

**DAUGHTER** - teen - soprano

**FATHER** - lyric baritone

**MOTHER/MIRROR MOTHER** - lyric soprano, possible coloratura - shimmer/glass tone

**STEPMOTHER** - contralto, possible mezzo - warmer/darker tone

*“To produce maximum amount of effect with minimum amount of material” / Imbed the vocal lines; melody, rhythm, words with the weight of the scene (e.g. Scenes 1 - 3, sparse orchestration, individual instruments and solo voice - indicating alone, grief, empty, isolation.)*

*“No matter the size of the ensemble, instruments are set in such a way as the timbre or tone color can be heard.”*

## **ACT ONE**

### **Overture:**

*Taiko Drumming:*

- *In darkness, drums are heard/felt, low rumbling. They create a sense of foreboding and discord.*
- *Drums crescendo to a sforzando accent with abrupt silence - lights up*

### **Scene One:**

On her deathbed, MOTHER hands over to DAUGHTER a treasured possession that will always remind DAUGHTER of her: a handheld mirror.

- *MOTHER sings - solo voice, “Mother’s love theme” (traditional scale - pentatonic)*
- *Mirror appears - “Mirror theme” - koto/plucked tremolo*

### **Scene Two:**

MOTHER passes, and FATHER and DAUGHTER grieve for her during a wake.

- *As mother passes, her voice melds (dies out) to bamboo flute*
  - *flute now embodies “Mother’s love theme” as a spirit.*
- *FATHER/DAUGHTER Duet*
  - *sing “Grief theme”*
  - *based on the ½ step bending ornaments of the koto, minor pentatonic.*
  - *(in scale? Traditional Japanese scale?)*

### **Scene Three:**

After the cremation/funeral, FATHER packs up MOTHER’S clothing to take away. DAUGHTER tries, unsuccessfully, to stop him. FATHER leaves with MOTHER’S clothing while DAUGHTER goes to a drawer, pulls out the mirror, and cradles it. MIRROR MOTHER appears.

- *Baritone aria shifts between major/minor pentatonic love/grief*
- *Daughter enters*

- *taiko drums reenter, indicating conflict.*
- *Conflict Duet between FATHER/DAUGHTER*
  - *Duet back and forth, no harmonic lines - only linear*
  - *Ornament vocal lines with “Grief” motif.*
  - *Taiko drum crescendo to strong accent/silence as FATHER exits -*
    - *mirroring opening to mother’s death.*
- *Mirror appears - “Mirror theme” - koto/plucked tremolo*
- *DAUGHTER sings aria to the mirror -*
  - *accompanied by koto*
  - *MIRROR MOTHER appears and joins the aria*
  - *the addition of bamboo flute in unison with MIRROR MOTHER’s voice.*

**Transition: Taiko Drums** - are they an indication of threat from MIRROR MOTHER or FEMALE FRIEND

#### Scene Four:

FEMALE FRIEND drops off enough food for a week, and expresses her sympathy to FATHER. Meanwhile, DAUGHTER plays hide-and-seek with her new friend, MIRROR MOTHER.

- *Entrance of FEMALE FRIEND -*
  - *string orchestra (larger forces to indicate comfort, largness, warmth.)*
  - *Increase in woodwind forces; alto flute, double reeds*
  - *“Comfort theme” - Tonality shifts from minor/major*
    - *showing an opposite trajectory for FATHER (from Scene 3)*
- *DAUGHTER/MIRROR MOTHER - joyous, rhythmic lines.*
  - *Arpeggiated lines of vocalese as if laughter, unison to harmony.*
  - *Grief (minor) ornamentation transforms to major ornamentation*
  - *Underneath - ominous roll of taiko drums + plucked koto - opposite ends of the spectrum*

#### Scene Five:

FATHER enjoys a springtime walk with FEMALE FRIEND, as sakura bloom around them. They discuss second chances. Meanwhile, DAUGHTER shares an ice cream cone with MIRROR MOTHER. They make each other laugh.

#### Continuation of musical structures from previous scene

- *Duet for FATHER/FRIEND*
  - *Moments of vocal harmony to reflect the deepening connection.*
- *DAUGHTER/MIRROR MOTHER*
  - *Increases in laughter and joy in vocal lines*
  - *Dramatic signs of unease, wilder use of koto, pizzicato strings and drums*

### **Scene Six:**

FATHER proposes to FEMALE FRIEND. *Meanwhile*, DAUGHTER plays dress-up with MIRROR MOTHER, in a kimono that is slightly too big for her.

- *FATHER: Baritone aria*
  - *reappearance of themes from Scene 3 (folding wife's kimono)*
  - *Shifts from minor to major (grief to love, healing)*
- *DAUGHTER/MIRROR MOTHER duet*
  - *continue musical language, bouncing between laughter/buoyancy and mania.*
- *MIRROR MOTHER aria*
  - *Sings her "Love" Theme.*
  - *Music needs to show comfort and that there is joy in these moments of losing herself in the mirror.*

### **Scene Seven:**

FATHER and STEPMOTHER exchange wedding vows. As DAUGHTER and MIRROR MOTHER look on, they wipe away tears of distress. Suddenly, DAUGHTER storms out of the wedding, disrupting it. In one hand, she holds the mirror, and in the other, she holds the hand of MIRROR MOTHER.

- *FATHER/STPMOTHER duet*
  - *New musical theme for wedding vows - "Joy" theme.*
  - *New material to support a new beginning.*
  - *Melodic elements drawn from "folk song" to be sung at the start of Act Two by STEPMOTHER*
  - *Different tonal center/color/key*
- *Bamboo flute enters (MOTHER's voice) as a counterpoint.*
  - *It's melodic line starts with MOTHER'S love theme*
  - *transforms to the "grief" motif with dissonance.*
  - *MIRROR MOTHER's voice joins the flute line indicating a stronger presence*
- *DAUGHTER should be silent, not singing. Let the conflict occur in her mind*
- *Reappearance of the Taiko drums bringing another unsettling/conflict element underscoring the increased conflict.*

## **ACT TWO**

### **Scene One:**

STPMOTHER sings a folk song to herself as she puts away folded laundry in DAUGHTER'S ROOM. She is about to open the drawer where DAUGHTER keeps the mirror, when DAUGHTER enters, sees her, and shoves her away. DAUGHTER plants herself between STEPMOTHER and the drawer, and orders STEPMOTHER out.

- *STPMOTHER sings - solo voice "folk song" - Joy theme.*
- *DAUGHTER's entrance accompanied by Koto - wild arpeggios, aggressive glissandos, percussive gestures. Vocal lines mirror aggression and misunderstanding.*

### Scene Two:

STEPMOTHER beseeches FATHER to talk to DAUGHTER about her behavior. *Meanwhile*, DAUGHTER complains bitterly to MIRROR MOTHER about STEPMOTHER.

- *STEPMOTHER aria* -
  - *first time audience hears lack of warmth or stress in character's voice*
  - *Vocal lines, higher in the tessitura, more strident tones, more rhythmic agitation*
- *DAUGHTER - counterpoint*
  - *Adding elements of rhythmic and melodic dissonance as a counterpoint to the STEPMOTHER's aria*

### Scene Three:

FATHER rushes to DAUGHTER'S room, and instead of berating her, shares his own grief over the death of MOTHER. MIRROR MOTHER appears next to the drawer where the mirror is kept. The three of them share a moment, even though FATHER cannot see MIRROR MOTHER. *Meanwhile*, STEPMOTHER, who has been looking on, backs away from the door of DAUGHTER'S room and bemoans her own feeling of isolation.

- *FATHER/DAUGHTER duet*
  - *Similar to "Grief" duet but with more warmth, love, and understanding.*
  - *As MIRROR MOTHER appears, duet becomes trio*
  - *Song is harmonious and warm, elements of the "Mother's love theme" are fully realized.*
- *STEPMOTHER aria*
  - *Beginning unaccompanied - focus on weight of solo melodic lines*
  - *Perhaps increase isolated instruments in accompaniment; cello, double reed*

### Scene Four:

DAUGHTER excitedly shows the mirror to FATHER and points out MIRROR MOTHER. Surprised and dismayed, FATHER tries to convince DAUGHTER that MIRROR MOTHER isn't real. He seizes the mirror from DAUGHTER, who cries out. *Meanwhile*, STEPMOTHER says goodbye to FATHER in a note, stating they should have waited for a better time.

- *DAUGHTER/FATHER - Musical Scene*
  - *DAUGHTER has excited aria moments as she reveals MIRROR MOTHER's existence*
  - *Melodic line; both joyous, active and pleading, moving to higher range*
  - *FATHER vocal lines show increasing alarm/concern also active rhythms and increasing upper range*
  - *Koto/taiko drum accompaniment*
- *STEPMOTHER - aria - calm contrast, lower tessitura, slower rhythmic motion (long notes)*

### Scene Five:

FATHER rushes into the room where STEPMOTHER is, and attempts to break the mirror. STEPMOTHER implores him to stop and wrests the mirror from him.

- *Taiko Drums and aggressive Koto figures (Act 2, Scene 1) as FATHER moves to smash mirror*
- *Drums crescendo to a sforzando accent with abrupt silence as STEPMOTHER stops FATHER's action*
- *Cello/Double Reed hinting at "Comfort Theme" (Act 1, Scene 4)*

### Scene Six:

STPMOTHER offers the mirror to DAUGHTER. DAUGHTER takes back the mirror, gratefully.

- *STPMOTHER aria*
  - *Musical elements draw from "Mother's love theme," but must show difference.*
  - *DAUGHTER adds a moment of vocal harmony at the end of aria to show acceptance of mirror and STEPMOTHER.*

### Scene Seven:

FATHER and STEPMOTHER haul suitcases to the front door. *Meanwhile*, in her room, DAUGHTER puts the mirror away, for good. She grabs her suitcase and joins STEPMOTHER and FATHER by the door. They say goodbye to the house and leave together.

- *"Joy/Folk song" should be the foundation for the final scene.*
- *As DAUGHTER puts away the mirror;*
  - *musical elements of "grief" theme, "Mother's love theme," and the colors of the koto appear briefly and fleeting.*
- *FATHER/STPMOTHER/DAUGHTER Trio - sing in harmony as they exit.*