

Ben Morris

for the 2021 Source Song Festival

DEATH, INC.



for soprano and piano

Text by Joyce Sutphen

from Carrying Water to the Field: New and Selected Poems

© June 2021

Ben Morris Music

www.benmorrismusic.com

bmorriscomposer@gmail.com

973-722-0460

Ben Morris
DEATH, INC.

for soprano and piano

Duration: ca. 3'40"

Text:

Without his scythe and crooked knife
he's simply an ordinary guy.

You see him at the bus stop,
and he's reading a folded newspaper,

or he's in the car next to you
on the freeway—first he passes

you, and then you pass him.
It goes on like that for a long time,

but though you glance over at him,
he never looks back at you,

which (it turns out) is a good thing.
All the while you've been

waiting for the carriage to stop
(kindly) at your door—the carriage

that would take you past the schoolyard
and the fields, accompanied by

the gentle clip-clop of horses' hooves,
but suddenly you realize he might be

driving an eighteen-wheeler, high on
meth, tires screeching. Yes—it could

happen like that, but it's just
as likely he might be the shadow

of a tree you planted years ago
falling across the green lawn.

for the 2021 Source Song Festival

DEATH, INC.

for soprano and piano

Joyce Sutphen (b. 1949)

Ben Morris (b. 1993)

Casually dark, 12/8 swing ♩ = 88

Soprano

+ = sticky tack muting on F6, Gb6, and C7

Piano

mf

4 *mf* **A**

With-out his scythe and croo-ked knife he's sim-ply an or-din-a-ry

7

guy. You see him at the bus stop

2

9 *casual* **B** *p dolce*

and he's rea-ding a fold-ed news-pa- per or he's

11

in the car next to you

13 *gliss.*

on the free - way

15 **C** Poco più mosso ♩ = 92

mf

p

3

First, he pass - es you _____ and

mf

p

This system contains the first two measures of the piece. It features a vocal line and a piano accompaniment. The vocal line begins with a half note 'First,' followed by a quarter note 'he', a quarter note 'pass - es', and a half note 'you' which is tied to the next measure. The piano accompaniment consists of chords and moving lines in both hands. The key signature has two flats, and the time signature is 12/8. The tempo is marked 'Poco più mosso' with a quarter note equal to 92 beats per minute.

17 *fp* _____ *mf* *p*

then you pass him _____ He

p *mf*

Red.

This system contains measures 17 and 18. The vocal line starts with a half note 'then', followed by a quarter note 'you', a quarter note 'pass', and a half note 'him' which is tied to the next measure. The piano accompaniment continues with chords and moving lines. The dynamic markings are *fp* (fortissimo piano) for the first measure and *mf* (mezzo-forte) for the second. The tempo remains 'Poco più mosso'.

19 *routinely* *poco rit.* _____ *mf*

pas-ses you _____ you pass him it

pp

This system contains measures 19 and 20. The vocal line begins with a half note 'pas-ses you' which is tied to the next measure, followed by a quarter note 'you', a quarter note 'pass', and a half note 'him' which is tied to the next measure. The piano accompaniment continues with chords and moving lines. The dynamic markings are *pp* (pianissimo) for the first measure and *mf* (mezzo-forte) for the second. The tempo is marked 'poco rit.' (poco ritardando). The key signature has two flats, and the time signature is 12/8.

Death, Inc. | Ben Morris

4
21 **D** $\text{♩} = 88$ *f* *port.*

goes on like that _____ for a long

mf *f*

23 *rit.* *pp* *a tempo* $\text{♩} = 88$ *mf*

time _____ but

p *pp*

26 **E**

though you glance o - ver at him he

mf

28

ne - ver looks back at you _____ which

30

F *meno mosso* ♩. = 84

rit.

(it turns out) is a good

32

meno mosso ♩. = 60

p _____ *pp*

p *freely, espress.*

G

thing. _____ All the while you've been wait - ing _____ for the

una corda

Ped.

6

35

car - riage to stop (kind - ly) at your door

poco rit. H meno mosso ♩ = 56

37

the car - riage that will take you past the school-yard and the

39

fields ac-com-pan-ied by the gen - tle clip clop

dead sound, mute with sticky tack (very little pitch)

mf (right hand only)

sostenuto pedal - keep low notes sustained

p

of hor-ses' hooves

(8) *ppp* *p* *mf* *ppp*

loco *8va*

sub. ♩ = 80

mf more urgently, quasi-recit.

but sud denly you rea-lize he might be dri-ving an eight-teen wheel - er

loco

like emerging from a tunnel

f *pp*

ff

high on

ff suddenly bombastic

p

8

ffp

47

meth

f

48

ff

gliss.

ti - res

screach -

ing

rit.

pp

50

calming down

p

52 *p* **J** ♩ = 80 *rit.*

Yes— it could hap-pen like

55 *wistful* *meno mosso* ♩ = 76

that but it's just as like - ly

57 *rit.* **K** *freely floating* ♩ = ca. 52 *dolce*

He might be the sha - dow the sha-dow of a tree

rit.

rit.

59

take your time

you plan-ted long a - go

Soaring ♩ = 48

L

mf lush

61

fall - - ing fall - - ing a -

gliss. *gliss.* *p*

mf rich

accel. ♩ = 72 accel.

fp

63

cross a - cross the green

revving up, like Jerry Lee Lewis

p *sub. p*

gva--- loco

rit. **M** a tempo primo ♩ = 88

66

Musical score for measures 66-68. The score is in 6/8 time. Measure 66 features a vocal line with a long note and a piano accompaniment of chords. Measure 67 has a vocal line with a slur and piano accompaniment with chords and a bass line. Measure 68 continues the vocal line with a slur and piano accompaniment with chords and a bass line. Dynamics include *f* and *lawn.*

69

Musical score for measures 69-70. The score is in 6/8 time. Measure 69 has a vocal line with a slur and piano accompaniment with chords and a bass line. Measure 70 continues the vocal line with a slur and piano accompaniment with chords and a bass line. Dynamics include *f*.

71

molto rit. ♩ = 66

Musical score for measures 71-73. The score is in 6/8 time. Measure 71 has a vocal line with a slur and piano accompaniment with chords and a bass line. Measure 72 has a vocal line with a slur and piano accompaniment with chords and a bass line. Measure 73 has a vocal line with a slur and piano accompaniment with chords and a bass line. Dynamics include *fff*, *hard cut off*, and *pp*.