

THE SPIRITUALS SERIES

Remembering Home

Super flumina Babylonis, Psalm 137;

Orin Johnson

“Sometimes I Feel like a Motherless Child,” traditional Spiritual

Hypnotic (♩ = ca. 94)

The musical score is presented in two systems. The first system includes a Cello part and a Piano part. The Cello part begins with a whole rest for the first four measures, followed by a half note G in the fifth measure, marked with a piano (*p*) dynamic. The Piano part consists of a right-hand melody and a left-hand accompaniment. The right hand starts with a piano (*p*) dynamic and features a rhythmic pattern of eighth notes and quarter notes. The left hand provides a steady accompaniment with quarter notes. The second system continues the piano accompaniment, with the right hand marked *mp* (mezzo-piano) and the left hand continuing its accompaniment. A measure number '5' is placed at the beginning of the second system. A large, semi-transparent watermark reading 'PREVIEW' is overlaid diagonally across the score.

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*If no cello is playing, measures 5–8 may be omitted.

Soprano *p*
Su - per flú-mi-na Ba-by - ló - nis il - lic

Alto *p*
Su - per flú-mi-na Ba-by - ló - nis il - lic

p

Soprano *mp*
sé - di-mus et flé - vi-mus, cum re - cor - da -

Alto *mp*
sé - di - mus et flé - vi - mus,

mp

17 *mf*

ré - mur Si - on, cum re - cor - da - ré - mur

mf

cum re - cor - da - ré - mur Si - on, O Si - on.

21 (Cello) *p*

mp

Si - on. Il - lic sé - di - mus et flé - vi - mus,

mp

Su - per flú - mi - na il - lic flé - vi - mus,

25 *poco rall.* *a tempo*
p

poco rall. *a tempo*
p

poco rall. *a tempo*
p

il - lic flé - vi - mus.

p poco rall. *a tempo*

29 *mf*
espressivo
mf

Baritone

Some-times I feel like a

mp *mf*

*Play cue notes only in the absence of cello.

33

moth - er - less child, _____ Some - times I feel like a

This system contains measures 33 through 36. It features a vocal line with lyrics, a bass line, and a piano accompaniment. The piano part includes chords and melodic lines in both hands. A large 'PREVIEW' watermark is visible across the page.

37

moth - er - less child. _____ Some - times I feel like a

This system contains measures 37 through 40. It features a vocal line with lyrics, a bass line, and a piano accompaniment. Dynamic markings 'f' are present above the vocal line and below the piano accompaniment. A large 'PREVIEW' watermark is visible across the page.

41

moth - er - less child, _____ A long way _____ from

This system contains measures 41 through 44. It features a vocal line with lyrics, a bass line, and a piano accompaniment. Dynamic markings 'mp' are present above the vocal line and below the piano accompaniment. A large 'PREVIEW' watermark is visible across the page.

45 *poco rall.*

p

p *poco rall.*

home, _____ A long way _____ from

p *poco rall.*

49 *a tempo*

pp

a tempo

home. _____

pp *a tempo*

53 *molto*

molto

*If no cello is playing, measures 51–54 may be omitted.

57

mf *mf*

S *mf*

A *mf*

B *mf*

Su - per flú-mi - na Ba-by - ló - nis il - lic

Su - per flú-mi - na Ba-by - ló - nis il - lic

Some - times I feel like a moth - er - less child,

mf

mf

61

sé - di - mus et flé - vi - mus, cum re - cor - da -

sé - di - mus et flé - vi - mus,

Some - times I feel like a moth - er - less child.

mf

65

f

f

f

f

mp

f

69

mp

p

mp

mp

p

mp

ré - mur Si - on, cum re - cor - da - ré - mur
 cum re - cor - da - ré - mur Si - on, O - Si - on.
 Some-times I feel like a moth - er - less child, A

Si - on. Il - lic se - di - mus et flé - vi - mus,
 Su - per flú - mi - na il - lic flé - vi - mus,
 long way from home, A

Remembering Home

73 *poco rall.* *a tempo*

poco rall. *p* *a tempo*

poco rall. *p* *a tempo*

poco rall. *a tempo*

il - lic flé - vi - mus. _____

il - lic flé - vi - mus. _____

long way _____ from home. _____

poco rall. *p* *a tempo* *pp*

77 *pp*

p *pp*

81 *p* *pp* *rit.* *ppp*

p *(pp)* *rit.* *ppp*

*If no cello is playing, measures 79–82 may be omitted; play cue notes in measures 83–84 only in the absence of cello.

Remembering Home

CELLO

Orin Johnson

Hypnotic (♩ = ca. 94)

3

p

8

13

poco rall.

p

27

a tempo

p *mf*

34

f

40

mp *p*

47

poco rall. *a tempo*

pp *pp*

53

molto

57

mf *mf*

The musical score consists of four staves of music in bass clef, 3/4 time, with a key signature of two flats (B-flat and E-flat).
 Staff 1 (measures 63-67): Starts with a fermata, followed by a melodic line. A dynamic marking of *f* (forte) is placed below the staff.
 Staff 2 (measures 68-74): Features a melodic line with a dynamic marking of *mp* (mezzo-piano) and a *poco rall.* (poco rallentando) instruction.
 Staff 3 (measures 75-80): Includes a dynamic marking of *pp* (pianissimo) and the instruction *a tempo*.
 Staff 4 (measures 81-82): Contains a dynamic marking of *p*, a *rit.* (ritardando) instruction, and a final dynamic marking of *ppp* (pianississimo).

Composer Notes

“Remembering Home” pairs two profound songs of exile: Psalm 137, the Israelites’ lament from their exile in Babylon, and the spiritual dating from Civil War times, “Sometimes I Feel like a Motherless Child.” The former speaks of being forcibly separated from a geographic and sacred homeland; the latter is borne from not only that experience but from the separation of parents and children often suffered by enslaved persons. An optional cello part* adds a third plaintive melody of sadness and longing, while a hypnotic piano part underpins it all, almost as if in a daze.

While very few of us have had such dramatic experiences of exile, that feeling of being far from home—and not by one’s own choice—is in some ways universal and is part of every Christian’s journey to again, one day, see God face to face. This piece would fit in well during any season or service of lament, or when worshipping with those whose people have experienced such devastation, or indeed with any people forced from their homeland by war, hunger, or any lack of freedom.

—Orin Johnson

*If necessary, this piece may be performed satisfactorily without a cello. In the absence of a cello, performers may omit mm. 5–8, 51–54, and 79–82. Pianists should play cue notes as well, and only in the absence of a cello.

Latin text:
*Super flumina Babylonis
 illic sedimus et flevimus,
 cum recordaremur Sion.*

English Translation:
 By the waters of Babylon
 there we sat and wept
 when we remembered Zion.

Preview

