

Janet Oates

2019

!

A gallery of ne'er-do-wells in 5 portraits

For mezzo-soprano and piano

Duration c. 4 minutes

- i. A most irksome hobbadehoy
- ii. A woman of less than pleasing countenance
- iii. A questionable lady
- iv. A wandought, no doubt.
- v. An unnecessary letter of a gentleman

The five movements of ! may be performed as one continuous song with no breaks between them.

Alternatively, ! may be separated into five separate portraits to be interspersed – in any order - between different items on a recital programme.

A version for unaccompanied vocal ensemble also exists.

Texts assembled from archaic insults

i. **A most irksome hobbadehoy** (45 seconds)

You scobberlotching raggabrash, stampcrabbing scallywag, you cream-faced loon. You rank spoony ninnyhammer, chuckle-headed sponger, you skin-wasting cumberworld, you cow-handed whiffle-whaffle, dew-beating dalcop, galumphing quisby, loiter-sacking lubberwort.

This unreliable young man is a large, clumsy chap who does little work, has little intelligence, and does not pay his own way through life.

ii. **A woman of less than pleasing countenance** (25 seconds)

Furfuraceous fustylugs.

This unappetising soul is corpulent and lazy, with an unfortunate face..

iii. **A questionable lady** (35 seconds)

Pediculous draggle-draggle

A louse-infested prostitute.

iv. **A wandought, no doubt.** (1 minute)

A drate-poking gnashgab mumblecrust, crambazzled stingbum, am I?
A seek-sorrowful smelfungus, am I?
Boboly-nobolyiferous whoreson zed (bespawling gobermouch) am I?
Gabber... minikin....

An aging hypochondriac, with negativity emanating from every oozing pore.

v. **An unnecessary letter of a gentleman** (1- 2 minutes)

Why, he's a fribbling sneaksby! He's a bed-swerving fop-doddle! I concur, such a baffle-gabbing word-grubbing snout band! My, what a rake-fire, a roiderbanks, a tip-taking gillie-wet-foot! A clack-box: all hat and no cattle!

A gentleman of no honour, whose words are more copious than his coins, and whose thoughts are emptier than his purse, but who believes himself important and a charmer.



i: a most irksome hobbadehoy

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right in his face: a very personal attack.

♩ = c.110

voice

f
gliss.
you

Piano

f

4

scob-ber - lot-ching rag - ga-brash!
gliss.
you

6

scob - ber lot-ching rag - ga-brash! rag - ga-brash! Stamp - crab-bing

8

scal - ly - wag, You cream - faced loon,____

10

— you rank spoo-ny nin - ny - ham - mer,

12

nin ny - ham - mer, chuc - kle - head - ed spon - ger!

Più mosso

Più mosso



ii: a woman of less-than-pleasing countenance

Musingly; with growing realisation.

Text: furfuraceous fustylugs.

Slightly nasal; one continuous breath. The 'ffu' syllable OR the 'ty' of 'sssty' may be made on an inhale to aid the continuous line of sound.

Pitch-line (and opening pitch) is approximate.

MS *mf* (unvoiced)

Fffur- fffur- 'a- ceou- sss ffu- sssty- lu- gsss

pianist: vocalising

fffff fffff ssshhh sssss ff! sss- t- t- t sss *p* hold ad lib

knocks * on the piano

a high, dry tone *f* *f* *p* drum with fingernails

mp a deeper more resonant tone

* rhythms and number of knocks are approximate: treat notation as gestural.



iii: a questionable lady

completely outraged.

poco a poco accel.

MS, spoken
(vary pitches ad lib)

Puh, puh, puh, puh, puh, puh, di-cu-lous. Puh, puh, puh, puh, puh, puh, di-cu-lous.

Puh, puh, puh, puh, puh, puh, di-cu-lous. Di-cu-lous, di-cu-lous. Di-cu-lous, di-cu-lous.

Di di di di, di di di di, Di di di di, di di di di, Duuuh - rig-gle-ig-gle ig-gle ig-gle ig-gle Duuuh -

sharp intake of breath

rag-gle-ag-gle ag-gle ag-gle Drihh hah hah hah hah hah Drahh hah hah hah hah hah hah

sim.

sim.

drig - gle drag - gle drig - gle drag - gle drig - gle drag - gle drig - gle drag - gle

21

MS

drig - gle drag - gle drig - gle drag - gle drig - gle drag - gle drig - gle drag - gle

Pno.

23 $\text{♩} = 120+$

MS

druh - guh - druh - guh druh - guh - druh - guh druh - guh - druh - guh druh - guh - druh - guh

poco a poco

15^{ma}

Pno.

WHISTLE. If you can't whistle, play the ossia.

gliss.

25 *poco a poco accel.*

MS

druh - guh - druh - guh druh - guh - druh - guh druh - guh - druh - guh druh - guh - druh - guh

accel.

15^{ma} *poco a poco*

Pno.

poco a poco accel.

move smoothly, with no sense of pulse within or between bars

gliss.

27 *presto possibile*

MS

d - g - d - g d - g - d - g d - g - d - g d - g - d - g d - g - d - g T!

(like a spitting gesture)

ff

c.35"

Pno.

gliss.

T!

ff

T!

ff (vocalisation, like a spitting gesture)



iv: a wandought, no doubt.

barely aware.

May be performed as notated...

OR the pianist and vocalist can be entirely independent: tempi, pauses, entrances and finishing points may vary in each rehearsal/performance. Piano may begin first if desired.

M-S. *mp* *very freely* *rit...* *5*

a drate - pok - ing gnash - gab - gab - gab - gab - gab

Piano *♩ = c. 42* *very steadily; legato.* *15^{ma}* *p*

M-S. *3* *poco accel...* *gliss.*

mm - - - mum - mum-mum-mum-ble- crust.....

Pno. *(15)* *loco* *#2* *Ped.*

M-S. *5* *mf*

Cramm - bazz - zz -

Pno. *8^{va}*

7 *p*

M-S. *gliss.*

zzled sting-bum-bum-bum-mmm am I? a

Pno. *loco* *Ped.* *gliss.*

HUM: mmmm
pitch of your choice

10

M-S. *gliss.*

seek - sor - row - ful smel - - fun - gus am

Pno. *loco* *Ped.*

12

M-S. *I?*

Pno. *Ped.*

14

M-S. *3* *5*

Bo - bo - ly - no-bo-ly - if - fer-ous whore - son zed zed zed zzz

accel... *rit....* *accel...*

Pno. **Pitchless whisper. Does NOT need to be in time with piano.**

3 *3* *3*

be-spaw - ling go - ber-mouch shh

16

M-S. *gliss.* am I? am

Pno. rit.... rit.... accel... rit....

3 3 HUM (zzz):
pitch of your choice

gliss. *gliss.*

zzzzz.....

(pitches here are approx - instead it could be a steady descent from F to C)

19

M-S. I? mmm gab-ber-gab-ber-gab-ber-gab-ber-gab-ber-gab-ber

Pno. *rit...*

Red.

22

M-S.

Pno. *rit....*

b

25 **piu mosso** rit...

M-S. mi - ni - mi - ni - mi - ni - mi - ni - mi - ni - kin - nnn *gliss.*

15^{ma}

Pno. c. 2'30



v: an unnecessary letter of a gentleman

Performance notes:

- 1) ad lib repeat bars. Whenever you (individually) arrive at a bar or partial bar marked by repeats, this may be played as many times as you wish (including just once). Try to decide on the fly rather than in advance. Performers will therefore be un-coordinated from bar 4 onwards. The steady crotchet pulse must be maintained.
2) dynamics: the whole song should be loud and over-confident, while allowing the voice to be heard over the piano.

$\text{♩} = 120$ *gleeful pots and kettles in a clubhouse.*

f

M-S. *gliss.*

Why, _____ he's a frib-bl-ing sneaks-by! He's a bed-swer-ving

$\text{♩} = 120$

Piano

mf

smug little parliamentary-style grunts of approval (any low pitch)

4

M-S.

fop - doo - dle! hmgh! hah! I con-cur! such a

Pno.

6

M-S. *gliss.*

baf - fle - gab-bing word-grub-bing snout-band! My, _____ what a rake - fire, a

Pno.

8

M-S. 

roi - der - banks, a trip - tak - ing gil - lie - wet - foot, a clack - box! hah!

Pno. 

as many notes as your hand can cover, with these top and bottom notes

10

M-S. 

hmgh! hoh! All hat, and no cat - tle. hmgh! hmgh!

Pno. 

*finish with piano **

as many notes as your hand can cover, with these top and bottom notes

use partial forearm; white and black notes *whole forearm*

use partial forearm; white notes only

whole forearm

*finish with voice**

* ending: when you arrive at your final bar, repeat until the other performer is also on their final bar; continue together for a while if you like; finish together.