

Nothing Happens Here at Home

Reuben's Solo

John Knapp II

Patricia Souder

♩ = 88 *Freely; Tenderly* Accompaniment Track 2A

REUBEN sweeps floor as he enters, then leans on broom and looks at sky wistfully as he sings. SARAH enters with basket of fruit during REUBEN'S solo.

The score shows the first three measures of the piece. The key signature has one flat (B-flat) and the time signature is 4/4. The music begins with a whole rest in the treble clef and a quarter rest in the bass clef. The melody in the treble clef starts with a quarter note G4, followed by quarter notes A4, B4, and C5. The bass line consists of a quarter note G2, followed by quarter notes A2, B2, and C3. There are three triplet markings over the bass line in measures 2, 3, and 4.

4 *mf* REUBEN,
I wish that I could move to Rome; Noth-ing hap-pens

The score shows measures 4 through 8. The vocal line begins at measure 4 with a quarter note G4, followed by quarter notes A4, B4, and C5. The piano accompaniment continues with the same bass line as in the previous system, with triplet markings. The dynamic marking *mf* is present.

9
here at home. I hop in bed, "Dear Lord... A - men," and snug-gle down in Beth - le - hem. If

The score shows measures 9 through 12. The vocal line begins at measure 9 with a quarter note G4, followed by quarter notes A4, B4, and C5. The piano accompaniment continues with the same bass line as in the previous system, with triplet markings. The dynamic marking *mf* is present.

14 Wistfully

Musical score for measures 14-16. The vocal line is in a wistful mood. The piano accompaniment features a steady eighth-note pattern in the right hand and a simple bass line in the left hand. Both hands include several triplet markings.

I could tra - vel wide and far, I'd see much more than

17

Musical score for measures 17-19. The vocal line shows a sigh and a wish. The piano accompaniment continues with triplet patterns. The tempo is marked 'rit.' (ritardando).

one bright star. I wish that I could move to Rome;

Sighs; with frustration

Slowly

Musical score for measures 20-22. The tempo is marked 'Slowly'. The vocal line is sparse. The piano accompaniment features a more complex texture with triplets and a 'p' (piano) dynamic marking.

Noth - ing hap - pens here at home.

Preview only - Do not print

SCENE 1

[SARAH approaches REUBEN as he finishes the last two lines of his solo.]

SARAH: [Amazed and a little disgusted] Rome? Reuben, of all places!

REUBEN: Oh, Sarah, Bethlehem is so boring. Every day I go to Synagogue School. When I come home, I have to help Papa care for the animals and sweep the inn and the courtyard. It's always the same. Rome is where the action is!

SARAH: Reuben, how can you say that? Bethlehem is so full of action tonight that Papa is turning away people because there's no room. Mama and I have been baking all day. She sent me to the Fruit Market before it closed and this [takes orange and withered grapes from basket] is all I could get. We've been so busy I feel as if I could drop. How can you say nothing happens here at home?

REUBEN: Busy and important are two different things, Sarah. You've been busy, but you haven't done anything important. Why I've lived in Bethlehem for thirteen years and nothing, *absolutely nothing*, important ever happens here.

SARAH: But Bethlehem is our home. We're Jews, God's chosen people, living in the land God promised to our forefathers.

REUBEN: God's chosen people living in the promised land? That's ridiculous! We don't even run our own government. We're just puppets in the hands of the Romans.

SARAH: You'd better not let the Roman soldiers hear you say that.

REUBEN: See what I mean?

SARAH: Israel's had hard times before, but God's always taken care of His people. Maybe God will send another prophet soon. Maybe . . .

REUBEN: Sarah, be sensible. Israel's had no prophet for hundreds of years.

SARAH: But the prophets told us God would send Messiah.

REUBEN: Then why hasn't He done it? What's he waiting for? Conditions are certainly bad enough.

SARAH: [Quite distressed.] Reuben, you shouldn't question God. Don't you remember the verse Papa taught us? For My thoughts are not your thoughts, neither are your ways My ways, saith the LORD." God never forsakes His people. Surely you remember Abraham . . . and Isaac . . . and Jacob . . . and . . .

JOSEPH AND CHOIR: *Joseph's Egyptian Jail Song*

[JOSEPH, as cantor, enters STAGE RIGHT. CHOIR is positioned in rear of auditorium. CHOIR marches to front as they echo Joseph's words.]

[REUBEN and SARAH sit on courtyard benches.]

Joseph's Egyptian Jail Song

(A Marching Rhyme)

John Knapp II

Patricia Souder

(♩ = 120) CD 3 [NOTE: CD includes 2 measure introduction to establish the marching beat]

Joseph

Great - grand - fa - ther A - bra - ham (Great - grand - fa - ther A - bra - ham)

Choir

Jos.

Marched in - to - the Pro - mised Land. (Marched in - to - the Pro - mised Land.) Grand - fa - ther I - saac,

Ch.

Jos.

(Grand - fa - ther I - saac) Did not turn back. (Did not turn back.) Un - cle E - sau,

Ch.

Jos.

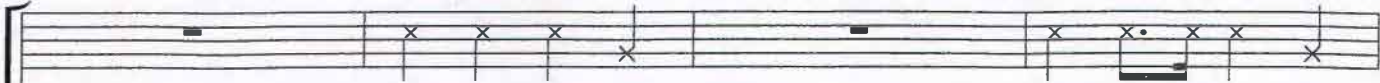

(Un - cle E - sau,) Hot soup he saw. (Hot soup he saw.) My fa - ther Ja - cob,

Ch.

CD 4

Joseph's Egyptian Jail Song



14

Jos. 
(Your fa - ther Ja - cob,) Twelve sons raised up. (Twelve sons raised up.) My mo - ther Ra - chel,
Ch. 

18

Jos. 
(Your mo - ther Ra - chel,) Loved me real well. (Loved you real well.) I am Jo - seph,
Ch. 

22

Jos. 
(You are Jo seph,) One who knows if (One who knows if) God is with me,
Ch. 

26

Jos. 
(God is with you) I can - not fail, (You can - not fail,) E - ven though Pot - i - phar
Ch. 

30

Jos. 
(E - ven though Pot - i - phar) Put me in jail. (Put you in jail.)
Ch. 

REUBEN: That was in the days of the patriarchs. It was exciting to be a Jew then.

[JOSEPH walks to REUBEN and confronts him as SARAH sighs and takes the basket of fruit into the Inn.]

JOSEPH: [In gravelly voice] Do you really think it was exciting to be sold into slavery and thrown into jail?

REUBEN: Well, at least *something* happened.

JOSEPH: Something happened, all right, my friend. But you can be sure I wanted to go home much more than you wish you could leave home. If God hadn't been with me, I would have sung: [Use tune from "Nothing Happens Here at Home"]
"I do not like this palace dome;
The place for me is back at home."

REUBEN: [Nods head thoughtfully, but refuses to give up] Yes, but after you got out of jail, you became rich and famous. Lots of exciting things happened then.

JOSEPH: Exciting? You think slavery is exciting? My being in Egypt caused our people to be slaves for 400 years. [Crosses arms in challenge]

REUBEN: [Lifts hands in gesture of helplessness. Then, not wanting to lose face, says in brighter tone . . .] But then there was Moses and all his wonderful miracles!

[JOSEPH shakes head and joins choir. REUBEN can also join choir if convenient.]

CHOIR: *Moses, O Moses*

MOTIONS for chorus: Choir stands in two or three lines. MOSES stands in front of choir and leads in motions:

Moses, O Moses

*servant of
God*

*Where do you keep
that unusual rod?
We saw you once
a wooden stick take
You flung it down
and it hissed like a
snake*

*Then down dipped your hand
this snake up to pick
and that ugly reptile
changed back to a stick*

Choir turns on heel to face Moses at an angle. Points to Moses
[Moses points to self with quizzical look on face.]

Choir faces front

Face and hands are raised to God

Face front, shrug shoulders, palms up, eyes wide with question

Raise right hand as if holding rod

Turn on heel to face Moses again

Face front, raise right hand as if holding rod

Flick wrist as if throwing rod down

Flutter hands palms down

Hands do "S" curve to right side, palms together. Nervous expressions

Lean down with right hand to pick up snake between fingers

Come up slowly as if holding tail of snake

Stand as though holding snake

Let go of tail of snake; grasp rod with right hand; smile; relax posture

Moses, O Moses

Patricia Souder, *Verses*
John Knapp II, *Chorus*

Patricia Souder
Arr. Carmen Allen

Chant-like (♩ = 144) CD 5 CD 7, v. 2 CD 9, v. 3

A CHOIR:

1. Long a - go in E - gypt land,
2. "Lord, de - liv - er; Hear our cry!
3. Pain - ful plagues on man and beast,

Pha-raoh ruled with cru - el hand: "Work them hard, they've got no rights;
If you don't, we'll sure - ly die." God said, "Mo - ses, take your rod;
As God's an - ger was un - leashed: Lo - custs, frogs and flies ga - lore,

They're just low - ly Is - rael - ites." Bro - ken backs from
With it, show the pow'r of God." Mo - ses went to
Lice in ev - ry - thing they wore. Blood - y wa - ter,

13

ma - king — bricks; Bro - ken hearts from Pha-raoh's — tricks; Days of mis - 'ry,
 Pha-roah's — throne; But King Pha - roah's heart was — stone. God said, "Let My
 smel - ly — fish: Phar - aoh still re - fused God's — wish. On - ly death's sharp,

17

CD 6, v. 1 CD 8, v. 2 CD 10, v. 3 C Refrain

nights of — grief; Bit - ter bon - dage, no re - lief. Mo - ses, O
 peo - ple — go," Pha - roah laughed and said, "Oh, no!"
 bit - ter — blow Made proud Pha - roah say, "Please go!"

22

Mo - ses ... ser - vant of God ... Where do you keep that un -

27

us - u - al rod? We saw you once a

Preview only - Do not print

31

wood - en stick take; You flung it down and it hissed like a

36

D

snake. Then down dipped your hand, This snake up to pick And

41

1, 2 D.C. 3

that ug - ly rep - tile changed back to a stick that ug - ly

46

rep - tile changed back to a stick!

[SARAH re-enters from Inn door with a basket of mending.]

REUBEN: [Hisses and wriggles arm like a snake as he starts toward SARAH.] Imagine! A rod that turned into a snake!

SARAH: [Jumps, startled. Drops basket. Shouts—] Reuben!

REUBEN: [Blinks eyes, assumes angelic expression and says with an air of dignity—] Perhaps you'd prefer a river of blood, my dear?

SARAH: [Wrinkles nose, sighs deeply and states emphatically—] Definitely not!

REUBEN: Perhaps frogs, then?

Frogs in the rivers,
Frogs in the streets,
Frogs in the bedchambers
Under royal sheets!

SARAH: Frogs in the kneading troughs,
Frogs in the bread,
Frogs squooshing under foot--
I'd rather be dead!

[Picks up basket and contents, then sits on bench and starts mending.]

REUBEN: Not me, Sarah. That was the time to live. Just think! A miracle every day!

MIRIAM: [Entering from CHOIR] Not so fast, Reuben, not so fast. I'm Miriam, Moses' sister, who made sure nothing happened to Moses when he was a baby. That was thrilling . . . and so were the many miracles we saw God do. But Reuben, that's only part of the story. We also had to wander in the wilderness for forty years. Being an innkeeper's son in Bethlehem is filled with adventure compared to that!

CHOIR: *Grumbling Anna*

MOTIONS for Verse 1: MOTHER carries wooden bowl with cotton balls or pulls cotton balls out of her pockets. Scatters them on floor. Make appropriate gestures as they sing.

ANNA wrinkles nose and shakes head as she sings "this fluffy white stuff." Looks the other way with nose in air as she sings, "It's boring to eat only manna."