

Way Down Yonder

for soprano, violin, viola, and cello

Music by Liza White

Text by Rickey Laurentiis

Way Down Yonder

Makes me just wanna cry, she says, her mother-eyes
catching the sly Creole rails, turned steamy and wet.
In the Quarters, my family and I eat beignets
off a too-small table, pigeons flashing their tails
like beggar-men moaning for a dollar. Hear an old man
in the back of us, his trumpet calling *Amazing Grace*
by the river and (*listen*) that river's blowing back.
Nothing left but kids tripping on their makeshift
taps to join in. And they do: over the melody, the funk,

the beat. It's like the ground gives in, or a levee does: we're stuck
till they find us, or we're washed away--.
It's happened already, Lord, don't let it happen again.
Said it's happened already Lord, not again,
have us way down in the deep muck's core forgetting why
we ever said, *Amen*--better yet, why we ever came back.
But we did. That's what lovers do: they come back.
To have their lower faces turned white
with sugar, to be bothered by greedy birds, to file at the river,
not to ask for an apology, but to bend at the knee,
to kiss it.

Instrumentation:

Soprano

Violin

Viola

Violoncello

This is a C score. All instruments sound as written.

Special instructions for all musicians:

m is a dynamic marking between *mp* and *mf*.

For string players, where 'x' noteheads are used in conjunction with the sign Φ , grip the neck of the instrument with the left hand so as to mute the strings. The resulting sound should have no discernable pitch.

Way Down Yonder

Rickey Laurentiis

Liza White

Hazy, dreamlike $\text{♩} = \text{ca. } 100$ *rit.* $\text{♩} = \text{ca. } 72$ *poco sul tasto*

$\text{♩} = \text{ca. } 100$ *ord.* *rit.* ... $\text{♩} = \text{ca. } 72$ **A**

poco sul tasto *ord.*

Musical score for measures 13-15. The score is in 3/4 time and consists of three staves: Treble, Bass, and Bass. Measure 13 features a treble staff with a triplet of eighth notes and a bass staff with a triplet of eighth notes. Measure 14 has a treble staff with a half note and a bass staff with a half note. Measure 15 has a treble staff with a triplet of eighth notes and a bass staff with a triplet of eighth notes. Dynamics include *cresc.*, *mf*, *m cresc.*, and *cresc.*. Performance markings include *pizz.*, *arco*, and *mf*.

B Distressed

Musical score for measures 16-18. The score is in 3/4 time and consists of three staves: Treble, Bass, and Bass. Measure 16 features a treble staff with a triplet of eighth notes and a bass staff with a triplet of eighth notes. Measure 17 has a treble staff with a triplet of eighth notes and a bass staff with a triplet of eighth notes. Measure 18 has a treble staff with a triplet of eighth notes and a bass staff with a triplet of eighth notes. Dynamics include *f*. Performance markings include *arco*, *pizz.*, and *mf*.

Musical score for measures 19-21. The score is in 2/4 time and consists of three staves: Treble, Bass, and Bass. Measure 19 features a treble staff with a triplet of eighth notes and a bass staff with a triplet of eighth notes. Measure 20 has a treble staff with a triplet of eighth notes and a bass staff with a triplet of eighth notes. Measure 21 has a treble staff with a triplet of eighth notes and a bass staff with a triplet of eighth notes. Dynamics include *f*. Performance markings include *arco*, *pizz.*, and *mf*.

22 *rit.*

f *cresc.* *ff*

pizz. *arco* *pizz.* *arco*

pizz. *arco* *pizz.*

f *ff* *f*

C As if lost in thought
♩ = ca. 76-80

25 ♩ = ca. 60

mp

Makes me just wan-na cry, she says, her mo-ther eyes_ catch-ing the sly

poco sul tasto

m *p*

poco sul tasto

p

arco

m

28

Cre-ole rails, turned stea-my and wet. In the Quar-ters, my fam'-ly and I eat bei-gnets off a

mp *p*

mp *p*

too-small ta- ble, pi-geons flash-ing their tails like beg-gar men moa-nin' for a dol-lar.

D

36 *cresc.* Hear an old man in the back of us, his trum-pet call-ing *mf* A - ma - zing *mp* Grace by the ri-ver

Slower

41 $\text{♩} = \text{ca. } 69$ *p* and (lis - ten) *mp* that ri-ver's blow-ing back.

E A tempo

♩ = ca. 76 - 80

5

45

No-thing left but kids trip-ping on their make-shift taps to join in. And they do:

mp *p* *mp*

pizz. φ *pizz.*

pizz. φ

poco sul tasto

49

o-ver the me-lo-dy, the funk, the beat.

cresc. *ord.* *pizz. φ* *arco ord.*

arco poco sul tasto *ord.*

cresc. *arco poco sul tasto* *ord.* *mf*

cresc. *arco* *pizz. φ* *arco*

F Unsettled

53

It's like the ground gives in, or a le-vee does: we're stuck till they find us,

mf *m* *mf* *cresc.*

mf *m* *mf* *mf*

pizz. φ *arco* *pizz. φ*

6 57

or we're washed a-way

arco pizz. ϕ arco ϕ pizz. arco

cresc. cresc. cresc.

G Highly distressed
 ♩ = ca. 120

61

It's hap-pened al-rea-dy, Lord, don't

f pizz. ϕ

f *f* *f*

65

let it hap-pen a-gain. Said it's hap-pened al-rea-dy Lord,

arco pizz. ϕ arco pizz. arco

mf *f* *f* *mf* *f*

69

not a - gain, have us way down in the deep muck's core for - get - ting why

arco

pizz. ϕ

arco

73

we e - ver said, A - men --

pizz. ϕ

arco

f sempre

f sempre

f sempre

pizz. ϕ

H

77

bet - ter yet, why we e - ver came back.

arco

pizz. ϕ

cresc.

arco

pizz. ϕ

cresc.

pizz. ϕ

arco

cresc.

81

81

85

pizz. ϕ arco pizz. arco

arco pizz. arco pizz. arco

I Slower, again contemplative
♩ = ca. 112

mp

86

86

89

90

But we did.

pizz. arco *ff* *mp* poco sul tasto

pizz. arco *ff* *mp* poco sul tasto

ff *mp* poco sul tasto

91

91

94

95

That's what lo - vers do: they come back.

p *p* *p*

96

To have their

102

lo-wer fa-ces turned white with su-gar,

107

to be bo-thered by gree-dy birds,

K

113

p sempre

to file at the ri-ver, not to ask for an a-po-lo

p sempre

port.

L

119

pp

gy, but to bend at the knee, to kiss it.

p sempre

poco sul tasto

pp

p

poco sul tasto

pp

126

pp

pizz.

p