> 8<sup>va</sup> 8<sup>vb</sup>

18 <sup>3+2</sup> *p*

S. — E - ven - tu - al - ly, then, he

Pno. *mp* *sfz* *sfz* *p* *sfz* *p* *mf*

8<sup>vb</sup>



21 *p espress.*

S. screamed, Mad in de - ni - al, "Ah! there is no

Pno. *p mf sfz p mf*

26 *p*

S. God!" A swift hand, A sword from the

Pno. *p*

31 *(non dim.)*

S. sky, Smote him, and he was dead.

Pno.