

The Seven Stages of Woman

A song Cycle

Music - Jeannette Owen
Lyrics - Philippa Johnson



Voices

Narrator (could be performed by one of the voices)

Mezzo Soprano

Alto

Instrumentation

Flute

Clarinet in Bb

Viola

Duration

24 minutes

Programme Notes

This piece began when two old friends, who both had time on their hands due to a world pandemic, returned to study for their Masters in Composition and Creative Writing.

Over lunch, Jeannette mentioned a talk given at Bath Spa University by the composer Emily Hall about setting text to music, and the benefits of artistic collaboration. Philippa immediately became animated and reached for Shakespeare's speech on The Seven Stages of Man. Jeannette exclaimed, "The Seven Stages of Woman", and the concept was born.

This work follows the journey of a woman from birth, through happy childhood years and teenage anxiety, to leaving home and becoming independent. She juggles a career with motherhood, then finds herself with an empty nest and the opportunity for reinvention. This is followed by retirement, becoming a grandmother and finally reflecting on her life: now she is ready to pass on the role of matriarch to the next in line.

Each song has a particular character – for example, babyhood has its lullaby, childhood a polka, and retirement is represented by a tango.

In performance, the artists should all be women.

Contents

1. Little One, Baby Mine (Babyhood)	Mezzo Soprano, Flute, Viola
1a. Narrative link	Narrator, Flute, Viola
2. From Idyll To Angst (Childhood to Teenage Years)	Mezzo Soprano, Flute, Viola
2a. Narrative link	Narrator, Flute, Clarinet, Viola
3. On My Own Two Feet (Young Adult)	Mezzo Soprano, Flute, Clarinet
3a. Narrative link	Narrator, Flute, Clarinet, Viola
4. The Juggler (Career and Motherhood)	Mezzo Soprano, Alto, Viola
4a. Narrative link	Narrator, Flute, Clarinet, Viola
5. Blue Sky Thinking (Empty Nest and Reinvention)	Alto, Flute, Clarinet, Viola
5a. Narrative link	Narrator, Clarinet, Viola
6. As The World Turns (Retirement and Grandparent)	Alto, Clarinet, Viola
6a. Narrative link	Narrator, Flute, Clarinet, Viola
7. Reflection (Looking Back on a Life Well Lived)	Alto, Flute, Viola

The Seven Stages of Woman

1. Little One, Baby Mine

Philippa Johnson

Jeannette Owen

Lilting - like a lullaby

$\text{♩} = 46$

Mezzo-soprano

Flute

Viola

Lilting - like a lullaby

$\text{♩} = 46$

mp

5

M-S.

Fl.

Vla

p

9

M-S.


Fl.

Vla

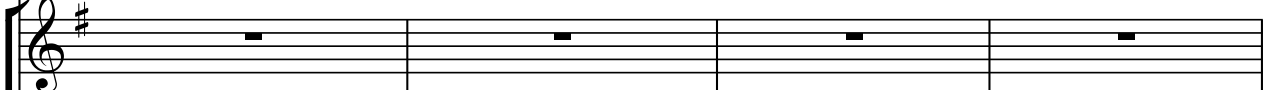
mp

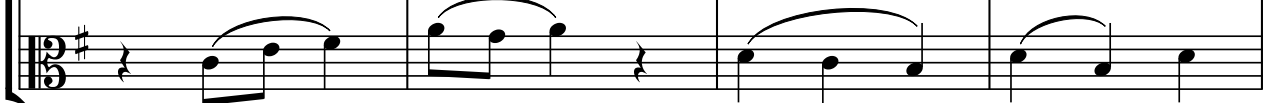
1. Lit - tle one, ba - by mine, what are you say - ing?

13

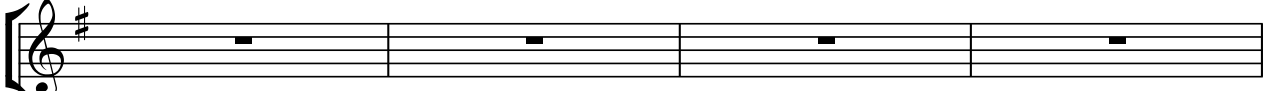
M-S. 

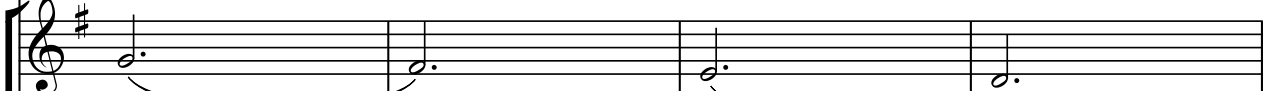
Ba by says "love me, smile at me, feed me;


Fl. 

Vla. 


17

M-S. 


Fl. 
mp

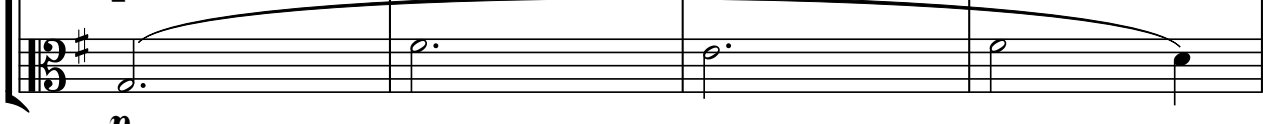
Vla. 
mp

21


M-S. 


Gaze at my pa - per nails, cra dle my ti - ny feet,

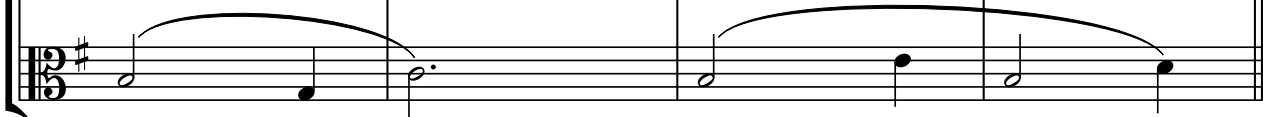
Fl. 
p

Vla. 
p

25

M-S. 

Fl. 

Vla. 

29

M-S. 

Fl. 

Vla. 


33

M-S. 

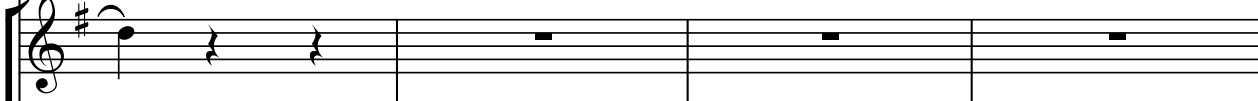
Fl. 


Vla. 

37

M-S. 


2.Lit - tle one, ba - by mine, what are you say - ing?

Fl. 

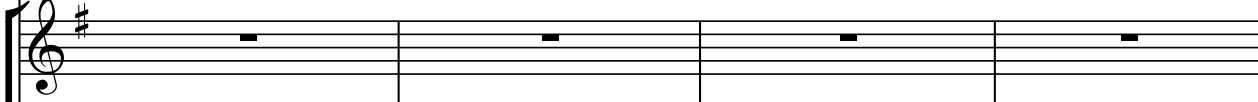
Vla. 

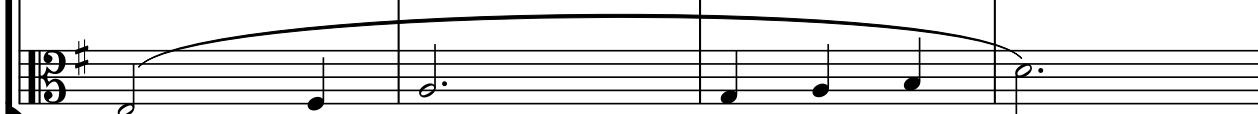
p

41

M-S. 

Ba - by says "com - fort me, care for my cry - ing;

Fl. 

Vla. 

45

M-S. 

Fl. 

Vla. 

49

M-S. *Take my dis - tress, all my pain and con - fu - sion, For -*

Fl. *p*

Vla

53

M-S. *give my be - wild - er ment, gen tle my soul."*

Fl.

Vla

57

M-S.

Fl. *mp*

Vla *p*

61

M-S.

3.Lit - tle one, ba - by mine, what are you say - ing?

Fl.

pp

Vla

65

M-S.

Ba - by says, "watch me, I'm crawl - ing and walk - ing!"

Fl.

Vla

69

M-S.


Fl.

mp

Vla


73


M-S.  Hear me call 'ma - ma' and


Fl.  *p*

Vla.  *p*

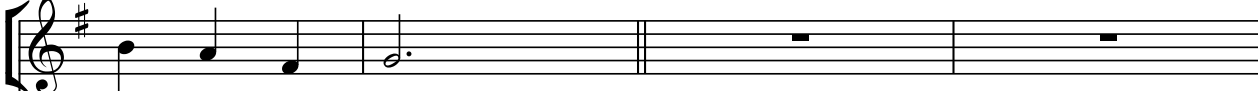
77

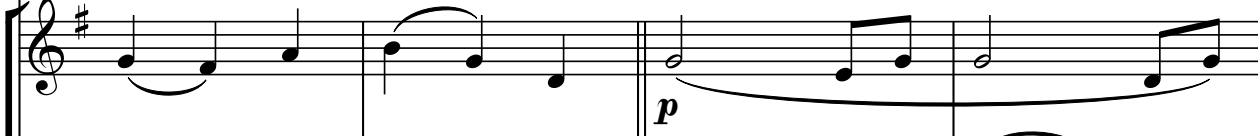
M-S.  laugh till I hic - cup, then sing me to sleep with my


Fl.  *p*

Vla.  *p*

81

M-S.  bear by my side

Fl.  *p*

Vla.  *mp*

85

M-S.

4.Lit tle one, ba - by mine,

Fl.

pp

Vla

89

M-S.

what are you say - ing? Ba - by says, "Hun - gry!" or

Fl.

Vla

93

M-S.

"Thirs - ty!" or "Tired!"

Fl.

mp

Vla

96

M-S.

Fl.

Vla

100

M-S.

Fl.

Vla

Play groups and lit tle friends, teach ers and

104

M-S.

Fl.

Vla

nurs' ry, Paint - ing and bath - time, then sto - ries, then

108

M-S. *bed.*

Fl. *mp*

Vla *mp*

112

M-S.

Fl.

Vla *p*

117

M-S. 4.Lit - tle one, ba - by mine, what are you say - ing?

Fl. *pp*

Vla

121

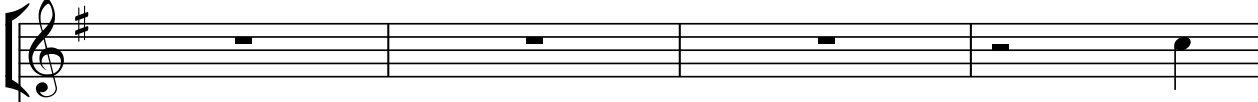
M-S. 

I'm not a ba - by, I'm big and still grow - ing!

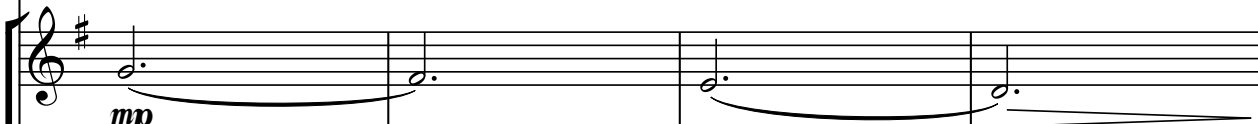
Fl. 

Vla. 


125

M-S. 

Still


Fl. 

mp


Vla. 

mp


129

M-S. 

read to me, sing to me, tuck me in co - si - ly,


Fl. 


p

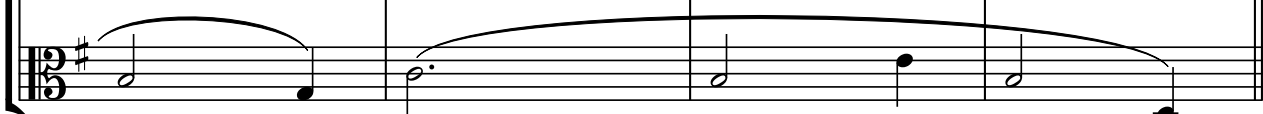
Vla. 

p

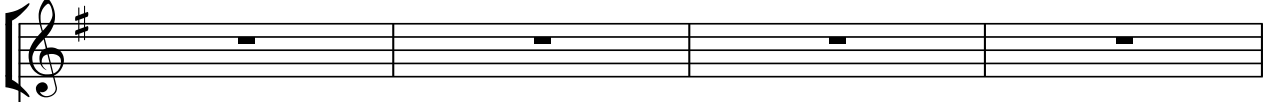
133


M-S. 
You are my world to me, moth - er of mine.


Fl. 

Vla. 


137


M-S. 


Fl. 
mp

Vla. 
mp

141 rit.

M-S. 

Fl. 
p

Vla. 
p

1a.

145 ♩ = 90

Narrator From infant to baby, baby to toddler, and on into the curious, interesting

Fl. ♩ = 90

Vla

149

Narrator individual- but babyhood is behind: time to make new footprints.

Fl.

Vla

2. From Idyll to Angst

Polka

♩ = 100

M-S. *mf*

Polka
♩ = 100

Fl. *mf*

Vla. *mp*

1. We

5

M-S. wand - er hand in hand to see the pen - guins at the zoo, And

Fl. *mp*

Vla. *p*

9

M-S. walk down lanes of black - ber - ries and pick them as we go; An

Fl.

Vla.

13

M-S.

Fl.

Vla

17

M-S.

Fl.

Vla


21


M-S.


Fl.

Vla


25


M-S.  turn your eyes to mine, And as we skim stones on the beach we


Fl. 

Vla. 


29

M-S.  sing a lit - tle rhyme: At night I read you sto - ries a - bout

Fl. 

Vla. 

33

M-S.  pi - rates, po - nies, ghosts! And in the morn - ing, make your lunch, and

Fl. 

Vla. 

37

M-S. tea and but - tered toast. 3.You've

Fl.

Vla

41

M-S. learned so much in school to - day, done mu - sic, sci - ence, art! You've

Fl.

Vla arco
mp

45

M-S. drawn a tad - pole, cooked some bread, done com - pli - ca - ted sums! Let's

Fl.

Vla

49

M-S. *make some coo - kies, sing a song, and join the lib - ra - ry, Then*

Fl.

Vla

53

M-S. *cud - dle up, watch Doc - tor Who, or Dis - ney films in - stead. Take*

Fl.

Vla

rit. mf

57

Pastorale
Meno mosso ♩ = 50

M-S. *time to lay on dai - sies grass and feel the sun shine warm Hear*

Fl.

Vla

Meno mosso
Pastorale ♩ = 50

61

M-S. ae - o planes pass o ver head, lawn mow - ers mid - af - ter - noon_____ Have

Fl.

Vla

65

M-S. du - vet days, drink le___ mon - ade, have pic___ nics in___ the park_____ Have

Fl.

Vla

69

M-S. ho___ li - day___ with fa - mi - ly, watch fire___ works af___ ter dark!

Fl.

Vla

Tempo primo

73 ♩ = 100


M-S. 


Fl. 


Vla. 

5.Such

77

M-S. 
spe - cial times will pass so quick! Play foot - ball, ten - nis, swim! Learn

Fl. 

Vla. 


81

M-S. 
the gui - tar, pi - an - o, drums, go cy - cling with your mates; Make

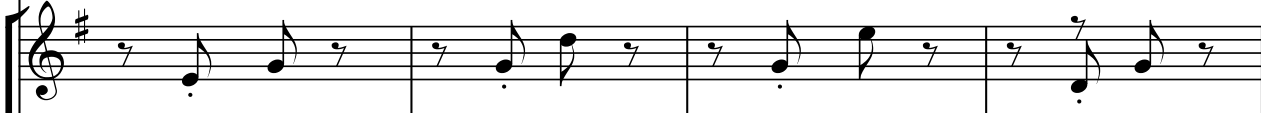
Fl. 


Vla. 

85

M-S. 

Christ mas cards, sew lit - tle bags, paint pic - tures, bake a cake, While

Fl. 

Vla 

89

M-S. 

fam' - ly's still the heart of all, and me - mo - ries are made.

Fl. 

Vla 

93 $\text{♩} = 80$

M-S. 

Leave me a-lone! I need new shoes! You just don't un-der-stand! She's mean to me! I

Fl. 

Vla 

mf

97

M-S.

failed the test! I hate the way you cook! I need a lift. Why aren't we rich? You

Fl.

Vla

101

M-S.

don't know an-y thing! It's time I head-ed off: I'm not your ba-by an-y more

Fl.

Vla

105

M-S.

Fl. *f*

Vla *mf*

109

M-S.

Fl.

Vla.

Musical score for measures 109-112. The M-S. part consists of whole rests. The Fl. part has a melodic line with eighth and sixteenth notes. The Vla. part has a rhythmic accompaniment of eighth notes.

113

M-S.

Fl.

Vla.

rit.

Musical score for measures 113-116. The M-S. part consists of whole rests. The Fl. part has a melodic line with eighth and sixteenth notes, ending with a long note. The Vla. part has a rhythmic accompaniment of eighth notes, ending with accents. A "rit." marking is present above the Fl. and Vla. staves.

2a.

117

Now you are independent, and oh so ready to mark your own boundaries.

Narrator

Fl.

Cl.

Vla

120

Time to define your own rules, step into the wide world and claim your dreams.

Narrator

Fl.

Cl.

Vla

3. On My Own Two Feet

124 $\text{♩} = 120$

M-S.

Fl.

Cl.

1. Hur - ry, hur - ry! Fu - ture Cal - ling!

127

M-S.

Fl.

Cl.

World's_ my oy - ster, lots to do; Laugh - ter, drink - ing,

130

M-S.

Fl.

Cl.

par - ties, liv - ing, On_ my own, at last I'm me.

133


M-S. 

Do my stuff my own way, now I'm free.


Fl. 


Cl. 

136

M-S. 

2. Stu - dy, Stu - dy! Fu - ture Cal - ling! Try - ing hard to

Fl. 

Cl. 

139

M-S. 

do my best; Feel - ing strong but some-times lone - ly,

Fl. 

Cl. 

142

M-S.

On___ my own when it's just me. But I'll work it out, at

Fl.

Cl.

145

M-S.

least I'm free.

Fl.

Cl.

148

M-S.

3.Love and heart - ache, Part - ner cal - ling! Hav-ing fun a-long the

Fl.

Cl.

151

M-S. way; Trust - ing, trav' - ling, try - ing, dar - ing,

Fl.

Cl.

154

M-S. what's im-por-tant, right for me? Ad - ven-ture beck - ons, live be -

Fl.

Cl.

157

M-S. cause I'm free.

Fl. *mf*

Cl. *mp*

160

M-S.

Fl.

Cl.

165

M-S.

Fl.

Cl.

169

M-S.

Fl.

Cl.

4. Hust - le, bust - le house is cal - ling! Find my own place,

172

M-S. 

Fl. 

Cl. 

175

M-S. 

Fl. 

Cl. 


178

M-S. 

Fl. 

Cl. 

181


M-S. 

work is cal - ling, Get a job, there's bills to pay;


Fl. 

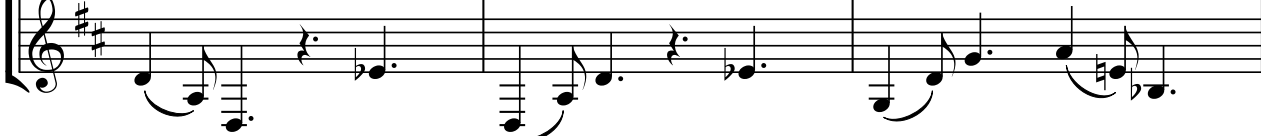
Cl. 

184

M-S. 

Learn to cook, get house in - su - rance vis - it par - ents

Fl. 

Cl. 

187

M-S. 

for a rest: there's more to a - dullness than be - ing free.

Fl. 

Cl. 

3a.

190 $\text{♩} = 92$
Fulfilment, complexity, romance - and life gets into it's own swing. You

Narrator

Fl. $\text{♩} = 92$
p

Cl. *p*

Vla *p*

193
find yourself somewhere, not entirely sure how you got there, but almost everyone

Narrator

Fl.

Cl.

Vla

196
else thinks you know what you're doing: and now there's someone new.

Narrator

Fl.

Cl.

Vla

4. The Juggler

198 ♩=108

M-S.

A. *mf*

Vla

♩=108

p

1. We are mo-ther, We are mo-ther walk-ing,

201

M-S.

A.

Vla

run-ing, call-ing, car-ing, Nurse and shop-per, dress-er, teach-er, All our

204

M-S.

A.

Vla

be-ing work-ing think-ing: I can see through

207

M-S.

A.

Vla

walls, I can hear for miles, All my be-ing tied with

211

M-S.

A.

Vla

heart-strings To your life, my dar-ling child.

214

M-S.

A.

Vla

we are work-er Driv-ing, plan-ning,
2. We are mo-ther, feed-ing, play-ing,

217

M-S.

writ-er, chef, Phone calls, meet-ings, friends and coll-eagues:

A.

ne-go-ti-a-tor,

Vla

220

M-S.

I can see through walls, I can hear for miles, All my

A.

Vla

224

M-S.

All my be-ing tied with heart-strings To your grow-ing, lit-tle one.

A.

be-ing tied with heart-strings To your grow - ing, lit-tle one.

Vla

227

M-S.

A.

Vla

3. We are work-er,
we are moth-er

230

M-S.

A.

Vla

pay the bills, spread-sheets, meet-ings,
which one will win out to-day? re-mind to prac-tise, tir-ed

233

M-S.

A.

Vla

eyes: I can see through walls,

236

M-S.

A.

Vla

All my be - ing

I can hear for miles, All my be - ing tied with

239

M-S.

A.

Vla

tied with heart-strings Though you've grown-as big as me.

heart-strings though you've grown as big as me.

242

M-S.

A.

Vla

first and fore-most, work-ing hard,

4. We are mo-ther, to make ends meet;

245

M-S.

A.

Vla

will we have a job to - mor - row?

we still need e - nough to eat.

248

M-S.

A.

Vla

I can see through walls, I can hear for miles

I can see through walls, I can hear for miles, All my

252

M-S.

A.

Vla

All my be-ing tied with heart-strings though you bare-ly need me now.

be-ing tied with heart-strings though you bare ly need me now.

255

M-S. we are work-er,

A. 5. We are mo-ther,

Vla

258

M-S. pulled one way rush-ing, plan-ning, of-ten out,

A. and then the o-ther, fran-tic, wea-ry, but still your mo-ther,

Vla


261


M-S. al-ways try to do my best: I re

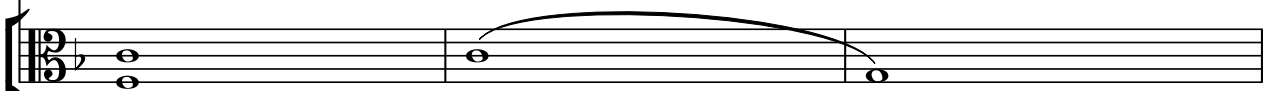
A. al-ways try to do my best: I can see through

Vla


264


M-S. 

A. 

Vla 

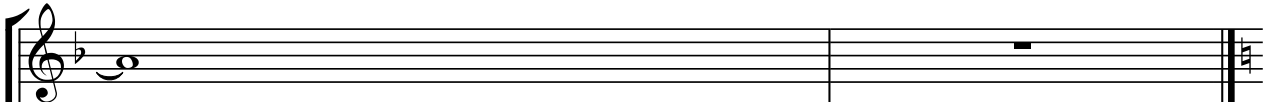
267

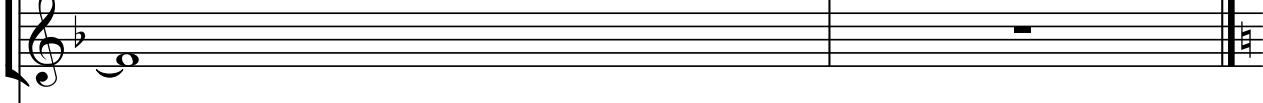
M-S. 

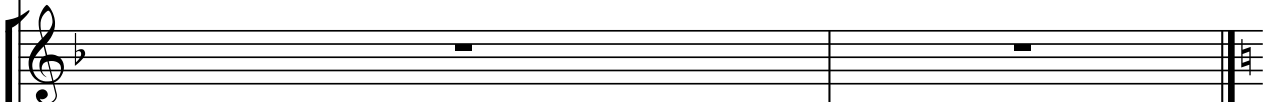
A. 

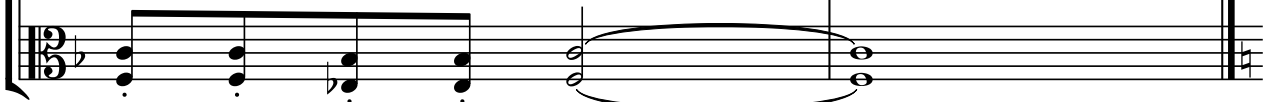
Vla 

270

M-S. 

A. 

Fl. 

Vla 

4a.

♩ = 84
272 Slowly spiralling out of the gentle chaos, it's time to wave those days goodbye. Who

Narrator

Fl.
Cl.
Vla.
p

275 were you? Who have you become, and want to be? You start to touch back down, get into your

Narrator

Fl.
Cl.
Vla.

278 *rit.* own stride, and head for the horizon that's been waiting. It's your adventure now.

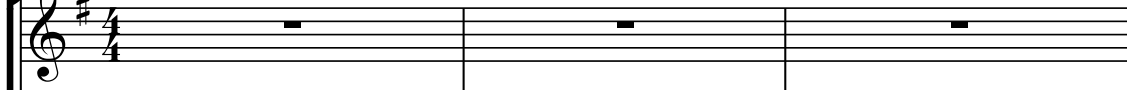
Narrator

Fl.
Cl.
Vla.
rit.


5. Blue Sky Thinking

280 ♩ = 100

A. 

Fl. 

Cl. 

Vla. 

1. I'm Mis - ses Rip Van

283

A. 


Fl. 

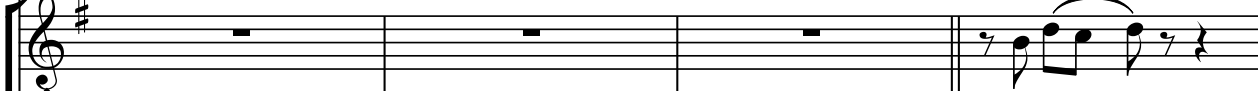
Cl. 


Vla. 

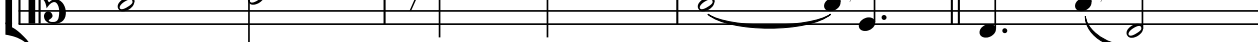
Win - kle, I'm the sleep - er in the Hills, The dra gon on her

287

A. 

Fl. 

Cl. 

Vla. 

gild - ed hoard, the seed in mud - dy drills: Can you hear my

291

A. voice? I rise and sing, My

Fl.

Cl.

Vla.

294

A. eyes be-gin to o - pen, Time to spread my wings.

Fl.

Cl.

Vla.

298

A. 2. Like nar - ciss - us af - ter win - ter, my

Fl.

Cl.

Vla.

302

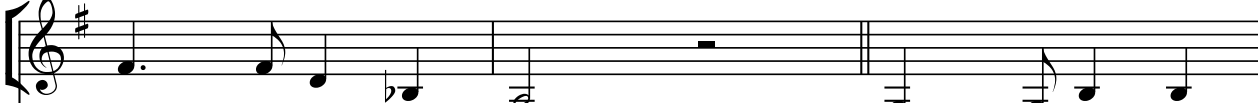
A.  co - lour's strong and bold; Like aut - umn af - ter sum - mer, my


Fl. 


Cl. 

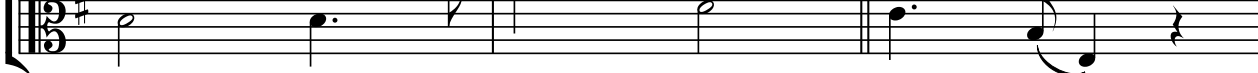
Vla. 

306


A.  harv - est's ripe' - ning gold: Can you hear my


Fl. 


Cl. 


Vla. 

309

A.  voice? I rise and sing, My

Fl. 

Cl. 

Vla. 

312

A. 

eyes be - gin to o - pen, Time to spread my wings.

Fl. 

Cl. 

Vla. 

316

A. 

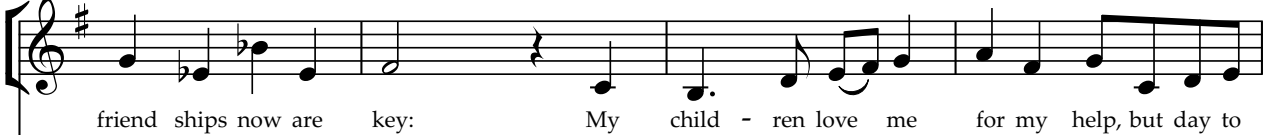
3. My mind has woken up a gain, my

Fl. 

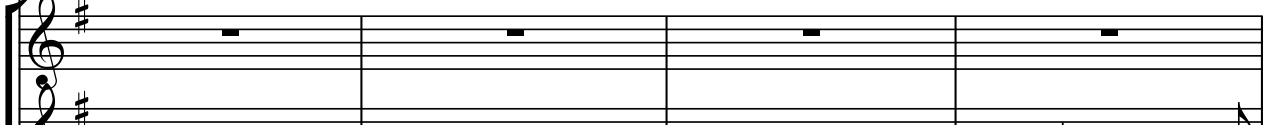
Cl. 


Vla. 


320

A. 

friend ships now are key: My child - ren love me for my help, but day to

Fl. 

Cl. 

Vla. 

324


A. 
day they don't need me. Can you hear my voice? I

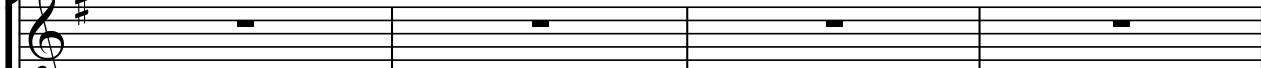
Fl. 


Cl. 


Vla. 

328

A. 
rise and sing, My eyes be-gin to o - pen,

Fl. 

Cl. 

Vla. 

332

A. 
Time to spread my wings. 4.I've

Fl. 

Cl. 

Vla. 

336

A. nur - tured tend ed, been there, kept my wants for a - noth - er

Fl.

Cl.

Vla.

339

A. day; I was moth - er, daught er, sis - ter, but lost my self a long the

Fl.

Cl.

Vla.

343

A. way. Can you hear my voice? I

Fl.

Cl.

Vla.

346

A. rise and sing, My eyes be-gin to

Fl.

Cl.

Vla.

349

A. o - pen, Time to spread my wings.

Fl.

Cl.

Vla.

353

A. 5. Un teth - ered strong and eag - er to

Fl.

Cl.

Vla.

356


A. 
catch life dis-cov - er more: Now I love my-self as


Fl. 


Cl. 


Vla. 

359

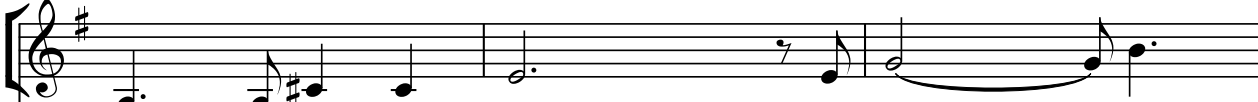
A. 
much as you, see those blue skies? watch me soar!


Fl. 

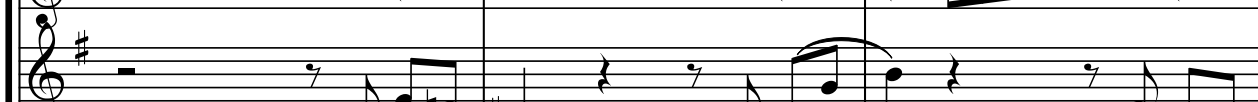
Cl. 


Vla. 

362

A. 
Can you hear my voice? I rise and

Fl. 

Cl. 

Vla. 

365

A. 
sing, My eyes be-gin to o - pen,

Fl. 

Cl. 

Vla. 

368

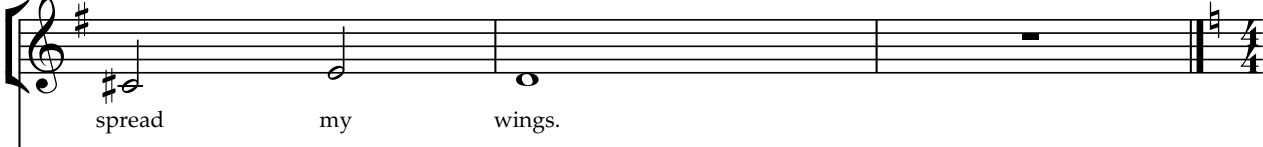
A. 
Time to spread my wings. Time to


Fl. 


Cl. 

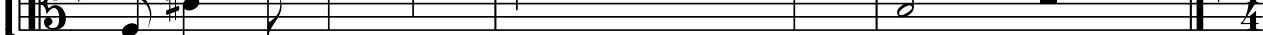
Vla. 

371

A. 
spread my wings.

Fl. 

Cl. 

Vla. 

5a.

374 Rich in experience, far less judgemental, far more patient, and your eyes have seen

Narrator

Cl. *mf*

Vla *mp*

378 much. You are stronger, wiser, keener, your eyes still fixed on the horizon.

Narrator

Cl.

Vla

6. As The World Turns

Tango straight quavers

382 **Allegretto** ♩ = 126 *mf*

A. *mf*

Tango straight quavers
Allegretto ♩ = 126

Cl. *mp*

Vla. *p*

1. So now I can look

385

A. back as well as on; I

Cl.

Vla.

388

A. hold my fu - ture blink - ing in my arms,

Cl.

Vla.

391

A. 
 And won - der how I've got this far, My

Cl. 

Vla. 

394

A. 
 chil - dren's child - ren 'Grand - ma-ma! A new job for my-

Cl. 

Vla. 

397

A. 
 self___ as the world_____ turns.

Cl. 

Vla. 

400

A. 

2.The ro - ses need at -

Cl. 

Vla. 

403


A. 

ten - tion and the pond, With


Cl. 


Vla. 

406


A. 

dra - gon-flies, and seeds to sweet - ly sow:


Cl. 


Vla. 

409


A. 

There's pots of pan - sies com - post worms, I'm


Cl. 

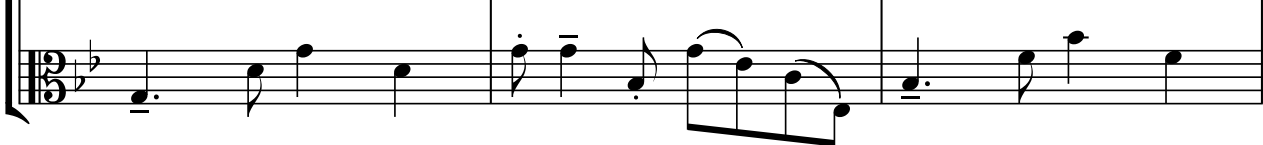
Vla. 

412


A. 

giv - en se - ca - teurs and ferns A new life for my-


Cl. 


Vla. 

415

A. 

self___ as the world_____ turns.

Cl. 

Vla. 

418

A.  3. I'm paint - ing now, and

Cl.  *mf*

Vla. 

421

A.  craft - ing Christ - mas cards, And

Cl. 

Vla. 

424

A.  swim - ming, writ - ing po - et - ry and songs;

Cl. 

Vla. 

427

A. I seem to have the time to see, The

Cl.

Vla.

430

A. lit - tle things that plea - sure me, New

Cl.

Vla.

433

A. vi - sions of my - self _____ as the world _____

Cl.

Vla.

436

A. turns. 4.I

Cl.

Vla.

439

A. wan - der cast - les, hill forts, coun - try lanes,

Cl.

Vla.

442

A. Ex - plore new pla - ces, tra - vel, see the

Cl.

Vla.

445

A. world: I'm hap - py now I've

Cl.

Vla.

448

A. time fot me, But time now for a cup of tea: And

Cl.

Vla.

451

A. give my - self some peace__ as the world_____

Cl.

Vla.

454

A. turns.

Fl.

Cl.

Vla.

This musical score block contains four staves for measures 454, 455, and 456. The top staff, labeled 'A.', is in treble clef with a key signature of two flats and contains a single half note followed by two whole rests. The second staff, labeled 'Fl.', is also in treble clef with a key signature of two flats and contains two whole rests. The third staff, labeled 'Cl.', is in treble clef with a key signature of two flats and contains a melodic line with eighth and sixteenth notes, including a triplet. The fourth staff, labeled 'Vla.', is in bass clef with a key signature of two flats and contains a melodic line with eighth and sixteenth notes, including a triplet. The music concludes with a double bar line at the end of measure 456.

6a.

457 ♩ = 78

Narrator You stop by a bench, and take a while to look behind you: What a view! The

Fl. *p*

Cl. *p*

Vla *mp*

460 rit.

Narrator valleys and fields full of memories, of loves, friends, and faces you knew. And there - your

Fl. rit.

Cl. rit.

Vla

463

Narrator path from the distant hills that has woven it's way right up to this cherished moment.

Fl.

Cl.

Vla

7. Reflection

465 $\text{♩} = 56$

A. *mf*

1.Do you see my eyes, edged in pal-est

Fl. $\text{♩} = 56$

Vla *p*

470

A. blue? they can see the years, time pass-ing like a gla-ci - er;

Fl. *mp* *p*

Vla

475

A. Like stand-ing on a mount-tain, I

Fl. *pp* *p*

Vla

480

A. gaze in - to the dis-tance and see a young - er me. The

Fl. *mp*

Vla

486

A. paths I might have ta - ken, And won - der, friend what might have been if I'd

Fl.

Vla

491

A. turned the oth - er way

Fl. *mp*

Vla

p

497 *mf*

A. *mf*

2. Do you see my hands, the fra - gile skin so thin? They held you dear when

Fl. *p*

Vla *mp* *mp*

502

A.

you were new, with all your life be fore you; They cooked and cleaned and mend - ed, held

Fl.

Vla

507

A.

hands and dried your tears, Like braille, they read the time, The

Fl.

Vla

513

A. mem'ries built and tend-ed, I won-der, dear, will my touch be some thing you re-call with

Fl.

Vla.

519

A. love? *mf* 3.Do you SEE my arms, that look so weak and

Fl. *p* *mp*

Vla.

525

A. pale? they have hugged youthrough your years, the laught-er and the weep-ing

Fl. *mp* *p*

Vla.

530

A.  En - fold - ing, bear - ing shelt - er - ing, as

Fl.  *pp* *p*

Vla. 


535


A.  best I could sup - port - ing: Though emp - ty now, they're wide An


Fl.  *mp*

Vla. 

541

A.  off - ring still of com - fort, for now I un - der - stand the give and take that we all

Fl.  *mp*

Vla. 

547

A. *mf*

need. 4.Do you see my

Fl. *mp* *p*

Vla *pp*

553

A. feet? I ran ex plored and clam-bered, I've pad-dled through the years and left my

Fl. *mp* *mp*

Vla *mp* *mp*

558

A. foot-prints on the beach; I walked you up and

Fl. *p* *pp*

Vla *p* *pp*

564

A.

down through sleep-less nights, but now I'm rest-ing; My dance is al-most done,

Fl.

Vla.

570

A.

but you know ev'-ry move now, so fol-low in my foot-steps with a

Fl.

Vla.

576

A.

dance that's all your own.

Fl.

Vla.