

# **If I Told Him**

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for Four Voices

Willyn Whiting

2021



Soprano (C#4 – G5)

Alto (C4 – E5)

Tenor (D#3 – G4)

Bass (F2 – D4)

Text by Gertrude Stein

Duration approx. 7'30"

#### PROGRAM NOTE

*If I Told Him (2021)* is a setting of Gertrude Stein's poem *If I Told Him: A Complete Portrait of Pablo Picasso (1924)*. The poem is a series of contrasting stanzas in free verse. Words are repeated and rearranged throughout the text to alter the listener's perception of language, taking on an almost motivic role. I tried to acknowledge these observations in my setting. The poem is in fact Stein's second literary portrait of Pablo Picasso. The first was written in 1907 in response to Picasso's portrait of her (1906).

This work was composed for zFestival, a virtual new music festival, in the summer of 2021 and was first premiered by Sarah Richards, Kristina Boerger, Thom Baker and Russell Holbert.

#### PERFORMANCE NOTES

The piece should be performed with solo voices.

The singing should be with minimal vibrato.

The 12 sections of the piece should all be performed attacca.

If I Told Him, A Completed Portrait of Picasso  
by Gertrude Stein

If I told him would he like it. Would he like it if I told him. Would he like it would Napoleon would  
Napoleon would would he like it.

If Napoleon if I told him if I told him if Napoleon. Would he like it if I told him if I told him if  
Napoleon. Would he like it if Napoleon if Napoleon if I told him. If I told him if Napoleon if  
Napoleon if I told him. If I told him would he like it would he like it if I told him.

Now.

Not now.

And now.

Now.

Exactly as as kings.

Feeling full for it.

Exactitude as kings.

So to beseech you as full as for it.

Exactly or as kings.

Shutters shut and open so do queens. Shutters shut and shutters and so shutters shut and shutters  
and so and so shutters and so shutters shut and so shutters shut and shutters and so. And so  
shutters shut and so and also. And also and so and so and also.

Exact resemblance to exact resemblance the exact resemblance as exact resemblance,  
exactly as resembling, exactly resembling, exactly in resemblance exactly and resemblance. For  
this is so. Because.

Now actively repeat at all, now actively repeat at all, now actively repeat at all.

Have hold and hear, actively repeat at all.

I judge judge.

As a resemblance to him.

Who comes first. Napoleon the first.

Who comes too coming coming too, who goes there, as they go they share, who shares all, all is  
as all as as yet or as yet.

Now to date now to date. Now and now and date and the date. Who came first Napoleon at  
first.

Who came first Napoleon the first. Who came first, Napoleon first.

Presently.

Exactly do they do.

First exactly.

Exactly do they do.

First exactly.

And first exactly.

Exactly do they do.

And first exactly and exactly.

And do they do.

At first exactly and first exactly and do they do.

The first exactly.

And do they do.

The first exactly.

At first exactly.  
First as exactly.  
As first as exactly.  
Presently  
As presently.  
As as presently.

He he he he and he and he and and he and he and he and and as and as he and as he and  
he. He is and as he is, and as he is and he is, he is and as he and he and as he is and he and he  
and and he and he.

Can curls rob can curls quote, quotable.

As presently.  
As exactitude.  
As trains.  
Has trains.  
Has trains.  
As trains.  
As trains.  
Presently.  
Proportions.  
Presently.  
As proportions as presently.

Farther and whether.  
Was there was there was there what was there was there what was there was there there was  
there.  
Whether and in there.  
As even say so.

One.  
I land.  
Two.  
I land.  
Three.  
The land.  
Three  
The land.  
Three.  
The land.  
Two  
I land.  
Two  
I land.  
One  
I land.  
Two  
I land.

As a so.  
The cannot.

A note.  
They cannot  
A float.  
They cannot.  
They dote.  
They cannot.  
They as denote.  
Miracles play.  
Play fairly.  
Play fairly well.  
A well.  
As well.  
As or as presently.  
Let me recite what history teaches. History teaches.

# If I Told Him

Willyn Whiting

♩ = 88

*Smorzando*

Soprano: Na -

Alto: *mp* would he like it if Na - po - leon would

Tenor: *f* If I told him would he like it would he like it if I told him would he

Bass: *f* If Na - po - leon if I

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S: *f* po - leon would *p* If I told him would he like it would he like it if I told him

A: *f* would he like it *p* if Na - po - leon if Na - po - leon if I told him

T: *p* like it if I told him if I told him if I told him if Na - po - leon

B: *p* told him if I told him if Na - po - leon *mp* would he like it if I told