

# A Short Story of Falling

Alice Oswald

Piers Connor Kennedy

Harry

[The pianist improvises an accompaniment of 'raindrops' using only the notes in the boxes provided. As a guide, the pianist should look to play *one note or none per hand per semiquaver* within a fixed pulse (c. ♩=76, as indicated), which is kept throughout the piece. The length of time spent playing the notes of each box before moving to the next is not fixed in tempo but should be led by instinct, nor should the change of notes necessarily be made overt. Where applicable, the progression should follow the vocal parts, either in waiting for the end of a vocal phrase (e.g. bars 2-3), or in taking cues as indicated by dotted lines (e.g. bar 5). An introductory ossia part is provided as an example of the proposed style.]

[Example]

(*ppp*)  
 (In a regular tempo, c. ♩=76)  
*ppp* raindrops\*  
 [octave above written pitch]

Piano

*poco cresc.*

Ped.

[The singer is to sing the bracketed phrases in a regular tempo (c. ♩=60, as indicated), which is slower than and unrelated to that of the piano. There is free time between brackets and at full bar lines, and each bracket begins after it has been cued by the piano, with cue notes given at the start of each bracket for reference. Note that the in-bracket tempo remains unbroken when spanning bars or systems; this is marked by a short bar line (e.g. bars 6-7).]

(In a regular tempo, c. ♩=60)

*p* legato, dreamily *pp*

H.

oh > [narrow mouth] > oo

The bracketed phrases in bars 2 & 4 should be played with the LH as written, once, within the tempo (c. ♩=76), before immediately rejoining the improvisation as before. The RH, meanwhile, performs the boxed improvisation continuously throughout.

Pno.

*pp*

LH

*p*  
 [at written pitch]

*poco cresc.*

4 [sim.] *mp* port. *pp*

oh > [narrow mouth] > oo\_\_\_

*p* *poco dim.*

LH

*mp* [at written pitch]

6 (c. ♩=60) *p spritely* (no pause)

It is the sto - ry\_\_\_ of the fall - ing\_\_\_ rain

*pp*

7 *p*

to turn in-to a leaf and fall\_ a - gain.

*poco cresc.* *p*

9 *p spritely*

It is the sec - ret of a sum - mer show'r

10

H. *p*  
to steal the light and hide it in a flow'r.

Pno. *poco dim.* *pp* *poco cresc.*

12

H. *p poco cresc.* (wait for cue)  
and ev' - ry flow'r a ti - ny tri - bu - ta - ry

Pno. [at written pitch] *p*

[From bar 12, the pianist should gradually increase the rate of notes played, in correlation with the increase in dynamic. During bars 16-22, the pianist should look to play none, one, or two notes per hand per semiquaver as a general rule (no audible rests). Then, from bar 23 onwards, the rate should decrease again in correlation with the decrease in dynamic.]

13

H. (*poco cresc.*) *mp* (wait for cue)  
that from the ground flows green and mo - men - ta - ry

Pno. *poco cresc.*

14

H. *cresc. poco a poco*  
is one of wat - er's wish es and this tale hangs

Pno. *mp cresc. poco a poco*

15 *mf cresc.* (wait for cue) 5

H. in a seed - head small - er than my thumb - nail

Pno. *cresc. poco a poco*

16 *f joyously*

H. if on - ly I a pass - er - by

Pno. *mf* *f*

\* [The bracketed phrases (bars 16-23) should each be played as written, once, within the tempo (c. ♩=76). Each bracket should begin out of the improvised passages without breaking the flow of semiquavers, and similarly should flow immediately into the next improvised passage. Bars 21 & 22 exclusively feature the RH continuously repeating a three-note ostinato as written whilst simultaneously the LH exercises the improvisation using the notes in the box, as before. Careful attention should be given to the sustain pedal, and to the placement of the dotted-line cues as they correspond to the vocal part.]

17

H. could pass as clear as wa-ter through a plume

Pno. *(mf)* *(f)*