

*Four E. E. Cummings Songs* was written in 1972, while I was at the University of Minnesota. Inspired by Mr. Cummings' whimsical poetry, the work was one of my "pet projects" for Paul Fetler's composition seminar.

duration: c. 11:30

Spring is like a perhaps hand  
(which comes carefully  
out of Nowhere)arranging  
a window,into which people look(while  
people stare  
arranging and changing placing  
carefully there a strange  
thing and a known thing here)and

changing everything carefully

spring is like a perhaps  
Hand in a window  
(carefully to  
and fro moving New and  
Old things,while  
people stare carefully  
moving a perhaps  
fraction of flower here placing  
an inch of air there)and

without breaking anything.

the Cambridge ladies who live in furnished  
souls  
are unbeautiful and have comfortable minds  
(also, with the church's protestant blessings  
daughters, unscented shapeless spirited)  
they believe in Christ and Longfellow, both  
dead,  
are invariably interested in so many things—  
at the present writing one still finds  
delighted fingers knitting for the is it Poles?  
perhaps. While permanent faces coyly  
bandy  
scandal of Mrs. N and Professor D  
. . . . the Cambridge ladies do not care,  
above  
Cambridge if sometimes in its box of  
sky lavender and cornerless, the  
moon rattles like a fragment of angry candy

Thy fingers make early flowers of  
all things.

thy hair mostly the hours love:  
a smoothness which  
sings, saying  
(though love be a day)  
do not fear, we will go amaying.

thy whitest feet crisply are straying.  
Always  
thy moist eyes are at kisses playing,  
whose strangeness much  
says; singing  
(though love be a day)  
for which girl art thou flowers bringing?

To be thy lips is a sweet thing  
and small.  
Death, Thee i call rich beyond wishing  
if this thou catch,  
else missing.  
(though love be a day  
and life nothing, it shall not stop kissing).

a pretty a day  
(and every fades)  
is here and away  
(but born are maids  
to flower an hour  
in all,all)

o yes to flower  
until so blithe  
a doer a wooer  
some limber and lithe  
some very fine mower  
a tall;tall

some jerry so very  
(and nellie and fan)  
some handsomest harry  
(and sally and nan  
they tremble and cower  
so pale:pale)

for betty was born  
to never say nay  
but lily could learn  
and lily could pray  
and fewer were shyer  
than doll. doll

