

SIDNEY LANIER

SONGS

for Voice and Piano

Poems by
SIDNEY LANIER

Music by
BRUCE TRINKLEY

SIDNEY LANIER SONGS

for Voice and Piano

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COMPOSER'S NOTE

Sidney Lanier was born on February 3, 1842, in Macon, Georgia. He died on September 2, 1881, in Polk County, North Carolina after a long battle with tuberculosis. He attended Oglethorpe College and fought on the Confederate side in the Civil War, refusing promotion to remain in the same unit with his younger brother.

Lanier had a great aptitude for and love of music, eventually becoming principal flautist in the Peabody Orchestra in Baltimore. He spent time in the northeast trying to establish a career and reputation as a writer, but also lived in San Antonio and Florida seeking relief from his tuberculosis.

SIDNEY LANIER SONGS was composed during a residency at The Hambidge Center for the Creative Arts and Sciences in Rabun Gap, Georgia, in October 2007. The composer first encountered the poetry of Sidney Lanier in junior high school, as many of us did. And coming across a collection of his poetry in the Rabun County Library renewed an interest in this most famous and gifted of southern poets.

THE SHIP OF EARTH

Thou Ship of Earth, with Death, and Birth, and Life, and Sex aboard,
And fires of Desires burning hotly in the hold,
I fear thee, O! I fear thee, for I hear the tongue and sword
At battle on the deck, and the wild mutineers are bold!

The dewdrop morn may fall from off the petal of the sky,
But all the deck is wet with blood and stains the crystal red.
A pilot, GOD, a pilot! For the helm is left awry,
And the best sailors in the ship lie there among the dead!

THOU AND I

So one in heart and thought, I trow,
That thou might'st press the strings and I might draw the bow
And both would meet in music sweet,
Thou and I, I trow.

THE STIRRUP-CUP

Death, thou'rt a cordial old and rare:
Look, how compounded, with what care!
Time got his wrinkles reaping thee
Sweet herbs from all antiquity.

David to thy distillage went,
Keats, and Gotama excellent,
Omar Khayyam, and Chaucer bright,
And Shakspeare for a king-delight.

Then, Time, let not a drop be spilt:
Hand me the cup whene'er thou wilt:
'Tis thy rich strirrup-cup to me;
I'll drink it down right smilingly.

A BALLAD OF TREES AND THE MASTER

Into the woods my Master went,
Clean forspent, forspent,
Into the woods my Master came,
Forspent with love and shame.
But the olives they were not blind to Him,
The little gray leaves were kind to Him:
The thorn-tree had a mind to Him
When into the woods He came.

Out of the woods my Master went,
And He was well content.
Out of the woods my Master came,
Content with death and shame.
When Death and Shame would woo Him last.
From under the trees they drew Him last:
'Twas on a tree they slew Him - last
When out of the woods He came.

A SONG OF THE FUTURE

Sail fast, sail fast,
Ark of my hopes, Ark of my dreams;
Sweep lordly o'er the drownèd Past,
Fly glittering through the sun's strange beams;
Sail fast, sail fast.
Breaths of new buds from off some drying lea
With news about the Future scent the sea:
My brain is beating like the heart of Haste;
I'll loose me a bird upon this Present waste;
Go, trembling song,
And stay not long; oh, stay not long:
Thou'rt only a gray and sober dove,
But thine eye is faith and thy wing is love.

1. The Ship of Earth

3

Sidney Lanier

Bruce Trinkley

Tempestoso $\text{♩} = 60$ ***f***

Voice

Piano

ff *dim.* *simile*

4 Ship of Earth, with Death, and Birth, and Life, and Sex a -

mf

7 board, And fires of De - sires burn - ing hot - ly in the

mf *cresc.* *mp* *cresc.* *con pedale*

11 hold, I fear thee, O! I fear thee, for I

f

Thou

mp cresc. *mf*

hear the tongue and sword _____ At bat - tle on the

[14]

p cresc. *mf*

cresc. *ff*

[17] deck, and the wild mu - ti - neers are bold! _____

cresc. *ff dim.*

p

[21] The dew - drop morn may fall from off the

pp

mp *cresc. poco a poco*

[25] pet - al of the sky, But all the deck is

mp cresc. poco a poco

28 *f* *with abandon* *piu f*
 wet with blood and stains the crys - tal red. A

31 *dim.*
 pi - lot, God, a pi - lot! For the helm is left a -

34 *mp*
 wry, And the best sail - ors in the ship lie there a - mong the

38 *poco rit.*
 dead! *poco rit.*

diminuendo al fine

2. Thou and I

Sidney Lanier

Bruce Trinkley

Con grazia ed espressione ♩ = 112 *molto legato* *p*

Voice

Piano

mp *p*

con pedale

pochiss. rit. *a tempo* *mp*

pochiss. rit. *a tempo*

poco rit. *mf*

poco rit. *mp*

So

one in heart and thought, I trow, That thou might'st press the

strings and I might draw the bow And

a tempo

16 both would meet in mu - sic sweet, Thou and

a tempo

21 I, I trow. And trow. So one in

poco rit. *p* *poco rit.* *a tempo*

dim. *pp* *p*

27 heart and thought, I trow, That thou might'st press the strings and

pochiss. rit. *a tempo*

pochiss. rit. *a tempo*

calando *allarg.*

33 I might draw the bow.

calando *allarg.*

3. A Ballad of Trees and the Master

Sidney Lanier

Bruce Trinkley

Larghetto $\text{♩} = 56$

Piano *mf*

dim. *poco rit.*

mp

In - to the woods my Mas - ter went, Clean for-spent, for - spent, _____

con pedale

mf

In - to the woods my Mas - ter came, For - spent with love and shame. _____ But the

cresc. poco a poco

ol-ives they were not blind to Him, The lit-tle gray leaves were kind to Him: The

13

cresc. poco a poco

thorn-tree had a mind to Him When in - to the woods He came. When

17

f *dim. poco a poco* *mp*

f *dim. poco a poco*

in - to the woods He came. Out of the woods my Mas - ter went, And

21

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

He was well con - tent. Out of the woods my Mas - ter came, Con-

25

mf *mf*

cresc. poco a poco

tent with death and shame. When Death and Shame would woo Him last. From

29

cresc. poco a poco

dim. poco a poco

un - der the trees they drew Him last: 'Twas on a tree they slew Him last When

33

f

dim. poco a poco

mp *allarg.*

out of the woods He came. When out of the woods He came.

37

allarg.

mp

4. The Stirrup-Cup

11

Sidney Lanier

Bruce Trinkley

Brindisi ♩ = 152

Voice

Piano

f *poco marcato*

p cresc.

5 thou art a cor - dial old and rare: Look, how com -

mf *sub. p cresc.* *mf*

con pedale

11 pound - ed, with what care! Time got his wrin - kles reap - ing thee

sub. p *mp cresc. poco a poco*

f *poco marcato* *poco rit.* *a tempo*

17 Sweet herbs from all an - tiq - ui - ty.

poco rit. *a tempo*

f *p*

mp

23 Da - vid — to thy dis - til - lage went, — Keats, and —

simile

cresc. poco a poco

29 — Go - ta - ma — ex - cel - lent, — O - mar Khay -

cresc. poco a poco

f

35 yam, and Chau - cer bright, And Shak - spere for a king -

mf

dim.

mp *mf* *f*

41 de - light. Then, Time, let not a drop be

poco marcato

p cresc.

mf

47 spilt: Hand me the cup when - e'er thou wilt:

sub. p *mf* *sub. p*

53 'Tis thy rich stir - rup - cup to me; I'll drink it down right

mp cresc. poco a poco *f* *mp cresc. poco a poco* *mf*

poco marcato

59 smil - ing - ly. I'll drink it down right smil - ing -

ff *f*

poco rit.

65 ly.

poco rit. *8vb*

5. A Song of the Future

Sidney Lanier

Bruce Trinkley

Larghetto $\text{♩} = 56$

Piano

mf

mp

p

pp

mp

mf

con pedale

poco rit.

a tempo

poco rit.

a tempo

p

5 Sail fast, sail fast, Ark of my hopes, Ark of my dreams;

9 Sweep lord - ly o'er the drown - ed Past, Fly glit - ter - ing

13 through the sun's strange beams; Sail fast, sail fast.

mf *cresc.*

17 Breaths of new buds from off some dry - ing

mp cresc. *cresc.*

f *cresc.* *piu f*

21 lea — With news a - bout the Fu - ture scent the sea: —

mp cresc. poco a poco *f*

25 My brain is beat - ing — like the heart of Haste; — I'll

mp cresc. poco a poco

28 loose me a bird up - on this Pres - ent waste; — Go, trem -

f *sonore*

mp

bling song, And stay not long; oh, stay not long:

32

sub. p

p sempre non cresc.

Thou art on - ly a gray and so - ber dove, But thine eye

35

p

ossia

is faith and thy wing is

39

love.

43