(for Abbie)

Winnie

(A theater work for soprano or instrumental performance
artist and piano based on Samuel Beckett's Happy Days.)

Expanse of scorched grass rising center to low mound.
Gentle slopes down to front and either side of stage.
Back an abrupt fall to stage level. Maximum of
simplicity and symmetry.

Imbedded up to above her waist in exact center of
mound, WINNIE. About fifty, well preserved, blond
for preference, plump, arms and shoulders bare,
low bodice, big bosom, pearl necklace. She is discovered
sleeping, her arms on the ground before her, her head on
her arms. Beside her on the ground to her left a capacious
black bag, shopping variety, and to her right a collapsible
collapsed parasol, beak of handle emerging from sheath.

To her right and rear, pianist. The work begins in darkness.

(Beginning of non-instrumental version.)

Quiet ma con bravura (d = 54)

 Giovano e quasi frenetico

(Leave the score pages unbound. Slide
to the left at the arrow symbols.)

long pause
Beginning of instrumental version. Instrument is heard in darkness.

Quiet; like a fanfare, lento \( \text{\(\frac{4}{4}\)} \) 

The light rises. She straightens up, lays her hands flat on ground; throws back her head and gazes at zenith. (Instrumental version: she lays instrument down and follows directions of previous measure.)

Morning Music \( \text{\(\frac{4}{4}\)} \) 

Pause. Head back level, eyes front, pause. She clasps hands to breast, closes eyes. Lips move in inaudible prayer.
Hands remain clasped. Low:

For Jesus Christ sake Amen.

Eyes open, hands unclasp, return to mound. Pause. She clasps hands to breast again, closes eyes, lips move again in inaudible addendum.

Eyes open, hands unclasp, return to mound. She turns to bag, rummages in it without moving it from its place.

Quasi agitato

World without end Amen.

Begin, Winnie. Begin your day Winnie.

Rummages again.

moderato piano

Tutti, con anima
morendo poco a poco

Brings out flat tube of toothpaste,

Turns back front, unscrews cap of tube, lays cap on ground, squeezes with difficulty small blob of paste on brush, holds tube in one hand and brushes with other

Cantabile; pseudo lamentoso

She turns modestly aside and back to her right to spit out behind mound. In this position her eyes rest on WILLIE

She cranes a little farther back and down.

Loud

Louder

Tender smile as she turns back front, lays down brush.

Poor Willie running out—but well can't be helped just one of those old
shakes out handkerchief—
starts wiping handle of brush, wiping mechanically—
wiping
wiping

cas-ion-al mild mi-grane it comes then goes al-


head down, resumes
wiping; stops wiping,
head up, calmed, wip-
ing eyes, folds hand-
kerchief, put it back
in bodice—


examines handle of brush, reads—

Poi piu quieto e tranquillo
ful-ly guar-an-teed... gen-u-ine

(During fermate:) Takes off spectacles, lays
them and brush down, gazes before her

Calmo (meno mosso) (pause)

Old things

(pause)

pure

gen-u-ine pure...

8° both hands

(pause)
She casts about, sees parasol, considers at length, takes it up and develops from sheath a handle of surprising length. Holding butt of parasol in right hand she cranes back and down to her right to hang over Willie.

Come un notturno ma qualche volta violento

She strikes down at him with heark of parasol. She strikes again.

The parasol slips from her grasp and falls behind the mound.

It is immediately restored to her by Willie's invisible hand. Thank you dear. She transfers parasol to left hand, turns back front and examines right palm. Damp. Returns parasol to right hand, examines left palm.

Come sopra

Head up, cheerfully:

Ah well, no worse. No bet-ter, no worse, no change no pain.
Spoken: Don't go off on me again now dear will you please. I may need you.

No hurry, no hurry, just don't curl up on me again.

Turns back front, lays down parasol, examines plumes together, wipes them on gray.

Perhaps a shade off color just the same. Turns to bag.

rummages in it,
Subito prestissimo;

brings out revolver, holds it up, kisses it rapidly.

puts it back, rummages.

A tempo

reads table,
Largo $\alpha' = \frac{4}{4}$

Loss of spirits
lack of keenness
want of appetite

in-fants child- ren
adults six level
Turns to bag, rummages in it.

brings out lipstick.

turns back front, examines lipstick. Looks for spectacles.  Puts on spectacles, looks for mirror. Takes up mirror, starts doing lips.  Ancora come sopra

Subito quielo e quasi lontano
(poco meno mosso)

What is that wonder-ful line?

Ob__ fleet-ing joys

Oh____ some-thing last-ing woe.
Winnie takes up toothbrush and examines handle through glass.

Come sopra; quasi pressando

Fully guaranteed... genuine pure...

During fermata: Winnie lays down glass and brush.

Takes handkerchief from bodice, takes off, and polishes spectacles,

(again coordinated with gestures.)

Puts on spectacles, looks for glass, takes up, and polishes, lays down glass, looks for brush, takes up brush, and wipes handle, lays down brush, looks for brush, takes up brush and...
examines handle through glass.

Come sopra

During fermata: Pause. Winnie lays down glass and brush, takes off spectacles, lays them down, gazes front.

Winnie speaks:
That's what I find so wonderful, that not a day goes by--smile--to speak in the old style--smile off--hardly a day, without some addition to one's knowledge however trifling, the addition I mean, provided one takes the pains. And if for some strange reason no further pains are possible, why then just close the eyes--she does so--and wait for the day to come--opens eyes--the happy day to come when flesh melts at so many degrees and the night of the moon has so many hundred hours.

Gioioso ma quasi frenetico (\( \lambda = 60 \))

Intermittent plucking at grass, head up and down, to animate the following.
Ah yes, if only I could be alone, - I mean prattle away without a soul to hear.

Not that I hear much, no, Willy, God forbid. Days when perhaps you hear nothing.

But days too when you answer.
So that I may say at all times, even when you do not answer and perhaps hear nothing, something of this is being heard,

I am not merely talking to myself, that is in the wilderness, a thing I could never bear to do for any length of time.
That is what en-sab-les me to go on,

Where as if you were to die, to speak in the old style, or go a-way and leave me, then what would I do, what could I do, all day long, I

mean be-tween the bell for wak-ing and the bell for sleep?

Sim - ply gaze be - fore me with com-pressed lips?

Not an-oth-er word as long as I drew breath, noth-ing to break the sil-ence of this place.
Save pos-sib-ly now and then, ev-er-y now and then, a sigh in-to my look-ing glass.

Or a brief ha ha ha

gale of laugh-ter ha ha ha should I hap-pen to see the old joke a-gain, ha ha ha

Ah well what a joy in an-y case to hear you laugh a-gain, Wil-lie, I was con-vinced I nev-er would, you
never would.

I suppose some people might think us a triffe irreverent, but I doubt it.

How can one better magnify the almighty than by sniggering with him at his little jokes, particularly the poorer ones?

(Misquelling intentional.)
I think you would back me up there, Wil-ly, or were we per-haps di-ver-ted by two quite dif-fer-ent things.

Oh well, what does it mat-ter, that is what I al-ways say, so long as one... you know...

What is that won-der-ful line... laugh-ing wild... some-thing some-thing laugh-ing wild a midst se-ver-est woe...
Effemero; molto legato ( ā = 64)

molto rallentando e decrescendo —— poi accelerando e crescendo

fan-cy not. Yes, the feeling more and more that if I were not

held in this way I would sim-ply float up in-to the blue.
And that perhaps some day the earth will yield and let me go,

the pull is so great, yes, crack all around me and let me out.

Don't you ever have that feeling, Wil-lie, of being stuffed up?
Don't you have to cling on sometimes, Wil - lie?

Wil - lie.

during fermata: looks at parasol [or instrument]

takes up parasol [or instrument.]

Lightly and flourishing \( \text{mp} \quad r = 84 \)

I sup - pose I might - yes, I sup - pose I might...

hoist this thing now.
One keeps putting off putting up for fear of putting up to soon

and the day goes by, quite by, without one's having put up at

parasol now fully open. [Instrument functioning.] Turned to her right she twirls it idly this way and that.
(Winnie speaks:)
Ah yes, so little to say, so little to do, and the fear so great, certain days, of finding oneself left with hours still to run, before the bell for sleep, and nothing more to say, nothing more to do, that the days go by, certainys go by, quite by, the bell goes,

Lo stesso tempo; non rallentando

329

Turning front.

and lit·tle or noth·ing said, lit·tle or noth·ing done.

That·is the dan·ger. To be guard·ed a·gainst.

Subito piu presto \( (r = 78) \)

\( f \)

(mp)

(Play the following three measures only if the soloist does not play an instrument.)

(senza pedale)
I used to perspire freely. Now hardly at all.

The heat is much greater. The perspiration much less.

That is what I find so wonderful

The way man...
daps him self. To chang-ing con-di-tions.

She transfers parasol to left hand.

Holding up wear-ies the arm.

That is a curious observation. I hope you heard that, Willie,
I should be grieved to think you had not heard that. She takes parasol in both hands.

I am weary, holding it up, and I cannot put it down.

I am worse off with it up than with it down, and I cannot put it down.
Reason says, Put it down, Winnie, it's not helping you, put the thing down and get on with something else.
can - not move.

No, some-thing must hap-pen, in the world, take place, some change, I can-not, if I am to move a-gain.

f Wil-lie. Help. For pi-ty's sake.

No? You can't?

f 8th

Well I don't blame you, it would ill be-come me who can-not move to blame my Wil-lie be-cause he can-not speak.
That is what I find so wonderful,
my two lamps, when one goes out the other burns brighter.
Winnie speaks:
Oh yes, great mercies.
Come sopra; molto piu tranquillo (\(^{60\%}\))

Ah earth you old ex-ting-uish-er.

mp

I pre-sume this has oc-curred be-fore, though I can-not re-call it.

Can you Wil-lie?

Can you re-call this hav-ing oc-curred be-fore?

molto rallentando

Largo (\(^{48\%}\))

With the sun bla-zing so much fier-er down, and hour-ly fier-er is it not na-tur-al that things should go on fire, nev-er known to do so, in this way,
I mean spontaneous like? Shall I myself not melt perhaps in the end, or burn, oh I do not necessarily mean burst into flames, no, just little by little

be charred to a black cinder, all this visible flesh. On the other hand, did I ever know a temperate time? No. I speak of temperate times and torrid times, they are

empty words. It is no hotter today than yesterday; it will be no hotter tomorrow than today, how could it, and so on back into the far past, forward into the far future.
Come sopra (subito presto)

then back, fumbles deeper. brings out finally musical-box. winds it up, turns it on, listens for a moment holding it in both hands, huddled over it, turns back front, straightens up and listens to tune, holding box to breast with both hands. It plays the Waltz

Duet "I love you so" from The Merry Widow. [Played on piano.] Gradually happy expression. She winds musical-box.

Imitating a musical-box (d = 54)

both hands; song free to double bar.

Music stops. Brief burst of song without words—musical-box tune—from Willie [i.e. the pianist] very hesitantly running down to a stop.
Increase of happy expression. She lays down box. Oh this will have been a happy day! She claps her hands. Again, Willie, again! Claps. Encore, Willie, please! Pause. Happy expression off. No! You won’t do that for me?

Quasi cantabile; lo stesso tempo

Well is very un-der-stand-able, very un-der-stand-able. One can not sing just to please some one, how ev-er much one loves them, no, song must

come from the heart, that is what I always say, pour out from in-most like a thrush.

How of-ten I have said, in evil hours, sing now, Win-nie, sing your song, there is noth-ing else for it, and did not. No, like the thrush, or the bird of
dawning, with no thought of benefit to one's self or any-one else.

During this section, Winnie slowly sinks into the mound, becoming embedded up to her neck. (For the instrumental version she sinks while she slips her arms and hands into a jacket and gloves that blend in as part of the mound.

Strange feeling.
Strange feeling that some-one is looking at me.

Molto quieto; lo stesso tempo

I am clear, then dim, then gone, then dim again, then clear again, and so on, back and forth, in and out of some-one's eye.
Strange? No, here all is strange.

Long pause.

There is my story of course, when all else fails.

A life. A long life. Beginning in the womb where life used to begin, Mill-dred will have mem-or-ies, she will have mem-or-ies, of the womb, be-fore she dies, the moth-er's womb.
She is now four or five al-read-y and has re-cent-ly been gi-ven a big wax-en doll. Ful-ly clothed, com-plete out-fit. Shoes, socks, un-dies, com-plete set.

fril-ly frock, gloved white meshA lit-tle white straw hat with chin e-las-tic. A lit-tle pic-ture book with led-gets in real print to go un-der her arm when she takes a walk.

Chin-a blue eyes that op-en and shut. The sun was not well up when Mil-lie rose, de-scend-ed the steep... slipped on her night-gown, de-scend-ed all a-
lone the steep wood-en stairs, back-wards on all fours, though she'd been for-bid-den to do so, tip-toed down the sil-ent pas-sage en-tered the nur-ser-y

and be-gan to un-dress dol-ly. Crept un-der the tu-ble and be-gan to un-dress dol-ly. Scold-ing her... the while.

Gent-ly, Win-nie!

subito molto quieto
Cantabile, come sopra

The day is now well advanced. And yet it is perhaps a little soon for my song.

Honic vocalises.

ha ha ha ha ha ha ha ha ha ha ha ha ha ha
To sing to soon is fat-al, I al-ways find.
ha ha ha ha ha ha ha ha On the oth-er hand it is pos-si-ble to leave it too late.
ha ha ha ha ha ha The
bell goes for sleep and one has not sung ha ha ha ha ha The whole day has flown--flown by, quite by and no song of an-y class, kind, or de-scrip-tion. There is a prob-lem here.

Choking back song...

One can-not sing, just like that, no. ah. It bub-bles up, for some un-known rea-son, the time is well chos-en, one chokes it back. ha ha ha ha ha One says,

Now is the time, it is now or nev-er and one can-not. ha ha ha ha ha Simp-ly can-not sing. Not a note. An-oth-er thing, Wil-lie, while we're on the sub-ject
The sadness after song ah ah Have you run across that, Wil-lie? ha ha ha ha ha In the course of your ex- per-i ence?

No! ha ha ha

Sadness after in-ti-mate sex-u-al in-ter-course one is fa-mil-i-ar with of course. ha ha ha ha ha You would con-cur with Ar-is-to- tle there, Wil-lie,

I fan-cy ah

Yes, that one knows and is pre-pared to face. ah ha ha ha ha ha

(largely)
But after song... ha ha ha ha Ha It does not last of course: ha ha ha ha ha... That is what I find so won-der-ful.

It wears a-way.

What are those won-der-ful lines?

Go fee-get me why should something o'er that

some-thing shad-ow fling... go fee-get me... why should sor-row go for-get me nev-er hear me... sweet-ly smile... bright-ly sing (sigh)

(Molto qui et can-tabile $\delta \approx 4 \div 4$)

That is what I find so won-der-ful a part re-mains of one's clas-sics, to help one through the day.

(With a sigh. One loses one's clas-sics. Pause. Oh not all.

Pause. A part. Pause. A part remains.)
Suddenly a mouse ran up her thigh and Mildred, dropping dolly in her fright, began to scream—Winnie gives a sudden piercing scream—and

screamed and screamed—Winnie screams twice—and screamed and screamed

and screamed and screamed till all came running, in their night attire, papa,
mama, Bibby and... old Auntie, to see what was the matter...
what on earth could possibly be the matter.

Ah well, not long now, Win-nie, can't be long now, un-til the
bell for sleep.

Then you may close your eyes,
and plays.

Molto cantabile
Problem here. No, something must move, in the world, I can't any more. A Zephyr. A breath.

What are those immortal lines?

It might be eternal dark. Black night without end. Just chance, I take it, happy chance. Oh yes, a bound ing mercies.

Come sopra ma piu lento

With lyrical nostalgia; ancora lento e quieto

And now? And now, Wil-ly?
That day. The pink fizz. The flute glasses. The last guest gone. The last bumper with the bodies nearly touching. That
day.


I piu quieto possibile

Sing your old song Winnie. Oh this is a happy day, this will have been another happy day! After all. So far.