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A Small Handful

for Solo Voice

Anne Sexton

Gilda Lyons

1. Where It Was At Back Then

Joyously ♩ = 112
sfp — *f*

rit. — *sweetly glowing* ♩ = 56

Voice

Hu(h), — Hu(h), Hus-band, last night I dreamt they cut off your hands and feet.

Tempo I ♩ = 112 *mp* — *f*

remote, deadened ♩ = 76
mp sub.

Hu(h), Hu(h), Hus-band, you whis-pered to me, — Now we are both in-com-plete.

rit. — *sickly* *sfp* — *mp* **Moving forward, with a strong pulse** ♩ = 50 *espr.*

Hu(h), Hus-band, I held all four in my arms like

sons and daugh-ters. Hu(h), Hu(h), Hus-band, I bent slow-ly down and washed them in

incalzando

mag-i-cal wa-ters. Hu(h), Hus-band, I placed each one where it be-

f dolce, a piacere

cresc. *accel.*

longed on you. — “A mir-a-cle,” — you said and we la-(ha ha ha)-aughed,

♩ = 60 *rit. al fine* *mp senza vib.*

la-(ha ha)-(h)aughed the laugh of the well-to-do.

2. Music Swims Back To Me

Deadened, dry $\text{♩} = 56$

Voice *p* *mp* *p* *faster* *mp p sub.*

Wait Mis-ter. Which way — is home? They turned the light — out

Tempo I *mp* *p* *mf* *mp* *faster, agitated* *mf ord.*

3 *senza vib.* *3* *3* *3* and the dark — is mov - ing in the cor - ner. There are no sign posts in — this room, moving forward

Tempo I *mp* *mf* *p* *incalzando poco a poco* *senza vib.* *3* *3* *mf* *mp espr. ord.* *p sub.*

6 four la - dies, o-ver eigh-ty, in dia-pers ev-ery-one of them. La la la, — Oh

9 *mf* *3* mu - sic swims back to me — and I can — feel the tune — they —

14 *p sub.* *mf* *p* played the night — they left — me

18 *mp dry, pulling back* *Broadly, driven* $\text{♩} = 64$ *cresc.* in this pri-vate in-sti-tu - tion on — a hill. Im - ag - ine it. A

20 *mf* *3* *3* *f* **Tempo I** *mp sub.* ra - di - o play - ing — and ev - ery - one — here — was cra 3 - zy. I

23 *mf* *p* *rubato* *mp* *mf* liked it — and danced in — a cir - - cle. Mu - sic pours — o - ver the

27 *f* *mf sub.* *f* *senza vib.* *p* sense and in a fun 3 - ny way mu - sic sees — more than I.

3. Seven Times

Intimate and free ♩ = 30

Voice *mp* *mf* *mp*

I — died sev - en — times in sev - en — ways — let - ting

Moving ahead, now with a strong pulse

4 *mf* *mp*

death — give me a sign, — let-ting — death — place his — mark — on my

7 *mf* *deadened p sub.* *incalzando* *mf*

fore - head, — crossed o - ver, — crossed o - ver. — And

Pushing forward ♩ = 42

10 *f* *freely* *mp* *mf*

death took root in that sleep. In that — sleep — I — held an ice — ba - by — and I —

14 *mp* *suddenly quite gentle* *p* *f* *ff espr. molto* *mf*

rocked — it and was rocked by — it. — Oh Ma - don - - na, —

17 *mp* *3* **Slower, with a strong pulse again** *rit.* *p*

hold — me. — I — am — a small — hand - ful.