

Within Two Walls

for soprano, flute, cello, and harpsichord (or piano)

JESSICA MEYER

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7'

PROGRAM NOTE

This work was commissioned by Trinity Wall Street in Manhattan for a concert titled "Lagrima Mie," curated by Melissa Baker and Molly Netter. "Lagrima Mie" explored the female perspective in composition - particularly the raw evocation of emotion heard in the music of the famous Baroque artist Barbara Strozzi (1619-1677), who broke through gender barriers to become the most successful composer of secular vocal music in Venice of her time. Works by Strozzi and several of her contemporaries were paired with world premieres of Trinity-commissioned works focused on empowering female voices.

"Within Two Walls" is a reworking of the translated text from Strozzi's "Lagrima mie." In the song, the singer longs for a day where she can free her inner pain by finally crying and letting it all out, even wondering if she would be better off dead. I find the most compelling part is the recognition of her own role in creating her misery, which is true for so many people throughout time. The sounds I chose were inspired by the episodic form and expressive baroque gestures found in the original Strozzi song, yet many ideas were also filtered through my love for both tragic opera and pop/rock.

Many thanks to Mel, Molly, Ezra, and Avi who made this a singular and wonderful experience.

TEXT

*My tears, my tears, my tears, why do you hold back?
Why won't you burst forth with the fierce pain that takes my breath and oppresses my heart?*

*Lidia, whom I so adore, with that pitiful gaze she shot me,
her severe father imprisoned her within two walls.
Closed in, is that beautiful innocent one, where a ray of sun cannot reach.*

*What most pains me, and increases my torment, is that I was the reason my good proved bad.
I was the reason... my good proved bad.*

*And you, pained eyes, do not cry tears.
Why do you hold back?*

*Alas, how I miss my Lidia, my idol, whom I so adore.
She's trapped within hard marble walls for which I sigh, yet I do not die.
If death might be granted to me now that I am deprived of hope...*

*Come on!
Take my life!
I beg of you...relieve me of my sufferings!
I am well aware that in order to torture me even more
fate denies me even death.
Oh God...it's true...oh God! it's true!!
Vicious Destiny thirsts only for my wailing.
My tears, My tears, My tears, why do you hold...*

Within Two Walls

Commissioned by The Rector, Church-Wardens, and Vestrymen of
Trinity Church, in the City of New York

JESSICA MEYER

♩ = 50 **On the verge of tears**

Soprano Solo

Flute

Violoncello

Harpisichord

p

pizz.

mp

mp

My tears, My tears, My tears

5

S. Solo

Fl.

Vc.

Hpsd.

why do you hold back

mp

mf

trww

6

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8

S. Solo *mp* *f*

Why won't you burst forth with the fierce

Fl. *p* *f*

Vc. *arco* *fp* *f*

Hpsd. *tr* *mf* *f*

11

S. Solo *mf*

pain that takes my breath and op-press es my heart?

Fl. *f*

Vc. *f*

Hpsd. *f* *tr*

blown sigh

15

S. Solo

Li - di - a whom I a -

Fl.

Vc.

Hpsd.

p

p

p

19

S. Solo

dore

with that pit-i-ful gaze she shot me

her sev-ere

Fl.

Vc.

Hpsd.

Spoken

mf

p

mf

mf

p

22

S. Solo

fa - ther_ im - pris - oned her with - in two walls with -

Fl.

Vc.

Hpsd.

25

S. Solo

in two walls Closed in_ is that

Fl.

Vc.

Hpsd.

27 *p*

S. Solo
beau ti - ful in - no - cent one where a ray of sun can - not

Fl. *p*

Vc.

Hpsd. *p*

29

S. Solo
reach. What most pains me and in

Fl. *p*

Vc. *p*

Hpsd. *p*

31

S. Solo

Fl.

Vc.

Hpsd.

creas - es my tor - ment is that

♩ = 45

32

S. Solo

Fl.

Vc.

Hpsd.

I was the rea - son my good turned bad I

ff

tr

ff

tr

♩ = 45

♩ = 45

rit......

a tempo

♩ = 50

34

S. Solo

was the rea - son my good turned bad. _____ And

Fl.

Vc.

Hpsd.

ff

p

pizz.

mp

♩ = 50

mp

39

S. Solo

you, pained eyes, do not cry tears. Why

Fl.

Vc.

Hpsd.

tr

3

3

a tempo...but recit-like

♩ = 45

43 *rit.....*

S. Solo

do you hold back? A - las, how I miss my Li-di-a my i-dol

Fl.

Vc.

Hpsd.

p

mp

p

mp

♩ = 45

48

S. Solo

_ whom I so a-dore She's trapped with-in hard mar-ble walls for which I sigh yet I

Fl.

Vc.

Hpsd.

mf

mf > p

mf

mf > p

3

4/4

3/4

rit...... ♩ = 85 **Resigned**

52 *pp*

S. Solo

do not die

Fl.

Vc. pizz. *p* ♩ = 85

Hpsd. *mp*

59

S. Solo

Fl. *p*

Vc.

Hpsd. *tr*

65

S. Solo

Fl.

Vc.

Hpsd.

69

mp

S. Solo

Fl.

Vc.

Hpsd.

If death might be gran - ted to me now that

arco

73

S. Solo

I am (mah) de - prived of hope

Fl.

Vc.

Hpsd.

Getting Angry

77

S. Solo

Come on (nah!)

Fl.

Vc.

Hpsd.

81

S. Solo

take my life! I beg of you re-lieve me

Fl.

Vc.

Hpsd.

85

S. Solo

of my suf-fer - ings

Fl.

Vc.

Hpsd.

improvise on "ah"
a really high and
pained gesture

Musical score for measures 88-90. The score includes parts for S. Solo, Fl., Vc., and Hpsd. The S. Solo part features a melodic line with a fermata over measures 88 and 89, and the lyrics "I am well a - ware_". The Fl. part has a melodic line with a fermata over measures 88 and 89. The Vc. part has a bass line with a fermata over measures 88 and 89. The Hpsd. part has a complex bass line with sixteenth notes and a trill in measure 89. Dynamics include *mp* and *mp*<.

Musical score for measures 91-93. The score includes parts for S. Solo, Fl., Vc., and Hpsd. The S. Solo part features the lyrics "that in or - der to torture me ev - - en" and a triplet in measure 92. The Fl. part has a melodic line with a triplet in measure 92. The Vc. part has a bass line with a triplet in measure 92. The Hpsd. part has a complex bass line with sixteenth notes and a triplet in measure 92.

94

S. Solo

more fate de - nies me

Fl.

Vc.

Hpsd.

96

S. Solo

ev - en death oh God... it's

Fl.

Vc.

Hpsd.

rit..... *ff* *a tempo*

soprano adds
accelerating
grace note
ornaments

slow to
fast trill

99

S. Solo
true... oh God! It's true!!

Fl.
ff
6 6

Vc.
ff

Hpsd.
ff

$\text{♩} = 45$ **Seething** $\text{♩} = 50$ **Done**

rit.....

105

S. Solo
p
Vi-cious Des-tin-y thirsts on-ly for my wail-ing

Fl.
fff
p

Vc.
pizz.
fff
mp

Hpsd.
 $\text{♩} = 45$ $\text{♩} = 50$
mp

111 *p*

S. Solo

My tears, My tears, My tears

Fl.

Vc.

Hpsd.

114

S. Solo

why do you hold

Fl.

Vc.

Hpsd.

pp

p

Miami, FL
February 15th, 2019