

Gwyneth Walker

An Adventure at Grannie's

a fable for Narrator and Piano

An Adventure at Grannie's

duration: 10'00"

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*An Adventure at Grannie's* is a musical dramatization of a familiar fable (which the audience will recognize as the story unfolds). The Narrator portrays a variety of roles (the wolf, the child, the woodcutters and Grannie herself). Therefore, some simple costuming elements are suggested. A gray hat (or set of ears!) might do for the wolf. A red bonnet or kerchief around the neck could represent the child. For the woodcutters, the Narrator might grab a (toy) axe, or (better yet!), don a hard hat! And for Grannie, a nightcap which could be a shower cap would suffice.

As the story is told, each time that a specific character speaks, or is referred to, the Narrator puts on the appropriate costume items. [It is suggested that the various hats or props be placed on a music stand near the Narrator, for handy grabbing.] When the wolf disguises himself as Grannie, the shower cap can be placed over the wolf ears.

The pianist need not wear a costume. However, an outfit which has both red and gray colors would be very appropriate.

The narration and piano motives should integrate quickly and smoothly, so that the speaking leads directly into the musical expression with minimal pause.

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Dr. Gwyneth Walker (b. 1947) is a graduate of Brown University and the Hartt School of Music. She holds B.A., M.M. and D.M.A. Degrees in Music Composition. A former faculty member of the Oberlin College Conservatory, she resigned from academic employment in 1982 in order to pursue a career as a full-time composer. She now lives on a dairy farm in Braintree, Vermont.

Gwyneth Walker is a proud resident of Vermont. She is the recipient of the Year 2000 "Lifetime Achievement Award" from the Vermont Arts Council as well as the 2008 "Athenaeum Award for Achievement in the Arts and Humanities" from the St. Johnsbury (VT) Athenaeum.

Walker's catalog includes over 200 commissioned works for orchestra, chamber ensembles, chorus and solo voice. The music of Gwyneth Walker is published by E. C. Schirmer of Boston (choral and vocal music) and Lauren Keiser Music (orchestral and instrumental music).

Further information concerning Gwyneth Walker and her works is available at www.gwynethwalker.com

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# An Adventure at Grannie's

a fable for Narrator and Piano

Story adapted  
by the composer

Gwyneth Walker

[NARRATOR is offstage]

*p* ominously (to suggest a wolf)

*p* in contrast (to suggest a sweet child)

*mp*

*8<sup>vb</sup>* with pedal

*mp*

*8<sup>vb</sup>*

*loco*

*accel.*

*f*

repeat ad lib.

*3*

*3*

*white-note gliss.*

NARRATOR comes on stage

N: Once upon a time there was a young child.

She was very sweet.

*8<sup>va</sup>*

*p*

*pp*

*p*

(*Red.*)

4

She loved to amuse  
herself by gathering nuts,

running after  
butterflies,

and picking  
flowers.

*mf joyously*

*gliss.*

*8<sup>va</sup>*

Lively ♩. = 120

*rit.*

*mf bouncy*

Ah! (as if to say,  
"so sweet!")

Now one day her mother, who had been  
churning and baking cakes, said to her: "My dear,

*p*

*pp*

put on your cloak  
and take this cake to your Grannie,

and ask her how she is,  
for I hear she is ailing."

["Gran-nie" - same  
speed as speech]

Slowly

*8<sup>va</sup>*

Now the child was very fond of grandmother who had  
made her so many nice things, so she put on her cloak  
and joyfully started on her errand.

*joyfully*

*p frailly*

*mf*

But her grandmother lived some way off, and to reach the cottage, the child had to pass through a vast and lonely forest.

Lively ♩. = 120

NARRATOR puts on a woodcutter's hat, and/or picks up an axe.

Spooky (not slowly)

However, some woodcutters

were at work in it, so the child was not so very much alarmed when she saw a great big wolf coming towards her.

NARRATOR exchanges woodcutter's apparel for a gray cap or wolf ears.

And sure enough, there was the wolf. Had it not been for the woodcutters,

he would surely have eaten the child. Instead, he only stopped and asked her politely where she was going.

[Red outfit]

"I am going  
to see Grannie,

to take her this cake and pot of butter,  
and ask how she is," said the child. *joyfully*

(as if to say,  
"where are you going?")

*f* *p* *mf*

*p* 8<sup>va</sup>  
8<sup>vb</sup>

[Gray outfit]

"Does she live a very far  
way off?" asked the wolf craftily.

Lively ♩. = 120

*p*

[Red outfit]

"Not so far if you go  
by the straight road,"  
replied the child.

"You have only to pass the mill,  
and the first cottage on the right  
is Grannie's. But I am going by  
the woodpath, because there are  
such a lot of nice nuts to gather,

*mf joyfully*

butterflies to catch

and flowers to pick."

*mf* 3

gliss. 8<sup>va</sup>

Lively ♩. = 120

*rit.*

*mf* bouncy

*p*

NARRATOR may pretend to be the child, picking flowers while going to see Grannie.

("Idyll")

*a tempo*

*mf* joyfully

*f*

*f*

*a tempo*

*p*

*f*

8 [Gray outfit]

“I wish you good luck,” said the wolf politely. “Give my respects to your grandmother and tell her I hope she is quite well.”

And with that he trotted off. But instead of going his way, he turned back and took the straight road to the old women’s cottage and knocked on the door.

at a trotting tempo  
*mf*  $\rightrightarrows$  *p*

But Grannie had gone to see the woodcutters, so no one came to the door. The wolf knocked again

and then walked in and shut the door.

[Knock on piano ledge] *mf*  $\wedge$   $\times$   $\wedge$   $\times$   $\wedge$   $\times$  [Thud of foot on floor] *f*  $\wedge$   $\times$   $\wedge$   $\times$   $\wedge$   $\times$

NARRATOR puts on nightcap (or showercap) over gray cap or ears

Then he put on Grannie’s nightcap and her nightgown, and he got into the bed and rolled himself well up in the bedclothes.

**Flowing** ♩ = 120  
gently, as a lullaby

*mf* *rit.* 11  
with pedal

By and by along came the child,

(rit.) as if dozing off (*mf*)  $\rightrightarrows$  *p* *mf* joyfully ♩ = 120  
Ped.

who had been gathering nuts, running after butterflies, and picking flowers.

[NARRATOR]\*

Quickly She knocked on the door. “Who’s there?” making his voice as soft as he could.

Now the child heard the voice and thought it was rather strange, but she remembered that her grandmother had been ailing and so she said: “ ‘Tis I!”

“ ‘Tis I!” “ ‘Tis I! – You beloved granddaughter with a pot of butter and a cake from mother, to ask how you are.”

\*During the following interplay between the wolf and the child, the Narrator continues to wear the gray cap (or ears), with nightcap on top. Each time that the child speaks, or is mentioned, a red kerchief or bonnet may be held up for the audience to see.

“The door is unlocked...  
Come on in, my dear,”  
said the wolf.

So the child turned the knob,  
the door opened, and

[spoken by pianist] *“heh heh heh heh”*

*a creaking sound*  
[like an old door opening,  
made by the pianist, *ad lib.*]

there, she thought, was her grandmother in the bed;  
for the cottage was so dark that she could not see well.  
Besides, the crafty wolf turned his face to the wall at first.  
And he made his voice as soft as he could when he said:

*p mysteriously*

(“The Kiss”)

“Come and kiss me, my dear.”

♩ = 108

*mf cantabile, romantico*

*molto rit.*

*p*

*kiss\**

The child took off her  
cloak and went to the bed.

\*puckered smack by both  
Narrator and Pianist

“Oh Grandmama!” “Oh Grandmama!” “What big arms you’ve got!” “All the better to hug you with,”

*mf* *p* *f*

(vigorous tremolo)

said he. Faster “Oh Grandmama!” “Oh Grandmama!” “What big ears you’ve got!”

*p* *f* *mf*

Ped.

[Pianist inclines ear over keyboard] “All the better to hear you with, my dear.” Quickly “Oh Grandmama!”

*p* *f* *mf*

Ped.

“Oh Grandmama!” “What big eyes you’ve got!”

*f*

Narrator and Pianist  
look at each other,  
eyes open wide.

“All the better to  
see you with, my dear.”

*rit.*

*gliss.*

*gliss.*

[high black-note clusters]

*f*

bed.

“Oh Grandmama!”

“Oh Grandmama!”

“What big teeth  
you’ve got!”

Narrator and Pianist  
face audience and  
clack teeth *ad lib.*

*f*

× × × × × × ×

× × × × × × ×

NARRATOR removes nightcap,  
and is now only the wolf.

puts nightcap back on

“ALL THE BETTER TO EAT YOU  
WITH, MY DEAR!” said the wicked wolf.

And with that he jumped out of bed  
and chased the child around and around  
the house and out into the woods.

[very loud black-note clusters  
at both ends of the keyboard]

*ff*

↑

↓

(“The Chase”)

**Presto furioso** ♩ = 144

*f* *dramatico*

*long, quick gliss.*

*f*

NARRATOR pretends to be the wolf, chasing after the child.

The first system of music consists of two staves. The treble staff contains a series of eighth notes, some grouped with slurs. The bass staff contains a rhythmic accompaniment of eighth notes and rests.

The second system continues the musical piece. It features a fermata over a note in the treble staff. The bass staff continues with its rhythmic accompaniment. The system ends with a double bar line.

shakes kerchief in terror

*very high gliss.*

(in terror!)

shakes kerchief in terror

*not as high gliss.*

The third system shows sustained chords in both staves. A long horizontal line with a downward-pointing arrow indicates a glissando across the keyboard.

"scampering" up the keyboard...

and back down.

The fourth system uses diagonal lines in both staves to represent the "scampering" of the keyboard. The lines slope upwards in the first two measures and downwards in the last two. A bracket labeled "[random clusters]" is placed under the first two measures.

The wolf again

NARRATOR picks up axe, but keeps wearing gray outfit with nightcap

Puts down axe.

But that was the wolf's undoing, for there he met the woodcutters

and they cut off his head before he could get out of Grannie's night clothes and run away.

Pianist leans head to side, eyes closed and arms limp, as if dead.

8vb

The child went home to her mother – and the churning of butter and the baking of cakes. As for the wolf: It is said on dark and chilly nights... In the vast and lonely forest... every so often... one still sees the ghost of a wolf... wearing Grannie's nightcap and nightgown... looking for something delicious to eat...

\*finger tremoli (both hands on piano rack)

Pianist slowly raises hands up towards piano rack, as if coming back to life.

\*roaming about as if looking for food.

NARRATOR may sway gently with the music, portraying the "ghost of a wolf" roaming the forest

("Tango of the Mind")

♩ = 66

finger trem.  
(both hands)



*p* *mf*  
with pedal

NARRATOR plays claves  
(or claps hands lightly)

[rhythm continues until  
stop is indicated]

*p*

*mf*

*p* *mf* a wolf cry

gentle gliss. finger trem.

Narr. STOP rhythm

Resume rhythm

Stop rhythm

Narrator and Pianist: THE END!

Duration: 10'00"  
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