

Joanna Marsh

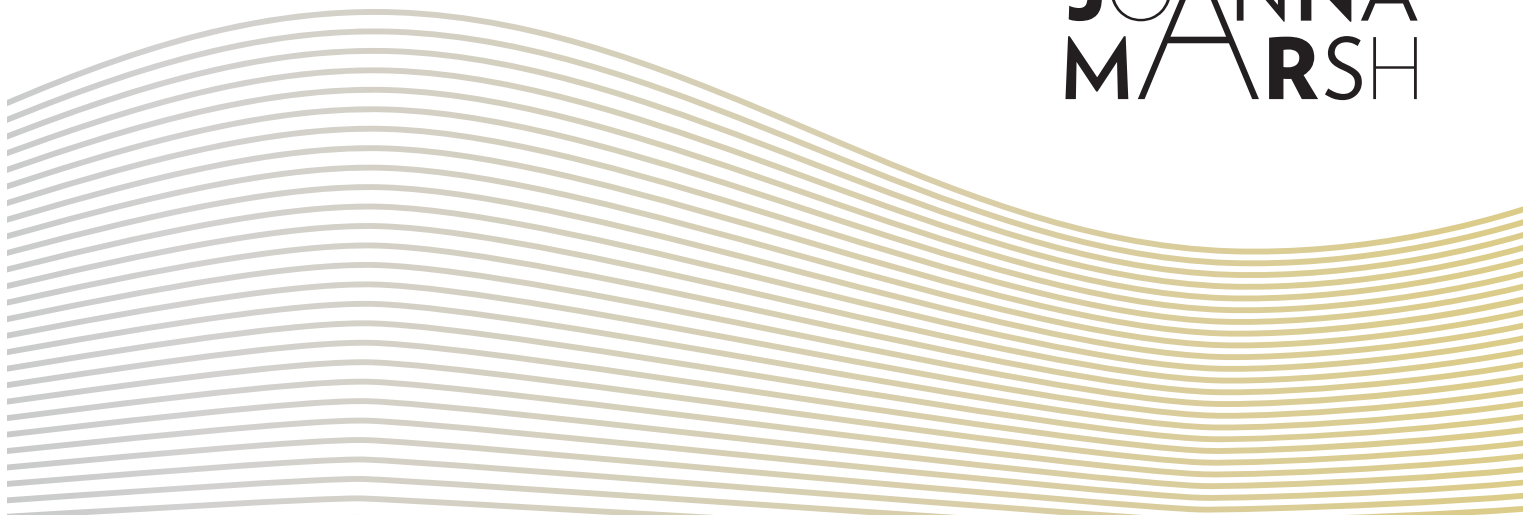
**The Veiled Sisters**

SSSAAA

with organ and bass viol

Sample  
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JOANNA  
M/ARSH



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**The Veiled Sisters** (August 2021)

SSSAAA

with organ and bass viol

Duration c.5'30"

The Veiled Sisters intertwines two texts, a poem by Esther Morgan b.1970, 'Half Sister', and a poetic description of Erminia Caterina Abelli a celebrated singer and nun at the convent of San Giovanni Battista in Bologna, who entered monastic life in 1620. This text is by Alessandro Francucci, a lawyer from Parma, collected in a volume of his poetry, Parma, Biblioteca Palatina, Manoscritti Parmense 1198.

## The Veiled Sisters

Costei, che il bello col suo bello, abbellà;  
Onde d'Abelli li serva bel nome  
Sotto l'incarco di corpore some  
Vive fatta à Dio sposa, e come Ancella.  
*(She, that beautifies Beauty with her beauty,  
So that Abelli is a good name for her,  
Under the bond of fleshly duties  
Lives made into God's bride, and handmaiden.)*

I watch you from my dark house,  
How the sun tilts your face towards me,  
Your smile blossoming in the warmth.

Al'hor, che elesso solitaria cella

I leave this house rarely  
Wrapped in white layers like a bee-keeper  
To protect me from the swarms of light,

Con Forbice crudel troncò le chiome  
E fe novo stupor,  
*(Now she has chosen the solitary cell  
With cruel shears she cut her hair  
And made a new wonder.)*

Or like the veiled princess  
Whose throat was so translucent  
The swallowed wine showed through.

Do you sense the thinness of my skin,  
How, exposed, it would simmer like milk?  
Do I arouse a cruelty in you or tenderness?

Quivi romita et à compagna giace  
Romita al Mondo, accompagnata à Dio  
*(Now enclosed and frozen to marriage,  
Shut away from the world, wed to God.)*

Quivi in fiamme d'amore suo cor si sface,  
E col dolce cantar pone in oblio  
L'humane cure, e imparadisa i Chiostri.  
*(Here in flames of love she turns her heart,  
And with sweet singing puts into oblivion  
Human worries, and makes the cloisters into a paradise.)*

Last night I offered my sleeplessness to you,  
My body glowing like a candle  
Under the magnolia's gloved hands.

# The Veiled Sisters

Esther Morgan b.1970  
Alessandro Francucci Fl 1620s

Joanna Marsh

Like a beloved folk song ♩ = 66 She, that beautifies Beauty with her beauty,

**UNISON ALTOS** *mp*

Cos - tei, — che — il bel - lo — col su - o bel - lo, ab -

**ORGAN** *mp*

**BASS VIOL** *mp*

4 So that Abelli is a good name for her *mf*

S.3 I watch you — from my

A. unis. bel - la; On - de d'A - bel - li le ser - va bel — no-me, — So-to l'in -

Org.

B. Viol

8 Under the bond of fleshly duties Lives made into God's bride, and handmaiden.

S.1

S.2

S.3  
 dark house, \_\_\_\_\_ How \_\_\_\_\_ the sun tilts your face \_\_\_\_\_ to -

A.1  
 - car - co di \_\_\_\_\_ cor - po - re \_\_\_\_\_ so - me Vi - ve fat - ta à Di - o

A.2  
 - car - co di \_\_\_\_\_ cor - po - re \_\_\_\_\_ so - me Vi - ve fat - ta à Di - o

A.3  
 - car - co di \_\_\_\_\_ cor - po - re \_\_\_\_\_ so - me Vi - ve fat - ta à Di - o

Org.

B. Viol

12

*mf*

S.1 Your smile \_\_\_\_\_ blos-som-ing in the

*mf*

S.2 Your smile blos - som-ing in the

*mf*

S.3 - wards me, \_\_\_\_\_ Your smile, your smile \_\_\_\_\_ blos-som-ing in the

*mf*

A.1 spo - sa, e co-me An-cel - la. \_\_\_\_\_ Your smile blos - som-ing in the

*mf*

A.2 spo - sa, e co-me An-cel - la. \_\_\_\_\_ Smile \_\_\_\_\_ blos - som-ing in the

*mf*

A.3 spo - sa, e co-me An-cel - la. \_\_\_\_\_ Smile \_\_\_\_\_ blos - som-ing in the

*p*

Org.

B. Viol

Now, she has chosen the solitary cell

17

S.1 *p* warmth. \_\_\_\_\_

S.2 *p* warmth. \_\_\_\_\_

S.3 *p* warmth. \_\_\_\_\_ *mf* I leave this house

A.1 *p* warmth. \_\_\_\_\_

A.2 *p* warmth. \_\_\_\_\_ *mp* Al - 'hor, al - 'hor che e -

A.3 *p* warmth. \_\_\_\_\_ *mp* Al - 'hor, al - 'hor che e -

Org.

B. Viol *mp*

21

*mf*

S.1

White lay - ers like a

*mf*

S.2

Wrapped \_\_\_\_\_ in white \_\_\_\_\_

S.3

rare - ly \_\_\_\_\_ lay - ers like \_\_\_\_\_ a

*mf*

A.1

Wrapped \_\_\_\_\_ in white \_\_\_\_\_ lay - ers like a

A.2

- les - so, che e - les - - so \_\_\_\_\_ so - li - ta - ri - a

A.3

- les - so, che e - les - - so \_\_\_\_\_ so - li - ta - ri - a

Org.

B. Viol

25

S.1  
bee - - keep-er To pro - tect me, to pro - tect from the

S.2  
To pro - tect me, pro - tect me from the

S.3  
bee - keep - er To pro - tect me, to pro - tect me

A.1  
bee - keep - er to pro - tect me from the

A.2  
*mf*  
cel - - la... To pro - tect, to pro - tect me from the

A.3  
*mf*  
cel - - la... To pro - tect from the

Org.

B. Viol

With cruel shears she cut her hair

29

*f blazing*

S.1 swarms \_\_\_\_\_ of light, \_\_\_\_\_ tron -

*f blazing*

S.2 swarms, \_\_\_\_\_ Con For - - bi - ce cru - del \_\_\_\_\_

*f blazing*

S.3 swarms, the swarms \_\_\_\_\_ of \_\_\_\_\_ light, Con \_\_\_\_\_ For - bi - ce cru - del tron -

*f blazing*

A.1 swarms, the swarms \_\_\_\_\_ of \_\_\_\_\_ light, \_\_\_\_\_ Con \_\_\_\_\_ For - bi - ce cru - del \_\_\_\_\_ tron -

*f blazing*

A.2 swarms, the swarms \_\_\_\_\_ of \_\_\_\_\_ light, Con For - - bi - ce cru - del tron -

*f blazing*

A.3 swarms, the swarms \_\_\_\_\_ of \_\_\_\_\_ light, Con For - - bi - ce cru - del tron -

Org.

B. Viol

*And made a new wonder,*

33

S.1  
- cò — le chio - me E fe no - vo, no -

S.2  
le chio - - me no - vo stu -

S.3  
- cò — le chio - - me E fe no - vo stu -

A.1  
- cò — le chio - me, tron - - cò — le chio - me E fe no - vo stu -

A.2  
- cò, le chio - me, tron - cò E fe no - vo stu -

A.3  
- cò, le chio - me, tron - cò E fe no - vo stu -

Org.

B. Viol

38

S.1 *mp*  
- - - vo, Or \_\_\_\_\_ like the veiled

S.2  
- por, no - vo stu - por, Like

S.3  
- por, E fe no - vo stu - por, stu - por,

A.1 *mp*  
- por, E fe no - vo stu - por, stu - por, veiled,

A.2  
- por, E fe no - vo stu - por,

A.3 *mp*  
- por, E fe no - vo stu - por, Or \_\_\_\_\_ like the veiled

Org.

B. Viol *mp*

43

S.1 *p*  
 prin-cess Whose throat \_\_\_\_\_

S.2 *mp* *p*  
 the veiled prin-cess Whose throat \_\_\_\_\_

S.3 *p*  
 was so trans-lu-cent\_ The swal-lowed

A.1 *p*  
 — the veiled prin-cess Whose throat was so trans-lu-cent\_ The swal-lowed

A.2 *mp*  
 the veiled prin-cess

A.3  
 prin-cess

Org.

B. Viol *p*

47

S.1 *mf*  
Do you sense the

S.2 *p* *mf*  
showed through, showed through.

S.3 *mf*  
wine \_\_\_\_\_ showed through, showed through.

A.1 *mf*  
wine Do you sense the

A.2 *p* *mf*  
wine \_\_\_\_\_ showed through, showed through.

A.3 *mp* *mf*  
The swal-owed wine showed through. Do you sense the

Org.

B. Viol *mf*

50

S.1  
 thin - ness of my skin, How, ex - posed, — would sim - mer like

S.2  
 (mf)  
 of my skin, ex-posed, sim - mer like

S.3  
 (mf)  
 How, — ex - posed, it would sim - mer

A.1  
 thin - ness of my skin, How, — ex - posed,

A.2  
 (mf)  
 How, — ex - posed, —

A.3  
 thin - ness of my — skin, — How, ex - posed, it would sim-mer — like

Org.  
 Organ accompaniment with treble and bass staves.

B. Viol  
 Bass Violin accompaniment.

Now enclosed and frozen to marriage,

54

*p* *pp*

S.1 milk, \_\_\_\_\_ would sim - mer like

*p* *pp*

S.2 milk, \_\_\_\_\_ like

*p* *mp*

S.3 like milk, \_\_\_\_\_ like

*p* *pp*

A.1 milk, like milk, like milk? \_\_\_\_\_

*p*

A.2 Qui - vi ro-mi-ta \_\_\_\_\_ et à com - pag - na, \_\_\_\_\_ com-pag-na

*p*

A.3 milk? Qui - vi ro-mi-ta \_\_\_\_\_ et à com - pag - na, \_\_\_\_\_ com-pag-na

Org. *p*

B. Viol *p*

Shut away from the world, wed to God,

58

*p* *mf*

S.1 milk? Do I a-rouse cru - el - ty or ten - der - ness?

S.2 milk? or ten - der - ness?

S.3 milk? or ten - der - ness?

*p* *mf*

A.1 Do I a-rouse cru - el - ty or ten - der - ness?

*mf*

A.2 gia-ce, Ro - mi-ta al Mon - do, ac-com-pag-na-ta à Di - o

*mf*

A.3 gia-ce, Ro - mi-ta al Mon - do, ac-com-pag-na-ta à Di - o

Org. *mf*

B. Viol *mf*

*Here in flames of love she turns her heart,*

*ff*

63

S.1

In — fiam — me, in

S.2

*ff*

— Qui — vi in fiam-me d'a — mo — re, — in

S.3

*ff*

Qui — vi in fiam-me, in — fiam — me d'a — mo — re, in —

A.1

*ff*

Qui — vi in fiam-me, in — fiam — me d'a — mo — re, in —

A.2

*ff*

Qui — vi in fiam-me, in — fiam — me d'a — mo — re, in —

A.3

*ff*

Qui — vi in fiam-me, in — fiam — me d'a — mo — re, in —

Org.

*f*

B. Viol

67

S.1 *mf*  
fiam - - - me d'a - mo - re... Last\_

S.2  
fiam - me d'a - mo - re, in fiam - me d'a - mo - re...\_

S.3 *mf*  
fiam - me d'a - mo - re, in\_ fiam - me d'a - mo - re... Last\_

A.1 *mf*  
fiam - me d'a - mo - re, in\_ fiam - me d'a - mo - re... Last\_

A.2 *mf*  
fiam - me d'a - mo - re, in\_ fiam - me d'a - mo - re... E col dol - ce, dol -

A.3 *mf*  
fiam - me d'a - mo - re, E col dol - ce, dol -

Org.

B. Viol

72

*And with sweet singing...* *mp* *...puts into oblivion*

S.1  
 night I of-fered my sleep-less-ness to you, My

S.2  
*mf* *mp*  
 I of-fered sleep-less-ness to you,

S.3  
*mp*  
 night I of - fered my sleep-less-ness to you, —

A.1  
 night I of-fered

A.2  
 - ce, — E col - dol - ce can - tar po - ne in o - -

A.3  
 - ce, — E col - dol - ce can - tar po - ne in o - -

Org.

B. Viol

Human worries...

76

*mf*

S.1  
bo - dy - glow - - - ing

*mf*

S.2  
bo - - - dy glow - - - ing

S.3

A.1  
*mf*  
glow -

A.2  
- bli - o L'hu - ma - ne, l'hu - ma - ne cu -

A.3  
- bli - o L'hu - ma - ne, l'hu - ma - ne cu -

Org.

B. Viol  
*mp*

...and makes the cloisters into a paradise.

80

S.1

S.2

S.3

A.1

A.2

A.3

Org.

B. Viol

like a candle

ing, like a candle glow ing

re, e im - pa - ra - di - sa i Chio - stri, im - pa - ra -

re, e im - pa - ra - di - sa i Chio - stri, im - pa - ra -

84

S.1 *f*  
 mag - no - - - - li-a's

S.2 *f*  
 Un - der - - - mag - no - - - li-a's gloved

S.3 *f*  
 Un - - - der the mag - no - - - - - li-a's

A.1 *f*  
 mag - no - - - - li-a's gloved

A.2 *f*  
 - di - sa - Chio - stri. mag - no-li-a's gloved

A.3 *f*  
 - di - sa - Chio - stri. Mag - no - - - li-a's gloved

Org.

B. Viol

89

*pp* *rit.*

S.1  
gloved hands.

S.2  
*p* *pp*  
hands, hands.

S.3  
*pp*  
gloved hands.

A.1  
*p* *pp*  
hands, hands.

A.2  
*p* *pp*  
hands, gloved hands.

A.3  
*p* *pp*  
hands, gloved hands.

Org.

B. Viol *rit.*

Commissioned by Laurie Stras for Musica Secreta  
for the album Mother Sister Daughter, 2022

# The Veiled Sisters

Esther Morgan b.1970  
Alessandro Francucci Fl 1620s

Joanna Marsh

Like a beloved folk song ♩ = 66

ORGAN *mp*

Musical notation for measures 1-5. The score is for organ and features a complex, changing time signature: 4/4, 3/4, 5/4, 3/4, 3/4. The music is marked *mp* (mezzo-piano). The melody is in the right hand, and the bass line is in the left hand.

6

Musical notation for measures 6-11. The time signature continues to change: 4/4, 3/4, 5/4, 3/4, 4/4, 3/4. The melody continues in the right hand, with some rests in the left hand.

12

Musical notation for measures 12-17. The time signature changes to 3/4, 4/4, 3/4, 3/2, 4/4, 4/4. The music is marked *p* (piano). The melody is in the right hand, and the bass line is in the left hand.

18

Musical notation for measures 18-22. The time signature changes to 3/4, 4/4, 3/4, 5/4, 3/4. The melody continues in the right hand, with some rests in the left hand.

23

Musical notation for measures 23-27. The time signature changes to 3/4, 4/4, 3/4, 4/4, 5/4. The melody continues in the right hand, with some rests in the left hand.

29

Musical score for measures 29-33. The piece is in G major. Measure 29 is in 4/4 time. Measure 30 changes to 4/4. Measure 31 changes to 3/4. Measure 32 is in 3/4. Measure 33 is in 3/4. The right hand features a melodic line with eighth and sixteenth notes, while the left hand provides a simple accompaniment.

34

Musical score for measures 34-38. The piece is in 3/4 time. The right hand continues with a melodic line, and the left hand has a simple accompaniment.

41

Musical score for measures 41-46. The piece is in 4/4 time. The right hand has a melodic line with some rests, and the left hand has a more active accompaniment with eighth notes.

47

Musical score for measures 47-51. The piece is in 4/4 time. Measure 50 changes to 5/4. Measure 51 changes to 3/4. The right hand has a melodic line, and the left hand has a simple accompaniment.

52

Musical score for measures 52-57. The piece is in 3/4 time. Measure 53 changes to 4/4. Measure 54 is marked with a piano (*p*) dynamic. The right hand has a melodic line, and the left hand has a simple accompaniment.

58

Musical score for measures 58-62. The piece is in 3/4 time. Measure 60 changes to 3/2. Measure 61 changes to 4/4. Measure 62 is in 3/4. The right hand has a melodic line, and the left hand has a simple accompaniment. Dynamics include mezzo-forte (*mf*) and forte (*f*).

64

Musical score for measures 64-67. The piece is in G minor. Measure 64 is in 3/4 time. Measures 65-67 are in 4/4 time. The score features a treble and bass clef with various rhythmic patterns and accidentals.

68

Musical score for measures 68-72. The piece is in G minor. Measure 68 is in 3/4 time. Measures 69-71 are in 4/4 time. Measure 72 is in 4/4 time. The score features a treble and bass clef with various rhythmic patterns and accidentals.

73

Musical score for measures 73-77. The piece is in G minor. Measure 73 is in 4/4 time. Measure 74 is in 4/4 time. Measure 75 is in 3/4 time. Measure 76 is in 3/4 time. Measure 77 is in 4/4 time. The score features a treble and bass clef with various rhythmic patterns and accidentals.

78

Musical score for measures 78-82. The piece is in G minor. Measure 78 is in 4/4 time. Measure 79 is in 3/4 time. Measure 80 is in 4/4 time. Measure 81 is in 4/4 time. Measure 82 is in 4/4 time. The score features a treble and bass clef with various rhythmic patterns and accidentals.

83

Musical score for measures 83-88. The piece is in G minor. Measure 83 is in 4/4 time. Measure 84 is in 3/4 time. Measure 85 is in 4/4 time. Measure 86 is in 4/4 time. Measure 87 is in 3/4 time. Measure 88 is in 4/4 time. The score features a treble and bass clef with various rhythmic patterns and accidentals.

89

Musical score for measures 89-92. The piece is in G minor. Measure 89 is in 4/4 time. Measure 90 is in 4/4 time. Measure 91 is in 4/4 time. Measure 92 is in 4/4 time. The score features a treble and bass clef with various rhythmic patterns and accidentals. The piece concludes with a *rit.* (ritardando) marking.

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Like a beloved folk song ♩ = 66

BASS VIOL

*mp*

7

13

*mp*

20

26

no - vo, no - - - - vo,

37 S.1

*mp*