Sally Greenaway - Dawn of evening

1. What does the title mean?

- Dawn of evening refers to the beginning of evening - twilight, when daylight is fading and night is beginning.
- The title is reflected in the quiet, spacious and lyrical character of the music.
- The generally soft dynamics, sustained melodic lines and transparent texture create a calm, still atmosphere.
- Each variation returns to the same basic theme, giving the music a sense of continuity while the increasing decoration suggests gradual change.
- Variation 4 (bb. 25-33) is the most rhythmically active version of the theme before the music subsides into the final quiet chords.

2. What keys are used?

- Home key: F minor/F aeolian.
- There are no modulations: the piece remains centred on F minor throughout.
- bb. 1-33: F minor.
- E natural in bb. 4 and 12 briefly suggests F harmonic minor.
- D natural in bb. 6, 14, 22 and 30 introduces a Dorian colour.
- A natural in b. 28 changes the F-minor chord to F major, creating a brief Tierce de Picardie effect within the final variation.

3. What period and style is this from?

- 20th/21st Century Australian music; originally composed in 2007 and revised in 2025.
- Song/ballad style, influenced by pop and film music.
- Homophonic texture: the right hand carries the principal melody while the left hand supplies chordal accompaniment.
- Repeated variation structure and recurring chord patterns.
- Flexible use of minor-scale forms and modal colouring, particularly Aeolian and Dorian.
- The recurring D-flat - E-flat - F minor progression (VI - VII - i) is characteristic of pop-influenced harmony - use of chord progressions.
- Open fifths and consecutive fifths.

4. What is the structure/form of the piece?

- Variation form: four versions of the same basic melodic theme and accompaniment - like song and verses.

Variation 1 - bb. 1-8

- Two four-bar phrases.
- First phrase ends openly on the dominant; the second gives a more conclusive return to F minor.

Variation 2 - bb. 9-16

- Closely follows the first variation, with added melodic decoration.
- The accompaniment in bb. 9-11 is altered.

Variation 3 - bb. 17-24

- The material is placed an octave lower.
- Both hands become more ornamented.
- The harmony is adjusted so that both phrases return to F minor through the subtonic.

Variation 4 - bb. 25-33

- The most highly decorated and rhythmically active variation, like an improvisation.

- Activity reaches its peak around bb. 25-28.
- b. 28 briefly changes F minor to F major through A natural.
- The final cadence arrives in b. 32; the tonic is restated in b. 33.

5. What does the notation mean?

- **With rubato, solace and compassion -** With flexible timing and a consoling, compassionate character.
- **dotted minim = ca 34-42 -** The dotted-minim beat is approximately 34-42 beats per minute.
- **crotchet = 68-84 -** Equivalent alternative metronome indication: approximately 68-84 crotchet beats per minute.
- **2/2** - cut common time - 2 minims per bar
- **p espressivo -** Softly and expressively.
- **con pedale -** With pedal; use the sustaining pedal.
- **p -** Piano - soft.
- **pp -** Pianissimo - very soft.
- **mp -** Mezzo-piano - moderately soft.
- **mf -** Mezzo-forte - moderately loud.
- **f -** Forte - loud.
- **cresc. -** Crescendo - gradually become louder.
- **dim. -** Diminuendo - gradually become softer.
- **crescendo hairpin (<) -** Gradually become louder.
- **diminuendo hairpin (>) -** Gradually become softer.
- **purposeful, elegant -** With a purposeful and elegant character.
- **cadenza-esque -** In the manner of a cadenza - a freer, decorative solo-like passage.
- **stoic, flowing -** Steady and restrained in character while maintaining a flowing line.
- **rall. -** Rallentando - gradually slow down.
- **relaxed, gently -** With a relaxed, gentle character.
- **lontano -** Distant; sounding as though from far away.
- **triplet (3) -** Three notes performed in the time normally occupied by two notes of the same value.
- **slur -** Connect the notes smoothly as one phrase or gesture.
- **tie -** Join notes of the same pitch so that they sound as one sustained note.
- **tenuto line -** Hold the note for its full value, usually with gentle emphasis.
- **grace-note / ornamental small notes -** Decorative notes played in relation to the principal note.