

THE SPIRITUALS SERIES

Remembering Home

Super flumina Babylonis, Psalm 137;
“Sometimes I Feel like a Motherless Child,” traditional Spiritual

Orin Johnson

Hypnotic (♩ = ca. 94)

Cello

Piano

p

mp

5

3

p

mp

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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.

mf

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,

mp

25 *poco rall.* *a tempo*

p

poco rall. *a tempo*

p

il - lic flé - vi - mus.

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

musical score for measures 33-36. The system includes a vocal line with lyrics, a piano accompaniment, and a grand staff. The lyrics are: "moth - er - less child, _____ Some - times I feel like a". The piano part features chords and moving lines in both hands.

37

musical score for measures 37-40. The system includes a vocal line with lyrics, a piano accompaniment, and a grand staff. The lyrics are: "moth - er - less child. _____ Some - times I feel like a". The piano part features chords and moving lines in both hands. Dynamics include *f* (forte).

41

musical score for measures 41-44. The system includes a vocal line with lyrics, a piano accompaniment, and a grand staff. The lyrics are: "moth - er - less child, _____ A long way _____ from". The piano part features chords and moving lines in both hands. Dynamics include *mp* (mezzo-piano).

45

*poco rall.**p**poco rall.**p*

home, _____

A long

way _____

from

p poco rall.

49

*a tempo**pp**pp**a tempo*

home. _____

pp a tempo

53

molto

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

57

mf

mf

S *mf*

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

A *mf*

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

B *mf*

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

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. _____

69

Remembering Home

73 *poco rall.* *a tempo*

poco rall. *p* *a tempo*

il - lic flé - vi - mus.

poco rall. *p* *a tempo*

il - lic flé - vi - mus.

poco rall. *a tempo*

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*

63

68

75

81

f

poco rall.

mp

p

a tempo

pp

rit.

ppp

p

pp

ppp

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