

# *Silence in Forty-Two*

*for baritone and piano*

*Music: Ronald Keith Parks*

*Lyrics: Dustin M. Hoffman*

# *Silence in Forty-Two*

## Instrumentation:

*Baritone and piano*

*Silence in Forty-Two was written for baritone Jeff McEvoy. The lyrics are an adaptation by Dustin M. Hoffman of his short story also titled Silence in Forty-Two.*

## *Silence in Forty-Two*

*The maintenance man jingles down the hallway. His tool belt claps his thighs. He passes one red door and another red door and another and more, until he stops at apartment forty-two. Where the deaf girl lives. The beautiful deaf girl with curly black hair and those hips, and oh those hips, those hips too wide for her flat stomach and small breasts. Those hips that would match his own pelvis. He knocks and waits, knocks and waits, yells maintenance, but what's the point? She'll never hear him. Last time, he walked in on her watching TV, volume blaring, her hands floating off the sofa, cupping vibration, feeling words.*

*This time, she could be stepping out of the shower. Those impossible hips bare. Those wet curls dripping.*

*He slides the master key into deadbolt, opens. No one. The deaf girl is gone, has taken all her silence with her. Inside her apartment, he hears the girls at the pool laughing through the slider, voices thin as their sun-bleached bikinis. A car stereo bumps bass. The garbage truck's forklift crashes against steel dumpster. Washing machines churn next door, sopped and strangled clothes asking, Where's-she? Where's-she? Where's-she?*

*He breathes in, closes his eyes, finally finds the drip, drip, drip of her leaking showerhead. He wrenches off the head, retapes the threads, reattaches, and the bathroom quiets. Easy. Except for the garbage truck's bleats, tin-can laughter, bass thump, electronic chug. He shuts the bathroom door. Still the world seeps in. He jams his fingers into his ears, and hears his heart throb. Does she hear this part or is her blood mute? He'd like to ask her if pulse is the same as beat. But she wouldn't hear him. Maybe they'd use paper, his stubby carpenter's pencil on one of her fat brilliant books written by a Russian. They'd pass it back and forth and he'd forget every sound but scribble.*

*His blood thumps against his calluses, against his cartilage. It comes harder the longer he presses. So long in silence, she must feel a thousand times as much. Her heart is a jackhammer, her veins a riot, her hips a tectonic plate.*

# Silence in Forty-Two

Lyrics by: Dustin M. Hoffman

from Vernacular Songbook

Music by: Ronald Keith Parks

Written for Jeff McEvoy

♩ = 48

Baritone

Piano

*ppp*

5

*pp*

B

5

Pno.

The main - te-nance man jin - gles down the hall - way. His

8

B

8

Pno.

tool belt claps his thighs. He pass-es one red door and an-oth-er red door and an -

10

B

oth - er and more, un - til he stops at a - part - ment for - ty - two. Where the

Pno.

12

B

deaf girl lives. The beau-ti-ful deaf girl with curl-y black hair and those hips,

Pno.

15

B

and oh those hips, those hips too wide for her flat stom-ach and small breasts.

Pno.

18

B

Those hips that would match his own — pel - vis. He

Pno.

20

B

knocks and waits, knocks and waits, yells main - te - nance, but what's the point? She'll nev - er

Pno.

22

B

hear him. Last time, he walked in on her watch - ing TV, vol - ume blar - ing, her

Pno.



slightly faster ♩ = 54

32

B

dead - bolt, o - pens. No one. \_\_\_\_\_

Pno.

32

pp

36

B

The deaf girl is gone, \_\_\_\_\_

Pno.

36

pp

3

40

B

has tak-en all her si - lence \_\_\_\_\_ with her. In - side her a-part - ment,

Pno.

40

3

43

B

he hears the girls at the pool laugh-ing through the slid-er, — voic-es thin as their

Pno.

Detailed description: This system contains measures 43 and 44. The bass line (B) starts with a 7-measure rest, then plays a melodic line with eighth and quarter notes. The piano accompaniment (Pno.) features a treble staff with chords and a bass staff with single notes. The key signature has two sharps (F# and C#).

45

B

sun-bleached bi - ki-nis. — A car ster - e - o bumps bass. The

Pno.

Detailed description: This system contains measures 45 and 46. The bass line (B) has a 4-measure rest, then a triplet of eighth notes, followed by a quarter note. The piano accompaniment (Pno.) continues with chords in the treble and single notes in the bass. The key signature remains two sharps.

48

B

gar-bage truck's fork - lift crash-es a - gainst steel dumpst-er. —

Pno.

Detailed description: This system contains measures 48 and 49. The bass line (B) begins with a triplet of eighth notes, followed by a quarter note and a half note. The piano accompaniment (Pno.) features chords in the treble and single notes in the bass. The key signature remains two sharps.



51

B

3

Wash-ing ma-chines churn next door, \_\_\_\_\_ sopped and stran - gled clothes

Pno.

54

B

*mp*

ask - ing, Where's - she? \_\_\_\_\_ Where's - she? \_\_\_\_\_

Pno.

*mp*

58

B

*mf*

Where's - she? \_\_\_\_\_

3:4

Pno.

*mf*



70 *mp*

B

re - at - tach - es, and the bath - room qui - ets. Eas - y.

Pno.

73

B

Ex - cept for the gar - bage truck's bleats, tin - can laugh - ter, bass thump, e - lec - tron - ic chug.

Pno.

76

B

He shuts the bath - room door. \_\_\_\_\_ Still the world seeps in. \_\_\_\_\_

Pno.

78

B

He jams his fin-gers in - to his ears, and hears his heart throb.

3

Pno.

81

*mf*

B

Does she hear this part or is her blood mute? He'd like to ask her if

81

Pno.

*mf*

83

B

pulse is the same as beat. But she wouldn't hear him. But she wouldn't hear him.

3

3

Pno.

86 *f*

B

she wouldn't hear him. she wouldn't hear him.

Pno.

86 *f*

8<sup>va</sup>

97

B

97 pa - per, his stub-by car - pen - ter's pen - cil on one of her fat bril - liant books

Pno.

*ppp*

100

B

100 writ - ten by a Rus - sian. They'd pass it back and forth and he'd for - get eve - ry sound but

Pno.

103

B

103 scrib - ble. His blood thumps a - gainst his cal - lus -

Pno.

106

B

es, a - gainst his car - ti - lage. It comes hard - er the

Pno.

109

B

long - er he press - es. So long in si - lence, she

Pno.

113

B

must feel a thou - sand times as much. Her heart — is a jack - ham - mer,

Pno.

116

B

her veins a ri - ot, her hips a tec - ton -

Pno.

119

*rit.* - - - - -

B

ic plate. a tec - ton - ic plate.

Pno.

8va - - - - -

122 slower ♩ = 46

B

122

*rit.* - - - - -

Pno.

8va - - - - -

Ronald Keith Parks  
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