

In Blackwater Woods



Joelle Wallach

In Blackwater Woods

Look, the trees
are turning
their own bodies
into pillars

of light,
are giving off the rich
fragrance of cinnamon
and fulfillment,

the long tapers
of cattails
are bursting and floating away over
the blue shoulders

of the ponds,
and every pond,
no matter what its
name is, is

nameless now.
Every year
everything
I have ever learned

in my lifetime
leads back to this: the fires
and the black river of loss
whose other side

is salvation,
whose meaning
none of us will ever know.
To live in this world

you must be able
to do three things:
to love what is mortal;
to hold it

against your bones knowing
your own life depends on it;
and, when the time comes to let it go,
to let it go.

Mary Oliver

In Blackwater Woods

for Nancy Burke

Mary Oliver

$\text{♩} = 86$ mormorio

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The piano introduction is in 4/4 time, marked *p* (piano). It features a melody in the right hand and a bass line in the left hand. The melody begins with a half note G4, followed by quarter notes A4, B4, and C5, then a half note B4. The bass line starts with a half note G3, followed by quarter notes A3, B3, and C4, then a half note B3. The piece is in a minor key, indicated by the key signature of one flat (Bb).

The vocal entry is marked *mp* (mezzo-piano). The melody is in the right hand, and the piano accompaniment is in the left hand. The lyrics are: "Look, the trees are turning their own bodies in to". The melody begins with a half note G4, followed by quarter notes A4, B4, and C5, then a half note B4. The piano accompaniment features a steady eighth-note pattern in the right hand and a bass line in the left hand.

The vocal continuation is marked *mf* (mezzo-forte). The melody is in the right hand, and the piano accompaniment is in the left hand. The lyrics are: "pillars of light, giving off the rich fragrance of". The melody begins with a half note G4, followed by quarter notes A4, B4, and C5, then a half note B4. The piano accompaniment features a steady eighth-note pattern in the right hand and a bass line in the left hand.

cin - ne - mon and ful - fill - - ment;

p luminoso

poco f

The _____ long _____ ta - - pers of cat - tails are burst - ing and float - ing a - way _____ o - ver blue _____

mp

shoul - ders _____ of ponds, _____ and ev - 'ry pond, _____ no mat - ter what its name, _____

dolcissimo ma poco f

is _____ name - less now. _____ Ev - 'ry year, ev - 'ry - _____

p

p sotto voce

thing _____ leads back to this: _____ the fires _____

p o c o

p o c o a p o c o

and black riv - er of loss whose o - - ther side ³is sal - va

subito p e ben lontano *poco ritenuto*

- - tion, _____ whose mean - ing _____ none will e - ver know. _____

poco ritenuto
sotto voce

A tempo *p placido ma triste* *mp* *poco*

To live in _____ this world you must do three things: to love _____

p *sotto voce*

what's mor - - - tal, to hold it a - gainst your

poco

poco f ma dolce *mp*

bones know

ing your own 3 life de - pends on it;

poco f *mp* *f ma molto dolce*

and when time comes to let go,

to let go.

The first system of the musical score consists of a vocal line and a piano accompaniment. The vocal line begins with a whole note rest, followed by a quarter note G4, a quarter note F#4, and a half note E4. The piano accompaniment features a complex texture with multiple voices, including a prominent bass line with a descending scale and a treble line with a series of chords and a final melodic phrase.

mf ma ben dolce
And — when time —

The second system continues the musical score. The vocal line has a whole note rest, followed by a quarter note G4, a quarter note F#4, and a half note E4. The piano accompaniment features a complex texture with multiple voices, including a prominent bass line with a descending scale and a treble line with a series of chords and a final melodic phrase.

mf comes — to let go, *mp* to let go.

The third system continues the musical score. The vocal line has a whole note rest, followed by a quarter note G4, a quarter note F#4, and a half note E4. The piano accompaniment features a complex texture with multiple voices, including a prominent bass line with a descending scale and a treble line with a series of chords and a final melodic phrase.

pppp

The fourth system continues the musical score. The vocal line has a whole note rest, followed by a quarter note G4, a quarter note F#4, and a half note E4. The piano accompaniment features a complex texture with multiple voices, including a prominent bass line with a descending scale and a treble line with a series of chords and a final melodic phrase.