



Frank Stemper

GOODNIGHT

MOON

voice and 'cello



for

Nathaniel Pierce, tenor & Nathaniel Pierce, violoncello

duration: 16 minutes

Notes:

Accidentals hold through the bar but not the octave, however, because of the chromatic nature of this music, there are many redundant cautionary accidentals.

Bowings for the 'cello are merely suggestions. Feel free to adjust them to suit yourself and the music.

All staccatos are the same duration, short, regardless of the written duration. However, the use of staccato in the motive at the opening of the piece should be very short and sharp, and scratchy. It attempts to represent the mind and attention span of a young child (or in this case, a little bunny), which dashes from one event or thought to another, like a nervous fly — rather than listening to the story.

The speaking voice should be at a dynamic that can be heard, and inflected subtly like someone reading a story to a child. The written rhythmic notation of the spoken recitation is merely a suggestion, as is the contour of the written line – notated with X's. Please feel free to alter the highs and lows, either during performance to suit your own interpretation. The result should be a natural performance of speech, and should not be stiff or formal at all. Additionally, the timbre of the spoken voice may also be at the performer's discretion. The story seems to be read by an ambiguous narrator, whose voice could sound like anything, even the tenor's or cellist's natural voice. But the narration could be in the "quiet old lady" voice, although the only thing that she really says is "hush." Another option is the little bunny, because the actual text of this story seems to occur inside the little bunny's thoughts, as he looks around the room saying 'goodnight.'

Extra-musical Notes:

This work includes several suggested directions to incorporate extra-musical gestures that will add another dimension to the performance. These directions may be followed at the performer's discretion, and they are free to expand or alter the directions as they see fit.

For example, in bar 75 there is a direction to "look into the audience and flash a quick toothy smile" to accompany a single harmonic pitch on the cello. At this moment, the performance ceases being a strictly musical or sonic work by crossing the line into *theater*. Of course this happens all the time during musical performances, as the musician(s) expresses the music visually and dramatically, even though there is no such direction to do so. That is, *indirect* theater is always part of every musical performance, because of the facial and other expressions, movements, etc. by the musician, visible to the audience. However, in my setting of *Goodnight Moon*, these directed gestures provide additional meaning of the thematic narrative, or at the very least embellish or clarify what the music is implying abstractly. The 'toothy smile' in bar 75 reinforces the idea that the cello line is the little bunny screwing around rather than paying attention to the story.

(As a father of five, I can tell you that the bunny in *Goodnight Moon* is not as calmly attentive as the illustrations indicate! That bunny isn't tired, and, if there were additional illustrations, they would confirm that bunny wants his play day to continue and has no intention of calmly going to bed.)

Another example is the voice's reaction of "Hush" in bar 31. This is a response to the first 30 bars of the piece, a solo cello series of quick disjunct rambling motives, implying the A.D.D. musings of a child at bedtime. Thus, the two performers have taken on roles of characters in this drama: the voice portraying the "quiet old lady," and the 'cello co=starring as the "little bunny." Throughout this work the singer and cellist play multiple roles. In addition to the little bunny and quiet old lady, the two musicians portray the story's narrator, the moon, the room, the stars, a dancing bunny, "a thump like falling out of bed," clocks, a cow, getting tired, sleeping, falling to sleep, etc., etc. In fact, the two musicians sometimes simultaneously play different versions of the same character.

That the two musicians' parts, tenor and cello, will be performed by a single performer, as is Mr. Pierce's own *métier*, identity could be a problem. One can only hope that schizophrenia doesn't set in!

á Abigail Gertrude
Goodnight Moon

Frank Stemper

(really scratchy, sinister)

sul pont

♩ = 120
sharp, quick, slightly scratchy staccato

Musical notation for measures 1-7 in bass clef, 4/4 time. Dynamics: *mp*, *p*, *mp*, *pp*. Includes a five-fingered chord and a sharp, scratchy staccato passage.

Musical notation for measures 8-12 in bass clef, 4/4 time. Dynamics: *mp*, *sfz*, *mp*, *p*. Includes performance instructions: "as before", "a thump, like pizz. falling out of bed", "arco, norm.", and "sul tasto no vib.". A fermata is placed over measure 10.

Musical notation for measures 13-19 in treble clef, 4/4 time. Dynamics: *mf*, *p*, *mp*, *p*. Includes performance instructions: "sul tasto no vib." and "sul pont". A fermata is placed over measure 15.

Musical notation for measures 20-25 in bass clef, 4/4 time. Dynamics: *mp*. Includes performance instruction: "sharp stacc. and scratchy again".

Musical notation for measures 26-29 in bass clef, 4/4 time. Dynamics: *mf*. Includes a triplet in measure 29.

Musical notation for measures 30-35 in grand staff, 4/4 time. Dynamics: *mf*, *mp*. Includes performance instructions: "spoken, lovingly", "lyrically, dolce", "slightly slower, playful, and a little clumsy", and "Hush—". A fermata is placed over measure 31. The bass line features triplets.

Musical notation for measures 36-40 in grand staff, 4/4 time. Dynamics: *mp*, *p*. Includes performance instructions: "full voice espress. *mp*". The vocal line includes the lyrics "Good night— Moon—".

44 *cresc.*

50 *f sfz*

54 *f* *3*

56 *♩ = 60*
whining *f* (higher pitched) *mf* kurt, stern (lower pitched) *p* half-whispered gently *mf* speaking, reading aloud beginning the story
getting testy *(D)* *espress.*
 HUSH— hush. (amused with a slight smile) hush In the
p pp mp

62 *3*
 great green room there was a te-le-phon and a red bal-loon—

66 *suddenly singing one word sneak in and out ——— and seamlessly return to speech*
 and a pic-ture of the COW— jump-ing o-ver the Moon.
over-pronounce the diphthong in COW
like a cow! *mp*

with this harmonic
look into audience and
flash a quick, toothy smile

♩ = 120

71

and and AND

as before

mf

8va - 7

76

a second quick toothy smile at the audience

8va - - -

f

3 3 3 5

79

interrupting the cello

a-aand and there were three lit-tle - there were three lit-tle

pizz.

cello interrupts the story-telling

L.V.

sfz

82

bears sit-ting on sit-ting on sss- losing this game

interrupting

f

L.V.

f

f

arco

86

(Eb)

(Eb)

3

89

pp

arco

Shhhhhh-

pizz. arco (F)

as before

mf

sfz

3 3 3

4 *mf* *ppp* *mf*
half whispered

92 (shhh) (shhh) (shhh) hush another quick toothy smile

p

99

106 $\text{♩} = 60$ quietly annoyed trying to continue continuing, no longer annoyed

sarcastically clears throat The Bears were sit-ting on chairs and

112 (sung) (sneak in and out) (spoken)

mp

and there were BEARS ON CHAIRS and there were two lit-tle kit-tens and a pair of

espress. *mp*

116 *p* *mf* *ppp* (spoken)

mit-tens KIT - TENS AND— MIT - TENS— and and

122 (sung) *ppp* *mf* a bit faster $\text{♩} = 72$ and suddenly rhythmic (spoken)

AND— (D) there was a house a

f *mf*

124 *cresc.*

toy house there was a lit-tle toy house and

126

and a

127 *f* *ad lib - gliss. etc.*

mouse Yes— (s) a

129 *ad lib - gliss. etc.*

mouse! a young— mouse

131

133

and a comb and a brush and a bowl full of

sfz

136 *poco rit.-----*

mush aaand— a qui-et old— La-dy who was

140 *almost hollering!* ♩ = 60 *full voice espress. mp*

whis-per - ing HU-SH! Good -

mp

148 *p* *mf* ♩ = 76 *p* *legato*

night— Room— Good - night

155 *p* *mf*

MOON Good - night cow

159 *p*

jump - ing o - ver the Moon Good - night Night

163 *rit.* *a tempo* ♩ = 120

Light Good - Night - Light _____

(quiet pause) like the beginning

ppp *mp* *p*

begin to hold back YAWN

168 ♩ = 76 *p*

YAWN - sleepy slightly audible

And the red bal-loon Good -

legato *p*

172 *mf* *mp* *p*

night Bears good-night chairs Good -

p

175

night kit - tens and good - night mit - tens Kit - ten's

178 *mf* *p* *mf* *p*

181 *mp* turn yourself into a clock
(give subtle accents to consonants)

Good - (d) Night (t) clocks (cks) and (d) good - (d)-night (t) Socks

mf *p*

184 (spoken) *mf* (sung)

(cks) let harmonic glisten like the beginning by Mar-gar-et Wise Brown Good - night lit - tle

p *mf*

187 *p* *mp* (♩=♩)

house and good - night Mouse— quiet, ethereal

p *mp* *p*

191 *mp* Good - night lit - tle house and good-night mouse

arco - tenuto *mp* pizz.

mp *p*

195 young mouse

mp *p*

p Nicieably Quieter
with subtle "hushes"

197

Good - night

f mp < f mp < mf p

199

comb and Good - night

201

brush— shhhh good - night brush— shhhh young

Spoken like the beginning

203

brush— Shhh— shintheGreat Green Room there was and— a lit-tle

mf < f

falsetto - like a child
p

205

Good - night NO - BO - DY

p

10

211 *rit.* *HUSH the audience with finger on lips*

216 *a tempo p* *rit. -- molto --- molto* *a tempo*

Good - night Mu(sh) hush Young Mu(sh) hush and good-

legato *--- coming to a STOP*

p

221 *mf* *p*

night good - Night to the OLD LA - DY

226 *rit.*

whis - per - ing...

230 *dim.*

Old La - dy whis - per - ing NO - BO -

234

DY
whis - per
ing...

238 *freely, dolce, very quiet*

Good - night
Stars
Good-night Air
Good-night

*sung, but partially whispered
(flüsterstimme)*

242

Noi - ses Ev - ry - where.

*barely audible improvised
whispering with fade of C#*