

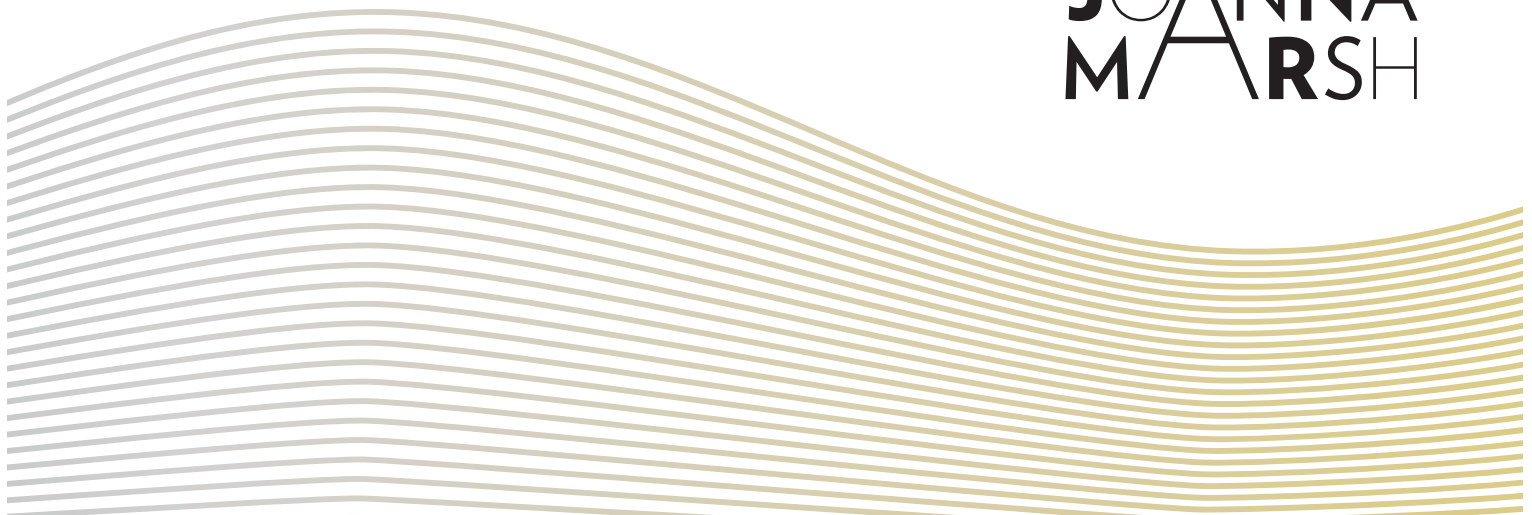
Joanna Marsh

Arabesques

mixed voices unaccompanied
(S, A, A, T, Bar, B)

Sample
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JOANNA
M/ARSH



Joanna Marsh

Arabesques (2015 – revised 18th August 2020)

mixed voices unaccompanied
(S, A, A, T, Bar, B)

Total duration c.13'

ISMN 979-0-9002355-5-8

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Arabesques

A commission for the Kings Singers, Arabesques are settings of four short but highly evocative poems by contemporary male Arab poets. Each tells the story of a woman they have known: 'A Woman', remembers a passionate encounter, 'You want', muses on her acquisitiveness, 'Fading', observes her aging, 'Seeds in Flight', finds rebirth after her death. 'Fading' was premiered at the London A Cappella Festival, on 29th January 2015. 'A Woman', and 'Seeds in Flight', were premiered at The American School in Doha, on May 7th 2015. The pieces were revised in November 2015. A fourth piece 'You want' was included in the set and this arrangement was created to enable the works to be sung by choirs.

1. A Woman

How will I drag my feet to her now?
In which land will I see her,
And on which street of what city
Should I ask about her?
And if I find her house,
Let's say I do,
Will I ring the bell?
How should I answer?
And how will I stare at her face
As I touch the light wine
Seeping between her fingers.
How should I say hello...
And how will I take the pain
Of all these years?
Once twenty years ago,
In an air-conditioned train,
I kissed her all night through...

Sa'adi Youssef b.1934 Iraq

2. You want

You want, like all women,
Solomon's treasure.
You want pools of perfume,
Combs of ivory.
You want a horde of slaves.
Sharazad, like all women want.
You want me to give you
The stars, the heav'ns.
You want me to give you
The stars in the heav'ns

Nazir Kabbani 1923-1998 Syria

3. Fading

Imagine where this dove will go;
Imagine when her wings turn grey,
When her call grows old.

Will she turn to the mirrors of young sparrows
Who slide into delusion?
Or will a deaf sparrow offer her
A perch to sing?
How will she apologise to a traveller
Wanting to stroke her feathers
When the flock scatters?
How will she strut through the courtyard
Or impress the grass?
Will she look for a kind boy to grind her
A grain of wheat,
Or an old flame to relight aging passions?
Perhaps she will divide her sadness
Between a window and a metal cage.
Perhaps she'll become a professional mourner
At the funerals of birds.
Imagine where this dove will go
When the trees donate their lowest branch.
Imagine when neighbours
Are indifferent to her past, fading.

Abboud al Jabiri b.1963 Iraq

4. Seeds in Flight

An ancient woman, who has lived all seasons,
Wanders the earth gathering camomile.
Each flower in her apron is a star,
Her apron is the sky.
When she reaches the house,
She strews them to dry
Like shells on a beach –
To bring good luck,
To whisper the future.
In the sun her tattoo glistens,
A star glints in her golden earring,
The camomile dries.
Her hand, hennaed with God's names,
Spun the wool of the flock,
Embroidered the wedding clothes,
Gathered the dried flowers.
But next season, when the future arrived,
It silenced the whispers.
She was buried with her ancestors.
And yet as if by chance,
As if by magic,
As if by a miracle
The camomile grows each season.
Many seeds have flown.
These seeds remain.

Khaled Abdallah b.1970 Gaza

Arabesques

1. A WOMAN

Sa'adi Youssef
b.1934 Iraq

Joanna Marsh

$\text{♩} = 98$

SOPRANO

ALTO 1 *mf sost.*
How will I drag my feet to her

ALTO 2 *mp*
How will I _____ drag my feet to her

TENOR *mp*
Drag my feet to her

BARITONE *mp*
How will I _____

BASS

5 *più f*
How will I drag my feet to her

mf
now? How will I drag my feet to her

mf dolce
now, _____ to _____ her now? How will I drag my feet to her

mf
now? How will I dra - (a)g my feet to her _____

now, to her now? How will feet to her _____

mf
now, to her now? How will feet to her

10

mf sost.

now? In which land will I see her, which street of

mf sost.

now? In which land will I see her, which street of

mp *mf sost.*

now, to her now? In which land will I see her, which street of

mp *mf sost.*

now, to her now? In which land and on which street of

mp *mf sost.*

now, to her now? In which land will I see her, and on which street

mp *mf sost.*

now, to her now? In which land which street

14

sost. mp

what ci - ty _____ should I ask a - bout her? _____

what ci - ty _____

p

what ci - ty _____ a - bout her _____ if I find _

sost. mp *mf sost.*

what ci - ty _____ should I ask a - bout her? _____ And if I

p

a - bout her _____ if I find _

mp

what an (n)

19

mf sost. find her house ___ *mf* ring the bell? ___

___ her house and ___ *mp* will I ring the bell, *p* ring ___

mf find let's say ___ I do, will I ring *mp* ring the bell? ___

___ her house and ___ *p* Will I ring the bell, ring ___

mf let's say ___ I do *mp* ring the bell? ___

24

mf How would I an - swer? *f sost.* How should I an - swer

mf How would I an - swer? *mf* How should I an - swer ___ *f sost.* and how will I

mp How would I *f* and how

___ *mp* would I an - swer? How should I an - swer ___ and how will I

p How would I *mf* an - swer *f* how will I

___ *f* would I an - swer?

poco rit. a tempo

mf

rit.

tenderly

her face

mp

mf sost.

tenderly

stare at her face as I touch the light wine

mp

mf

tenderly

her face I touch the light wine

mp

mf sost.

tenderly

stare at her face as I touch the light wine

mp

mf

tenderly

stare at her fa(ce) at her face as I touch the light wine

mf

mf

stare at her touch

Poco meno mosso ♩ = 92

mf

rit.

mp

seep - - - ing

mf

mp

seep - ing, seep - ing 'tween her fin - gers, -

mf

mp

seep - ing, seep - ing be - tween her fin - gers, -

mf

mp

seep - ing, seep - ing be - tween her fin - gers, -

mf

mp

seep - ing, seep - ing 'tween her fin - gers, -

mf

seep - ing, seep - ing

37

Tempo I ♩ = 98

mf *rit.*

fin - gers? —

mf

'tween her fin - gers? —

mp *p*

fin - gers? should I —

mp *p*

be - tween her fin - gers? — How should I, —

mp *mf sost.*

be - tween her fin - gers? — How

mp

'tween her fin - gers? —

42

mf legato

and

mf sost.

How should I say, hel - lo and

mf

how should I should say, hel - lo and how will

how should how should I say and how —

should I say, should say hel - lo

mf

hel - lo

how will I take the pain of

how will, how will I take, I take the pain, I take the pain of

how will I take the pain of

how will I take I take the pain, I take the pain of

how will, how will, how will I take the pain of

of

f *mf* *f* *mp* *f* *mf* *p* *f* *mf* *f* *mf*

all these years? Once

all, of all these, these years? Once

all these years, these years? Once

all, of all these, these years, these years? Once

all these years, these years? Once

all these years? Once

mp *f* *mp* *f* *mp* *mp*

51 *f* *mf*

twen - ty years a - go, I kissed her

f *mf*

twen - ty years a - go in an air - con - di - tioned train

f *mf*

a - go, air - con - di - tioned train I kissed her

f *mf*

a - go in an air - con - di - tioned train

f *mf*

twen - ty years a - go, I kissed her

f *mf*

in an air - con - di - tioned train I kissed her

56 *mp* *rit.* *dim.* *p*

all the night through, the night, the night through.

mp *dim.* *p*

the night, the night through.

mf dim. *mp* *dim.* *p*

all the night through, all the night through.

mf *mp dim.*

all the night through, the night, the night.

all the night through.

all the night through.

2. YOU WANT

Nazir Kabbani
1923–1998 Syria

Joanna Marsh

$\text{♩} = 120$
ad lib. first two beats

mf

SOPRANO

Musical notation for Soprano part, measures 1-4. Lyrics: You want

ALTO 1

Musical notation for Alto 1 part, measures 1-4. Lyrics: You, you want

ALTO 2

Musical notation for Alto 2 part, measures 1-4. Lyrics: You want, you want, you want, you

TENOR

Musical notation for Tenor part, measures 1-4. Lyrics: You want, you want, you want, you

BARITONE

Empty musical staff for Baritone part, measures 1-4.

BASS

Musical notation for Bass part, measures 1-4. Lyrics: You want, you want, you want, you

4

Musical notation for Soprano part, measures 5-8. Lyrics: you want like all wo - men

Musical notation for Alto 1 part, measures 5-8. Lyrics: you want like all wo - men

Musical notation for Alto 2 part, measures 5-8. Lyrics: want, you want, you want, you want, wo - men

Musical notation for Tenor part, measures 5-8. Lyrics: want, you want, you want, you want, wo - men

Empty musical staff for Baritone part, measures 5-8.

Musical notation for Bass part, measures 5-8. Lyrics: want, you want, you want, you want, wo - men

8

mf
want, trea - sure trea - sure

f *mf*
want, So - lo - mon's trea - sure trea - sure

f *mf*
want, So - lo - mon's trea - sure you

8 *mf*
want, You want, you want, trea - sure you

mf
You want, you want, trea - sure

want, You want, you want, you

11 *mp* *f*
So - - - lo-mon's trea -

f
So - - - lo-mon's trea -

mf *f*
want So - lo-mon's you want, you

mf *f*
want So - lo-mon's So - lo-mon's you want, you

So - - - lo-mon's

mf *f*
want, So - lo-mon's you want, you

15 *sub. mp*

- sure, trea - sure like all wo - men

- sure, trea - sure.

sub. mp

want, trea - sure all wo - men

sub. mp

want, trea - sure like all wo - men.

f *sub. mp*

want, you want like all men.

sub. mp

want, trea - sure all

a tempo

19 *p* *mp*

want

mp *p*

you want you want you want you want you want you want you

p *mp*

want

mf

Pools of per - fume

22

mp
you —

mf
want combs of i - vo - ry — you —

p *mp* *mf*
combs of you want you want you want — you want a horde

mp *mf*
you want you want you want — you want a horde

mp *mf* *sub. mp*
combs — of i - vo - ry — you want

mp *mf*
combs — of a horde —

25

want, you — want, a horde of slaves

want, you — want, a horde of slaves

mf
a horde — of — slaves

mp *p*
you want you want, slaves — you want you want —

you want you want, a horde of — slaves — want —

— a horde — of — slaves

30

mf *mp*

per - fume a

mp *mf* *mp*

pools of per - fume i - vo - ry, a

mp

combs of i - vo - ry, a

p *mp*

you want you want you want combs of i - vo - ry, a

p *mp*

pools of per - fume combs of i - vo - ry, a

mp

combs of i - vo - ry, a

34

mf *mp*

horde of slaves. Sha - ha - ra - zad,

mf *mp*

horde of slaves Sha - ha - ra - zad,

mf

horde of slaves

mf *mp*

horde of slaves like

mf *mp*

horde of slaves like

mf

horde of slaves

39

p Sha - ha - ra - zad, *p* Sha -

p Sha - ha - ra-zad, like all wo-men! *mf* Sha - *p*

like all wo-men! *p* Sha -

all wo-men! *p* Sha - ha - ra-zad, like all wo-men! *mf* Sha - *p*

all wo-men! *p* Sha - ha - ra-zad, like all wo-men! *mf* Sha - *mp*

Sha - ha - ra-zad, like all wo-men! Sha -

43

mf - ha - ra - zad, *p* wo - men, want like

mf - ha - ra - zad, like all wo - men! *p* Sha - ha - ra - zad, like

mf - ha - ra - zad, like all wo - men! *p* Sha - ha - ra - zad, like

mf - ha - ra - zad, like all wo - men! *p* Sha - ha - ra - zad, like

mf - ha - ra - zad, like all wo - men, want like

mf - ha - ra - zad, like all wo - men! *p* Sha - ha - ra - zad, like

46 *mf* *sub. p* *f* *With a swagger*

all wo - men want, _____ You want me to give _____

all wo - men want, _____ You want me to

all wo - men want, _____ You want to

all wo - men want, _____ You want me to

all wo - men want, _____ me

all wo - men _____ me

50

_____ you the stars _____ in the heav'ns, _____ you want me

give you the stars in the heav'ns, _____ you want me to

give the stars the heav'ns, _____

give you the stars the heav'ns, _____ you want me to

you the the heav'ns to

you the the heav'ns to

Broader

54

mf *f*

the stars _____ in the heav'ns. You want me to give _

give you _____ the stars _____ in the heav'ns. You want me to give _

the stars _____ in the heav'ns. You want me to give _

give you the stars _____ heav'ns. You want me to give _

give you the stars _____ in the heav'ns. You want me to give _

give you _____ to give _

58

molto rit. *p*

— you the stars _____ in the hea - - - - vens.

— you the stars _____ in the hea - - - - vens.

— you the stars _____ in the hea - - - - vens.

— you the stars _____ in the hea - - - - vens.

— you the stars _____ in the _____ vens.

— you the stars _____ in the _____

3. FADING

Abboud al Jabiri
b.1963 Iraq

Joanna Marsh

$\text{♩} = \text{c.}92$

SOPRANO
Where _____ this

ALTO 1
mm _____ dove _

ALTO 2
seamless mp < > *sim.*
I - ma - gine, i - ma - gine, i - ma - gine, i -

TENOR
seamless mp < > *sim.*
I - ma - gine, i - ma - gine, i - ma - gine, i -

BARITONE

BASS

5

dove will go; _____ when her

go, _____ o, _____ o; _____ when _____

- ma - gine, i - ma - gine, _____ i - ma - gine, i - ma - gine, i -

- ma - gine, i - ma - gine, _____ i - ma - gine, i - ma - gine, i -

airy sigh p *gliss.* *mp*
(ahhh) _____ fad - ing (ng)

p *mp*
fad - ing (ng)

9

(9)

wings turn grey, — when her call grows old. —

(9)

wings turn grey, — when her call grows old. —

-ma - gine, i - ma - gine, i - ma - gine, i - ma - gine.

-ma - gine, i - ma - gine, i - ma - gine, old. —

mp *mf*

fad - ing (ng) i - ma - gine, i -

mp *mf*

fad - ing (ng)

13

(9) *mp* *sost.* (9)

— Will she turn to the mir - rors — of young spar - rows who

(9) *mp* (9)

— Will she turn to the mir - rors — of young spar - rows who

mp (9)

Will — turn to the mir - rors — of young spar - rows who

mp

Will she — turn who

mp

-ma - gine mir - rors young spar - rows

mp

young spar - rows —

16

slide de - lu - sion? Will a deaf spar-row of - *cresc.*

slide in - to de - lu - sion? Or will a deaf spar - row of - *cresc.*

(9) slide in - to de - lu - sion? Or will a deaf spar-row of - *cresc.*

(9) slide in - to de - lu - sion? Or will a deaf of - *cresc.*

slide in - to de - lu - sion? Or will a deaf spar-row

20

- fer her a perch to sing, to sing, *mf* *f*

- fer her a perch to sing, to sing, to *mf* *f*

- fer her a perch to sing, sing, to sing, *mf* *f*

- fer her a perch to sing, to sing, *mf* *f*

sing, sing, *mf* *f*

sing, *f*

sing, *f*

23

mp , *mf*

sing? Tra - vel - ler

mp , *mf*

sing? How will she a - po - lo - gise to a tra - vel - ler

mp ,

sing? How

mp , *mf*

sing? To a trav -

mp , *mf*

sing? How trav -

27

stroke her fea - thers when the flock scat - ters? _

want - ing to stroke her fea - thers when the flock scat - ters? _

mf

when the flock scat - ters? _

mf

want - ing to stroke her fea - thers.

- 'ler stroke when the flock sca? _

- 'ler stroke flock sca? _

31

Or im - press the grass? Will she

How will she strut through the court-yard or im - press the grass?

How will she strut through the court-yard Will she

Or im - press the grass?

— Stru(t) through — or im - press the grass? Will —

— Stru(t) through — or im - press the grass?

mp

mp

mp

mp

35

look for a kind boy to grind her a grain of

Grind — a grain of

look for a kind boy to grind — a grain of

to grind — her grain of

— a kind boy to grind a grain of

Kind boy to grind her grain of

gradual cresc.

poco rit. a tempo

mp gradual cresc.

gradual cresc.

mp gradual cresc.

gradual cresc.

mp gradual cresc.

39 *mf* *mp still* *mf*

wheat, — or an old flame — to re-light ag - ing pas - sions? —

mf *mp still* *mf*

wheat, — or an old flame — to re-light ag - ing pas - sions? —

mf *mf*

wheat, — Per -

mp still *mf*

or an old flame — to re-light ag - ing pas - sions? — Per -

mf *mf*

wheat, — pas - sions? — Per -

mf *mp still* *mf*

wheat, — or an old flame — light ag - ing pas - sions? — Per -

43 *poco rit.* *mp*

A win - dow and a

mp

Her sad - ness — be - tween a win - dow and a

mp

- haps she will di - vide her sad - ness —

mp

- haps she will di - vide her sad - ness — be - tween a win - dow and a

mp

- haps she will di - vide her sad - ness — be - tween a win - dow and a

mp

- haps she will di - vide her sad - ness — be - tween a win - dow and a

a tempo

47 *mf* *f* *mp*

me - tal cage. A pro - fes - sion - al mour - ner

mf *f* *mp*

me - tal cage. She'll be - come (m) mour - ner

f *mp*

Per - haps be - come a pro - fes - sion - al mour - ner

mf *f* *mp*

me - tal she'll be - come a pro - fes - sion - al mour - ner

mf *f* *mp*

me - tal cage. A pro - fes - sion - al mour - ner

mf *f* *mp*

me - tal cage. Per - haps she'll be - come fes - sion - al mour - ner

molto rit.

Steadier than Tempo 1

51 *pp* *mp* *p*

at the fu - ner - als of birds. Where

mp *p* *sost.*

birds. Where this

pp *mp* (,) *p*

at the fu - ner - als of birds. I - ma - gine, i - ma - gine, i -

pp *mp* (,) *p*

at the fu - ner - als of birds. I - ma - gine, i - ma - gine, i -

pp *mp* (,) *p*

at the fu - ner - als of birds. I - ma - gine, i -

pp *mp* *p*

at of birds.

55

mp

when the trees do-nate their low-est branch. _____ When

mp

dove will go _____ their low-est branch. _____ When

mp

-ma - gine when the trees do-nate their low-est branch. I - ma - gine when

mp

-ma - gine _____ fad - ing, _____ i - ma - gine when

mp

-ma - gine _____ fad - ing, _____ ma - gine when

mp

fad - ing, _____

59

rit.

pp

neigh - bours are _____ fad - ing.

pp

neigh - bours are in - dif - fer - ent to her past. _____

pp

neigh - bours are in - dif - fer - ent _____ fad - ing.

p

pp

ah dif - fer - ent to her past. _____ Fad - ing.

p

pp

are in - dif - fer - ent to her past. _____ Fay.

p

pp

to her past. _____ Fay.

4. SEEDS IN FLIGHT

Khaled Abdallah
b.1970 Gaza

Joanna Marsh

Lyrical ♩ = 62

SOPRANO

ALTO 1

ALTO 2 *p*
An - cient wo-man (n), wan - ders the

TENOR *p*
Who _ has lived all sea-sons wan - ders

BARITONE *p*
An an - cient wo-man (n), wan - ders the

BASS *p*
An an - cient who _ has lived all sea - sons, _____

4

p — *mp cresc.* — *mf*
Each flower her a - pron is the

p — *mp cresc.* — *mf*
Each flower is the

earth gath - 'ring

gath - 'ring — ca - mo - mile. In her a - pron is a star; is the

mp cresc. — *mf*
ear(th).* Flower her a - pron is the

mp cresc.
gath - 'ring — ca - mo - mile. Flower

* Barely audible 'th'.

8

sky. _____ *p* Reach - es _____ *mp* she strews - them - to

sky. _____ *mp* Reach - es the house

sky. _____ *mp* When she reach - es _____ she strews - them - to

sky. _____ *mp* Reach - es the house

sky. _____ *mp* Reach - es _____ she strews - them - to

sky. _____ *mp* When she reach - es _____ the house

12

dry _____ *p* shells on a beach, to bring good luck, _____ *mf* *rit.* the

to dry _____ *mf* like - shells - on a beach, luck, *mp* the

dry _____ *mf* shells _____ on a beach, to bring good luck, to whis-per the

dry _____ *mf* shells _____ on a beach, to bring luck, to whis-per.

dry _____ *mf* beach, luck. _____

to dry _____ *p* like - shells *mf* luck. _____

a tempo

fu - ture. — In the sun, the sun glin —

fu - ture. — In the sun her tat-too glis - tens, — a star glints —

fu - ture. — In the sun glis-tens, — a star glints —

In the, in the sun glis-tens, —

In the sun her tat-too glis - tens, —

— her gold - en ear-ing, — the ca - mo-mile dries. —

— in ear-ing, — the ca - mo-mile dries. —

— in her gold - en ear-ing, — the ca - mo-mile dries. —

Her hand hen-naed — with

in (n)* — ear-ing, — dries. — With

ear-ing, — dries. —

* Move to hum on 'n'.

24 rit.

a tempo

mf
spun the wool, _____ the wool of the flock, _____

mf *mf* *mp*
spun the wool, _____ the wool of the flock, spun the wool -

mf *mp*
God's names, _____ spun the wool, _____

p *mf* *mp*
God's names, God's names, _____ spun the wool, _____

p *mf*
God's, _____ God's names, _____ spun the wool -

p *mf*
God's, _____ God's names, _____ spun the wool -

27

mf
— em - broi - dered the wed - ding clothes, gath - ered —

mf
_____ the wed - ding clothes,

mf *mp*
_____ the wed - - - - ding clothes, _____ gath -

mf
_____ wed - - - - ding clothes, _____ gath - ered —

mp
_____ wed - - - - ding clothes,

dried flowers.

mp *express.*

gath - ered the dried flowers. But next sea - son,

- ered dried flowers. (hum)

mf

gath - ered the dried flowers.

mp *express.*

But next sea - son,

dried flowers. (hum)

34 *poco rit.*

It si - lence (n)* (s).

when the fu - ture ar - rived, it si - lenced the whis - pers.

(hum) it si - lence (n)* (s).

(hum) it si - lenced the whis - pers.

when the fu - ture ar - rived, it si - lenced the whis - pers.

(hum) si - lence (n)* (s).

* Close to hum on 'n' and position the 's' with the end of 'whispers'.

38 **a tempo*****p***

With her an - ces-tors,

(hum) bur-ied with her an - ces-tors,

She was bur-ied with her an - ces-tors,

mp She was bur-ied with her an - ces-tors, yet as

(hum) Bur-ied her and

She was bur-ied with her an - ces-tors,

43

if by ma - gic,

cresc. as if by chance, by chance, by ma - gic, as

cresc. as if by chance, by chance, as if by ma - gic,

cresc. if as if by chance, as if by ma - gic,

cresc. if by chance, chance, by ma - gic, as

cresc. as if by chance, by chance, by

47 *mp* *mf* *mp*

if by a mi - ra - cle, the ca - mo - mile, the

mp *mf* *mp* *mp*

if by a mi - ra - cle, a mi - ra - cle, ca - mo - mile,

mp *mf* *mp*

if by a mi - ra - cle, mi - ra - cle, ca - mo - mile

mp *mf* *mp*

8 if by a mi - ra - cle, the ca - mo - mile, the

mp *mf* *mp*

if by a mi - - - - ra - cle, the ca - mo - mile

mf *mp*

mi - - - - ra - cle, ca - mo - mile

51 *f* *rit.* *a tempo*

ca - mo - mile grows each sea - son.

f *mf*

ca - mo - mile grows each sea - son. Ma - ny

f *mf*

grows Ma - ny seeds have

f

8 ca - mo - mile grows each sea - son.

f *mf*

grows, grows each sea - son. Ma - ny seeds have

f *mf*

grows, grows. Ma - ny seeds have

55 *mf* *mp*

Flown _____ re - main, re -

mp

flown. _____ These seeds re - main, these seeds re -

mp

flown. _____ These seeds re - main, these seeds, re -

mp

These seeds re - main, these seeds re -

mp

flown. _____ Re - main, re - main these seeds re -

mp

flown. _____ Re - main, re -

59 *f* *sost.*

- main, these seeds re - main. _____

f *sost.*

- main, these seeds re - main. _____

f *sost.*

- main, these seeds re - main, re - main. _____

f

- main, these seeds re - main, re - main. _____

f

- main, these seeds re - main.

f

- main, these seeds re - main.

Sample
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