

Commissioned for The Crossing, Donald Nally, Conductor
First performance on December 12, 2021 at St. Andrews Episcopal Church, College Park, Maryland
by The Crossing, conducted by Donald Nally

Special thanks to Rabbi Steven Denker for his guidance in the creation of this work.

Program Notes

Exodus was written for The Crossing as part of their “Carols After the Plague” series. For this project, I was asked to compose a personal “carol” in response to a “plague”.

Growing up Jewish, I did not feel a personal connection with the word “carol”. I did, however, have a connection with the word “plague”. The Old Testament is riddled with them, and I couldn’t help but draw a line between the plagues in the bible and the current plagues we face in our society. I found myself returning to the *Mi Chamocha* (Exodus 15:1-18): a prayer that was sung at the end of the Passover story directly after the Jews escaped Egypt. It is a love poem to God and it begins with a rhetorical question: “Who is like you, O God...” To me, I did not see this as a rhetorical question but one of deep complication with my faith. This small phrase became the fertile ground for me to ask further questions. I wanted to take the grandiosity of that phrase and distill it into a child-like curiosity intertwined with uncertainty.

Text

who is like you
will you protect me
should i thank you
will you stay silent
nevertheless, i pray

—adapted from Exodus 15:11
by the composer

Duration: ca. 6:00 minutes

Exodus

for SATB Chorus unaccompanied

Exodus 15:11
(adaptation by AB)

Alex Berko
(ASCAP)

Yearning ♩ = 66

p

Soprano
who is like you— will you pro - tect me— should

Alto
like you— will you pro - tect— should

Tenor
like you— you pro - tect— should

Bass
pro - tect me— should

Piano
for rehearsal only

6 *mp* *p* *mf* *pp poco rit.*

i thank you— will you stay si - lent, stay— si - lent

mp *p* *mf* *pp poco rit.*

i thank you— will you stay si - lent, stay— si - lent

mp *p* *mf* *pp poco rit.*

i thank you— will you stay si - lent, stay— si - lent

mp *p* *mf* *pp poco rit.*

i will you stay si - lent, stay— si - lent

Piano
poco rit.

♩ = 112 (suddenly faster)

11 *pp*

S1 who _____ is,

S2 who _____ is,

A1 *pp*
who is, who is, who is, who is, who is, who is, who is, who is, who is, who is,

A2 *pp*
who, who, who, who, who, who, who, who, who, who, who, who, who, who,

♩ = 112 (suddenly faster)
*

14

S1 who is, who is,

S2 _____ who is, who is,

A1 who is, who is, who is, who is, who is, who is, who is, who is, who is, who is, who is, who is,

A2 *pp*
who, who, who, who, who, who, who, who, who, who, who, who, who, who, who, who, who, who, who, who,

*In mm. 11-27, 44-66, and 85-126, due to the preponderance of different voice parts singing on the same pitch with different rhythmic patterns, the reduction will provide pitch changes only. Specific rhythms may be added, at the discretion of the accompanist, to provide further assistance to the singers.

18

S1
who is, who is

S2
— who — is, — who — is —

A1
who is, who is, who is, who is, who is, who is, who is, who is, who is, who is, who is, who is, who is, who is, who is, who is,

A2
who, who,

22

S1
like you, who is,

S2
— like — you, — who —

A1
who is, who is, who is, who is, who is, who is, who is, who is, who is, who is, who is, who is, who is, who is, who is, who is,

A2
who, who,

♩ = 69 (slightly faster than Tempo I)

26

S1
who

S2
is, who, who is

A1
who is, who is, who is, who is, who is, who is

A2
5
who, who, who, who, who, who is

♩ = 69 (slightly faster than Tempo I)

30 *unis. p*

S
like you will you pro - tect me should i

A *unis. p*
like you will you pro - tect me should i

T *p unis.*
like you will you pro - tect me should i

B *p*
pro - tect me should i

♩ = 78 (faster than before)

67 *pp* *pp* background

S1
who is, who is, who is, who is, who

S2
pp who is like you *p*

A
pp who is like you *p*

T
pp is like you *p*

♩ = 78 (faster than before)

71

S1
is, who is, who is, who is, who is, who is, who is, who is, who

S2
p will you pro - tect me

A
p will you pro - tect me

T
p will you pro - tect me

78

S1 *p cresc. poco a poco*
 who is, who is, who is, who is, who is, who is, who is, who is, who is, who is, who is, who is,

S2 *p cresc. poco a poco*
 who is, who is, who is, who is, who is, who is, who is, who is, who is, who is, who is, who is,

A *p cresc. poco a poco*
 will you stay, will

T *p cresc. poco a poco*
 will you stay, will

80 *mp (cresc.)*
 S1 *mp (cresc.)*
 who is, who is, who is, who is, who is, who is, who is, who is, who is, who is, who is, who is,

S2 *mp (cresc.)*
 who is, who is, who is, who is, who is, who is, who is, who is, who is, who is,

A *mp (cresc.)*
 you stay, will

T *mp (cresc.)*
 you stay, will

*For the purpose of clarity, the reduction has been placed on three staves to assist the accompanist in playing specific voice parts in rehearsal.

93

S1: who is like

S2: who is, who is, who who is, who is, who is, who is, who is, who is, who is, who is,

A1: who is, who is, who is, who is, who is, who is, who is, who is, who is, who is, who is,

A2: who, who, who, who, who, who, who, who, who, who, who, who, who is, who is,

96

S1: who is, who is, who

S2: who is, who is, who is, who is, who is, who is, who is,

A1: who is, who is, like

A2: who is, who is, who, who, who, who, who, who, who is, who is, who is, who is,

T1: *(f)* who is, who is, who is, who is, who is, who is, who is, who is,

T2: *(f)* who is, who is, who is, who is, who is, who is, is, who, who, who, who, who, who,

110

S1 is, who, is, who is, who

S2 who, is, who is,

A1 you, who is like

A2 who is, who is, who is, who is, who is, who is, who is, who is, who is, who, who, who, who, who, who is, who is,

T1 who is, who is, who is, who is, who is, who is, who is, who is, who is, who is, who is, who is, who is, who is,

T2 who,

B1 who is like you,

B2 who is like you,

114

S1 is, who is, who is, who

S2 who is, who is, who

A1 you, who is

A2 who is, who is, who is, who is, who is, who, who, who, who, who, who, who, who

T1 who is, who is, who is, who is, who is, who is, who is, who is, who is, who is

T2 who, who, who, who, who, who, who, who, who, who, who, who, who, who, who, who

B1 who is like

B2 who is like

117

S1 is, who is, who is, who

S2 is, who is, who is, who is,

A1 like, stay

A2 who is, who is, who is, who is, who is, who is, who is, who is, stay

T1 who is, who is, who is, who is, who is, who is, who is, who is, who is, who is,

T2 who, who, who, who, who, who, who, who, who, who, who, who, who, who, who,

B1 you, stay

B2 you, stay

dim. poco a poco

dim. poco a poco

p sub.

p sub.

ff

ff

p sub.

p sub.

120

S1 is, who is, who is, who-

S2 who is, who is, who

A1 si - lent, stay

A2 si - lent, stay

T1 who is, who is, who is, who is, who is, who is, who is, who is, who is, who is, who is,

T2 who, who, who, who, who, who, who, who, who

B1 si - lent, stay

B2 si - lent, stay

The musical score is for a choir with eight parts: Soprano 1 (S1), Soprano 2 (S2), Alto 1 (A1), Alto 2 (A2), Tenor 1 (T1), Tenor 2 (T2), Bass 1 (B1), and Bass 2 (B2). It also includes a piano accompaniment at the bottom. The tempo is marked as 120. The lyrics are: S1: is, who is, who is, who-; S2: who is, who is, who; A1: si - lent, stay; A2: si - lent, stay; T1: who is, who is, who is, who is, who is, who is, who is, who is, who is, who is, who is,; T2: who, who, who, who, who, who, who, who, who; B1: si - lent, stay; B2: si - lent, stay. The piano accompaniment features triplets and a quintuplet.

♩ = 92 (carry energy over)

126 *pp* *p*

S1 is, who is stay si - lent, stay,-

S2 is, who is, stay si - lent, stay,

A *pp* *unis. p* stay si - lent, stay,-

T *pp* *unis. p* who is stay si - lent, stay,-

B *pp* *unis. p* stay si - lent, stay,-

pp *unis. p*

♩ = 92 (carry energy over)

131 *unis.*

S stay si - lent, stay si - lent, stay

A stay si - lent, stay si - lent, stay

T stay si - lent, stay si - lent, stay

B stay si - lent, stay si - lent, stay

135

S
si - lent, stay si - lent, si - lent, si - lent, *unis.* si - lent

A
si - lent, stay si - lent, si - lent, si - lent, si - lent

T
si - lent, stay si - lent, si - lent, si - lent, si - lent

B
si - lent, stay si - lent, si - lent, si - lent, si - lent

139

S
nev - er - the - less

A
(h) nev - er - the - less

T
nev - er - the - less i pray.

B
unis. nev - er - the - less i pray.

♩ = 76 subito