

HANDS: A TEXT FOR TWO VOICES, VIOLA DA GAMBA AND DEATH

Text to be read silently to oneself (if alone) or whispered, smilingly, to a friend while the musician plays.

[INTRODUCTORY MUSIC: KARL FRIEDRICH ABEL (WKO 205)]

1.

I walk between right and left. I am here because of up & down. I thirst because my hands are empty.

2.

Do you understand what your hands say? Listen to the hands of night. Listen to the hands shatter the wind like rocks.

1.

Those hands I cannot see have left my own hands empty. They have taken away the hips of my wife & left behind a pebble.

2.

And where is your wife. And where is the pebble.

1.

Laughing beside a steaming river. I hear music every time I remember her hands. I threw the pebble away while I sang.

2.

What kind of laughter? Is it the music of threshing wheat or of children drying green whips in the sun? Or is it a less dangerous kind of laughter. Perhaps it is an old woman's nose squeaking into a champagne glass?

1.

No. It is the music of hands hands hands. Belching hands urinating hands kicking flying riding hands. Dead hands.

2.

Ouch! My hands are trying to say something to the floor. I think they want to melt into the floor. My right & left are becoming up & down & help!—the wall is whispering something to me about death.

1.

Perhaps it is the green music of children's laughing whips. Is it the laughter of an old woman's nose? And where is your wife?

2.

I feel pebbles under the floorboards. Listen! Hands are stalking the gravel like S.S.men. I think they're after the pebbles of our wives.

1.

Do you hear what they're whispering to each other. One is a gruff American belching like a somnambulist. The other one is making music. The music of children eating burned-out stars.

2.

A hand eats like a lobster. Pincers make the meal complete.

1.

I'd like to question your wife's motives for having hands. Was she born with the ability? Or did they find her, strike her, ravage her with whips those children and...

2.

Become her?

1.

Quite.

2.

No. They were always one part of her. I remember when her fingers were born.

1.

The wall is counting to their strange music. I wish I had fingers.

2.

But you do. The kind we like.

1.

I mean fingers like the windows have. Fingers that draw your eyes like water out of the ground & then stick needles in so that the world dribbles hotly away like blood. Like whips. Like striking somnambulists threshing wheat as they soooo veerrry muuuch desire.

2.

But you do. But their bones have become cardboard tubes for ducks to swim through. But isn't a hand's do but you? I wish I had water out of the ground & then stick needles in. Pebbles because superannuated noses squeaking into a champagne glass.

1.

And where is your wife? And where is the pebble? Music laughter right & left. Because of up & down. Listen! To the hands...

2.

Slam the wind like rocks?

1.

No. It is the complete music of hands hands hands. No. It is the belching complete urinating complete kicking compendium.

2.

Complete.

1.

But you do. Your wife's pebble's been removed because of your hands condition compendium complete. Some like SS men I think are after the pebbles of our desire.

2.

I'd like to question their motives...

1.

Vision. A hand eats like a lobster. Pincers make the meal complete.

2.

Compendium complete. Compendium quite. Vision.

1.

You know I remember when her fingers were born.

2.

Ouch! These hands are hands hands hands.

1.

Excuse them S.S. children. What a sweet little pair of pincers. Claws, bones, feathers, bile.

2.

I feel pebbles under the floorboards. Wet whips drying in the sun. Quite.

1.

Should I show him in? Make the meal complete?

[MUSICAL INTERLUDE: CARL FRIEDRICH ABEL: "ARPEGGIO"]

2.

You make the first move, somnambulist American. Empty pincer.

1.

Two times on Sunday.

2.

What is today?

1.

My finger's birthday. Claws, bones, feathers, bile. My hand grazed gold eight tententious bombing days later.

2.

Eight. Quite. Excuse me but those hands I cannot see have left my own hands empty.

1.

& What is today? Wednesday's Vision.

2.

I feel pebbles like electric wool under my eyelids. You know my hands are hands hands hands.

1.

I walk between left & right, empty and overfull.

2.

Is that where it is? Star with a flail across it?

[ENTER 3.]

3.

Sssh! I think it's time to make a fist.

1.

Jesus. Here they are. Deflect the fucking wind. I hear them cluck like chickens under the floorboards.

2.

Bomb. You want to melt into a child's willow whip.

3.

The crack is filled like a purse with fists. It is over-full, bursting, urinating fists.

1.

Shall we make them? Ouch! Your pebble or your wife.

2.

Two times if you really want to know. Whip. Whip. Flail. Whip.

3.

My hands were not born yesterday. Ahem.

1.

Did you hear that? Whippy bile. Five-pointed star.

2.

Jesus. Here they are. Is that where it is?

3.

My hands have filled the crack. My fist is a heavy pincer. My hands are hungry fists, if you ask me. Shake. Claws, bones, feathers, pebbles, flail.

1.

Tongues were not meant to cripple. But you do. The kind of flail we like.

2.

My hands are cold. Cold like a moron's tongue.

3.

Lobsters are the S.S. of graves. Lobsters are the fruit of tombstones. Whips are the terrible nature of my fastidious fists.

1.

You know, I remember when your fingers were born.

2.

And where is your wife? Beneath the floorboards? Shhh. Jesus, there she is just like you said.

3.

Excuse me. My left & right are indeed up & down. This is where that tumor is.

1.

When did that begin?

2.

I threw away my pebble. My nose squeaked into a champagne glass. And I endured my star. The world dribbled in. Five-pointed tumor, if you ask me.

3.

Americans prefer death. Shake hands, my pincer. Only a bee sting, a child's bite, a kicking compendium. I thirst because my hands are empty. Shake! (Applause requested.) Bomb.

ruinous star

ruinous star

ruinous star

ruinous star

Shake!