

## **The Ravin' Alto**

(with apologies to Edgar Allan Poe)

Every Tuesday bright or dreary, whether we feel fine or weary,  
Though we can no longer meet as we once did in days of yore,  
Still we gather hearts a-beating with a cacophonous greeting,  
When we tune in to the Zoom we've all come truly to abhor,  
Each small box reminding us of the detachment we endure.

Such has life been -- not much more.

Months have passed in this strange fashion; still no snags have dulled our passion  
For the music and for Ryan's teaching which we all adore.

Though warm-ups are energetic and our breathing gets frenetic  
And our minds and mouths and lungs may feel sometimes that they're at war;  
Wearing uniforms of sweat pants, panting to our very core,

Will we give up? Nevermore!

Led on by our fearless maestro, even though he doesn't quite know  
How we sound in isolation, each behind a thick, closed door.  
We sing out with grace and spirit, grateful that he doesn't hear it,  
Each of us a soloist as we let our proud voices soar.

Nearby houses tremble as we let our full-mouthed voices roar.

Quoth our neighbors: "Please, no more!"

Truth is we can't keep from singing, even when cell phones are ringing,  
Thanks to the mute button, we can silence meddlers we deplore.  
So we concentrate on shifting to music that is uplifting,  
Walking us through valleys and terrain where we've not been before,  
List'ning to the voices that were largely unheard heretofore.

What a treat we've been in for!

So we want to thank this Texan, though his lip trills can be vexin'  
We're glad Ryan found his way here to New England's grand North Shore.  
And though country music doesn't play much here we hope this wasn't  
A deterrent to his joy, since we don't hear much Tim McGraw.  
Substitute Old Aaron Copeland for that cowboy Tim McGraw.

Little horses never bore!

Even when his ribs are broken, you won't find our Ryan chokin'  
As the chorus works on with precision like the Marine Corps.  
So whene'er Vaughn-Williams baffles, we just get back in our saddles,  
Toward an unknown region where we've surely never sung before,  
Following our leader with his usual esprit de corps  
Quoth our Ryan: "Read the score!"

Now as this weird year is waning, we applaud the skills we're gaining,  
Even though technology presents us challenges galore,  
We commit to keep on going, ever-growing, rhythms flowing,  
Tapping on our body parts, whichever ones feel the least sore,  
As together whether we're apart or not, here's our encore:  
"NCS - Forevermore!"

Epilogue:

Now to our board, always working, solving problems where they're lurking  
Making sure we'd meet each week with interesting plans in store.  
Mary Ann and all the crew did whatever they had to do,  
Although they knew this year would be unlike all that had gone before.  
They ensured we had new avenues of music to explore.  
Thanks to them – forevermore!

*Debbie Szabo May 2021*