

# "Rememberance of Ann's Death"

scene v from *Ann and Abe*

by Eric Simonson (2015)



The subject of this opera concerns the legendary (and historically controversial) romance between Ann Rutledge and the young Abraham Lincoln. The characters include: Abraham Lincoln, Ann Rutledge, Mary Todd Lincoln, Ward Lamon, a French Street Peddler, law partners of Lincoln, James Rutledge, John McNamar (fiancé of Ann Rutledge), townspeople of Danville, Illinois and townspeople of New Salem, Illinois.

**In this scene (scene v):** Sometime in the 1850's, Lincoln has ended another day working as a lawyer in a small town in central Illinois. In reverie, he recalls the death of Ann and his resulting “melancholy.” He attempts to lighten his mood by recalling a funny story he used to tell. The story is enacted in pantomime as it is being told. A narrating chorus of female voices recalls additional details about Ann's character, as well as gives the punchline to the funny story.

### **The Characters:**

Abraham Lincoln (tenor or lyric baritone)

3 female singers (of varying voice types, singing in unison)

2 pantomime artists (a man and an elderly woman)

**Duration:** 9 minutes approximately

# Remembrance of Ann's Death

from

*Ann and Abe*

Eric Simonson

Score

$\text{♩} = 48$  Rugged, Pensive

narrative  
chorus  
(3 or 4  
female  
voices)

Abe  
(tenor or  
lyric baritone)

Abe sits on park bench overlooking a city street in a small town in central Illinois (ca 1850). It is the end of the day, and the smells of supper cooking waft his way. An old tree is nearby.

$\text{♩} = 48$  Rugged, Pensive

*f*

*mf*

*p* *mf* *mf*

*mf*

5

Abe

The smell of the ap - ples fry - in' — takes me back a-ways.

5

Remembrance of Ann's Death

9  
Abe  
8  
Some-times a cer-tain feel-ing — sweeps ov - er me, in-ter-mix-ing joy and sad-ness.

9  
9  
noticing the tree nearby... **A** *p*

13  
Abe  
8  
Where is it from? That tree ov-er there has man y tales — to

13  
**A**  
*mf*

16  
Abe  
8  
tell, but it can-not — tell them to me, — since I lack the ears to hear.

16  
*mf*

## Remembrance of Ann's Death

19

Abe

8

And if I did, this wise ol' tree would tell me why I feel this way;

19

19

*pp*

22

He stands up and begins pacing.

Abe

8

it would know. I im - a - gine it's been here for fif - ty —

22

22

*p*

23

Abe

8

— six - ty years at least.

23

23

*mf*

The image shows a musical score for a song. It is divided into three systems. The first system (measures 19-21) features a vocal line for 'Abe' and a piano accompaniment. The vocal line has a treble clef and a key signature of one sharp (F#). The lyrics are 'And if I did, this wise ol' tree would tell me why I feel this way;'. The piano accompaniment consists of chords in the right hand and a bass line in the left hand, ending with a *pp* dynamic marking. The second system (measures 22-24) begins with a double bar line and the instruction 'He stands up and begins pacing.' The vocal line continues with 'it would know. I im - a - gine it's been here for fif - ty —'. The piano accompaniment features a more active melody in the right hand and a simple bass line in the left hand, with a *p* dynamic marking. The third system (measures 23-24) continues the vocal line with '— six - ty years at least.' and shows the piano accompaniment becoming more complex with a *mf* dynamic marking.

Remembrance of Ann's Death

25

Abe

25

25

25

**B**

27 His pacing ends. He stops, and he becomes freshly aware.

Abe

I feel the cool breeze and know where it comes

**B**

27 *p* *pp*

*mf* *p*

31

Abe

from: the West.

31

31

♩ = 54 Rolling

narrative  
chorus

32

Abe

32

But in - side me it's

♩ = 54 Rolling

32

32

*p*



Abe

33

dif - fer - ent. \_\_\_\_\_

"disruptive"

33

33

*ff*

*p*

*p*



34

Abe

8 There are no cool - ing breez - es, —

34

34

35

Abe

8 — on - ly an ache

35

6

*f* *p*

36

Abe

8 that burns,

36

*f* *ff* *pp*

6

37

Abe

8

some - times hot,

37

37

*f*

*p*

38

Abe

8

some - times bare - ly glow - ing.

38

*p*

38

*f*

*p*

39

Abe

8

He returns to the park bench. A group of three women singers, constituting a narrative chorus, appears stage right. They are relatively emotionless, with their gaze turned upward. Their attire should be neutral of history as much as possible.

39

*ff*

*f*

*mf*

*mf*

*f*

The image shows a musical score for a scene. It consists of three systems of music. Each system includes a vocal line for 'Abe' and a piano accompaniment. The first system (measures 37-38) has the lyrics 'some - times hot,' and 'some - times bare - ly glow - ing.' The piano accompaniment features various dynamics like *f* and *p*. The second system (measures 38-39) shows the piano accompaniment continuing with dynamics *p* and *f*. The third system (measures 39-40) shows the piano accompaniment with dynamics *ff*, *f*, *mf*, and *f*. There are also some performance instructions like '>' above notes in the final system.

41

Abe

Yes, I know why the ache,

*p* *p* *pp*

Detailed description: This block contains the musical score for measures 41-44. It features a vocal line for 'Abe' and a piano accompaniment. The vocal line starts at measure 41 with a treble clef and a key signature of one flat. The lyrics are 'Yes, I know why the ache,'. The piano accompaniment consists of two staves (treble and bass clefs). The first two measures (41-42) are marked with a piano (*p*) dynamic. The third measure (43) has a piano (*p*) dynamic. The fourth measure (44) is marked with a pianissimo (*pp*) dynamic and features a thick, sustained chord in the bass register. A double bar line is present at the end of measure 44.

45

narrative chorus

45

Abe

She was a hand - some girl,

seems just like yes - ter - day.

"looming"

*p*

Detailed description: This block contains the musical score for measures 45-48. It features a vocal line for 'narrative chorus' and 'Abe', and a piano accompaniment. The narrative chorus line starts at measure 45 with a treble clef and a key signature of one flat. The lyrics are 'She was a hand - some girl,'. The Abe vocal line starts at measure 45 with a treble clef and a key signature of one flat. The lyrics are 'seems just like yes - ter - day.'. The piano accompaniment consists of two staves (treble and bass clefs). The first two measures (45-46) are marked with a piano (*p*) dynamic. The third measure (47) is marked with a piano (*p*) dynamic and has the annotation '"looming"' above it. The fourth measure (48) is marked with a piano (*p*) dynamic. A double bar line is present at the end of measure 48.

47

narrative chorus

nat - u - ral, and

47

Abe

8

It was brain fe - ver. But she still called for

47

*mf* *f* *p* *f*

49

narrative chorus

quite in - tel - lect - u - al,

49

Abe

8

me. She must have loved me.

49

*f* *p* *f* *p*

51

narrative chorus

51

Abe

8

though not high - ly ed - u - cat - ed. —

Two days la - ter, and

51

51

*f*



**D**

**Humorously Agitated**

♩ = 60

53

narrative chorus

53

Abe

8

where was I? So sud - den. —

**D**

**Humorously Agitated**

♩ = 60

Abe moves upstage left, changing his demeanor purposefully to that of a colorful story teller.

53

53

*p*

*ff* like a distant memory of the Revolutionary War...

*mf*

55

55

*ff*

*p*  
 In this way, he tries to divert his attention from depressing thoughts by recalling a funny story he used to tell.

Abe

56

8

spoken: There was a fel - ler who loved all

56

56

*p*

A pantomime of the story begins to take place behind Abe, downstage and center.

Abe

57

8

things that were old and 'spec - ia - ly things from the

57

57

*ff*

*p*

58

Abe

8  
Rev-o - lu-tion-ar - y War. So

58 *f* *ff* *p*

59

Abe

8  
he had heard that an old wo-man owned a dress she had worn dur-ing the Rev-o-lu-tion-ar-y War.

59 *p*

61

Abe

8  
And he packed up and jour-neyed to said wo-man's town, hop - ing - to

alla "banjo"

61 *p*

62

Abe

8 gaze up - on the re - lic. When he

62

6

*p*

*mf*

Detailed description: This system contains measures 62 and 63. The vocal line (Abe) is in treble clef with a soprano 8. The lyrics are "gaze up - on the re - lic. When he". The piano accompaniment consists of two staves. In measure 62, the right hand has a whole rest and the left hand has a whole note chord (F#4, C5, G4). In measure 63, the right hand has a sixteenth-note triplet (G4, A4, B4) followed by a quarter rest, and the left hand has a sixteenth-note triplet (F#4, G4, A4) followed by a quarter rest. Dynamics include *p* and *mf*.

63

Abe

8 reached her she wel - comed him hos - pit - ab - ly and he com -

63

6

*p*

Detailed description: This system contains measures 63 and 64. The vocal line (Abe) is in treble clef with a soprano 8. The lyrics are "reached her she wel - comed him hos - pit - ab - ly and he com -". The piano accompaniment consists of two staves. In measure 63, the right hand has a whole rest and the left hand has a whole note chord (F#4, C5, G4). In measure 64, the right hand has a sixteenth-note triplet (G4, A4, B4) followed by a quarter rest, and the left hand has a sixteenth-note triplet (F#4, G4, A4) followed by a quarter rest. Dynamics include *p*.

64

Abe

8 menced to ask a - bout the dress. With great de -

64

*mf*

Detailed description: This system contains measures 64 and 65. The vocal line (Abe) is in treble clef with a soprano 8. The lyrics are "menced to ask a - bout the dress. With great de -". The piano accompaniment consists of two staves. In measure 64, the right hand has a whole rest and the left hand has a whole note chord (F#4, C5, G4). In measure 65, the right hand has a sixteenth-note triplet (G4, A4, B4) followed by a quarter rest, and the left hand has a sixteenth-note triplet (F#4, G4, A4) followed by a quarter rest. Dynamics include *mf*.



65

Abe

light she went to her dres - ser and fetched the cher - ished gar - ment.

66

Abe

When she pro - duced the cher - ished gar - ment he quick-ly

67

Abe

grabbed it \_\_\_ and in an act of fer - vent a - dor - a - tion and kissed it. Well some-what sur-

The narrative chorus changes its detached demeanor and faces the audience to give the punchline to the story:

narrative chorus

69

69

Abe

8

prised by this wor-ship-ful act the wo-man said:

69

69

*mf* *pp* *mf* *pp* *mf*

*mf* *pp* *mf* *pp* *mf*

*pp*

==

Detailed description: This block contains the musical score for measures 69 and 70. It features three staves: a vocal line for the 'narrative chorus', a vocal line for 'Abe', and a piano accompaniment. The narrative chorus line starts at measure 69 with a treble clef and a key signature of one sharp (F#). The lyrics are 'If this old dress de-serves all'. The piano accompaniment consists of two staves (treble and bass clefs). The piano part includes dynamic markings: *mf*, *pp*, *mf*, *pp*, and *mf* across the measures. There are also some performance instructions like a double bar line with repeat dots and a fermata.

narrative chorus

71

71

71

*pp* *mf*

*pp*

Detailed description: This block contains the musical score for measures 71 and 72. It features three staves: a vocal line for the 'narrative chorus', a vocal line for 'Abe', and a piano accompaniment. The narrative chorus line starts at measure 71 with a treble clef and a key signature of one sharp (F#). The lyrics are 'that, why don't you kiss some-thing that's old - er by far. Kiss my'. The piano accompaniment consists of two staves (treble and bass clefs). The piano part includes dynamic markings: *pp* and *mf*. There are also some performance instructions like a double bar line with repeat dots and a fermata.

Relaxing Somewhat

narrative chorus

73 a...

E ♩ = 54

Abe

73

8

73

*f*

73

*mf*

Relaxing Somewhat

E ♩ = 54

Elderly woman exits stage right quickly.

Abe returns to his melancholy, walks towards the park bench to sit down.

Abe

75

8

Sil-ly stor-y!

One of the singers in the chorus exits stage right quickly.

Man exits stage left quickly.

75

*p*

75

*mf*

*p*

*mf*

*p*

78

Abe

Who am I kid - ding? I'm just an en - ter - tain - er.

A second singer exits stage right quickly, leaving only one. The one remaining singer adopts a more individualistic demeanor, beginning to pace downstage. Is she "Ann"?

*mf* *p* *mf* *p*



♩ = 48 **Tempo Primo**

81

narrative chorus

Abe

That's what the peo-ple like.

*mf* broadly, spacious *pp* *mf*

He stands and begins pacing again.

Piano accompaniment for measures 85-88. The right hand features a melodic line with eighth and sixteenth notes, while the left hand provides a steady bass line with chords and single notes.



**F**

Abe assumes a position upstage and center.

Abe

Vocal line for Abe (measures 89-91) and piano accompaniment. The vocal line includes the lyrics: "When I left you, we both were". The piano accompaniment features a melodic line in the right hand and a bass line in the left hand. A piano (*p*) dynamic marking is present.



Abe

Vocal line for Abe (measures 92-95) and piano accompaniment. The vocal line includes the lyrics: "cry - in'. And ev - er since, it's me". The piano accompaniment features a melodic line in the right hand and a bass line in the left hand. Dynamic markings include *f* and *mf*.

94

Abe

8

who's been dy - in'. You, the hon - or - a - ble one, had to

94

94

*mf*

96

Abe

8

wait for that John Mc - Na - mar, or should I say "Muck" Neil.

96

96

*f*

98

Abe

8

I think we know why he had two names.

98

98

*f*

*mf*

This seems to catch the attention of the one female singer, and she stops pacing.

The musical score is arranged in three systems, each featuring a vocal line for 'Abe' and a piano accompaniment. The first system (measures 94-95) shows Abe singing 'who's been dy - in'. You, the hon - or - a - ble one, had to'. The piano accompaniment includes a dynamic marking of *mf*. The second system (measures 96-97) shows Abe singing 'wait for that John Mc - Na - mar, or should I say "Muck" Neil.'. The piano accompaniment features a dynamic marking of *f*. The third system (measures 98-99) shows Abe singing 'I think we know why he had two names.'. The piano accompaniment includes dynamic markings of *f* and *mf*. A performance instruction is placed between the vocal and piano staves of the third system: 'This seems to catch the attention of the one female singer, and she stops pacing.'

**G**

99

Abe

The lure of the West

**G**

99

*mf*



She is clearly aware of him, but he not of her during this exchange.

narrative chorus

100

It would - n't have been right not to tell him face - to - face

Abe

100

can be an - y man's test.

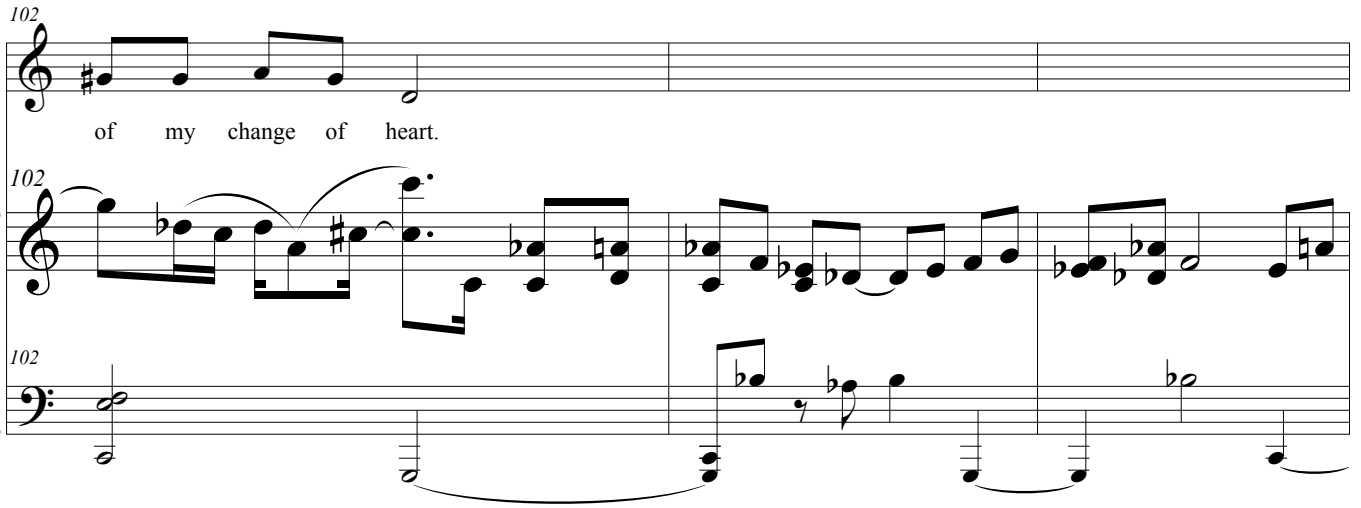
100

100

narrative chorus

102

of my change of heart.



"Ann" exits stage right. Abe exits stage left.

105

