

Windy Nights

*for two-part children's chorus,
piano and optional recorder descant*

RUSSELL NADEL

(2009)

Duration: c. 3'00"



Text:

Whenever the moon and stars are set,
Whenever the wind is high,
All night long in the dark and wet,
A man goes riding by.
Late in the night when the fires are out,
Why does he gallop and gallop about?
Whenever the trees are crying aloud,
And ships are tossed at sea,
By, on the highway, low and loud,
By at the gallop goes he.
By at the gallop he goes, and then
By he comes back at the gallop again.

- Robert Louis Stevenson, from *A Child's Garden of Verses* (1885)

Program Notes:

I composed this setting of Robert Louis Stevenson's "Windy Nights" because I was inspired by the evocative, suggestive, mysterious text. My original intention was to compose a set of settings of Stevenson poems, to be performed together, but only this one came out to my liking (to date). I used vocal ostinati – a technique with which our sixth-graders are familiar – gradual dynamic changes, and voice exchanges to highlight the spookiness of the words.

I was delighted with the premiere performance, with more than 900 of the finest sixth-grade singers in Fairfax County, VA, singing under the direction of Dr. Lynnel Joy Jenkins. Ten students also did an excellent job learning and performing the recorder descant. It was an honor and a privilege to be able to present my work to such a large group of developing musicians, and to have them sing it in a deeply musical way. I am grateful to them for their hard work.

Performance Notes:

Exaggerate diction, especially of the word "galloping."

Pay particular attention to the dynamics, especially as they change over long periods of time.

Vocal Ranges:



Part 1



Part 2

– *Russell Nadel*
August 2010

WINDY NIGHTS

Robert Louis Stevenson

RUSSELL NADEL

Moderato, pulsing (♩ = 60)

Optional Soprano Recorder Descant

Voice 1

Voice 2

Piano

5

Rec.

Voice 1

Voice 2

Pno.

mp spooky

When

mf

8^{vb}

9

Voice 1
e - ver the moon and stars are set,

Voice 2
mp spooky
When - e - ver the wind is high,

Pno.
pp
mp legg.

(8)---|

13

Rec.

Voice 1
mf All night long *mp* A man goes ri - ding by.

Voice 2
mf All night long in the dark and wet, *mp* A man goes ri - ding by.

Pno.
f

18 *mp spooky*
Voice 1 when the
Voice 2 *mp spooky*
Late in the night,
Pno. *pp*

21
Rec.
Voice 1 *f*
fires are out, Why does he gal-lop and gal-lop a - bout?
Voice 2 *f*
Why does he gal-lop and gal-lop a - bout?
Pno. *f* *mp legg.* *8va*

26

Rec.

mf spooky

Voice 1

When - e - ver the trees are cry-ing a-loud,

Voice 2

mp spooky

mf

When-e - ver the trees are cry-ing, And

Pno.

p

30

Rec.

mp

Voice 1

And ships are lost at sea, By, on the high

Voice 2

f

ships are lost at sea, By, on the high - way, low and loud,

Pno.