

When Lilacs Last in the Dooryard Bloom'd

(Abridged and adapted)

Four Lincoln

Text: Walt Whitman

Part III

Music: Vanessa McClintock

When lilacs last in the dooryard bloom'd,
And the great star early droop'd in the western sky in the night,
I mourn'd and yet shall mourn with each returning spring.

Ever-returning spring, trinity sure to me you bring,
Lilac blooming perennial and drooping star in the west,
And thought of him I love.

O powerful western fallen star!
Night surrounds me, tears flow,
Cruel hands hold me powerless,
The black murk hides the star.

In the dooryard stands a lilac bush,
With heart-shaped leaves of rich green,
Delicate blossoms rise, with the perfume strong I love,
A sprig with its flower I break.

In secluded corners of the swamp, a shy bird sings.
The thrush, solitary and withdrawn,
Song of the bleeding throat, Death's outlet song of life,
Without this song, it would surely die.

Amid cities, old woods, and endless grass,
Passing the yellow-spear'd wheat,
Passing through lanes, streets, and orchards,
Night and day journeys a coffin.

Through day and night the coffin journeys through lanes and streets,
With the tolling tolling bells' perpetual clang,
Mournful dirges surround it,
Here, coffin that slowly passes,
I offer my sprig of lilac.

Passing the visions, passing the night
Passing, I leave thee lilac with heart-shaped leaves,
I leave thee there in the door-yard, blooming, returning with spring.
I cease from my song for thee,

For the sweetest, wisest soul of all my days and lands—and this for his dear sake,
Lilac and star and bird twined with the chant of my soul,
There in the fragrant pines and the cedars dusk and dim.

When Lilacs Last in the Dooryard Bloom'd / Vanessa McClintock

$\text{♩} = 63$ *accel.*

Low Voice

Piano

mp *mp-mf*

$\text{♩} = 120$ *rallentando*

5 *mf* *mp-mf*

ritenuto $\text{♩} = 52$ *mf* $\text{♩} = 72$

9 When

li - lacs last in the door-yard bloom'd, And the great star ear-ly droop'd in the west - ern sky in the

13

18

night, I mourn'd and yet shall mourn with each

22

re - turn - ing spring. Ever - re - turn - ing spring, — trin - i - ty sure to me you bring,

26

— Li - lac bloom-ing per - en - i - all and droop-ing, — star in the

30

west, And thought of him I love. —

♩. = 42

34

O pow - er - ful west - ern

38

— fal - len star! Night sur - rounds me, tears flow. —

42

— Cruel hands hold — me pow - er -

46

less. The black — murd hides the star. —

50

54

58

62

$\text{♩} = 63$ *mf*

In the door - yard stands a li - lac bush, with

heart-shaped leaves of rich green, Del - i - cate blos - soms rise, with the

per - fume strong I love, A sprig with its flow - er I break.

♩ = 63

66

In se-clud-ed

71

cor - nors of the swamp, a shy bird sings. The thrush,

75

sol-li-tar-y and with - drawn, Song of the bleed - ing

79

throat, Death's out - let song of life,

84

With - out this song, _____ it

88

would sure - ly die.

ritenuto

93

$\text{♩} = 52$ *accel.*

mp-mf

cresc.

96

$\text{♩} = 92$ *rallentando*

mf

99 *mp*

102 *mf*

A - mid cit - ies, old woods, and

105

end - less grass, Pass - ing the yel - low - spear - 'd wheat,

108 *mp*

Pass - ing through lanes, — streets, and or - chards,

111

Night and day jour-neys a

114

cof - - - fin. _____

117

Through day and night the cof - fin jour - neys through lanes and streets,

120

With the tol - ling tol - ling bell's per - pe - tual clang, Mourn - ful dir - ges

The musical score is written in bass clef with a key signature of one flat (B-flat). It consists of a vocal line and a piano accompaniment. The piano part features continuous triplet eighth notes in the left hand and chords in the right hand. The lyrics are: 'Night and day jour-neys a cof - - - fin. _____ Through day and night the cof - fin jour - neys through lanes and streets, With the tol - ling tol - ling bell's per - pe - tual clang, Mourn - ful dir - ges'.

When Lilacs Last in the Dooryard Bloom'd / Vanessa McClintock

♩ = 52

123

— sur-round it, Here, cof-fin that slow-ly pass -

127

es, I of-fer my sprig of

131

accel.

li - lac.

135

p

p

♩ = 72

137

mf

Pass-ing the vi - sions, pass - ing the night

140

mp

Pass - ing, I leave thee li - lac with

143

heart - - - shaped leaves.

145

148 *mp* *ritenuto* I leave thee there in the door-yard, —

150 *accel.* $\text{♩} = 63$ *mf* $\text{♩} = 72$ bloom-ing, — re - turn - ing with spring. I cease from my song —

153 *mf* *rallentando* for — thee, —

157 *mp* *mf* *accel.* $\text{♩} = 63$ *mp-mf*

When Lilacs Last in the Dooryard Bloom'd / Vanessa McClintock

mf $\text{♩} = 72$

For the sweet - est, — wis - est soul of all my days and lands—

160 *mp*

and this for — his — dear sake, —

164 *mp-mf*

Li - lac and star and bird twined with the chant of my soul, — There in the

168 *p*

rallentando $\text{♩} = 63$

fra-grant pines and the ce - dars dusk and dim. —

172 *mp*