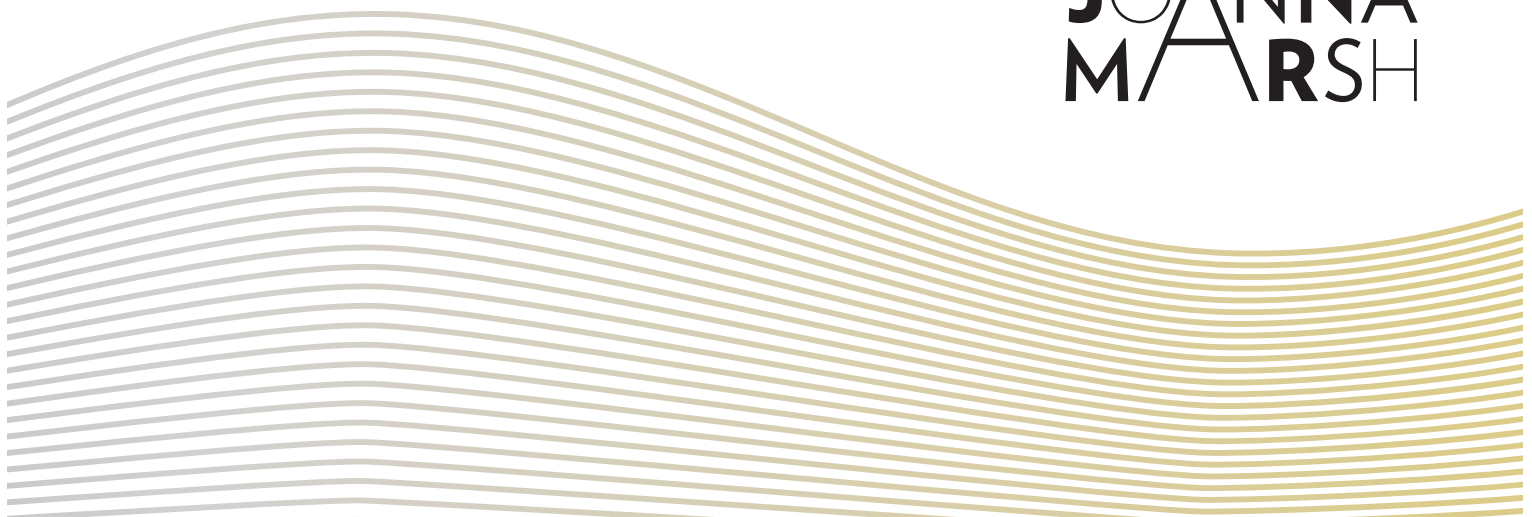


Joanna Marsh

Arabesques

mixed voices unaccompanied
(A, A, T, Bar, Bar, B)

JOANNA
MARSH



Joanna Marsh

Arabesques (2012)

mixed voices unaccompanied
(A, A, T, Bar, Bar, B)

Total duration c.13'

ISMN 979-0-9002355-4-1

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Arabesques

A commission for the Kings Singers, Arabesques are settings of four short but highly evocative poems by contemporary male Arab poets. Each tells the story of a woman they have known: 'A Woman', remembers a passionate encounter, 'You want', muses on her acquisitiveness, 'Fading', observes her aging, 'Seeds in Flight', finds rebirth after her death. 'Fading' was premiered at the London A Cappella Festival, on 29th January 2015. 'A Woman', and 'Seeds in Flight', were premiered at The American School in Doha, on May 7th 2015. The pieces were revised in November 2015 and the fourth piece 'You want' added to the set.

1. A Woman

How will I drag my feet to her now?
In which land will I see her,
And on which street of what city
Should I ask about her?
And if I find her house,
Let's say I do,
Will I ring the bell?
How should I answer?
And how will I stare at her face
As I touch the light wine
Seeping between her fingers.
How should I say hello...
And how will I take the pain
Of all these years?
Once twenty years ago,
In an air-conditioned train,
I kissed her all night through...

Sa'adi Youssef b.1934 Iraq

2. You want

You want, like all women,
Solomon's treasure.
You want pools of perfume,
Combs of ivory.
You want a horde of slaves.
Sharazad, like all women want.
You want me to give you
The stars, the heav'ns.
You want me to give you
The stars in the heav'ns

Nazir Kabbani 1923-1998 Syria

3. Fading

Imagine where this dove will go;
Imagine when her wings turn grey,
When her call grows old.

Will she turn to the mirrors of young sparrows
Who slide into delusion?
Or will a deaf sparrow offer her
A perch to sing?
How will she apologise to a traveller
Wanting to stroke her feathers
When the flock scatters?
How will she strut through the courtyard
Or impress the grass?
Will she look for a kind boy to grind her
A grain of wheat,
Or an old flame to relight aging passions?
Perhaps she will divide her sadness
Between a window and a metal cage.
Perhaps she'll become a professional mourner
At the funerals of birds.
Imagine where this dove will go
When the trees donate their lowest branch.
Imagine when neighbours
Are indifferent to her past, fading.

Abboud al Jabiri b.1963 Iraq

4. Seeds in Flight

An ancient woman, who has lived all seasons,
Wanders the earth gathering camomile.
Each flower in her apron is a star,
Her apron is the sky.
When she reaches the house,
She strews them to dry
Like shells on a beach –
To bring good luck,
To whisper the future.
In the sun her tattoo glistens,
A star glints in her golden earring,
The camomile dries.
Her hand, hennaed with God's names,
Spun the wool of the flock,
Embroidered the wedding clothes,
Gathered the dried flowers.
But next season, when the future arrived,
It silenced the whispers.
She was buried with her ancestors.
And yet as if by chance,
As if by magic,
As if by a miracle
The camomile grows each season
Behind the house.
Many seeds have flown.
These seeds remain.

Khaled Abdallah b.1970 Gaza

Arabesques

1. A WOMAN

Sa'adi Youssef
b.1934 Iraq

Joanna Marsh

$\text{♩} = 98$

ALTO 1

ALTO 2 *mf*
How will I drag my feet to her

TENOR *mp*
How will I drag my feet to her

BARITONE 1 *mp*
Drag my feet to her

BARITONE 2 *mp*
How will I

BASS

5

mf
How will I drag my feet to her

mf
now? How will I drag my feet to her

mf *dolce*
now, to her now? How will I drag my feet to her

mf
now? How will I dra - (a)g my feet to her

now, to her now? How will feet to her

mf
now, to her now? How will feet to her

now? In which land will I see her, which street of

now? In which land will I see her, which street of

mp *mf*
now, to her now? In which land will I see her, which street of

mp *mf*
now, to her now? In which land and on which street of

mp *mf*
now, to her now? In which land will I see her, and on which street

mp *mf*
now, to her now? In which land which street

14 *mp*
what ci - ty _____ should I ask a - bout her? _____

what ci - ty _____

p
what ci - ty _____ a - bout her _____ if I find _____

mp *mf*
what ci - ty _____ should I ask a - bout her? _____ And if I

p
a - bout her _____ if I find _____

mp
what an (n)

19

mf
 find her house _____ ring the bell? _____
mp *p*
 _____ her house and _____ will I ring _____ the bell, ring _____
mf *mp*
 find let's say I do, will I ring ring the bell? _____
 _____ her house and _____ Will I ring _____ the bell, ring _____
mf *mp*
 let's say I do ring the bell? _____

24

mp *f*
 How would I an - swer? How should I an - swer
mp *mf* *f*
 How would I an - swer? How should I an - swer and how will I
mp *f*
 How would I _____ and how
mf
 _____ would I an - swer? How should I an - swer _____ and how will I
mp *f*
 How would I _____ an - swer how will I
 _____ would I an - swer?

poco rit. a tempo

mf

rit.

tenderly

her face

stare at her face as I touch the light wine

her face I touch the light wine

stare at her face as I touch the light wine

stare at her face at her face as I touch the light wine

stare at her touch

rit.

♩ = 92

seep - ing

seep - ing, seep - ing 'tween her fin - gers,

seep - ing, seep - ing be - tween her fin - gers,

seep - ing, seep - ing be - tween her fin - gers,

seep - ing, seep - ing 'tween her fin - gers,

seep - ing, seep - ing

37

mf *rit.* **Tempo primo** ♩ = 98

fin - gers? ____

'tween her fin - gers? ____

mp *p* fin - gers? should I ____

mp *p* be - tween her fin - gers? How should I, ____

mp *mf* be - tween her fin - gers? How

mp 'tween her fin - gers? ____

42

mf *mf* *legato* and

How should ____ I say, ____ hel - lo and

mf how should I ____ should say, hel - lo and how will

how should how should I say and how ____

should I say, should say hel - lo

mf hel - lo

how will I _____ take the pain of

how will, how will I take I take the pain, I take _____ the pain of

how will I take the pain of

how will I take I take the pain, I take _____ the pain of

how will, how will, how will I take the pain of

of

f *mf* *f* *mp* *f* *mp* *f* *mp* *f* *mf* *f* *mp* *f* *mf* *f* *mf*

all these years? _____ Once

all, of all _____ these, these years? _____ Once

all these years, _____ these years? _____ Once

all, of all, _____ these, these years, _____ these years? _____ Once

all these years, these years? Once

all these years? Once

mp *mp* *mp* *f* *mp* *mp* *mp*

51 *f* *mf*

twen - ty years a - go, I kissed her

twen - ty years a - go, in an air - con - di - tioned train

a - go, air - con - di - tioned train I kissed her

a - go, in an air - con - di - tioned train

twen - ty years a - go, I kissed her

in an air - con - di - tioned train I kissed her

56 *mp* *rit.* *dim.* *p*

all the night through, the night, the night through.

mf *mp* *dim.* *p*

all the night through, the night, the night through.

mf dim. *mp* *dim.* *p*

through, all the night through.

mf *mp dim.*

all the night through, the night, the night.

all the night through.

all the night through.

2. YOU WANT

Nazir Kabbani
1923–1998 Syria

Joanna Marsh

$\text{♩} = 100$
ad lib. first two beats

ALTO 1
mf
You want

ALTO 2
mf
You, you want

TENOR
mf
You want, you want, you want, you

BARITONE 1
mf
You want, you want, you want, you

BARITONE 2

BASS
mf
You want, you want, you want, you

4

you want like all wo - men

you want like all wo - men

want, you want, you want, you want, wo - men

want, you want, you want, you want, wo - men

want, you want, you want, you want, wo - men

8

mf trea - sure trea - sure

f want, So - lo - mon's *mf* trea - sure trea - sure

f want, So - lo - mon's *mf* trea - sure you

8 want, You want, you want, trea-sure you

mf You want, you want, trea-sure

8 want, You want, you want, you

11

f So - lo - mon's trea -

f So - lo - mon's trea -

mf want — So - lo - mon's you want, you *f*

mf want So - lo - mon's So - lo - mon's you want, you *f*

So - lo - mon's

mf want, So - lo - mon's you want, you *f*

sub. *mp*

- sure, _____ trea - sure like all wo - men

- sure, _____ trea - sure.

sub. *mp*

8 want, _____ trea - sure all wo - men

sub. *mp*

want, _____ trea - sure like all wo - men.

f sub. *mp*

want, you — want _____ like all _____ men.

sub. *mp*

want, _____ trea - sure all

a tempo

19 *mp*

want. _____

mp _____ *p*

You want you want you want you want you want — you want you want you

mp

8 want. _____

mf

Pools of per - fume

22

mp You —

mf want combs of i - vo - ry — *mp* you —

mp combs of you want you want you want — *mf* you want a horde

mp you want you want you want — *mf* you want a horde

mp *lilting* combs — of i - vo - ry — *mp* you want

mp *lilting* combs — of a horde — *mf*

25

want, you — want, a horde of slaves —

want, you — want, a horde of slaves —

a horde — of — slaves —

mp you want you want, slaves — you want you want —

you want you want, a horde of — slaves — want —

a horde — of — slaves

molto rall.

mf *mp*

per - fume _____ a

mp *mf* *mp*

pools of per - fume _____ i - vo - ry, _____ a

mp

combs of i - vo - ry, _____ a

p *mp*

_____ you want you want _____ you want _____ combs of i - vo - ry, _____ a

p *mp*

pools _____ of per - fume _____ combs of i - vo - ry, _____ a

mp

combs of i - vo - ry, _____ a

34 *mf* *mp*

horde of slaves. _____ Sha - ha - ra - zad, _____

mf *mp*

horde of slaves _____ Sha - ha - ra - zad, _____

mf

horde of slaves _____

mf *mp*

horde of slaves _____ like

mf *mp*

horde of slaves _____ like

mf

horde of slaves _____

39

p Sha - ha - ra - zad, *p* Sha -

p Sha - ha - ra - zad, like all *mf* wo - men! *p* Sha -

like all *mf* wo - men! *p* Sha -

all wo - men! *p* Sha - ha - ra - zad, like all *mf* wo - men! *p* Sha -

all wo - men! *p* Sha - ha - ra - zad, like all *mf* wo - men! *p* Sha -

Sha - ha - ra - zad, like all *mf* wo - men! *p* Sha -

43

mf - ha - ra - zad, *p* wo - men, want like

mf - ha - ra - zad, like all *p* wo - men! Sha - ha - ra - zad, like

mf - ha - ra - zad, like all *p* wo - men! Sha - ha - ra - zad, like

mf - ha - ra - zad, like all *p* wo - men! Sha - ha - ra - zad, like

mf - ha - ra - zad, like all *p* wo - men, want like

mf - ha - ra - zad, like all *p* wo - men! Sha - ha - ra - zad, like

Broadly with a swagger

all wo - men want, _____ You want me to give _____

all wo - men want, _____ You want me to

all wo - men want, _____ You want to

all wo - men want, _____ You want me to

all wo - men want, _____ You want me

all wo - men _____ me

mf *sub. p* *f*

_____ you the stars _____ in the heav'ns, _____ you want me

give you the stars in the heav'ns, _____ you want me to

give the stars the heav'ns, _____

give you the stars the heav'ns, _____ you want me to

you the the heav'ns to

you the the heav'ns to

Broader

54

mf *f*

the stars _____ in the heav'ns. You want me to give _

mf *f*

give you _____ the stars _____ in the heav'ns. You want me to give _

mf *f*

the stars _____ in the heav'ns. _____ You want me to give _

mf *f*

give you the stars _____ heav'ns. _____ You want me to give _

mf *f*

give you the stars _____ in the heav'ns. You _ want me to give _

f

give you _____ to give _

58

molto rit. *p*

— you the stars _____ in the hea - - - - v'ns.

p

— you the stars _____ in the hea - - - - v'ns.

p

— you the stars _____ in the hea - - - - v'ns.

p

— you the stars _____ in the hea - - - - v'ns.

p

— you the stars _____ in the v'ns.

p

— you the stars _____ in the

3. FADING

Abboud al Jabiri
b.1963 Iraq

Joanna Marsh

$\text{♩} = \text{c.92}$

ALTO 1 *mp* Where this

ALTO 2 *mp* mm dove

TENOR *seamless mp* I - ma - gine, i - ma - gine, i - ma - gine, i - *sim.*

BARITONE 1 *seamless mp* I - ma - gine, i - ma - gine, i - ma - gine, i - *sim.*

BARITONE 2

BASS

5

dove will go; when her

go, o, o; when

- ma - gine, i - ma - gine, i - ma - gine, i - ma - gine, i -

- ma - gine, i - ma - gine, i - ma - gine, i - ma - gine, i -

airy sigh *p* *gliss.* fad - ing (ng) *mp*

fad - ing (ng) *p* *mp*

9

wings turn grey, — when her call grows old. —

wings turn grey, — when her call grows old. —

- ma - gine, i - ma - gine, i - ma - gine old. —

- ma - gine, i - ma - gine, i - ma - gine, i - ma - gine.

mp — *mf* —

fad - ing (ng) i - ma - gine, i -

mp — *mf* —

fad - ing (ng)

13

mp

— Will she turn to the mir - rors — of young spar - rows who

mp

— Will she turn to the mir - rors — of young spar - rows who

mp

Will — turn to the mir - rors — of young spar - rows who

mp

Will she — turn who

mp

- ma - gine mir - rors young spar - rows

mp

young spar - rows —

slide de - lu - sion? Will a deaf spar-row of - *cresc.*

slide in - to de - lu - sion? Or will a deaf spar-row of - *cresc.*

slide in - to de - lu - sion? Or will a deaf spar-row of - *cresc.*

slide in - to de - lu - sion? Or will a deaf spar-row of - *cresc.*

slide in - to de - lu - sion? of - *cresc.*

or will a deaf spar-row

- fer her a perch to sing, to sing, *mf* *f*

- fer her a perch to sing, to sing, to *mf* *f*

- fer her a perch to sing, to sing, *mf* *f*

- fer her a perch to sing, sing, *mf* *f*

- fer her sing, to sing, *mf* *f*

sing, sing, *mf* *f*

23

mp sing? _____ *mf* Tra - vel-ler _

mp sing? _____ *mf* How ____ will she a - po-lo-gise

mp sing? _____

mp sing? _____ *mf* How ____ to a tra - vel-ler

mp sing? _____ *mf* To a trav -

mp sing? _____ *mf* How ____ trav -

27

stroke ____ her fea-thers when the flock scat-ters? _

want - ing to stroke ____ her fea-thers when the flock scat-ters? _

mf when the flock scat-ters? _

want - ing to stroke ____ her fea-thers.

- 'ler stroke ____ when the flock sca? ____

- 'ler stroke ____ flock sca? ____

Or im - press the grass? Will she

How will she strut through the court-yard or im - press the grass?

How will she strut through the court-yard or im - press the grass? Will she

Or im - press the grass?

Stru(t) through or im - press the grass? Will

Stru(t) through or im - press the grass?

look for a kind boy to grind her a grain of

Grind a grain of

look for a kind boy to grind grain of

Grind her grain of

a kind boy to grind her grain of

Kind boy to grind her grain of

39 *mf* *mp still* *mf*

wheat, ___ or an old flame ___ to re-light ag - ing pas - sions? ___

mf *mp still* *mf*

wheat, ___ or an old flame ___ pas - sions? ___

mf *mp still* *mf*

8 wheat, ___ old flame ___ to re-light ag - ing pas - sions? ___ Per -

mf *mp still* *mf*

wheat, ___ or an old flame ___ to re-light ag - ing pas - sions? ___ Per -

mf *mf*

wheat, ___ pas - sions? ___ Per -

mf *mp still* *mf*

wheat, ___ or an old flame ___ light ag - ing pas - sions? ___ Per -

43 *mp* *poco rit.*

A win - dow and a

mp

Her sad - ness ___ be - tween a win - dow and a

8 - haps she will di - vide her sad - ness ___

mp

- haps she will di - vide her sad - ness ___ be - tween a win - dow and a

mp

- haps she will di - vide her sad - ness ___ be - tween a win - dow and a

mp

- haps she will di - vide sad - ness ___ be - tween a win - dow and a

47 *mf* *a tempo* *f* *mp*

me - tal cage. A pro - fes - sion - al mour - ner

me - tal cage. She'll be - come (m) mour - ner

Per - haps be - come a pro - fes - sion - al mour - ner

me - tal she'll be - come a pro - fes - sion - al mour - ner

me - tal cage. A pro - fes - sion - al mour - ner

me - tal cage. Per - haps she'll be - come fes - sion - al mour - ner

51 *molto rit.* *Steadier than Tempo 1* *mp* *p*

birds. Where

at the fu - ner - als of birds. Where this

at the fu - ner - als of birds. I - ma - gine, i - ma - gine, i -

at the fu - ner - als of birds. I - ma - gine, i - ma - gine, i -

at the fu - ner - als of birds. I - ma - gine, i -

at of birds.

55 *mp*

when the trees do-nate their low-est branch. _____ When

mp

dove will go _____ their low-est branch. _____ When

mp

-ma - gine when the trees do-nate their low-est branch. I - ma - gine when

mp

-ma - gine _____ fad - ing, _____ i - ma - gine when

mp

-ma - gine _____ fad - ing, _____ ma - gine when

mp

fad - ing, _____

59 *rit.*

neigh - bours are

pp

neigh - bours are in - dif - fer - ent fad - ing.

pp

neigh - bours are in - dif - fer - ent to her past. _____

p

ah dif - fer - ent to her past. _____ Fad - ing.

p

ah in - dif - fer - ent to her past. _____ Fad - ing.

p

to her past. _____

pp

Fay.

* Sing lower note if within range.

4. SEEDS IN FLIGHT

Khaled Abdallah
b.1970 Gaza

Joanna Marsh

Lyrical ♩ = 62

ALTO 1

ALTO 2

TENOR

BARITONE 1

BARITONE 2

BASS

An - cient wo-man (n), wan - ders the

Who _ has lived all sea-sons, wan - der

An an - cient wo-man (n), wan - ders the

An an - cient who _ has lived all sea - sons, _

4

Each flower _ her a - pron is the

Each _ flower _ is the

earth gath - 'ring

gath - 'ring _ ca - mo-mile. In her a-pron is a star; is the

ear(th).*

Flower _ her a - pron is the

gath - 'ring _ ca - mo-mile. Flower

* Barely audible 'th'.

8

sky. _____ *p* Reach - es _____ *mp* she strews - them - to

sky. _____ *mp* Reach - es the house

sky. _____ *mp* When she reach-es _____ she strews - them - to

sky. _____ *mp* Reach - es the house

sky. _____ *mp* Reach-es _____ she strews - them - to

sky. _____ *mp* When she reach-es _____ the house

12

dry _____ *p* shells on a beach, to bring good luck, _____ *mf* rit. *mp* the

to dry _____ like - shells - on a beach, luck, _____ *mf* *mp* the

dry _____ shells _____ on a beach, to bring good luck, to whis-per the

dry _____ shells _____ on a beach, to bring luck, to whis-per.

dry _____ beach, luck. _____ *mf*

to dry _____ like - shells luck. _____ *p* *mf*

a tempo

16

fu - ture. In the sun, the sun glints,

fu - ture. In the sun her tat-too glis - tens, a star glints

fu - ture. In the sun glis - tens, a star glints

In the, in the sun glis - tens,

In the sun her tat-too glis - tens,

20

her gold - en ear-ing, the ca - mo-mile dries.

in ear-ing, the ca - mo-mile dries.

in her gold - en ear-ing, the ca - mo-mile dries.

Her hand hen-naed with

in (n)* ear-ing, dries. With

ear-ing, dries.

* Move to hum on 'n'.

24 rit.

a tempo

mf 3 spun the wool, _____ the wool of the flock, _____

mf 3 spun the wool, _____ the wool of the flock, spun the wool _____

mf 3 *mp* spun the wool, _____

mf 3 *mp* spun the wool, _____

God's names, _____ spun the wool, _____

God's names, God's names, _____ spun the wool, _____

God's, _____ God's names, _____ spun the wool _____

God's, _____ God's names, _____ spun the wool _____

27

mf 3 _____ em-broi - dered the wed-ding clothes, _____ gath - ered _____

mf the wed-ding clothes, _____

mf 3 *mp* the wed - ding clothes, _____ gath -

mf 3 *mp* wed - ding clothes, _____

mf 3 *mp* gath -

_____ wed - ding clothes, _____

dried _____ flowers. _____

gath - ered the dried flowers. _____ But next sea - son, _____

- ered _____ dried _____ flowers. (hum) _____

gath - ered the dried _____ flowers. _____

- ered. _____ But next sea - son, _____

dried _____ flowers. (hum) _____

poco rit.

It si - lence (n) _____ (s).

_____ when the fu - ture ar - rived, it si - lenced the whis - pers. _____

(hum) _____ it si - lence (n) _____ (s).

(hum) _____ it si - lenced the whis - pers. _____

_____ when the fu - ture ar - rived, it si - lenced the whis - pers. _____

(hum) _____ si - lence (n) _____ (s).

38

a tempo

p
bur-ied ____ With her an - ces-tors,

p
(hum) ____ an - ces-tors,

p
She was bur-ied ____ with ____ her an - ces-tors,

mp
She ____ was bur-ied ____ with ____ her an - ces-tors, yet ____ as ____

p
(hum) ____ Bur-ied ____ her and ____

p
She was bur-ied ____ with her an - ces-tors,

43

mp
if ____ by ma - gic,

cresc.
as if by chance, by chance, by ma - gic, as ____

cresc.
as if by chance, by chance, as if ____ by ____ ma - gic,

cresc.
if as if ____ by ____ chance, as if by ma - gic,

cresc.
if by chance, chance, by ma - gic, as

cresc.
as if by chance, by chance, by

47 *mp* *mf* *mp*

if by a mi - ra - cle, the ca - mo - mile, the

mp *mf* *mp* *mp*

if by a mi - ra - cle, a mi - ra - cle, ca - mo - mile,

mp *mf* *mp*

if by a mi - ra - cle, mi - ra - cle, ca - mo - mile

mp *mf* *mp*

if by a mi - ra - cle, the ca - mo - mile, the

mp *mf* *mp*

if by a mi - ra - cle, the ca - mo - mile

mf *mp*

mi - ra - cle, ca - mo - mile

51 *f* *rit.* , a tempo

ca - mo - mile grows each sea - son.

f *mf*

ca - mo - mile grows each sea - son. Ma - ny

f *mf*

grows. Ma - ny seeds have

f *mf*

ca - mo - mile grows each sea - son. be - hind the house. Ma - ny seeds have

f ,

grows, grows each sea - son.

f *mf*

grows, grows. Ma - ny seeds have

55

*mf**mp*

Flown _____ re - main, re -

flown. _____ These seeds re - main, these seeds re -

flown. _____ These seeds re - main, these seeds re -

flown. _____ These seeds re - main, these seeds re -

Re - main, re - main these seeds re -

flown _____ main, re -

59

f

- main, these seeds re - main. _____

- main, these seeds re - main. _____

- main, these seeds re - main, re - main. _____

- main, these seeds re - main, re - main. _____

- main, these seeds _____ re - main.

- main, these seeds re - main.

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