

Silence in Forty-Two

Chamber version: for viola, baritone, piano, double bass, and drum set

Music: Ronald Keith Parks

Lyrics: Dustin M. Hoffman

Silence in Forty-Two

Instrumentation:

Viola

Baritone

Piano

Double bass

Drum set

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

The musical score is arranged in five systems. The first system (measures 1-4) features a Viola part with a *ppp* dynamic, a Baritone part, a Piano part with a *ppp* dynamic, and a Drum Set part with a *p* dynamic. The second system (measures 5-8) includes lyrics: "The main - te - nance man jin - gles down the hall - way. His". The third system (measures 9-12) includes lyrics: "tool belt claps his thighs. He pass - es one red door and an - oth - er red door and an -". The score includes various musical notations such as dynamics (*ppp*, *p*), articulation (*pizz.*), and performance instructions like "ride cymbal (bell)", "bass drum", and "snare (rim shot)".

10

Vla. *ppp*

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

Pno.

D.B.

D. S.

12

Vla.

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

Pno.

D.B.

D. S.

15

Vla.

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

Pno.

D.B.

D. S.

18

Vla.

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

Pno.

D.B.

D. S.

20

Vla.

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

Pno.

D.B.

D. S.

22

Vla.

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

Pno.

D.B.

D. S.

24

Vla.

B hands float-ing off the so-fa, cup-ping vi-bra-tion, feel-ing words, feel-ing words.

Pno.

D.B.

D. S.

27

Vla.

B This time, she could be step-ping out of the show-er. Those im-pos-si-ble hips

Pno.

D.B.

D. S.

29

Vla. *p* *ppp*

B bare. Those wet curls drip-ping. He slides the mas-ter key in-to

Pno. *p* *ppp*

D.B.

D. S. *p* *ppp* crash cymbal

43

Vla.

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

Pno.

D.B.

D. S.

45

Vla.

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

Pno.

D.B.

D. S.

48

Vla.

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

Pno.

D.B.

D. S.

51

Vla.

B

Pno.

D.B.

D. S.

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

54

Vla.

B

Pno.

D.B.

D. S.

ask - ing. Where's - she? _____ Where's - she? _____

mp

58

Vla.

B

Pno.

D.B.

D. S.

Where's _____ she? _____

mf

61 slightly faster ♩ = 58

Vla. *p*

B *p* He breathes in,

Pno. *p*

D.B. *p*

D.S. *p*

Vla.

B *p* clos - es his eyes, fi - nal - ly finds the drip, drip, drip of her

Pno.

D.B.

D.S.

Vla.

B *p* leak - ing show - er - head. He wrench - es off the head, re - tapes the threads,

Pno.

D.B.

D.S.

70

Vla.

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

Pno. *mp*

D.B. *mp*

D.S. *mp*

73

Vla.

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

Pno.

D.B.

D.S.

76

Vla.

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

Pno.

D.B.

D.S.

Vla.

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

Pno.

D.B.

D.S.

Vla. *mf*

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

Pno. *mf*

D.B.

D.S. *mf*

Vla. *mf*

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

Pno.

D.B.

D.S.

86

Vla. *f*

B *f*

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

Pno. *f*

D.B. *f*

D.S. *f*

87

88

89

90

Vla. *p*

B *p*

hear him. hear him.

Pno. *p*

D.B. *p*

D.S. *p*

94

Vla. *pp*

B *pp*

May - be they'd use

Pno. *pp*

D.B. *pp*

D.S. *pp*

Vla. 

B 

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

Pno. 

ppp

D.B. 

pp

D.S. 

Vla. 

B 

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

Pno. 

D.B. 

pp

D.S. 

Vla. 

pp

B 

 srib - ble. His blood thumps a - gainst his cal - lus -

Pno. 

D.B. 

pp

D.S. 

106

Vla.

B

Pno.

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

D.B.

D. S.

109

Vla.

B

Pno.

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

D.B.

D. S.

113

Vla.

B

Pno.

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

D.B.

D. S.

116

Vla.

B *3*

Pno.

D.B.

D. S.

119 *rit.*

Vla.

B

Pno.

D.B. *8^{va}*

D. S.

122 *slower* ♩ = 46 *rit.*

Vla.

B

Pno.

D.B. *8^{va}*

D. S.

her veins a ri - ot, her hips a tec - ton -
ic plate. a tec - ton - ic plate.

Ronald Keith Parks
 May 13, 2015
 Rock Hill, SC USA