

Gwyneth Walker

The Race

a fable for Narrator, Violin, Violoncello and Piano

based on the story "*The Hare and the Tortoise*"

The Race

duration: 12 minutes

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*The Race* is a contemporary adaptation of the familiar story, "The Hare and the Tortoise." In this new version, the central characters (Rabbit and Tortoise) remain the same. But, additional characters (the neighbors, the Owl) are added. Sights and sounds from the neighborhood are incorporated.

[A baseball game. The birds singing. Neighbors waving "hello." ] And, the race itself takes place with the characters donning running shoes and caps. A referee starts the race, with the sound of a Starter's Pistol.

There is a moral to this well-known story: slow down and appreciate your surroundings (!). And, the entire adventure ends in a grand celebration party for all!

This work may be performed in standard concert clothing (although running shoes or caps may be added). Or, the Narrator and players may experiment with costuming. The Cellist (*Tortoise*) may wear a backpack resembling a shell. The Violinist (*Rabbit*) may try wearing rabbit ears (!) or paws. And, the Narrator may select some attire suggesting a Referee. Puppets and scenery may even be added.

The Race was created especially for school and community concerts. It is hoped that audiences of all ages will find pleasure in this simple tale, retold as a contemporary road race. Sports fans (which include the composer) might be particularly amused!

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Widely performed throughout the country, the music of American composer **Gwyneth Walker** is beloved by performers and audiences alike for its energy, beauty, reverence, drama, and humor. 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. For nearly 30 years, she lived on a dairy farm in Braintree, Vermont. She now divides her time between her childhood hometown of New Canaan, Connecticut and the musical communities of Sarasota, Florida and Randolph, Vermont.

Gwyneth Walker has been a proud resident of Vermont for many years. 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. In 2012, she was elected as a Fellow of the Vermont Academy of Arts and Sciences.

Walker's catalog includes over 300 commissioned works for orchestra, chamber ensembles, chorus, and solo voice. A special interest has been dramatic works that combine music with readings, acting, and movement. The music of Gwyneth Walker is published by E. C. Schirmer (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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# The Race

*A Fable for Narrator, Violin, Violoncello and Piano*

Gwyneth Walker

(Narrative precedes the musical commentary)

**Narrator:** This is a story about a race. A road race between two animals.

*Fanfare*  
Quickly ♩ = 144, with energy

Violin  
(Rabbit)

Violoncello  
(Tortoise)

Piano  
(Onlookers)

4

Vln.

Vlc.

Pno.

*rit.*

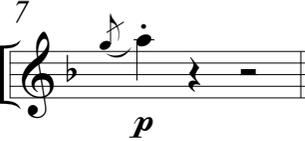
*heavily*

*rit.*

N: Once upon a time, there was a speedy animal.

**A**

7

Vln. 

*p*

N: He was a sprinter.

**A1** Quickly ♩ = 160  
("hopping sounds")

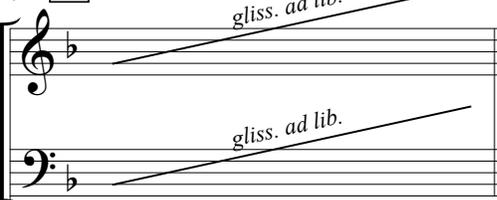
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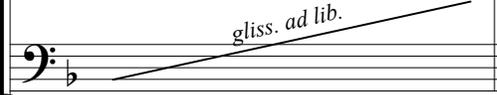
Vln. 

N: He ran so quickly that the wind whistled as he went by!

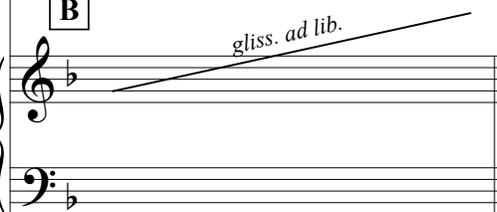
(to portray the wind whistling as the Rabbit runs by)

9 **B**

Vln. 

Vlc. 

Pno. **B**



*gliss. ad lib.*

N: He was a Rabbit. A Speedy Rabbit.

**C** Quickly ♩ = 160, as if hopping  
(much "hopping")

10

Vln. 

*p* *mf*

Vlc. 

*p* *mf*

Pno. **C** Quickly ♩ = 160, as if hopping



*p* *mf*

N: In fact, he was always in such a rush, that he never slowed down to notice the beautiful lighthouse at the end of his road, casting its circle of light out to the ships at sea.

**D** Moderate tempo

(the beautiful lighthouse)

14

Pno.

*mf cantabile*

*rit.*

N: He never heard the birds singing in the trees overhead.

**D1** Moderate tempo

(as birds singing)

18

Pno.

*p*

N: He did not stop to watch the children playing baseball in the park.

**D2** Moderate tempo

19 (baseball game)

Pno.

*f*

\*LH tap piano ledge\*\*

N: And, he never waved "hello" to his neighbors sitting on their porch.

**D3** Moderate tempo

(as if waving hello)

23

Pno.

*p*

*f*

\* to simulate the sound of a baseball hitting a bat, or (for the agile pianist) approximate a baseball swing (with both hands) while making a knocking sound with the tongue.

\*\*The Narrator might catch an imaginary ball!

N: He was very speedy, and always rushed to where he was going.

**E** Quickly ♩ = 160

("rabbit" motive)

25

Vln. *p* *mf*

Vlc. *p* *mf*

Pno. *p* *mf*

29

Vln. *p*

Vlc. *p*

Pno. *p*

33

Vln. *f*

Vlc. *f*

Pno. *f*

N: And then, there was the Tortoise.

N: [A Tortoise is a VERY LARGE turtle!]

**F** Slowly  
35 heavily

**F1** Very slowly  
36 very heavily

N: He was not speedy. In fact, he never ran at all. He plodded along at a leisurely pace, always stopping to admire the lighthouse at the end of his street, casting its circle of light out to the ships at sea.

**G** Slowly  
(the beautiful lighthouse)  
38 *mf cantabile* *rit.*

N: He always slowed down to listen to the birds singing in the trees overhead.

**G1** Slowly  
(as birds singing)  
42 *p*

N: And, he always stopped to watch the children playing baseball in the park.

**G2** Slowly  
43 (baseball game) *f* \*LH tap piano ledge

N: Of course, he always waived "hello" to his neighbors, sitting on their porch.

**G3** Slowly  
(as if waving hello)  
47 *p* *f*

\*to simulate the sound of a baseball hitting a bat. See footnote on page 5.

N: He was a slow Tortoise, but he always got to where he was going...eventually!

49 **H** At a slow, lumbering tempo

Vln. *(the lumbering Tortoise)* *f*

Vlc. *f*

**H** At a slow, lumbering tempo

Pno. *f (the lumbering Tortoise)*

*8va*

53

Vln.

Vlc.

Pno.

*(8va)* *loco*

57

Vln. *Grandly, rit.* *Less slowly* *rit.* *p*

Vlc. *p*

Pno. *Grandly, rit.* *Less slowly* *rit.* *8va* *p*

N: One day, the Rabbit

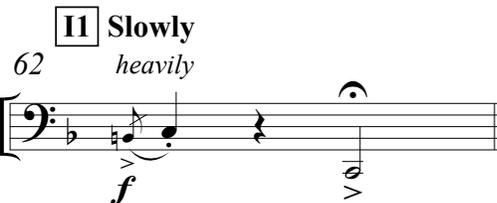
61 **I**

Vln. 

*p*

N: (who was a boastful creature) said to the other animals: “I am the fastest animal of all. I am very speedy. Therefore, I challenge any of you to a race. See if you can catch me!” The other animals drew back in fear. They did not want to race the Speedy Rabbit. They knew that they could not catch him. But, the Tortoise

62 **II** **Slowly**  
*heavily*

Vlc. 

*f*

N: (brave Tortoise!) stepped forward and said: “Speedy Rabbit, I am not afraid of you. I will race you. I accept your challenge.”

63 **J** **At a slow, lumbering tempo** *rit.*

Vln. 

*(the lumbering Tortoise)* *f*

Vlc. 

*f* *p*

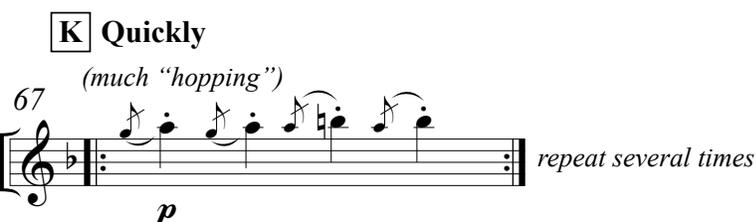
Pno. **J** **At a slow, lumbering tempo** *rit.*

*f* *(the lumbering Tortoise)*

*8<sup>va</sup>*

N: The Rabbit laughed and replied: “YOU?!? You will race me?!? Why, you are the slowest animal on the block. I can beat you on only one foot if I wanted!”

67 **K** **Quickly**  
*(much “hopping”)*

Vln. 

*p* *repeat several times*

10 N: The Tortoise replied slowly: "That may be true. But you should save your boasting until after the race."

**L** Quickly ♩ = 144, with energy  
preparing for the race

68

Vln. *f*

Vlc. *f*

Pno. *f*

**L** Quickly ♩ = 144, with energy  
preparing for the race

72 ("rabbit" motive)

Vln. *p*

Vlc. *f* (the lumbering Tortoise)

Pno. *f*

76

Vln. *f*

Vlc. *f*

Pno. *f*

*rit.*

Hold chord  
(to beginning  
of next measure)

N: So, the Rabbit and the Tortoise changed into their running clothes. They put on their running shoes, and their running caps.

**M**  
80 [Violin and Cello may put on caps]

Pno.

N: And, they lined up at the Starting Line. The Owl acted as Referee, and he said: “Runners take your marks..... ready.....set.....GO!” [Narrator claps hands loudly, to start the race.]

**M1**  
81 [Narrator and Players tap feet quickly, as if running... loudly at first, then *diminuendo* to a quiet background behind the reading]

Pno.

N: The Rabbit got off to a quick start. He sped down the road, leaving the Tortoise far behind. Then, noticing his great lead, and being a boastful Rabbit, he said: “I am so far ahead, that the slow Tortoise will never catch up. I think that I shall stop here and take a little nap. That will show the Tortoise how much faster I am than him!”

**M2**  
82 [Footsteps stop]

Pno.

N: So, the Rabbit found a nice soft little spot of grass, and lay down for a nap...

**N** Moderate tempo

83

*mf* gently

*rit.*

*p*

cont. *ad lib.*  
as if dozing off

**N** Moderate tempo

*mf* gently

*rit.*

*p*

Vln.

Pno.

N: Meanwhile, the Tortoise was plodding down the road at his usual pace. Of course, he stopped to admire the beautiful lighthouse, casting its circle of light to the ships at sea.

**O** Leisurely tempo  
(the beautiful lighthouse)

87

*mf cantabile*

*rit.*

N: Of course, he stopped to listen to the birds singing in the trees overhead.

**O1** Leisurely tempo  
(as birds singing)

91

*p*

N: Of course, he stopped to watch the children playing baseball in the park. [For, he was a Red Sox\* fan, and he knew a good game when he saw one!]

**O2** Leisurely tempo  
(baseball game)

92

*f*

\*\*LH tap piano ledge

N: And, of course, he waved "hello" to his neighbors as they sat on their porch.

**O3** Leisurely tempo  
(as if waving hello)

96

*p*

*f*

\* The name of a local team may be substituted

\*\*to simulate the sound of a baseball hitting a bat. See footnote on page 5.

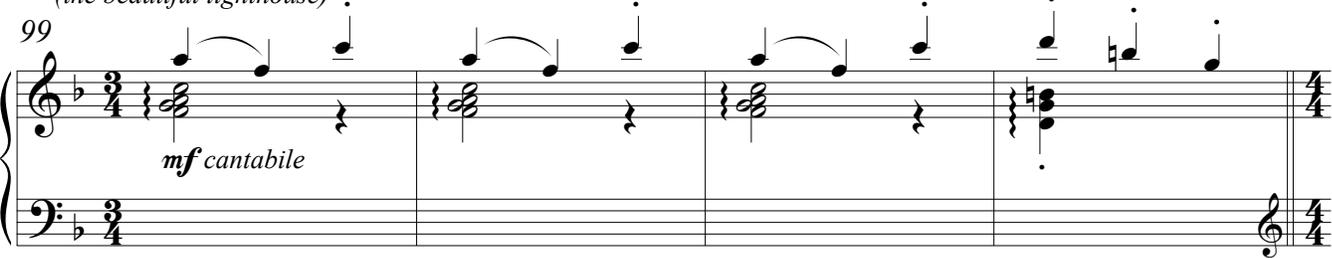
N: By now, he was nearly at the Finish Line. At just this time, Speedy Rabbit awoke from his nap.

**P** *con sord.*  
98 *startled*

Vln. 

N: He looked around, but did not see the Tortoise behind him, as he had expected. Nor did he see the Tortoise close by him, as he had thought he might. Instead, to his horror, he thought he spotted the Tortoise off in the distance, just about the cross the Finish Line! The Rabbit raced down the road as fast as he could. Of course, he did not stop to admire the beautiful lighthouse, casting its circle of light out to the ships at sea.

**Q** **Prestissimo**  
*(the beautiful lighthouse)* *no rit.*

Pno. 

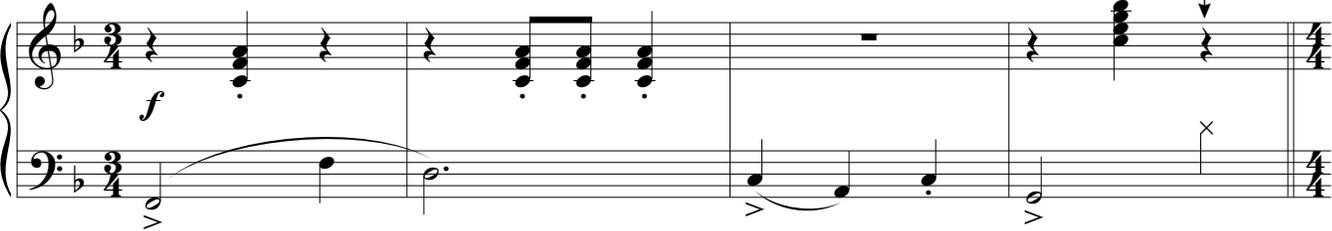
N: Of course, he did not stop to listen to the birds singing in the trees overhead.

**Q1** **Prestissimo**  
*(as birds singing)*

Pno. 

N: Of course, he did not stop to watch the children playing baseball in the park (even though he was a Yankees\* fan, and knew a good game when he saw one!).

**Q2** **Prestissimo**  
104 *(baseball game)* *\*\*LH tap piano ledge*

Pno. 

\* The name of a rival team may be substituted

\*\*to simulate the sound of a baseball hitting a bat. See footnote on page 5.

**N:** He raced, and he raced. [Narrator becomes short of breath with exhaustion.] When he came to the neighbors sitting on their porch, he stopped to ask: “Have you seen the Tortoise? Has he passed this way?” The neighbors (who were surprised to hear from the Rabbit after all of these years) answered: “Oh yes, the Tortoise came by some time ago. He is just now crossing the Finish Line. Hooray Tortoise! (they shouted to each other) Hooray Tortoise! Let’s have a party to celebrate!”

**R With energy** **In celebration** ♩ = 160

108

Vlc. *sfp* *gliss.* *(p)* *f*

Pno. *f* *gliss.* *(p)* *f*

**N:** The Rabbit sank down on his paws in shock. “Woe is me! Woe is me! I have lost the race to the Tortoise. And, what is worse, I have missed out all of the wonderful people and places along the way, all of these years! Woe is me!”

**S Slowly, mournfully** *(con sord.)* *trembling with sorrow* *rit.* *via sord.*

113

Vln. *p*

Pno. *p* *rit.*

**N:** The neighbors comforted the Rabbit by saying: “Don’t worry, Rabbit. You can change your ways right now. Slow down! And, we will be your friends.” So, the neighbors threw a BIG party, and invited everyone. They celebrated the Tortoise winning the race, and they welcomed the Not-so-Speedy Rabbit as their new friend.

**T** Slowly, grandly

117 *senza sord.*

Vln. *f* *sfp* *gliss.*

Vlc. *f* *sfp* *gliss.*

Pno. *f* *gliss.*

Narrator congratulates the Rabbit

**U** Quickly, very joyfully ♩ = 160

121

Vln. *f* *p*

Vlc. *f* *p*

Pno. *f* *p*

V Everyone dances!

126

Vln.

Vlc.

Pno.

*f*

*f*

*f*

131

Vln.

Vlc.

Pno.

*f*

*f*

*p*

*f*

W Rabbit: "hopping" motive

135

Vln.

Vlc.

Pno.

*p*

*f*

*p*

Tortoise: heavily

140 *hopping*

Vln. *(p)*

Vlc. *heavily* *f*

Pno. *p* *f*

Narrator toasts the animals and the pianist (with juice!)

**X** Especially celebratory

144 *gliss.*

Vln. *gliss.*

Vlc. *f*

Pno. *f*

**X** Especially celebratory

N: (exclaims) **THE** **END!**

*rit. to end*

*raise fists*

148

Vln. *f*

Vlc. *f*

Pno. *p* *f*

*rit. to end*

Narrator and players raise fists in the air as if celebrating winning a race.

## The Race

This is a story about a race. A road race between two animals. {FANFARE}

Once upon a time, there was a speedy animal. {A}

He was a sprinter. {A1}

He ran so quickly that the wind whistled as he went by! {B}  
*(The Pianist exhales loudly imitating the wind whistling as the Rabbit rushes by.)*

He was a Rabbit. A Speedy Rabbit. {C}

In fact, he was always in such a rush, that he never slowed down to notice the beautiful lighthouse at the end of his road, casting its circle of light out to the ships at sea. {D}

He never heard the birds singing in the trees overhead. {D1}

He did not stop to watch the children playing baseball in the park. {D2}  
*(Pianist mimes hitting a baseball and the Narrator catches it)*

And, he never waved “hello” to his neighbors sitting on their porch. {D3}

He was very speedy, and always rushed to where he was going. {E}

And then, there was the Tortoise. {F}

[A Tortoise is a VERY LARGE turtle!] {F1}

He was not speedy. In fact, he never ran at all. He plodded along at a leisurely pace, always stopping to admire the lighthouse at the end of his street, casting its circle of light out to the ships at sea. {G}

He always slowed down to listen to the birds singing in the trees overhead. {G1}

And, he always stopped to watch the children playing baseball in the park. {G2}  
*(Pianist mimes hitting a baseball and the Narrator catches it)*

Of course, he always waived “hello” to his neighbors, sitting on their porch. {G3}

He was a slow Tortoise, but he always got to where he was going...eventually! {H}

One day, the Rabbit {I}

(who was a boastful creature) said to the other animals: “I am the fastest animal of all. I am very speedy. Therefore, I challenge any of you to a race. See if you can catch me!” The other animals drew back in fear. They did not want to race the Speedy Rabbit. They knew that they could not catch him. But, the Tortoise {II}

(brave Tortoise!) stepped forward and said: “Speedy Rabbit, I am not afraid of you. I will race you. I accept your challenge.” {J}

The Rabbit laughed and replied: “YOU?!? You will race me?!? Why, you are the slowest animal on the block. I can beat you on only one foot if I wanted!” {K}

The Tortoise replied slowly: “ That may be true. But you should save your boasting until after the race.” {L}

So, the Rabbit and the Tortoise changed into their running clothes. They put on their running shoes, and their running caps. {M} *(Narrator and Pianist may put on caps.)*

And, they lined up at the Starting Line. The Owl acted as Referee, and he said “Runners take your marks.....ready..... set.....GO!” *(Narrator claps hands loudly, to start the race.)* {M1} *(Narrator and Pianist tap feet quickly, as if running...loudly at first, then diminuendo to a quiet background behind the following reading.)*

The Rabbit got off to a quick start. He sped down the road, leaving the Tortoise far behind. Then, noticing his great lead, and being a boastful Rabbit, he said: “I am so far ahead, that the slow Tortoise will never catch up. I think that I shall stop here and take a little nap. That will show the Tortoise how much faster I am than him!” {M2}

So, the Rabbit found a nice soft little spot of grass, and lay down for a nap... {N}

Meanwhile, the Tortoise was plodding down the road at his usual pace. Of course, he stopped to admire the beautiful lighthouse, casting its circle of light to the ships at sea. {O}

Of course, he stopped to listen to the birds singing in the trees overhead. {O1}

Of course, he stopped to watch the children playing baseball in the park. [For, he was a Red Sox\* fan, and he knew a good game when he saw one!] {O2}  
*(Pianist mimes hitting a baseball and the Narrator catches it)*

And, of course, he waved “hello” to his neighbors as they sat on their porch. {O3}

By now, he was nearly at the Finish Line. At just this time, Speedy Rabbit awoke from his nap. {P}

He looked around, but did not see the Tortoise behind him, as he had expected. Nor did he see the Tortoise close by him, as he had thought he might. Instead, to his horror, he thought he spotted the Tortoise off in the distance, just about the cross the Finish Line! The Rabbit raced down the road as fast as he could. Of course, he did not stop to admire the beautiful lighthouse, casting its circle of light out to the ships at sea. {Q}

Of course, he did not stop to listen to the birds singing in the trees overhead. {Q1}

Of course, he did not stop to watch the children playing baseball in the park (even though he was a Yankees\* fan, and knew a good game when he saw one!). {Q2}

He raced, and he raced. (*Narrator becomes short of breath with exhaustion.*) When he came to the neighbors sitting on their porch, he stopped to ask: “Have you seen the Tortoise? Has he passed this way?” The neighbors (who were surprised to hear from the Rabbit after all of these years) answered: “Oh yes, the Tortoise came by some time ago. He is just now crossing the Finish Line. Hooray Tortoise! (they shouted to each other) Hooray Tortoise! Let’s have a party to celebrate!” {R}

The Rabbit sank down on his paws in shock. “Woe is me! Woe is me! I have lost the race to the Tortoise. And, what is worse, I have missed out all of the wonderful people and places along the way, all of these years! Woe is me!” {S}

The neighbors comforted the Rabbit by saying: “Don’t worry, Rabbit. You can change your ways right now. Slow down! And, we will be your friends.” So, the neighbors threw a BIG party, and invited everyone. They celebrated the Tortoise winning the race, and they welcomed the Not-so-Speedy Rabbit as their new friend. {T}

THE END!