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Winter Songs

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for
Janene Sheldon

Winter Songs

poems: Weldon Kees

Early Winter

Randall Snyder
2002

Ruminative ♩ = 66

Soprano

Piano

p *mf* *mp*

Mem - o - ry of sum - mer is

win - ter's con - scious - ness Sit - ting or walk - ing or mere - ly

stand - ing still

mf *rit.....* *A Tempo* *p*

4

7

3

Animato ♩ = 76

mf 3 3 3

Earn - ing a liv - ing or watch - ing the

10

f p mf

Calmato ♩ = 66

f mp 3

snow fall I am re - mem - ber - ing

12

mf p f p

3 3 mf

the sun on the side - walks in a warm - er place

15

8vb ii

recite 3 3

A small ho - tel and a dead girl's face

18

pp mf

20 I think of these in this high-er al-ti-tude star-ing West

22 But the room is cold the words in the books are

Animato ♩ = 76
25 cold and the quest-ion of whe-ther we get what we

27 ask for is ab-surd un-

A Tempo 1 ♩ = 66

30 an - swered by the sound of an un - latched door ratt - ling in

31 wind of the sound of snow on roofs or glare of the win - ter sun

pp as an aside
32 what we have learned is not what we were told I watch the snow

35 feel for the heart-beat that is not there

January

Static ♩ = 52

quasi recitative *p* *mp* *pp*

39 Morn-ing blue cold and still

42 eyes that have stared too long stare at the wedge of light

p *mf* *p* *fp*

45 at the end of the fro - zen room where snow on a

mf *p*

47 wind - ow - sill packed and cold as a life win - ters the sense of

mf *p* *pp*

50 *mf* *p* *3* *pp*
 wrong and emp-ti-ness and loss that is my a waken ing a

53 life-time drains a-way down a path of frost

55 *p* *<* *mp* *p* *mf* *3* *5* *3*
 My face in the look ing glass turns a gain from the light toward

57 *p* *<* *3* *3* *3* *ppp*
 frag-ments of the past that break with the end of sleep

59 *pp* This wak - en - ing

61 *fp* *pp* *p* this breath no long - er re - al

63 *mf* *p* this deep dark - ness where we toss

65 *pp* cov - er a life at the last Sleep is too short a death

That Winter

Cold $\text{♩} = 80$

rit...... A Tempo

69

mf *ff* *f* *mp*

8^{vb} *accel.*..... A Tempo

72 Cold ground and cold - er stone un - earthed in ru - ined pass - age - ways

p *p*

75 the par - o - dies of build - ings in the

f *p* *pp* *f* *mf*

8^{vb} *pp* *f*

79 snow sno (w) tossed and rag - ing through a

p *f* *p* *mf*

81 world it im-i-tates that drives for-ev-er north to what is ru-mored to be

ff *p* *mf*

lyric

84 Spring

p *accel.....* *rit.....* ♩ = 92

87 to see the fa-ces you had thought were put a-way for-

mp

89 ev-er swept like leaves a-mong the crowd

f *p* *mf* *f*

mp *f*

mf *p* *f*

mp

f

mf *p* *f*

92 *mp* 3 is to be drawn like them on win-ter af-ter - noons

95 *p* to av-en-ues *f* you saw *p* de-mol-ished years *mf* be-

97 fore the house-es still re-main like mon-u-ments

99 their win-dows cracked

102 *f* *mf* *p*

FOR SALE signs on the lawn

105 A Tempo 1 ♩ = 80 *f* *p*

Then grass u-pon those lawns a - gain! and dogs

107 *p* *f* *mp*

in fash - ion twen - ty years a - go the

109 *p* *mf* *p*

streets my - ster - i - ous through sum - mer shade

112 *p* the mar-ve-lous worlds

115 with - in the world each o-pen-ing like a hand

118 and prom-i-sing a con-stant course

120 You see your - self a fool with smiles one you thought

Like The Beginning

121 dead

mf *f* 8^{va}

123 And snow is rag - ing

f *mp* (8^{va})

124 rag - ing in a dark - er wor - ld

f *mf* *ff* 8^{va} 8^{va}

In the Style of Plainchant $\text{♩} = 76$

Epilog: Rites For Winter

recite throughout

127

Now

132

to those dawns swept up from poles in the long rush of

135

Feb - ru - ar - y storms when flakes are swept a - way through

137

dark - ness to the north and moun - tains of blue ice are me - tal to the sun

140 of - fer no light no fires your na - ked - ness the numbed and

143 emp - ty hand is per - fect of - fer - ing the blood un - thawed the

146 small bones of the frost With - out this rit - u - al among these plains of ice

149 the black snows of the la - ter year are stayed black snows

152 that rage be-fore the warmth re- turns turn-ing to rains

155 slow rains that end as suns roll thun- der through di- vis- ioned skies

158 ex- po- sure moves the blood a- gain

160

rit.....

the veins are warm green worlds re - hearse to win - ter eyes

mp