

Gwyneth Walker

# From the Depths of the Soul

songs for Contralto and Piano

“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 is characterized by *depth of sonority*, speaking with a deep, rich tone. Thus, **From the Depths of the Soul** was created to explore the powerful expression of the low range. 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 piano underline the conviction/ command of the song.

“Deep River” features a flowing, *arpeggiated* 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* piano 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 pianist 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 accompaniment. This is to symbolize the spirit of a bird hovering close by.

# From the Depths of the Soul

for Contralto and Piano

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

4

### REFRAIN

9 *mf with strength* *rit.*

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

*with strength* *mf* *rit.* *p*

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

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

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

**Slower** *loco* *(p)* *poco accel.* **With some motion** ♩ = 108 *mf* *loco >*

**VERSE 2**

17 *(mf)* **Same tempo**

The Lord told Mo - ses

**Same tempo**

21

what to do, Let my peo - ple go! To lead the child - ren of

25

Is - rael through, *Let my peo - ple, let my peo - ple go* \_\_\_\_\_

**REFRAIN**

28

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

*rit.*

*rit.*

*p*

32

**Slower**  
*p*

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

*poco accel.*

**Slower**  
*loco*  
*(p)*

*poco accel.*

INTERLUDE

With some motion ♩ = 108

35 *mf*

go!

With some motion ♩ = 108

*mf*

*g<sup>ub</sup> - - -*  
with pedal

loco

38

*f* agitated

42

VERSE 3

46

assertively,  
with anger *f*

"Thus spoke the Lord," bold Mo - ses said.

*g<sup>va</sup> -*

loco

50

"If not I'll smite your first - born dead."

*8va-*

*loco*

54

"Your foes shall not be - fore you stand."

*8va-*

*loco*

58

"I'll lead you to the Prom - ised Land."

*8va-*

*loco*

62

**REFRAIN**

*(f)*

Oh, — go — down, Mo - ses,

65 *rit.* **Slower** *p*

way down in E - gypt Land. Tell old Phar -

*rit.* **Slower** *p* *loco*

68 *mf* **Freely** *p* *mp* *accel.*

- - aoh\_ to\_ let my peo-ple, - let\_ my\_ peo-ple, - let my peo - ple -

**Freely** *accel.*

72 *a tempo* (♩ = 108) *f* *rit.*

go, go!

*a tempo* (♩ = 108) *rit.*

Dur. 3:00



## 2. Deep River

Gently flowing ♩ = 100 (or slower)  
smoothly, as a river

The first system of the musical score is in 4/4 time with a key signature of two sharps (F# and C#). It consists of a vocal line and a piano accompaniment. The piano part is marked *mf cantabile* and includes the instruction *with pedal*. The vocal line begins with a quarter rest followed by a series of eighth notes.

## REFRAIN

*mf cantabile*

4

The second system of the musical score begins at measure 4. It features a vocal line with the lyrics "Deep riv - er, my" and a piano accompaniment. The piano part continues with a flowing eighth-note pattern.

7

The third system of the musical score begins at measure 7. The vocal line has the lyrics "home lies o - ver Jor - dan. Deep". The piano accompaniment continues with a consistent eighth-note accompaniment.

10

The fourth system of the musical score begins at measure 10. The vocal line has the lyrics "riv - er, Lord, I want to cross o - ver in - to camp - ground." The piano accompaniment features a change in texture with some chords and rests.

## VERSE 1

13 *poco accel.* Slightly faster ♩ = 108

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

*poco accel.* Slightly faster ♩ = 108

17

feast, that prom - ised land where all is

## REFRAIN

21 (♩ = 108)

peace? , Deep riv - er, my

(♩ = 108)

\*Cue-sized notes are an *ossia* for lower voices.

24

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

27

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

*with pedal*

30

**VERSE 2**  
*p*  
I'll go on up - to

34

heav - en, and take \_\_\_\_\_ my seat, and

37 \* 
  
cast my crown at Je - sus', Je - sus',

REFRAIN

40 *mf*
  
Je - sus', feet. Deep riv - er, my

43 
  
home lies o - ver Jor - dan. Deep

46 
  
riv - er, Lord, I want to cross o - ver in - to camp - ground.

\*Cue-sized notes are an *ossia* for lower voices.

49

**INTERLUDE**

52 *lightly separate* *growing into (mild) anxiety of the river travel*

**VERSE 3**

56 *p with anxiety*

Nev - er been so far from home...

59

riv - er, riv - er, car - ry me on...

REFRAIN

62

car - ry me, — car - ry me — on.

*mf*

*mf*

*cresc.*

65

Deep... my home lies o - ver

*mf*

68

Jor - dan. — Deep... I want to cross o - ver, I —

*mf*

71

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

*with pedal*

74

**VERSE 4**

**Slowly, freely**

*p* **impassioned**

77

*delicately, shimmering* *rolled chords, as a gesture of blessing* Lord, bless this

*p* **Slowly, freely**

*ped.* *ped.* *ped.*

81

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

*gently* *p*

*ped.* *simile*

85

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

REFRAIN

88

*accel.*

*a tempo* (♩ = 108)  
*mf*

shel - ter in your har - bor. Deep

*accel.*

*a tempo* (♩ = 108)

*cresc.* *mf*

91

riv - er, my home lies o - ver



93

Jor - dan. Deep

95 *rit. to end*

riv - er, Lord, I want to cross o - ver, I want to cross o - ver, I

*rit. to end*

98 *(rit.)*

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

*(rit.)* *p*

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

*p peacefully*

with pedal

6

*mp*

11

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

15

*(cresc.)* *f* *mf* *mp* *p*

*rit.*

Ped.

19 With energy ♩ = 120

gently tap hands

*p*

With energy ♩ = 120

tap gently on piano ledge (to set tempo for next song)

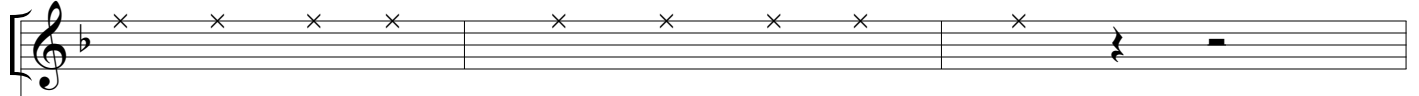
(no break, connect directly to next song)

### 3. Down to the River to Pray

With energy ♩ = 120

swing eighths (♩ =  $\overset{\sim}{\underset{\sim}{\text{♩}}}$ )

(gently tap hands)



With energy ♩ = 120

swing eighths (♩ =  $\overset{\sim}{\underset{\sim}{\text{♩}}}$ )

4 *mf* joyfully REFRAIN

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

8

good old way. And who shall wear the star - ry crown! \_\_\_\_\_ Good

12

Lord, show me the way.

16

VERSE 1

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

*p playfully*

20

come on down. O, my sis - ters, let's go down, — down to the riv - er, —

*mf* *p*

24

REFRAIN

go - in' down to the riv - er to pray. As I went down to the riv - er to

28

pray, *lightly* stud - y - ing a - bout the good old way. And

31

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

35

show me, show me the way. \_\_\_\_\_

39

VERSE 2

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

*mf* *p*

43

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

*mf*

46

down to the riv - er, — go - in' down to the riv - er to pray. As I went

50

## REFRAIN

down to the riv - er to pray, stud - y - ing a - bout the

*lightly*

53

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

57

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

**INTERLUDE**

**With much energy and joy (and extra swing!)**

61

*f* boldly

65

69

*p* Down to the riv-er, down to the riv-er, down to the riv-er to pray, go-in? *mf p*

*p* playfully *mf*

73 *rit.* *mf*

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

*cresc.* *rit.* *mf*

VERSE 3

77 **Slower, straight eighths** *p*

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

**Slower, straight eighths**

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

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

*(as if rushing to depart on a trip!)* *long pause* *Start slowly and accel.* swing eighths

*p* *p*



REFRAIN

With energy ♩ = 120

*f*

85 (accel.)

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

(accel.)

glissando

*f*

With energy ♩ = 120

88

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

lightly

91

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

*p sub.*

95

show me, show me, Lord, show me, show me, show me, Lord, \_\_\_

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

(*cresc.*)

show me, show me, show me the way, \_\_\_

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

101 (*cresc.*)

*rit.*

*f*

Lord, show me, show me the way! \_\_\_

(*cresc.*)

*rit.*

high gliss.

Dur. 3:30

# 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

*a tempo* ♩ = 60

*p very gently*

*with pedal*

11

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

Slightly faster

♩ = 66

, (p)

14

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

Slightly faster  
♩ = 66

INTERLUDE

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 night, and ev - 'ry

*rit.*

*rit.*

VERSE 2

20 (rit.)

Slightly faster ♩ = 72  
, mp

night, and ev - 'ry night, I pray the Lord my train would

(rit.)

Slightly faster ♩ = 72  
mp

22

come. I pray the Lord my train would

24

come. I pray the Lord my train would come to take me

27

back where I come from. True love don't

**Slightly faster**  
♩ = 80  
*mf*

**Slightly faster**  
♩ = 80

28

29 REFRAIN

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

*mf*

31

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

33

weep or \_\_\_\_\_ mourn for \_\_\_\_\_ me. \_\_\_\_\_ The Lord has come \_\_\_\_\_ to set me

36

INTERLUDE

free. \_\_\_\_\_ And ev - 'ry night, and ev - 'ry night, and ev - 'ry

, (*mf*)

38 *rit.* **Slower**  
*p*

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

*rit.* **Slower**

*mp* *p*

41 *accel.* *a tempo* ♩ = 80  
*mf*

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

*accel.* *a tempo* ♩ = 80

*pp* barely audible *cresc.* *mf*

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]

*mf*

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

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

54

sil - ver, ————— on wings of sil - ver, ————— on wings of

*delicately, as fluttering wings*

*with pedal*



56 *f*

sil - ver, I will

57 **Faster**

fly, fly,

**Faster**  
*as a bird in flight*

59 *rit.*

I will fly.

*rit.*

*p*

Dur. 3:30 | Total: 14:30  
June 12, 2016  
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