

Nigel Keay

Voices of the Air

A setting of the poem by Katherine Mansfield

Voices of the Air

But then there comes that moment rare
When for no cause that I can find
The little voices of the air
Sound above all the sea and wind.

The sea and wind do them obey
And singing singing double notes
On double basses - content to play
A droning chord for the little throats.

The little throats that sing and rise
Up into the light with lovely ease
And a kind of magical sweet surprise
To hear and know themselves for these.

For these little voices, the bee, the fly,
The leaf that taps, the pod that breaks,
The breeze on the grass tops bending by,
The shrill quick sound that the insect makes.

The insect hanging upon a stem
And a thread of water dropping among
The mosses, the big rocks and diadem
All the infinite silent song.

The silent song, so faint, so rare
That the heart must not beat
Nor the quick blood run to hear
The myriad voices of the air.

to Sherry Grant & Tessa Romano
Voices of the Air

Lyricist: Katherine Mansfield

Nigel Keay

Largo ♩ = 48

Mezzo-soprano

Mezzo-soprano: *mf*
But then there comes — that mo - ment rare

Piano: *mf*

Detailed description: This block contains the first four measures of the piece. The Mezzo-soprano part begins with a whole rest in the first measure, followed by a melodic line starting on a half note G4, moving to F4, E4, D4, and then a dotted half note C4. The Piano accompaniment starts with a whole rest in the first measure, then a series of chords and moving lines in both hands, including a prominent bass line with notes like G2, F2, E2, and D2.

5
When for — no — cause — that I can find — The

Mezzo-soprano: *f* *mp*

Piano: *mp*

Detailed description: This block contains measures 5 through 8. The Mezzo-soprano part continues with a melodic line that reaches a peak on a half note G4, then descends through F4, E4, D4, and C4. The Piano accompaniment features a complex texture with many chords and moving lines, including a bass line with notes like G2, F2, E2, and D2.

9
lit - tle voi - ces of the air Sound a - bove all the — sea — and

Mezzo-soprano: *mf* *mp*

Piano: *p* *mf* *mp*

Detailed description: This block contains measures 9 through 12. The Mezzo-soprano part continues with a melodic line that reaches a peak on a half note G4, then descends through F4, E4, D4, and C4. The Piano accompaniment features a complex texture with many chords and moving lines, including a bass line with notes like G2, F2, E2, and D2.

13

wind.

mf

mp

Detailed description: This system contains measures 13 through 18. It features a vocal line (treble clef) and a piano accompaniment (grand staff). The key signature has one sharp (F#). The piano part includes dynamic markings of *mf* and *mp*. The vocal line has a rest for the first measure, labeled 'wind.', and then begins in measure 14. The piano accompaniment is active throughout, with various textures and dynamics.

19

rallentando....

Red. *

Detailed description: This system contains measures 19 through 24. The key signature changes to two flats (Bb, Eb). The tempo marking 'rallentando....' is present. The piano accompaniment features a prominent bass line with eighth-note patterns. The vocal line has rests for measures 19-21 and then begins in measure 22. A 'Red.' marking with an asterisk is located at the end of the system.

25

mp *tranquillo* **a tempo**

The sea and wind do them o - bey And sing - ing

tranquillo

mp *pp* *mp*

Detailed description: This system contains measures 25 through 30. The key signature changes to one flat (Bb). The time signature is 3/4. The tempo marking 'a tempo' is indicated. The piano accompaniment includes dynamic markings of *mp*, *pp*, and *mp*. The vocal line has rests for measures 25-26, then begins in measure 27 with the lyrics 'The sea and wind do them o - bey And sing - ing'. The piano part includes a 'tranquillo' marking in measure 27.

30 *p* *mf* *f* *mf* *mp*

sing - ing dou - ble notes on dou - ble bas - ses con - tent to play a dro - ning

34 *p*

chord for the lit - tle throats—

39 rit.....a tempo rit.....a tempo *mp*

The

42

rit. a tempo *mf*

lit - tle throats that sing and rise up in - to_ the light with love - ly ease And a

tranquillo

47

kind of mag - i - cal sweet sur - prise to hear and to know them - selves for_ these—

rit.....a tempo

51

For these lit - tle voi - ces,

55 *mp* *f*
the bee, the fly, The leaf that taps, the pod that breaks,

58 *mf* *f*
The breeze on the grass tops ben - ding by, _____ The quick shri - ll

61 *mf* *f*
sound that the in - sect makes. _____

64

rit.....

Musical score for measures 64-66. The system includes a vocal line (treble clef) and a piano accompaniment (grand staff). The piano part features complex textures with triplets and slurs. The vocal line is mostly rests in this section.

67 a tempo

mp

mf

The in - sect hang - ing up - on a stem, and a thread of

Musical score for measures 67-70. The system includes a vocal line (treble clef) and a piano accompaniment (grand staff). The piano part features complex textures with triplets and slurs. The vocal line has lyrics: "The in - sect hang - ing up - on a stem, and a thread of".

71

mf

3

wat - er drop - ping a - mong The mos - ses, the big rocks and

Musical score for measures 71-74. The system includes a vocal line (treble clef) and a piano accompaniment (grand staff). The piano part features complex textures with triplets and slurs. The vocal line has lyrics: "wat - er drop - ping a - mong The mos - ses, the big rocks and".

74

di - a - dem all the in - fi - nite si - lent song.

Red. *

77

a tempo *mp*

The

p *mf*

81

mf rall.....

si - lent song so faint_ so rare That the heart must not

mp *p*

84 *f* **a tempo** *mf*

beat Nor the quick blood run To hear

87 *f* *mf* **rall.**

The my-ri-ad voi-ces

90 **Meno mosso** **rall...**

of the air

mf *mp*

Ped. *