

Gwyneth Walker

# **From the Depths of the Soul**

songs for Contralto and Viola

“Go Down, Moses”

“Deep River”

Interlude: “Time for Reflection”

“Down to the River to Pray”

“Every Night, When the Sun Goes Down”

## Program Notes

The Contralto voice and Viola are characterized by *depth of sonority*. Similar in range, they speak with a deep, rich tone. Thus, **From the Depths of the Soul** was created to explore this powerful combination of low voices. Each of the songs in this set contains the words *deep* or *down* in the title. These are dark songs – traditional American spirituals which are rooted in sorrow and suffering.

“Go Down, Moses” is placed in the key of C Minor, with the Contralto often singing in the low range around G below middle C. The message is one of oppression. Starting quietly and sadly, the music grows in strength with emphatic statements of *Let my people go!* Accented chords in viola underline the conviction/command of the song.

“Deep River” features a flowing, *arpeggiated* viola accompaniment, as a river. Contrasting sections stop the flow briefly, rising to a higher range with thoughts of the *Promised Land*. There is some anxiety about the river travel (*tremolo* viola patterns), but with the Lord’s blessing, the journey is taken in safety.

The tempo quickens for a swing rhythm version of “Down to the River to Pray.” The trip is joyous, with a *crescendo* ending of “Lord, show me the way!” In the last measure, the viola slides down into the river (musically, with a *glissando!*).

This arrangement of the traditional Appalachian song, “Every Night, When the Sun Goes Down,” focuses on the transcendence of faith over sorrow and of peace (through death) over suffering and pain:

*True love, don't weep or mourn for me. The Lord has come to set me free.*

A new verse is added at the end:

*And when I rise up in the sky, if you look up quickly,  
You will see me passing by. On wings of silver, I will fly.*

During this verse, the listener might hear a fluttering of wings (gently repeated notes) in the viola accompaniment. This is to symbolize the spirit of a bird hovering close by.

# From the Depths of the Soul

for Contralto and Viola

Traditional

Gwyneth Walker

## 1. Go Down, Moses

### VERSE 1

Slowly, with the weight of sorrow and oppression

**\*\* p**

Voice

When Is - rael was in E - gypt Land, Let my peo - ple

\*Viola

4

go! Op - pressed so hard they could not stand, Let my peo - ple go!

### REFRAIN

9

**mf with strength** *rit.*

Go down, Mo - ses, way down in E - gypt Land.

**mf with strength**

13

**Slower p** *poco accel.* **With some motion ♩ = 108 mf**

Tell - old Phar - aoh to let me peo - ple go!

**p** *pizz.* *arco* **mf**

\* A separate Viola part is available.

\*\*Cue-sized notes are an *ossia* for higher voices

VERSE 2

18

(mf) Same tempo

The Lord told Mo - ses what to do, *Let my*  
*rolled pizz.*

23

*peo - ple go!* To lead the child-ren of Is - rael through, *Let my*  
*rolled pizz.*

REFRAIN

27

*peo - ple, let my peo - ple go* down, Mo - ses, way down in

31

*rit.* **Slower** *p* *poco accel.*

E - gypt Land. Tell old Phar - aoh to let my peo - ple —  
*pizz.* *arco*

INTERLUDE

With some motion ♩ = 108

35

*mf*

*go!*

39

*agitated*  
*f*

43

*assertively, with anger* *f*  
"Thus"

VERSE 3

47

spoke the Lord," bold Mo - ses said. "If"  
*snap pizz.* *arco*  
*(f)*

51

not I'll smite your first - born dead." "Your"  
*snap pizz.* *arco*

55

foes shall not be - fore you stand." "I'll"  
*arco*

59 *(f)*

lead you to the Prom - ised Land." Oh, \_\_\_

63 **REFRAIN** *rit.*

go\_ down, Mo - ses, way down in E - gypt Land. \_\_\_

67 *Slower p* *mf* *Freely p* *mp*

Tell\_ old Phar - aoh\_ to\_ let my peo - ple, \_ let\_ my\_ peo - ple, \_

*(with voice)*

71 *accel.* *a tempo (♩ = 108)* *f* *rit.*

let my peo - ple\_ go, \_\_\_ go! \_\_\_

*snap pizz.*

*arco*

*f with anger and determination*

Dur. 3:00

## 2. Deep River

Gently flowing ♩ = 100 (or slower)

con sord.  
smoothly, as a river

*mf cantabile*

The score begins with a treble clef staff containing four whole rests. Below it, the bass clef staff features a continuous eighth-note accompaniment with a melodic line in the right hand. The key signature is two sharps (F# and C#) and the time signature is 4/4.

## REFRAIN

5 *mf cantabile*

Deep ——— riv - er, my home lies o - ver Jor - dan. ———

The refrain begins at measure 5. The vocal line starts with a half note 'Deep', followed by a quarter note 'riv - er', and then a half note 'my home lies o - ver Jor - dan.' The accompaniment continues with the same eighth-note pattern.

9

Deep ——— riv - er, Lord, I want to cross o - ver in - to camp - ground. ———

*rolled pizz.* *arco*

At measure 9, the vocal line continues with 'Deep riv - er, Lord, I want to cross o - ver in - to camp - ground.' The accompaniment features a 'rolled pizz.' (rolled pizzicato) effect in the bass line at measure 10, followed by an 'arco' (arco) section.

## VERSE 1

13 *poco accel.* Slightly faster ♩ = 108

Oh, don't you want\_ to go ——— to that gos - pel

Verse 1 begins at measure 13 with a tempo change to 'poco accel.' and a tempo of 108. The vocal line starts with 'Oh, don't you want\_ to go ——— to that gos - pel'. The accompaniment is more rhythmic, with a steady eighth-note bass line.

17

feast, that prom - ised land ——— where all ——— is

\* \*\*

At measure 17, the vocal line continues with 'feast, that prom - ised land ——— where all ——— is'. The accompaniment features cue-sized notes marked with '\*' and '\*\*'.

\* Cue-sized notes are an *ossia* for lower voices.\*\* The Viola should play whichever notes the Contralto does NOT sing, to harmonize with the voice.

## REFRAIN

21

, (♩ = 108)

peace? Deep riv - er, my home lies o - ver

25

Jor - dan. Deep riv - er, Lord, I want to cross o - ver in - to

*rolled pizz.*

29

camp - ground.

*arco*

## VERSE 2

33

*p*

I'll go on up to heav - en, and take my seat, and

*sim.*

*p*

37

cast my crown at Je - sus', Je - sus', Je - sus', feet.

*\**

*\*\**

3

\* Cue-sized notes are an *ossia* for lower voices.\*\* The Viola should play whichever notes the Contralto does NOT sing, to harmonize with the voice.



REFRAIN

41 *mf*

Deep riv - er, my home lies o - ver Jor - dan.

*mf*

45

Deep riv - er, Lord, I want to cross o - ver in - to camp - ground.

*rolled pizz.* *arco*

INTERLUDE

49

*lightly separate*

*p*

VERSE 3

53 *p with anxiety*

*growing into (mild) anxiety of the river travel*

Nev - er been so

*(p)*

57

far from home... riv - er, riv - er,

REFRAIN

61 *mf*

car-ry me\_ on... car-ry me, \_ car-ry me\_ on.

*mf*

65

Deep... my home lies o - ver Jor - dan. \_

69

Deep... I want to cross o - ver, I want to cross o - ver, I want to cross o - ver in - to  
*rolled pizz.*

73

camp - ground. \_

*arco*

VERSE 4

Slowly, freely  
*p* impassioned

77

*sul pont. delicately, shimmering*

*rolled pizz. with entire hand, in a gesture of a blessing*

Lord, \_ bless this

*p*

81

boat I ride, bless it safe - ly on the wa - ter. Bring it home at  
gentle tremolo

arco

85

E - ven - tide to shel - ter in your har - bor, Lord, to shel - ter in your  
rolled pizz.

accel.

## REFRAIN

*a tempo* (♩ = 108)

89

har - bor. Deep riv - er, my home lies o - ver  
arco

mf

93

Jor - dan. Deep riv - er, Lord, I want to cross o - ver, I  
rolled pizz.

97

want to cross o - ver, I want to cross o - ver in - to camp - ground.

arco

Dur. 3:30

(connect directly to "A Time for Reflection" without break)

# A Time for Reflection

(as a bridge between songs 2 and 3)

Slowly ♩ = 100

(con sord.) gently, reflectively  
*p* legato

6

*mp*

11

*cresc. poco a poco (to m. 16)*

15

*rit.*  
*(cresc.)* *f* *mf* *mp* *> p*  
via sord.

19

With energy ♩ = 120

*p*  
gently tap instrument (to set tempo for next song)  
gently tap hands  
*p*  
(no break, connect directly to next song)

## 3. Down to the River to Pray

With energy ♩ = 120

swing eighths (♩ = ♩<sup>3</sup> ♩)

(gently tap hands)

*mf* joyfully

As I went

*mf*

*senza sord.*

## 5 REFRAIN

down to the riv-er to pray, stud-y-ing a-bout the good old way. And

9

who shall wear the star - ry crown! \_\_\_\_\_ Good Lord, show me the

13

way. \_\_\_\_\_

## 17 VERSE 1

O, my sis - ters, let's go down, — let's go down, come on down.

*p* playfully

21

O, my sis - ters, let's go down, down to the riv - er, go - in'

*mf* *p* *mf*

## REFRAIN

25

down to the riv - er to pray. As I went down to the riv - er to pray,

*mf* *lightly*

29

stud - y - ing a - bout the good old way. And who shall wear the star - ry crown?

33

Good Lord, show me, show me, show me the way.

## VERSE 2

37

O, my broth - ers, let's go

41

down, down, down, come on down, come on down. O, my broth-ers, let's go

*p* *mf*

45

down, down, down, go-in' down to the riv-er, go-in' down to the riv-er to

*p* *mf*

## REFRAIN

49

pray. As I went down to the riv-er to pray, stud-y-ing a-bout the

53

good old way. And who shall wear the star-ry-crown? Good

57

Lord, show me, show me, show me the way.

*p* *mf*

INTERLUDE

With much energy and joy (and extra swing!)

61 *f* boldly

65

69 *p* *mf p*

Down to the riv-er, — down to the riv-er, — down to the riv-er to pray, — go-in'

*p sub.* *mf*

73 *rit.* *mf*

down by the riv-er, — down by the riv-er, — down by the riv-er to pray. O,

*p* *mf*

VERSE 3

Slower, straight eighths

77 *pizz.* *p*

lift your head, my wear - y friend, and taste the plea-sure that hea-ven will send. Let

81 *long pause* *p* *Start slowly and accel.* *swing eighths*

noth - ing cause you to de - lay... but... has - ten on the good old,

*arco* *p* *(answering voice)* *p*



With energy ♩ = 120

85 (accel.) *f*

has - ten on the good old way. As I went down to the riv - er to

*mf* *f*

(from random high pitch) *gliss. and trem.*

88 *lightly*

pray, stud - y - ing a - bout the good old way. And who shall wear the

*mf*

92 *p sub.*

star - ry crown? Good Lord, show me, show me, show me,

*p* *pizz.*

96 *cresc. poco a poco (to m. 102)*

Lord, show me, show me, show me, Lord, show me, show me, show me the

*arco* *pizz.* *cresc. poco a poco (to m. 102)*

100 (cresc.) *rit.* *f*

way, Lord, show me, show me the way!

*f* *gliss.*

# 4. Every Night When the Sun Goes Down

**VERSE 1**

*Slowly, freely*

*p* *mournfully*

Ev - 'ry night \_\_\_\_\_ when the sun goes down, Ev - 'ry night \_\_\_\_\_ when the sun goes

4

down, Ev - 'ry night \_\_\_\_\_ when the sun goes down, I hang my head \_\_\_\_\_ and mourn-ful

**REFRAIN**

*a tempo* ♩ = 60  
, (*p*)

8

cry. \_\_\_\_\_ True love don't weep, \_\_\_\_\_ true love don't mourn. \_\_\_\_\_ True love, don't

*rolled pizz.*

*p* *very gently*

11

weep, \_\_\_\_\_ true love don't mourn. \_\_\_\_\_ True love, don't weep or mourn for \_\_\_\_\_

*arco*

**Slightly faster**

♩ = 66

, (*p*)

14

me. \_\_\_\_\_ The Lord has come \_\_\_\_\_ to set me free. \_\_\_\_\_ And ev - 'ry

INTERLUDE

*rit.*

17

night, and ev-'ry night, and ev-'ry night, and ev-'ry night, and ev-'ry night, and ev-'ry night, and ev-'ry

VERSE 2

*rit.*

**Slightly faster** ♩ = 72  
*, mp*

20

night, and ev-'ry night, I pray the Lord \_\_\_\_\_ my train would come. \_\_\_\_\_ I pray the

23

Lord \_\_\_\_\_ my train would come. \_\_\_\_\_ I pray the Lord my train would \_

**Slightly faster**  
♩ = 80  
*, mf*

26

come \_\_\_\_\_ to take me back \_\_\_\_\_ where I come from. \_\_\_\_\_ True love don't

REFRAIN

29

weep, \_\_\_\_\_ true love don't\_ mourn. \_\_\_\_\_ True love don't weep, \_\_\_\_\_ true love don't

18

32

mourn. True love don't weep or mourn for me. The Lord has

INTERLUDE

35

come to set me free. And ev-'ry night, and ev-'ry night, and ev-'ry

38

night, and ev-'ry night, and ev-'ry night, and ev-'ry night, and ev-'ry night, and ev-'ry night, and ev-'ry

41

night, and ev-'ry night, and ev-'ry night, and ev-'ry night, And when I rise up in the

44

sky, and when I rise up in the sky, if you look up

47 [abrupt break]

quick - ly you will see me pass - ing\_ by, on wings of sil - ver I\_ will

[abrupt break]

50

fly. If you look up quick - ly, you will see me pass - ing, -

52 *rit.* *p* **Slowly**

pass - ing, pass - ing, pass - ing, pass - ing\_ by, on wings of sil - ver, on wings of

*p*

55 *f* **Faster**

sil - ver, on wings of sil - ver, I\_ will fly,

*f* *as a bird in flight*

58 *rit.* *p*

fly, I will fly.

*p*