

Four Songs for soprano and piano

by Corey Sevett

The Rights

Denise Levertov

I want to give you
something I've made

some words on a page—as if
to say “Here are some blue beads”
or, “Here’s a bright red leaf I found on
the sidewalk” (because

to find is to choose, and choice
is made). but it’s difficult:

so far I’ve found
nothing but the wish to give. Or

copies of old words? Cheap
and cruel; also senseless:

 Take
this instead, perhaps—a half-
promise: If

I ever write
a poem of a certain temper

(wilful, tender, evasive,
sad & rakish)

I’ll give it to you.

Lost Times

Francis Richardson

For each one who dies
a babe is born
to replace, replenish the race.
Nature’s way, the cycle
of things past, things to be.
We love that baby.
The children bear children,
and become their elders.
How strange it may seem.
But we loved Sam, and Abe.
We could not replace the memory
with other thoughts
and we cannot stop the loss.
Others will be taken. Without the chance
to say the right words
Or make up for lost times.

Cancion

Denise Levertov

When I am the sky
a glittering bird
slashes at me with the knives of songs.

When I am the sea
fiery clouds plunge into my mirrors,
fracture my smooth breath with crimson sobbing.

When I am the earth
I feel my flesh of rock wearing down:
pebbles, grit, finest dust, nothing.

When I am a woman—O, when I am
a woman,
my wells of salt brim and brim,
poems force the lock of my throat.

Folding a Shirt

Denise Levertov

Folding a shirt, a woman stands
still for a moment, to recall
warmth of flesh; her careful hands

heavy on a sleeve, recall
a gesture, or the touch of love;
she leans against the kitchen wall,

listening for a world of love,
but only finds a sound like fear
running through the rooms above.

With folded clothes she folds her fear,
but cannot put desire away,
and cannot make the silence hear.

Unwillingly she puts away
the bread, the wine, the knife,
smooths the bed where lovers lay,

while time’s unhesitating knife
cuts away the living hours,
the common rituals of life.

Clifton Press
MUSIC PUBLISHERS

P.O. Box 583083, Minneapolis 55458-3083
www.sevett.com

© 1984, 1996 Corey Sevett. All rights reserved.
“The Rights” and “Folding A Shirt” are from *Collected Earlier Poems: 1940-1960*, copyright 1979 by Denise Levertov. “Cancion” is from *The Freeing of the Dust*, copyright 1975 by Denise Levertov. These poems are reprinted by permission of New Directions Publishing Corporation. “Lost Times” copyright 1984 by Francis Richardson. Used by permission.

Living composers make their living not only from the sale of their music, but also from the licensing of the performing rights to their music. Performing rights for this work are registered with Broadcast Music, Inc. Please inform BMI or Clifton Press in the event of a public performance of this musical composition. Any comments to the composer or requests of the publisher should be addressed to: Clifton Press, P.O. Box 583083, Minneapolis, Minnesota 55458-3083 or corey@sevett.com.

This composition is copyrighted. All unauthorized duplication is strictly forbidden by law.

For more information about the composer, visit www.sevett.com.

The Rights

Poetry by Denise Levertov
Music by Corey Sevett

1 *f* Playful

Soprano

Piano

1 10

3

Sop.

Pno

Subito p

f

3 4

6 *f*

Sop.

Pno

I'd like to give you some-thing I've made, some words on a page.

6 7 5 4

The Rights

9

Sop.

As if to say, Here are some blue beads, or

Pno.

12

Sop.

here's a bright red leaf I found on the side-walk. (hum)

Pno.

ritard. *p* Slower

15

Sop.

Because But it's dif - fi - cult.

Pno.

Freely Faster

The Rights

18 Tempo I

Sop.  So far I've found noth - ing but the wish to give or cop - ies of old words.

Pno. 

21 *p* (Half sung)

Sop.  Cheap and cruel al - so sense - less.

Pno. 

25 *mf* , Slower ♩ = 72

Sop.  Take this instead per - haps a half pro - mise. If I ev - er write a

Pno. 

Lost Times

Poetry by F. Richardson
Music by Corey Sevett

Soprano

Piano

$\bullet = 72$

Sop.

Pno

5

mf

p

Sop.

Pno

8

riten.

A Tempo

p

11

Sop.

Pno

mf

15

Sop.

Pno

f

mp

riten.

19

Sop.

Pno

p

p

For each one who dies a bab' is born.

22

Sop.

To re - place re - ple - nish the

Pno

24

Sop.

race. *mf* Na - ture's way, the

Pno

26

Sop.

cy - cle of things past, *f* things to be.—

Pno

Sop.

29

Pno

mf *f* *Sempre*

3

3

3

3

3

Sop.

31

Pno

f *mf*

We love that ba - by,

3

3

3

Sop.

33

Pno

ba - by.

3

3

3

Sop.

Pno

34

6

6

6

6

Sempre

Detailed description: This system covers measures 34 and 35. The soprano part has a whole rest in measure 34 and a whole note in measure 35. The piano accompaniment features sixteenth-note runs in both hands, with sixteenth-note chords in the right hand. The word 'Sempre' is written in the bass line of measure 35. The key signature has three sharps (F#, C#, G#).

Sop.

Pno

35

6

6

6

6

f

Detailed description: This system covers measures 35 and 36. The soprano part has a whole rest in measure 35 and a half note in measure 36. The piano accompaniment continues with sixteenth-note runs and chords. A forte dynamic marking 'f' is present in the bass line of measure 35. The key signature has three sharps.

Sop.

Pno

36

3

f

3

3

3

3

The chil-dren bear chil - dren, - - - -

mf

Detailed description: This system covers measures 36 and 37. The soprano part has a half note in measure 36 and a quarter note in measure 37. The piano accompaniment features triplet eighth notes in the right hand and quarter notes in the left hand. A forte dynamic marking 'f' is present in the soprano part of measure 36. The lyrics 'The chil-dren bear chil - dren, - - - -' are written below the soprano staff. The key signature has three sharps.

38

Sop.

and be - come their el - ders

Pno

Detailed description: This system covers measures 38 to 40. The soprano part begins with a whole rest in measure 38, followed by a quarter rest in measure 39, and then a melodic line in measure 40. The piano accompaniment consists of chords in the right hand and single notes in the left hand. The key signature has one sharp (F#).

41

Sop.

How strange it may seem.

Pno

mp

Detailed description: This system covers measures 41 to 43. The soprano part has a quarter rest in measure 41, followed by a melodic line in measure 42, and a quarter rest in measure 43. The piano accompaniment features a steady eighth-note bass line in the left hand and chords in the right hand. A dynamic marking of *mp* is present. The time signature changes from 4/4 to 5/4 in measure 42 and back to 4/4 in measure 43.

44

Sop.

But we loved Sam — and Abe.

Pno

f

Detailed description: This system covers measures 44 to 46. The soprano part has a quarter rest in measure 44, followed by a melodic line in measure 45, and a quarter rest in measure 46. The piano accompaniment features a sustained chord in the right hand and single notes in the left hand. A dynamic marking of *f* is present. The time signature changes from 4/4 to 2/4 in measure 45 and back to 4/4 in measure 46.

46 Sop. We could not re - place the me - mo - ry with o - ther

48 Sop. thoughts _____ and we can - not stop the loss. *tr*

Pno *ff*

50 Sop. *ff* O - thers will be ta - ken. *f* Without the chance to say the right words

Pno *f*

Cancion

Poetry by Denise Levertov
Music by Corey Sevett

♩ = 66

Soprano

Piano

Red.

Red.

Sop.

Pno

Red.

Sop.

Pno

When I am the sky a glit - ter - ing bird

Sop.

9

sla - shes at me with the knives of song.

Pno

9

f

Detailed description: This system contains measures 9 and 10. The Soprano part (Sop.) is in treble clef, 4/4 time, with a key signature of one sharp (F#). The melody consists of quarter notes: G4 (F#), A4, B4, C5, B4, A4, G4. A fermata is placed over the final G4. The Piano part (Pno) is in grand staff, 4/4 time. The right hand (RH) has a whole note chord of G4, B4, D5, and F#5. The left hand (LH) has a whole rest. A dynamic marking of *f* is present at the end of measure 10.

Sop.

11

Pno

11

f

Detailed description: This system contains measures 11 and 12. The Soprano part (Sop.) has a whole rest in measure 11 and a whole note G4 in measure 12. The Piano part (Pno) is in grand staff, 4/4 time. The right hand (RH) features a melodic line of eighth notes: G4, A4, B4, C5, B4, A4, G4, F#4, G4, A4, B4, C5, B4, A4, G4. The notes are grouped in pairs with a '5' above them, indicating a fifth interval. The left hand (LH) has a whole rest. A dynamic marking of *f* is present at the start of measure 11. A key signature change to two sharps (F# and C#) occurs at the beginning of measure 12.

Sop.

13

Pno

13

Detailed description: This system contains measures 13 and 14. The Soprano part (Sop.) has a whole rest in measure 13 and a whole note G4 in measure 14. The Piano part (Pno) is in grand staff, 4/4 time. The right hand (RH) features a melodic line of eighth notes: G4, A4, B4, C5, B4, A4, G4, F#4, G4, A4, B4, C5, B4, A4, G4. The notes are grouped in pairs with a '5' above them, indicating a fifth interval. The left hand (LH) has a whole rest.

14

Sop.

Pno

15

Sop.

mf

When I am the sea

Pno

15

mp

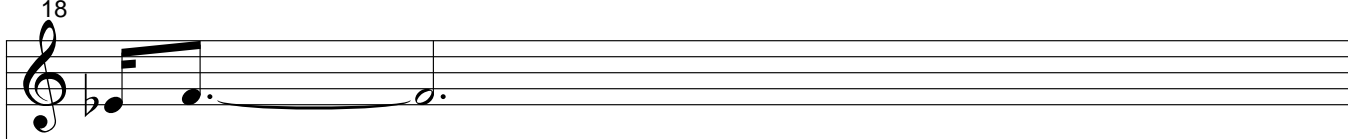
17

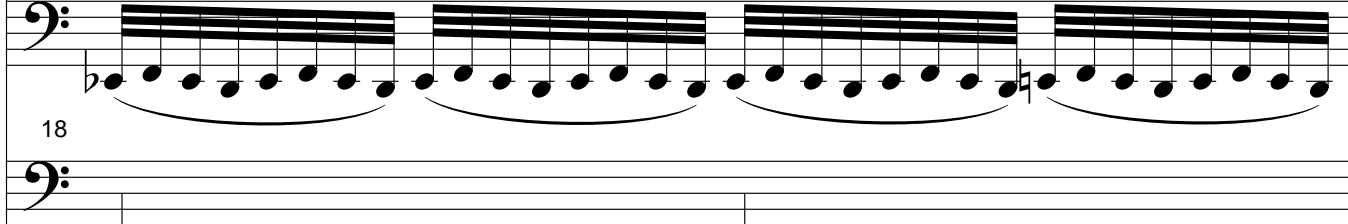
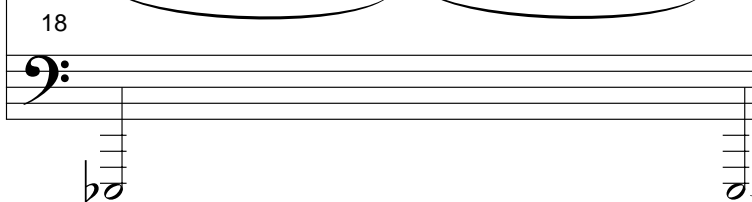
Sop.


fier - y clouds plunge in - to my

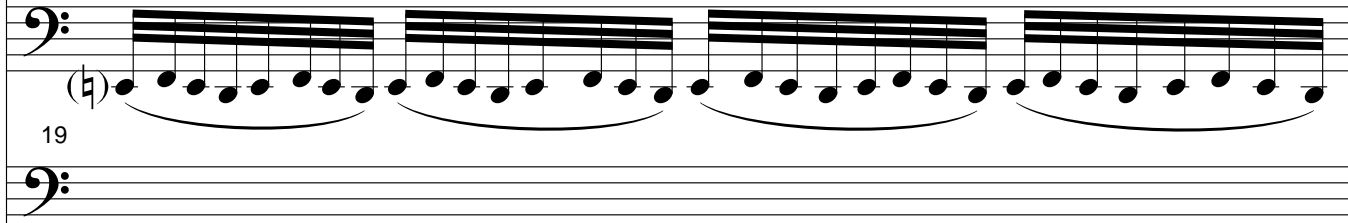
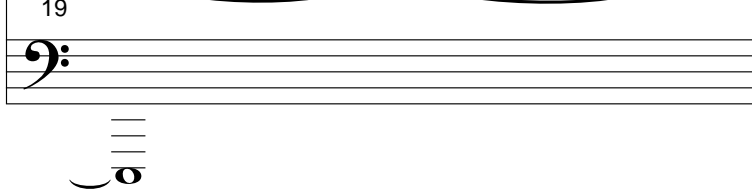

Pno

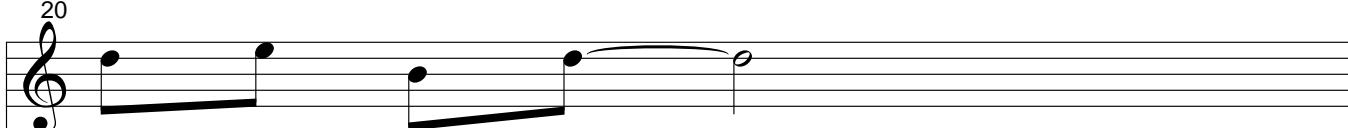
17

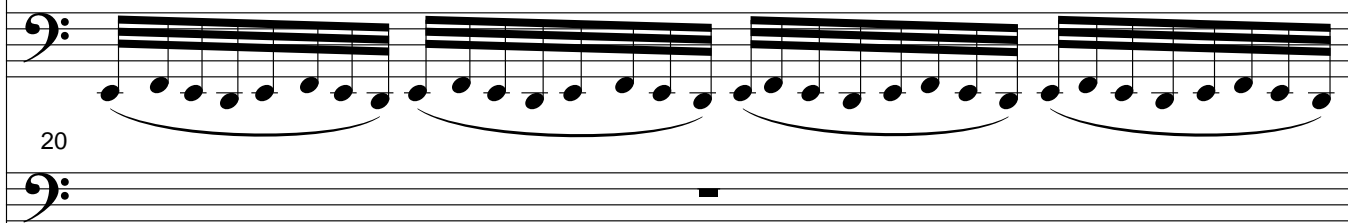
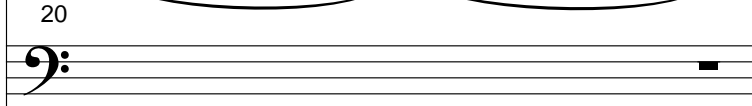
18
Sop. 
mir - rors,

18 *Riten.* *A tempo*
Pno 
18 
Ad.

19
Sop. 
frac - ture my smooth breath with

19
Pno 
19 


20
Sop. 
crim - son sob - bing.

20
Pno 
20 

21

Sop.

Pno

mf

Red.

Red.

Red.

22

Sop.

When I am the sea.

Pno

f

mf

f

Red.

Red.

Red.

24

Sop.

When I am the sea.

Pno

mf

Sop.

26

8va

6

6

6

Pno

26

New Tempo

Sop.

27

New Tempo ♩ = 208

espressivo

f

Pno

27

No Pedal

Sop.

31

10

Pno

31

10

Sop.

35

10/8

Pno

35

10/8

35

10/8

Sop.

39

7/8

Pno

39

7/8

39

7/8

Sop.

43

7/8

Pno

43

7/8

43

7/8

New Tempo $\text{♩} = 84$ *f*

Sop. Musical notation for Soprano, measures 47-48. Measure 47 is a whole rest. Measure 48 starts in 6/4 time and contains a quarter note G4, quarter note A4, quarter note B4, and a half note C5.

When I am the earth

New Tempo $\text{♩} = 84$

Pno Musical notation for Piano accompaniment, measures 47-48. Measure 47 is marked *ritard.* and contains a dotted half note G3 in the right hand and a dotted half note G2 in the left hand. Measure 48 is marked *mf* and contains a half note G3 in the right hand and a half note G2 in the left hand, both with a fermata.

Sop. Musical notation for Soprano, measure 50. The melody consists of quarter notes G4, A4, B4, C5, followed by a dotted quarter note B4, a dotted quarter note A4, and a half note G4. The lyrics are: "I feel my flesh of rock wear - ing down: peb - bles, grit,"

Pno Musical notation for Piano accompaniment, measure 50. The right hand has a sustained chord of G3, B3, D4, and E4. The left hand has a dotted quarter note G2, a dotted quarter note F2, and a half note E2.

Slower

Sop. Musical notation for Soprano, measure 54. The melody consists of quarter notes G4, A4, B4, C5, followed by a triplet of quarter notes B4, A4, G4. The lyrics are: "fin - est dust, noth - ing, nothing." A bracket above the triplet indicates it is a triplet of 3.

A tempo

Pno Musical notation for Piano accompaniment, measure 54. The right hand has a sustained chord of G3, B3, D4, and E4. The left hand has a sustained chord of G2, B2, and D3.

Sop. 58

Pno 58 *mp*

Detailed description: This system covers measures 58 to 61. The Soprano part consists of whole rests in all four measures. The Piano part is in 7/8 time. Measure 58 starts with a mezzo-piano (*mp*) dynamic. The piano accompaniment features a rhythmic pattern of eighth and sixteenth notes in both hands, with a melodic line in the right hand. The key signature has one flat (B-flat). Measure 61 ends with a half note in the right hand and a quarter note in the left hand.

Sop. 62

Pno 62 *f*

Detailed description: This system covers measures 62 to 65. The Soprano part has whole rests in measures 62, 63, and 64, followed by a half note in measure 65. The Piano part continues the accompaniment. Measure 62 starts with a mezzo-piano (*mp*) dynamic. A crescendo hairpin begins in measure 63, leading to a forte (*f*) dynamic in measure 64. The piano accompaniment features a melodic line in the right hand that rises in pitch, and a bass line in the left hand. Measure 65 ends with a half note in the right hand and a quarter note in the left hand.

Sop. 66

Pno 66

Detailed description: This system covers measures 66 to 69. The Soprano part has whole rests in measures 66, 67, and 68, followed by a half note in measure 69. The Piano part continues the accompaniment. Measure 66 starts with a mezzo-piano (*mp*) dynamic. The piano accompaniment features a melodic line in the right hand that rises in pitch, and a bass line in the left hand. Measure 69 ends with a half note in the right hand and a quarter note in the left hand.

70

Sop.

Pno

Red.

74 *p*

Sop.

When I am a wo-man

O

74

Pno

No pedal

Red.

78 *f*

Sop.

when I am a wo - man, my wells of salt brim and brim,

78

Pno

Folding A Shirt

Poetry by Denise Levertov
Music by Corey Sevett

Soprano

$\bullet = 68$

1 3

Fold-ing a shirt, a wo-man stands still for a mo-ment.

Piano

Sop.

4

to - re-call warmth of flesh

Pno

Sop.

7

Her care - ful hands hea - vy on a sleeve re - call a

Pno

Folding A Shirt

10

Sop.

ges - ture or a touch of love.

Pno

13

Sop.

She leans a-against the kit-chen wall

Pno

16

Sop.

listen-ing for a word of love but on-ly finds a sound like fear

Pno

Folding A Shirt

Sop. *ritard.*
run - ning thru the rooms a-bove

Pno *ritard.* *A tempo*
p

Sop. *mf*
(hum) - - -

Pno *Cresc.* *mf*

Sop.
- - With fold-ed clothes she folds her fear but

Pno

Folding A Shirt

29 Sop. *Riten.*
can-not put de-sire a - way and can-not make the si-lence hear - -

29 Pno *Riten.*

33 Sop. *Cresc.* - - - - -
Un - will-ing - ly

33 Pno *Cresc.*

37 Sop. - - - - -
she puts a - way the bread the

37 Pno *L.H.*

Folding A Shirt

Subito p

Sop. 39 wine the knife smooths the bed where lo-vers lay

Pno 39 *Subito p* *p*

Sop. 42 while times un - he - si - ta - ting knife

Pno 42

Sop. 45 cuts a-way the liv-ing hours the com-mon rit-u-als of life

Pno 45