

Patricia Julien

Mother to Son

Poem "Mother to Son" by Langston Hughes
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(for Mezzo Soprano, Viola, and Piano)

(7:15)

Written for Evelyn Kwanza

Mother to Son

Langston Hughes

Patricia Julien

Majestically ♩ = 52

Rubato *mf* *mp* (scoop)

Voice

Viola

Piano

Majestically ♩ = 52

f (scoop)

Well, son, I'll tell you: hmm

5 **A** **A tempo**

Life for me ain't been no crys-tal stair. Life for me ain't been no crys-tal stair.

A **A tempo**

mp *p*

9 *ff* *mp*

It's had tacks in it, And splin- ters, And boards torn up, And

f

14 *f* *p* *p* (hushed)

plac-es with no car-pet on the floor- Bare. Life for me ain't been no crys-tal stair.

mp *mf*

19 **B** (more lyrically) *mp*

Tacks,

f **B** *mp*

mf *mp*

24

Splin- ters, Boards torn up, Plac - es with no

3 3 3 3

28

car - pet on the floor - Bare. Life for me ain't been no crys-tal

p

34

stair. But

f

p

cresc.

39

C slightly faster ♩ = 58

all the time—I've been a-climb-in' on, All the time climb-in' on,

C slightly faster ♩ = 58

mf

43

And reach-in' land- in's, And turn-in' cor- ners, And_

48

some-times go-in' in the dark Where there ain't been no light. Life for

(strong)

53

me ain't been no crys - tal stair. But all the time I'se

D

D

f

57

been a-climb-in' on, All the time_ climb-in' on, And reach-in'

mf

This system contains measures 57 through 60. The vocal line is in treble clef with a key signature of three flats. The piano accompaniment consists of a right-hand melody in treble clef and a left-hand accompaniment in bass clef. The piano part features a steady eighth-note accompaniment in the right hand and a more complex bass line with some chromaticism. A mezzo-forte (*mf*) dynamic marking is present in measure 59.

61

land- in's, And turn-in' cor- ners, And_

This system contains measures 61 through 64. The vocal line continues with the same melodic pattern. The piano accompaniment maintains the eighth-note accompaniment in the right hand. A mezzo-forte (*mf*) dynamic marking is present in measure 61.

65

some-times go-in' in the dark Where there ain't been no light. Life for

mp

This system contains measures 65 through 68. The vocal line concludes with the phrase "Life for". The piano accompaniment features a more active bass line in the left hand, with some chromaticism. A mezzo-piano (*mp*) dynamic marking is present in measure 65.

70

me ain't been no crys - tal stair.

p

This system contains measures 70 through 73. It features a vocal line in treble clef with lyrics, a piano accompaniment in 12/8 time with a bass line in the left hand and chords in the right hand. A piano (*p*) dynamic marking is present in measure 71. The key signature has two flats.

74

E

cresc.

cresc.

This system contains measures 74 through 76. It features a vocal line in treble clef and a piano accompaniment in 12/8 time. A crescendo (*cresc.*) marking is present in measure 75. A key signature change to one flat occurs at the start of measure 76. The system concludes with a double bar line and a sharp sign indicating the next key signature.

77

This system contains measures 77 through 79. It features a vocal line in treble clef and a piano accompaniment in 12/8 time. The key signature has one flat. The system concludes with a double bar line and a sharp sign indicating the next key signature.

80

poco accel. **f** **F** Più mosso ♩ = 63

So boy, don't you

f **F** Più mosso ♩ = 63

83

turn back. Don't you set down on the steps Don't you turn back

87

'Cause you finds it's kind - er hard. Don't you fall now -

92

mp

Don't you fall - For I'se still go-in', hon ey,— I'se— still

97

mf

climb- in',— And life for

100

poco rit.

me ain't been no crys - tal stair.