

Gwyneth Walker

Climbing to Heaven

*A staged work for Two Readers, optional Actors,
Percussion and Piano Quartet*

based on

“The Wisdom of the Desert – *translations of the sayings of the Desert Fathers*”

by Thomas Merton

Climbing to Heaven

duration: approximately 22 minutes

Program Notes

CLIMBING TO HEAVEN is a dramatization of sayings of fourth-century Desert Fathers (hermits) as translated by Thomas Merton in *The Wisdom of the Desert*. Merton's writings bring to life these colorful and uniquely-charming monks. Their humor, their simplicity and their imagination create a world worth visiting by contemporary readers and audiences. And thus, this staged work endeavors to make this voyage possible.

The Participants

Two READERS, dignified yet dramatic. The roles of the two READERS are equal. The READERS stand on opposite sides of the stage, and exchange readings in a commentary manner. [Readers wear black concert clothing at the Introduction and Conclusion of the work. They wear monks' habits for the majority of the presentation.]

A group of MONKS (optional) as the non-speaking actors to dramatize/pantomime the sayings and stories. The MONKS are divided into older Brothers (such as Abbot Anthony, Abbot Pastor, etc.) and younger Brothers (such as the young monk trying to climb to heaven). It is envisioned that there be at least 6 MONKS. More would be preferable. Since movement is an essential part of the dramatization, the actors should also be comfortable with dance. [MONKS may be male or female.] The MONKS move with heads bowed, faces covered by their hoods. Their focus is humility, looking downward, until the end of the drama, when they look up to heaven in prayer.

In lieu of actors to portray the MONKS, the READERS are asked to assume a dramatic role. Through pantomime and dance movement, as suggested by instructions in the score, the READERS will portray the activity described in the narrative.

CHAMBER ENSEMBLE of piano quartet (Vln, Vla, Vcl, Pno) and percussion. A conductor is not necessary if the READERS are comfortable following the music in the score.

Instructions

The movements of the MONKS (or READERS) are intended to be synchronized with the music. Many of the stage actions are paralleled by musical gestures. Thus, it is important to follow the instructions provided in the score. These guidelines may be enhanced in the dramatizations. A close interaction between the musicians and the actors is desired.

The Scenes

1. Alpha – Introduction

The READERS and MONKS enter the hall from the back, and slowly process to the front/stage, as the hymn tune, *Of the Father's Love Begotten*, is played. READERS then provide background information on the 4th-century Desert Fathers.

2. The Path to Heaven

“Gates and Windows” and “Climbing and Falling” – a lesson in humility for a young MONK who thinks that he can climb to heaven by his own will (!)

3. Garments

As the wind passes through open garments, so do distracting thoughts enter the MONKS' minds. One must say “no” to these thoughts.

4. Work of the Hands

“The Axe” is discretion.

“Ten Lamps of Fire” are the MONKS *aflame* with ecstatic revelation.

5. Envy

“The Dwelling” – do not dwell in a place where you see that others are envious of you.

“The Brick” – a tango in which the MONKS attempt to quarrel over a brick...they fail!

6. Living Apart

“Fly to the Lord” – when evil thoughts are aroused by the enemy...fly, by prayer, to the Lord.

7. Pummeling the Mummies

A frightening encounter takes place between the MONKS and devils, at a pyramid. [The Monks win!]

8. Interlude

“The Monks at Work” – guidelines for monastic labors are recited as the MONKS do their chores.

“In Community, Greeting Each Other” – the MONKS wander across the stage, stopping to greet each other with a nod of the head. The opening hymn, *Of the Father's Love Begotten*, is played, as a recap of the introduction.

9. Omega – Conclusion

“Floating to Heaven” – one MONK kneels in prayer at center stage. READERS present final thoughts on contemporary needs to find our true selves, and to build, on earth, the kingdom of God.

“Prayer” – All MONKS and READERS slowly raise hands to heaven as the music rises to its final chord.

The Composer

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 lives in her childhood hometown of New Canaan, Connecticut.

Gwyneth Walker has been 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

Climbing to Heaven

for Readers, optional Actors, Percussion, String Trio and Piano

Gwyneth Walker

Based on “The Wisdom of the Desert –
translations of the sayings of the Desert Fathers”
by Thomas Merton

1. Alpha – Introduction

Ensemble and Conductor (opt.) on stage alone.

Slowly ♩ = 108

Violin

Viola

Violoncello

Percussion

(Chimes, High, Medium,
and Low Tom-Toms,
Triangle, High and Low
Bongos, Suspended
Cymbal, Bass Drum,
Tam-Tam, Glockenspiel,
Woodblock, Maracas)

One player

Chimes

Slowly ♩ = 108

Piano



6

Vln.

Vla.

Vlc.

Perc.

Text: “Various excerpts,” from *The Wisdom of the Desert*, by Thomas Merton

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READERS and MONKS enter hall from the back and proceed down the aisles, walking slowly in time with the music. They stand in front of the stage.

12 *rit.* **A** $\text{♩} = 60$

Vln. *p* *simile*

Vla. *p* *simile*

Vlc. *p* *simile*

Perc. (Chimes)

Pno. *rit.* **A** $\text{♩} = 60$
p
with pedal

17 *rolled pizz.* *(p)* *rolled pizz.* *(p)*

Vln. *(p)*

Vla. *(p)*

Vlc.

Perc.

Pno. *ped.*

B

[Theme: *Of the Father's Love Begotten*: 3rd century plainsong]

22

Vln. *arco*
mf legato

Vla. *rolled pizz.*

Vlc. *(p)*

Perc. *(light, delicate percussion to accompany Monk's Procession)*
High & Low Tom-Toms
p

Pno. *(p)*
(Leo) with pedal

B

27

Vln. *arco*
mf legato

Vla. *arco*
mf legato

Vlc.

Perc.

Pno.

32 *rolled pizz.* *arco*

Vln. *p* *mf*

Vla. *p*

Vlc.

Perc.

Pno.

37 *arco* **C** *mf legato*

Vlc.

Perc.

Pno. **C**

41 *rolled pizz.* *arco* *(pizz.)* *mf*

Vln. *p* *mf*

Vla. *rolled pizz.* *arco* *mf*

Vlc.

Perc.

Pno.

46 D

Vln.
Vla.
Vlc.
Perc. (Tom-Toms) Triangle
Pno.

mf *(mf)*

51

Vln. *rolled pizz.* *p* *rit.* *arco*
Vla. *rolled pizz.* *p* *arco*
Vlc. *rolled pizz.* *p* *arco*
Perc. Chimes *p*
Pno. *rit.* *arco*
Red.

From in front of the stage

56 **E**

R1

Reader 1

In the fourth century A. D. the deserts of Egypt, Palestine, Arabia and Persia were peopled by a race of men who left behind them a strange reputation. They were the first Christian hermits, who abandoned the cities of the pagan world to live in solitude.

[sustain chord through end of READER 1]

[cut-off chord]

pp

pp

pp

[sustain chord through end of READER 1]

[cut-off chord]

(Ceo.)



(56)

R2

Reader 2

Why did they do this? The reasons were many and various, but they can all be summed up in one word as the quest for "salvation."

Pno.

(Optional: slight movement of MONKS, a hint of the “swimming for their lives” gestures to come at [H].)

57 **F** *a tempo* (♩ = 60)

rolled pizz.

Vln. *p*

Vla. *rolled pizz.* *p*

Vlc. *rolled pizz.* *p*

Perc. High & Low Tom-Toms *p*

Pno. **F** *a tempo* (♩ = 60) *p*

with pedal

rit.



G

61

R1 And what was salvation? Certainly it was not something they sought in mere exterior conformity to the customs and dictates of any social group. In those days men had become keenly conscious of the strictly individual character of “salvation.”

R2 Society— which meant pagan society, limited by the horizons of life “in this world,” was regarded by them as a shipwreck from which each single individual man had to swim for his life.

G

Pno.

(Optional: MONKS circle in "swimming for their lives" gestures – arms move in stroke-like patterns.)

H *a tempo* (♩ = 60)

62

Vln. (pizz.) *p*

Vla. (pizz.) *p*

Vlc. (pizz.) *p*

Perc. (Tom-Toms) *p*

H *a tempo* (♩ = 60)

Pno. *p*

with pedal

66

Vln. *rit.* arco *pp*

Vla. *rit.* arco *pp*

Vlc. *rit.* arco *pp*

Perc. Chimes *p*

Pno. *rit.*

70 **I**

R1 { The fathers were humble and silent men, and did not have much to say. They replied to questions in few words, to the point. Rather than give an abstract principle, they preferred to tell a concrete story. Their brevity is refreshing, and rich in content.

R2 {

Pno. **I**

These words of the fathers are never theoretical in our modern sense of the word. They are never abstract. They deal with concrete things and with jobs to be done in the everyday life of a fourth-century monk. But what is said serves just as well for a twentieth-century thinker. The basic realities of the interior life are there: faith, humility, charity, meekness, discretion, self-denial. But not the least of the qualities of the “words of salvation” is their common sense.



READERS put on monks' habits, proceed up to stage, take places at opposite sides of stage.

71 **J** *a tempo* (♩ = 60)

Vln. (pizz.) **K**

Vla. (pizz.) **K**

Vlc. (pizz.) *p* *arco* *mf legato*

Perc. High & Low Tom-Toms *p*

Pno. **J** *a tempo* (♩ = 60) **K**

with pedal

76

Vln.

Vla.

Vlc.

Perc.

Pno.

(Tom-Toms)

arco

mf legato



80

Vln.

Vla.

Vlc.

Perc.

Pno.

(pizz.)

arco

mf legato

84 **L**

Vln. *rolled pizz.* *p*

Vla. *rolled pizz.* *p*

Vlc. *rolled pizz.* *p*

Perc. *Tri.* *mf* *(mf)* *p*

Pno. *mf* *p*

89

Vln. *rit.* *arco* *pp*

Vla. *arco* *pp*

Vlc. *arco* *pp*

Perc. Chimes *p*

Pno. *rit.* *pp*


Red. *pause*

2. The Path to Heaven

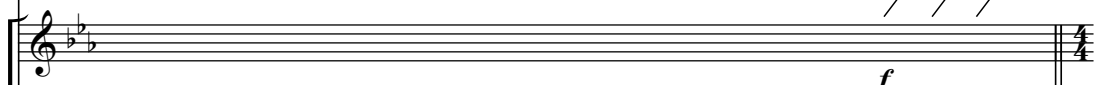
"Gates and Windows"


READERS (still dressed as monks) come to center stage, facing each other with the Tom-Tom in the middle. On the word "gate" they turn to face the audience, with arms extended towards each other, as gate posts.

R1 { There was a certain brother who was praised by all the others in the presence of Abbot Anthony, but when the elder tested him he found that he could not bear to be insulted. Then Abbot Anthony said: "You, brother, are like a house with a big strong gate,"

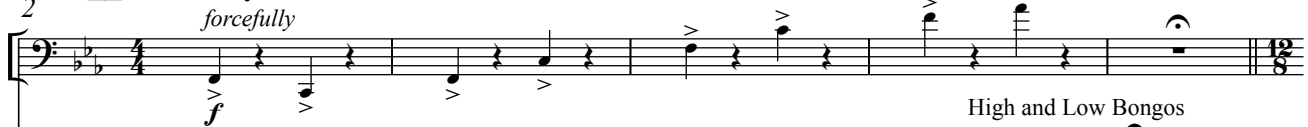
Perc.  Low Tom *f*


R1 { "that is freely entered by robbers through all the windows."

Vln.  *f* [short, high gliss.]

Vla.  *f*

"The Gate"


Vlc. **A** Forcefully ♩ = 120 *forcefully* *rit.*  *f* High and Low Bongos


Perc. Med. & Low Tom-Toms *f* *rit.* *sfp* *f* 

Pno. **A** Forcefully ♩ = 120 *f* *rit.* 

"The Robbers"

READERS dart or weave around each other, then resume poses at center stage.

Vln. **B** Quickly ♩ = 160 *furtively* *p*  *furtively*

Vla. *p* 

C "Climbing and Falling"

Yet another elder said: "If you see a young monk by his own will climbing up into heaven, take him by the foot and throw him to the ground, because what he is doing is not good for him."

10

R2

Vln.

Vla.

Perc. Tri.

p

pause

Young MONK (or READER 1) lifts foot.

D Quickly ♩ = 160 (♩ = ♩.)

High and Low Bongos

12

Perc.

[lifts foot]

p

pp

Young MONK looks around furtively, to see if he is being observed in his climbing.

E With growing energy ♩ = 144

16

Vln. *pizz.* *p* *arco*

Vla. *pizz.* *p* *arco*

Vlc. *p*

Perc. Low Tom *p*

Pno. *p*

Young MONK begins to climb (lifts feet).
accel.

21

Vln. *mf*

Vla. *mf*

Vlc. *mf*

Perc. (Low Tom) *cresc.* Low Bongo *mf*

Pno. *cresc.* *mf* *accel.*



as if reaching for a rope

25

F Faster ♩ = 160

Vln. *f* *p*

Vla. *f* *p*

Vlc. *f* *p*

Perc. *f* Susp. Cym. *p*

Pno. **F** Faster ♩ = 160
"climbing" *f*

29

Vln. *f* *p* *f* *p*

Vla. *f* *p* *f* *p*

Vlc. *f* *p* *f* *p* *f* *gliss. to end of string*

Perc. Low Bongo Susp. Cym. Low Bongo Susp. Cym. *f* *p* *f* *p*

Pno. "climbing" *p*



as if thrown to the ground by other monks

Young MONK - a thought of climbing...
a tempo, quickly

...back to ground.

33

Vln. *f* *rit.* *a tempo, quickly* *high gliss.*

Vla. *f* *rit.* *a tempo, quickly* *high gliss.*

Vlc. *p*

Perc. Low Tom Susp. Cym. *p* *f*

Pno. *f* *rit.* *a tempo, quickly* *high gliss.* *(f)* *p sub.*

pause

READERS return to sides of stage.

3. Garments

A Abbot Pastor said: “If you have a chest full of clothing, and leave it for a long time, the clothing will rot inside. It is the same with the thoughts in our heart. If we do not carry them out by physical action, after a long while they will spoil and turn bad.”

R1

Slowly, as a breeze
rolled pizz. *arco* **A**

Vln. *p*

Vla. *rolled pizz.* *arco*

Vlc. *rolled pizz.* *arco* *p*

C A brother came to Abbot Pastor and said: “Many distracting thoughts come into my mind and I am in danger because of them.”

R2

4 **B**

“A Chest of Clothing”
B Moderate tempo ♩ = 100 *rit.* **C**

Vln. *p*

Vla. *p*

Vlc. *p*

Perc. Glock. [slow gliss. to top] *p*

9 **D** Reading continues with music in background

R1

Then the elder thrust him out into the open air and said: “Open up

“The Wind”
D Quickly ♩ = 132

Pno. *pp*

Rec.

11

R1 { the garments about your chest and catch the wind in them.”

R2 { But he replied: “This I cannot do.”

Pno.

Red.

13

R1 { So the elder said to him: “If you cannot catch the wind,
neither can you prevent distracting thoughts from
coming into your head. Your job is to say NO to them.”

Susp. Cym. (last time)

Perc.

p

Pno.

[repeat these two bars until after
“say NO to them” and continue]

cresc. (last time)

Red.

15

E Music to portray the wind blowing through the garments.

Vln.

mf

p

Vla.

mf

p

Vlc.

mf

p

Perc.

mf

p

Pno.

mf

Red.

simile

17

Musical score for measures 17-18. The score is for a string quartet and piano. The key signature is one sharp (F#) and the time signature is 3/4. The first system (measures 17-18) features: Violin I (Vln.) with a melody of eighth-note triplets, starting *mf* and ending *p*; Violin II (Vla.) with a sustained *mf* chord in measure 17 and a triplet melody in measure 18, ending *p*; Violoncello (Vlc.) with a sustained *mf* chord in measure 17 and a triplet melody in measure 18, ending *p*; Percussion (Perc.) with a suspended cymbal (Susp. Cym.) playing a sustained *mf* chord in measure 17 and a sustained *p* chord in measure 18; and Piano (Pno.) with a continuous eighth-note triplet accompaniment in the right hand and a sustained *mf* chord in the left hand, both ending *p* in measure 18.



19

Musical score for measures 19-20. The score is for a string quartet and piano. The key signature is one sharp (F#) and the time signature is 3/4. The second system (measures 19-20) features: Violin I (Vln.) with a melody of eighth-note triplets, starting *mf* and ending *p*; Violin II (Vla.) with a sustained *mf* chord in measure 19 and a triplet melody in measure 20, ending *p*; Violoncello (Vlc.) with a sustained *mf* chord in measure 19 and a triplet melody in measure 20, ending *p*; Percussion (Perc.) with a suspended cymbal (Susp. Cym.) playing a sustained *mf* chord in measure 19 and a sustained *p* chord in measure 20; and Piano (Pno.) with a continuous eighth-note triplet accompaniment in the right hand and a sustained *mf* chord in the left hand, both ending *p* in measure 20.

21

Vln. *mf* *p* *mf*

Vla. *mf* *p* *mf*

Vlc. *mf* *p* *mf*

Perc. *mf* *p*

Pno. *mf* *p* *mf*



MONKS shake heads as if to say "NO."

23

Vln. *p* *mf* *p* *mf* *rit.* *mf* *p*
gliss. to end of string

Vla. *p* *mf* *p* *mf* *rit.* *mf* *p*
gliss. to end of string

Vlc. *p* *mf* *p* *mf* *rit.* *mf* *p*
gliss. to end of string

Perc. *mf* *mf* *p*
slow tremolo

Pno. *mf* *rit.* *p*
slow bowed tremolo

Leo. *p*

pause

4. Work of the Hands

"The Axe"

R1 { Abbot Ammonas said: "One man carries an axe all his life and never cuts down a tree. Another, who knows how to cut, gives a few swings and the tree is down. The axe," he said, "is discretion."

ad libitum
(as swings of an axe)

Vln. *f*

Vla. *f*

Vlc. *f*

Perc. [tree has fallen] Bass Drum *f*

Pno. [tree has fallen] *f*

8^{vb}
pause

Two MONKS at stage center

A "Ten Lamps of Fire"

R1 { 3 Abbot Lot came to Abbot Joseph and said: "Father, according as I am able, I keep my little rule, and my little fast, my prayer, meditation and contemplative silence; and according as I am able I strive to cleanse my heart of thoughts: now what more should I do?"

R2 { The elder rose up in reply

A

Pno.

4 **B** (reading approximately synchronizes with music)

and stretched out his hands to heaven, and his fingers became like ten lamps of fire. He said: "Why not be totally changed into fire!"

B $\text{♩} = 60$

Vln. *p* *mf* *p* *f*

Vla. *p* *mf* *p* *f*

Vlc. *p* *mf* *p* *f*

Perc. Tam-Tam *p* *mf* *p* *f*

Pno. *p* *f* [black-note clusters]

Ped.

MONKS (READERS) with hands outstretched

C Ecstatic, flowing $\text{♩} = 120$

10

Vln. *f*

Vla. *f*

Vlc. *f*

Perc. Glock. *f*

Pno. *f* with pedal

15

extend fingers
(with Glock.)

Vln.

Vla.

Vlc.

Perc. (Glock.)

Pno.

20

extend fingers
(with Glock.)

D *accel.*

Vln.

Vla.

Vlc.

Perc.

Pno.

Quickly

24

Vln.

Vla.

Vlc.

Perc.

Pno.

f

Quickly

Reo.



28

(Both READERS)

He stretched out his hands to heaven,
and his fingers became ten lamps of fire.

R1

R2

rit.

E

Vln.

Vla.

Vlc.

Perc.

Pno.

pp

pp

pp

pp

pp

pp

pp

[continue behind reading]

[stop]

(Reo.)

READERS raise arms, hands closed.
Extend fingers, one per beat.

hands outstretched.

31 **F** ♩ = 120

The musical score consists of five staves. The top three staves are for Violin (Vln.), Viola (Vla.), and Violoncello (Vlc.). The fourth staff is for Percussion (Perc.) with a Tam-Tam instrument. The bottom two staves are for Piano (Pno.). The key signature is F major (one sharp) and the time signature is 10/4. The tempo is marked as ♩ = 120. The score begins with a *p* (piano) dynamic and ends with a *ff* (fortissimo) dynamic. A *rit.* (ritardando) marking is placed above the Vln. staff. The Pno. part features a section of [black-note clusters] marked with a *rit.* and *ff*. A *pause* instruction is located at the bottom right of the page.

Vln. *p* *ff* *rit.*

Vla. *p* *ff*

Vlc. *p* *ff*

Perc. Tam-Tam *p* *ff*

Pno. **F** ♩ = 120 *rit.* [black-note clusters] *ff*

(Leo.) *pause*

5. Envy

“The Dwelling”

Percussionist comes to front center of stage, picks up a Woodblock disguised as a brick, examines it with curiosity and starts to play. As the “brick” is played, the MONKS move slightly about the stage, avoiding each other.

Begin reading after movement/pantomime of “avoidance” has begun.

Abbot Pastor said: “Do not dwell in a place where you see that others are envious of you, for you will not grow there.”

R1

As a tango $\text{♩} = 66$
 Woodblock (brick) w/ stick
 (Play moving from one end to the other;
 as in a conflict – one direction per measure)

Perc. $\text{♩} = 66$
f *p*

MONKS keep moving

A $\text{♩} = 66$
 2 (as a dialogue in conflict)

Vln. *p*

Perc. (*p*)

Pno. $\text{♩} = 66$
p

Vln. *mf* *p*

Vla. *mf* *p*

Perc.

Pno. *mf*

CHAMBER ENSEMBLE PLAYERS begin to sway, subtly, from outside to in, as in conflict – one direction per measure.

B “The Brick”

10

R1 There were two elders living together in a cell, and they
had never had so much as one quarrel with one another.
One therefore said to the other:
“Come on, let us have at least one quarrel, like other men.”

R2 The other said:
“I don’t know how to start a quarrel.”

Perc. **B** (p) *(percussion continues during dialogue)*

(10)

R1 The first said: “I will take this brick and place it here between us.
Then I will say: ‘*It is mine.*’ After that you will say: ‘*It is mine.*’
This is what leads to a dispute and a fight.”

R2 So then they placed
the brick between them.

Perc. **B** (p)

(10)

R1 One said: “It is mine,”

R2 and the other replied to the first:
“I do believe that it is mine.”

The first one said again:
“It is not yours, it is mine.”

Perc. **B** (p)

(10)

R1 So the other answered:
“Well then, if it is yours take it!”

R2 Thus they did not manage,
after all, to get into a quarrel.

Perc. **C** [stop]

ENSEMBLE stops swaying.
Look at each other

as a battle, MONKS in two groups (A, B) portray the musical battle, fighting over a brick!

D *a tempo* ($\text{♩} = 66$)

12 **[A]** **[B]**

Vln. *f*

Vla. *f*

Vlc. *f*

Perc. (Wbl.) *mf*

Pno. *f*

D *a tempo* ($\text{♩} = 66$)

16 **[A]** **[B]**

Vln. *f*

Vla. *f*

Vlc. *f*

Perc. *mf*

Pno. *f*

20 [E] [A] [B] [A]

Vln. Vla. Vlc. Perc. (Wbl.) Pno.



23 [B] [A] [B] [A] [B]

Vln. Vla. Vlc. Perc. Pno.

rapid "tug of war" depicted

F **[A]**

26

Vln.

Vla.

Vlc.

Perc.

Pno.



acquiescence
rit.

All MONKS: a gesture
of shaking hands.

29

Vln.

Vla.

Vlc.

Perc.

Pno.

rit.

gliss. to end
of keyboard

p

p

p

p

6. Living Apart

One MONK stage center, seated beneath a tree.

Abbot John said: "A monk must be like a man who, sitting under a tree, looks up and perceives all kinds of snakes and wild beasts running at him."

R1

"Fly to the Lord"

Quickly ♩ = 132, *quietly menacing*

sul pont.
8^{va}

pp

sul pont.

pp

sul pont.

pp

Maracas

pp

(repeat during reading)

(repeat during reading)

(repeat during reading)

(repeat during reading)

MONK sees snake, is frightened, and flees stage at end of scene.

(3)

R1

"Since he cannot fight them all, he climbs the tree and gets away from them.
The monk, at all times, should do the same. When evil thoughts are aroused
by the enemy, he should fly, by prayer, to the Lord, and he will be saved."

Vln.

Vla.

Vlc.

Perc.

(last time)

A *poco accel.*

cresc.

8^{va}

Very quickly
trem.- gliss. to end of string loco

f
trem.- gliss. to end of string

f
trem.- gliss. to end of string

f

cresc.

f

cresc.

f

pause



B Abbot Moses said: "A man who lives apart from other men is like a ripe grape. And a man who lives in the company of others is a sour grape."

"Sour grapes" expression on faces of MONKS and READERS.

Slowly, sourly *p*

mf

pause

7. Pummeling the Mummies

Reader 1: Once Abbot Macarius was travelling down from Scete to a place called Terenuthin, and he spent the night in a pyramid where the bodies of the pagans had been laid to rest years before. And he dragged out one of the mummies and put it under his head for a pillow.

MONKS portray this story.

♩ = 88

(sul pont.)
Vln. *pp spooky*

(sul pont.)
Vlc. *pp spooky*

Perc. Tam-Tam *pp spooky*

♩ = 88
Pno. *pp spooky*

[strum low strings inside piano]

(repeat during reading, ca. 3 times)

(begin reading)

(repeat during reading, ca. 3 times)

(repeat during reading, ca. 3 times)

(repeat during reading, ca. 3 times)

(repeat during reading, ca. 3 times)



Reader 2: The devils, seeing his boldness, flew into a rage and decided to scare him. And they began to call out from the other bodies, as if calling to a woman: "Lady, come with us to the baths." And another demon, as if he were the ghost of a woman, cried out from the body the elder was using as a pillow: "This stranger is holding me down and I can't come."

"Ah, Ah!" *spooky vocal sounds ad lib. from PLAYERS*

5 **A**

Vln. *(sul pont.)*

Vla. *f*

Vlc. *pp*

Perc. *(repeat ca. 4 times)*

Pno. *(pp)*

(begin reading)

(repeat ca. 4 times)

(repeat ca. 4 times)

(repeat ca. 4 times)

(repeat ca. 4 times)

Reader 1: But the elder, far from being frightened,
began to pummel the corpse saying:
"Get up and go swimming if you are able."

7 **B**

Vln. *f* (repeat ca. 1 time) [stop]

Vla. (repeat ca. 1 time) [stop]

Vlc. (repeat ca. 1 time) [stop]

Perc. Tom-Tom *f* (repeat ca. 1 time) [stop]

Pno. *f* (repeat ca. 1 time) *p* (on repeat) [stop]

8^{vb}
Ped.

(9) **Reader 2:**
Hearing this the demons
cried: "You win!"
And they fled in confusion.

C In fright ♩ = 88

Vln. *f* ord. *f* ord.

Vla. *f* ord. *f* ord.

Vlc. *f* ord. *f* ord.

Perc. Tam-Tam *f*

Pno. *f*

8^{vb}
Ped.

MONKS make pummeling motions.

12

Vln.

Vla.

Vlc.

Perc. Low Tom *f*

Pno. *f* "pummeling" motive

15

Vln. fleeing... *trem. - gliss. to end of string* *rit.* , *a tempo* one last devil flees.

Vla. *trem. - gliss. to end of string* *sul pont.* *pp* *gliss.*

Vlc. *trem. - gliss. to end of string*

Perc.

Pno. [black-note clusters] *scurrying up the keyboard, as if in fright* *rit.* *8va* , *a tempo* *short gliss. on high strings inside piano* *pp*

pause

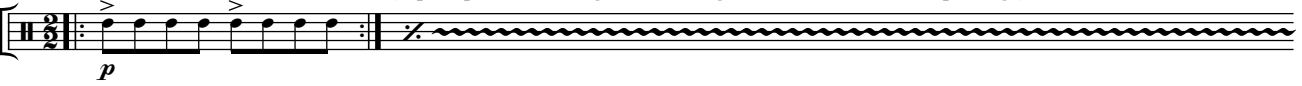
8. Interlude

“The Monks at Work”

$\text{♩} = 60$
High Tom or Bongo
with sticks

READERS join MONKS in moving around the stage, doing monk’s chores.
Readings are interspersed *ad libitum*.

(repeat pattern throughout reading and into next musical passage)

Perc. 

Readings: (*intersperse ad lib. while working*)

Better light work that takes a long time to finish than a hard job that is quickly done.

Do not dwell in a famous place, and do not become the disciple of a man with a great name.
And do not lay any foundation when you build yourself a cell.

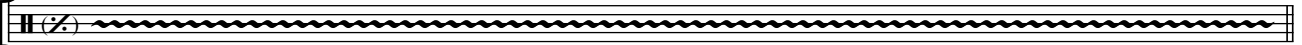
Either fly as far as you can from men, or else, laughing at the world and the men who are in it,
make yourself a fool in many things.

The monk should be all eye, like the cherubim and seraphim.

Get away from any man who always argues every time he talks.

A man must breathe humility and the fear of God just as ceaselessly as he inhales and exhales the air.

Humility is the land where God wants us to go and offer sacrifice.


Perc. 

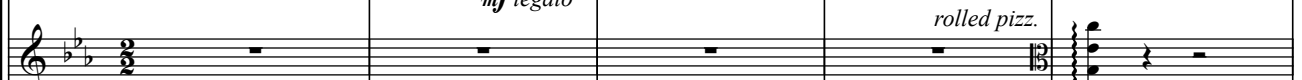
MONKS and READERS continuing moving, stopping to greet each with a nod of the head at places indicated by vertical arrows in the music.


[All players nod and greet each other, as the Triangle plays]

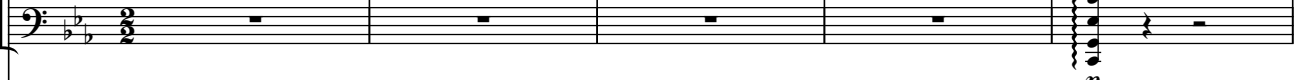
“In Community, Greeting Each Other”


2 **A** At a walking/working tempo $\text{♩} = 60$

Vln. 

Vla. 

Vlc. 

Perc. 

Pno. 

Musical score for measures 7-11. The score includes staves for Violin (Vln.), Viola (Vla.), Violoncello (Vlc.), Percussion (Perc.), and Piano (Pno.).

- Violin (Vln.):** Starts at measure 7 with a downward bow stroke. A slur covers measures 8-10. A box labeled 'B' is above measure 11.
- Viola (Vla.):** Features a section labeled 'arco ord.' and 'mf legato' starting in measure 11.
- Violoncello (Vlc.):** Provides harmonic support with chords.
- Percussion (Perc.):** Labeled '(Tri.)' and '(High Tom or Bongo)', playing a steady eighth-note pattern.
- Piano (Pno.):** Features a section labeled 'B' with chords.

Musical score for measures 12-15, separated from the previous section by a double bar line. The score includes staves for Violin (Vln.), Viola (Vla.), Violoncello (Vlc.), Percussion (Perc.), and Piano (Pno.).

- Violin (Vln.):** Starts at measure 12 with a downward bow stroke. The first measure is marked 'rolled pizz.' and 'p'. The second measure is marked 'arco' and 'mf'. A downward bow stroke is indicated above measure 15.
- Viola (Vla.):** Features a melodic line with a slur across measures 12-14.
- Violoncello (Vlc.):** Provides harmonic support with chords.
- Percussion (Perc.):** Continues with the eighth-note pattern.
- Piano (Pno.):** Features chords.

Musical score for measures 17-21. The score includes staves for Violin (Vln.), Viola (Vla.), Violoncello (Vlc.), Percussion (Perc.), and Piano (Pno.).

- Measures 17-19:** Vln. and Vla. have whole rests. Vlc. plays a half note chord. Perc. plays a steady eighth-note pattern. Pno. plays a block chord.
- Measure 20:** Vln. and Vla. have whole rests. Vlc. plays a half note chord. Perc. continues. Pno. continues.
- Measure 21:** Vln. and Vla. have whole rests. Vlc. plays a half note chord. Perc. continues. Pno. continues.

Annotations: *arco*, *mf legato*, *(p)*, *with pedal*. A common time signature (C) is shown in a box above the Vln. staff in measures 19 and 21. Three downward arrows are positioned above measures 17, 18, and 19.

Musical score for measures 22-26. The score includes staves for Violin (Vln.), Viola (Vla.), Violoncello (Vlc.), Percussion (Perc.), and Piano (Pno.).

- Measures 22-23:** Vln. plays a sixteenth-note run starting on a half note. Vlc. plays a half note chord. Perc. continues. Pno. continues.
- Measures 24-25:** Vln. has a whole rest. Vlc. plays a half note chord. Perc. continues. Pno. continues.
- Measure 26:** Vln. plays a sixteenth-note run starting on a half note. Vlc. plays a half note chord. Perc. continues. Pno. continues.

Annotations: *p*, *mf*. Four downward arrows are positioned above measures 22, 23, 25, and 26.

27

accel.

D Faster $\text{♩} = 88$

Vln.

Vla.

Vlc.

Perc. (Tri.)
(High Tom or Bongo)

Pno.

accel.

D Faster $\text{♩} = 88$

Red. *Red.* *simile*



READERS slowly return to sides of stage, assuming their original positions by the start of the next scene.

31

Vln.

Vla.

Vlc.

Perc. Bongo

Pno.

35 E

Vln.

Vla.

Vlc.

Perc. Low Tom *p* *f*

Pno. (*f*)



39

Vln.

Vla.

Vlc.

Perc. Tri. *f*

Pno. (*f*)

44

Vln.

Vla.

Vlc.

Perc. (Tri.) Bongo *f*

Pno.



48 **F**

Vln.

Vla.

Vlc.

Perc.

Pno. **F**

52 *rit.*

Vln.
Vla.
Vlc.
Perc.
Pno.



9. Omega – Conclusion

One MONK center stage, others on sides.

“Floating to Heaven”

They used to say of Abbot Sisois that unless he quickly lowered his hands and ceased from praying, his mind would be carried away into heaven.

R1

R2

(Following Reader 1)

And whenever he happened to pray with another brother, he made haste to lower his hands lest his mind be carried away and he remain in another world.

Slower

Vln.
Vla.
Vlc.
Pno.

(read.)

READERS discard monks' habits. Resume black concert clothing.

2

A

R1: It would perhaps be too much to say that the world needs another movement such as that which drew these men into the deserts of Egypt and Palestine. Ours is certainly a time for solitaries and for hermits. But merely to reproduce the simplicity, austerity and prayer of these primitive souls is not a complete or satisfactory answer.

R2: We must transcend them, and transcend all those who, since their time, have gone beyond the limits which they set. We must liberate ourselves, in our own way, from involvement in a world that is plunging to disaster.

R1: But our world is different from theirs. Our involvement in it is more complete. Our danger is far more desperate. Our time, perhaps, is shorter than we think.

R2: We must be ruthless in our determination to find our true selves, to discover and develop our unalienable spiritual liberty and use it to build, on earth, the kingdom of God.

A Original tempo $\text{♩} = 60$

pp unobtrusively (repeat during reading)

Final time rit.

with pedal *attacca*

MONKS and READERS start with hands and eyes lowered, but raise them during this scene (perhaps starting at **C**) to the heavenly gesture at the end.

“Prayer”

Very peacefully $\text{♩} = 100$, as a prayer

p *legato*

Very peacefully $\text{♩} = 100$, as a prayer

p

6

Vln. I
Vln. II
Vla.
Pno.

Ped.

with pedal

10

Vln. I
Vln. II
Vla.
Pno.

mf

A

14

Vln. I
Vln. II
Vla.
Pno.

p

A

17 *poco accel.*

Vln. *mf*

Vla. *mf*

Vlc. *mf*

Perc. Susp. Cym. *p*

Pno. *mf* *poco accel.*



B Slightly faster ♩ = 108

20

Vln. *p*

Vla. *p*

Vlc. *p*

Perc. *(p)*

B Slightly faster ♩ = 108

Pno. *p*

Leo.

23

Vln. *cresc. poco a poco*

Vla. *cresc. poco a poco*

Vlc. *cresc. poco a poco*

Perc. *cresc. poco a poco*

Pno. *cresc. poco a poco*



MONKS and READERS start to slowly raise hands to heaven (final gesture at end of music)

26

Vln. *(cresc.)* *rit.* , **C** *a tempo* (♩ = 108)

Vla. *(cresc.)* *rit.* , **C** *a tempo* (♩ = 108)

Vlc. *(cresc.)* *rit.* , **C** *a tempo* (♩ = 108)

Perc. *(cresc.)* High Bongo Low Tom

Pno. *(cresc.)* *rit.* , **C** *a tempo* (♩ = 108)

29

Vln.

Vla.

Vlc.

Pno.

And. *simile*

32 *accel. poco a poco (to m. 40)*

Vln.

Vla.

Perc.

Low Tom High Bongo Low Tom

p *f* *p*

accel. poco a poco (to m. 40)

Pno.

35 *(accel.)*

Vln.

Vla.

Vlc.

Perc.

High Bongo Low Tom High Bongo

f *p* *f*

(accel.)

Pno.

38 *(accel.)* **Quickly**

Vln. *p* *f*

Vla. *p* *f*

Vlc. *p* *f*

Perc. Low Tom *p* High Bongo Low Tom *f*

Pno. *(accel.)* **Quickly**

|| *molto rit.* **D** Original tempo ♩ = 100, peacefully

Vln. *p sub.*

Vla. *p sub.*

Vlc. *p sub.*

Perc. Glock. *p*

Pno. *molto rit.* **D** Original tempo ♩ = 100, peacefully

p sub.

Reo. _____

44

Vln.

Vla.

Vlc.

Perc. (Glock.)

gentle glissando

Pno.

Leg.

48

Vln.

Vla.

Vlc.

Perc.

Pno.

E *accel. poco a poco*

cresc. poco a poco

cresc. poco a poco

gentle tremolo, at the tip

cresc. poco a poco

gentle glissando

cresc. poco a poco

E *accel. poco a poco*

cresc. poco a poco

Leg.

(accel.) **Faster, ecstatic**

52

Vln. *(cresc.)* *f*

Vla. *(cresc.)* *f*

Vlc. *(cresc.)* *f*

Perc. *(cresc.)* *f*

Pno. *(cresc.)* *f*

(accel.) **Faster, ecstatic**

Red. *Red.* *Red.*



READERS and MONKS hold arms outstretched, looking up to heaven.

rit. to end

55

Vln. *p*

Vla. *p*

Vlc. *p*

Perc. *p*

Pno. *p*

rit. to end

Red. *Red.* *Red.* *Red.*

This version completed: October 12, 2011
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