

Mary, at the Tomb

By Vanessa McClintock

For soprano, three tenors, and piano

Music by Vanessa McClintock
Text by Vanessa McClintock, based
upon and quoted from the book of John
in the Holy Bible, King James Version

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Forward

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Mary, at the Tomb is a short evocative vocal work describing the Resurrection scene found in the book of John, Chapter 20, leading up to and including Mary's recognition of Jesus. It is intriguing that the Saviour asks Mary the same thing that the angels had just asked, but then adds the second part, "*whom seekest thou?*"

In scripture, one finds different accounts of the same events. In this work, Mary visits the tomb by herself and encounters two angels and the Saviour. The music is derived from a portion of the choral work *Easter Trilogy* in which the primary scriptural references are the books of Mark and Matthew. In those accounts, Mary Magdalene visits the tomb with other women.

This piece, for soprano, tenors, and piano, can be seen as an addendum or supplement to *Easter Trilogy*, or as a stand-alone work. Note that the music is permeated with conflicting accidentals: e.g. one will find Eb harmony in the lower part and C major in the upper, resulting with Eb notes in the bass and E-naturals in the treble, etc.; in other words, polytonalities and "floating tonalities."

If performed without chorus, the part for the angels would be performed by the solo tenor but seated to be unseen. He would stand for his solo part as the Saviour. If with a chorus, two tenors would stand and sing the parts of the two angels. The music director has the option to perform this separately before or after the *Easter Trilogy*, on either half of the program, or on another concert entirely.

The text of the work is as follows: Scripture: John, Chapter 20, adapted:

Introduction: In shock, Mary proclaims to Peter that Jesus has been taken from the tomb.

Mary: Peter! They have taken away our Lord!

Piano: *In frenzy, Peter, and that other disciple, and Mary scurry to the tomb. One can imagine the two disciples tripping over themselves in their haste.*

Finding the tomb empty, the disciples went away again unto their own homes.

But Mary stood without at the sepulchre weeping: and as she wept, she stooped down, and looked into the sepulchre. (She sighs in despair.)

Angels: Woman, why weepest thou?

Mary: They have taken away my Lord. I know not where they have laid him.
(She continues to sigh.)

Then Mary turns and sees Jesus, but does not recognize Him.

Jesus: Woman, why weepest thou? whom seekest thou?

Mary: Dear Sir, hast thou taken Him? Tell me where thou hast laid Him. Tell me and I will take Him away. *(She laments.)*

The music indicates a change from mystery and despair to light and hope.

Jesus: Mary.

Mary: Ah! Rabboni. *(Mary now recognizes the Saviour)*

Jesus: Touch me not; I have not ascended to my Father. Go tell my brethren I will ascend to my God and your God.

Approximate performance time: 7'49"

Vanessa McClintock

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Timeline of Events

- Bars 01-05
 - Having been to the tomb and saw that the stone door had been taken away, Mary goes to the disciples and makes the tragic declaration to Peter and the disciples that the body of Jesus is not at the tomb.
- Bars 06-21
 - Peter, not wanting to believe the news, races off to the tomb, joined by "that other disciple." Along the way, they trip over and pass each other in their haste. The "other disciple" arrives first to the sepulchre but does not enter; he sees the linen clothes and the tomb empty.
 - Peter finally catches up and does enter, followed by the other, and they confirm the LORD is missing.
- Bars 22-29
 - Dejected and feeling at a loss, the disciples return to their own homes, leaving Mary alone at the empty tomb.
- Bars 30-43
 - Mary laments as she wanders the grounds about the tomb.
- Bars 44-51
 - Mary probably senses something change and then approaches two angels who have arrived, or who had become visible to her.
- Bars 52-67
 - The two angels ask Mary a simple question, "Woman, why weepest thou?"
- Bars 68-90
 - Mary responds and continues to lament, probably pacing back and forth around the area, as her concerns multiply.
- Bars 91-93
 - Something happens which changes Mary's lament to something less severe.
- Bars 94-99
 - Jesus repeats the question asked by the angels. Mary does not recognize Him, assuming Him to be a gardener.
- Bars 100-103
 - Jesus now asks a slightly different question, "Woman, *whom* seekest thou?"
- Bars 104-115
 - Mary answers with a question: "Hast thou taken Him?" She pleads for an answer so she can reclaim the body and care for it. Then, there is another change.
- Bars 116-128
 - Jesus simply proclaims her name, "Mary." She immediately recognizes Him and addresses Him, "Rabboni." Jesus tells her not to touch Him and gives her a final instruction and a message for the disciples.
- Bars 128-138
 - Mary acknowledges and confirms and delivers the message. Presumably the Saviour fades into another realm?

Mary, at the Tomb

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Agitated ♩=120

Soprano:
Mary

Tenors:
Two angels
Saviour

Piano

f

mf

Mary

Pe - ter! They have tak - en a - way our Lord!

Frenzied ♩=132

f

This musical score is for the piece "Mary, at the Tomb" by Vanessa McClintock, specifically measures 8 through 16. The score is written for a piano in G minor (three flats) and 3/4 time. It consists of five systems, each with a grand staff (treble and bass clef). Measure numbers 8, 10, 12, 14, and 16 are placed to the left of their respective systems. The notation includes various musical symbols such as eighth and sixteenth notes, rests, and dynamic markings like accents (>) and breath marks (v). The piece features a complex, flowing melody in the right hand and a more rhythmic, often eighth-note accompaniment in the left hand.

18 *calando al haltingly*

20 *haltingly*

22 *Misterioso* ♩=60 *mp*

26 *rall.*

a tempo
Mary ***mf***
Ah

p
a tempo

mf

mp

poco rall.

mp
a tempo

$\text{♩} = 60$

Red. *

45 $\text{♩} = \text{c. } 80$

mp

48

Angel 1 *mf* Oh. _____

Angel 2 Ah. _____

52

56

Reo. * *Reo.* * *Reo.* * *Reo.* *

Two angels

mp

Wo - man, why weep - est thou, why weep - est

60

Red. *

poco rall.

mf

thou?

64

mf mp

poco rall.

Red. *

Mary *a tempo* *mf*

They have tak - en a - way my Lord.

68

a tempo

Red. *

72

I know not where they have laid him.

Reo. * Reo. *

76

mp

80

mf

Oh. Ah.

84

88

sfp *mf* *rall.*

Ah. Ah. Ah.

$\text{♩} = 58$ *rall.* *a tempo*

Ah.

91

$\text{♩} = 58$ *rall.* *a tempo*

Reo. *

94

Saviour *mf*

Wo - man,

96

why weep - est thou? *rall.*

98

a tempo

2

2

109

laid Him. Tell me and I will take Him a - way.

mf

Rec. *

113

rit.

rit.

Rec. *

116

a tempo

Mary (with a breath of recognition)

mf

Saviour

Ma - ry.

Ah! Rab - bon - ni.

rit.

a tempo

p

mf

rit.

Saviour

a tempo

120

Touch me not I have not cend - ed to my

Reo. *

122

Fa - ther. Go tell my

Reo. *

125

bre-thren I will as-cend to my God and your God. _

rit.

Reo. *

Mary *a tempo*

128 *a tempo*

Ah

132

135

rit.

137 *a tempo* *rall.* *a tempo*