

Michal Dawson Connor



WERE YOU THERE?

FOR SATB CHOIR WITH TREBLE SOLO

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An indomitable sense of hope, and unvarnished sorrow, permeate each line and melody of these unforgettable songs- forged in the anvil of abject misery and despair, aching for freedom's light.

Humiliated beyond all human reckoning, and given no respite from the daily drudgery of endless toil- these fiercely resilient souls somehow persevered, despite the harshest obstacles- leaving behind a true golden legacy of words and music to cherish. In his famous autobiography, Frederick Douglass wrote:

"Slaves sing most when they are most unhappy. The songs of the slave represent the sorrows of his heart; and he is relieved by them, only as an aching heart is relieved by its tears."

I am deeply honored to present these musical footprints of my proud ancestors- and hope that by singing them, we pause to remember the undaunted courage and grit of the men and women who originally composed them.

— MICHAL DAWSON CONNOR

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Were You There?

Spiritual

Arr. Michal Dawson Connor

Con Eloquenza (♩=55)

Solo *mp*
Were you there when they cru - ci - fied my Lord? Were you
Were you there when they nailed Him to the tree? Were you

Soprano *p*
Some - times, it caus - es me to trem - ble, trem - ble, trem - ble.

Alto *p*
Some - times caus - es me to trem - ble, trem - ble, trem - ble.

Tenor *p*
Some - times caus - es me to trem - ble, trem - ble, trem - ble.

Bass *p*
Some - times caus - es me to trem - ble, trem - ble, trem - ble.

Con Eloquenza (♩=55)

Piano
(for rehearsal only)

6

Solo
there when they cru - ci - fied my Lord? Oh,
there when they nailed Him to the tree? Oh,

Sop
Lord, when they cru - ci - fied Him. Steal a-way to Je - sus. Oh, Oh,
Lord, when they nailed my Je - sus.

Alt
Lord, when they cru - ci - fied Him. Steal a-way to Je - sus. Oh, Oh,
Lord, when they nailed my Je - sus.

Ten
Lord, when they cru - ci - fied Him. Steal a-way to Je - sus. Oh, Oh,
Lord, when they nailed my Je - sus.

Bas
Lord, when they cru - ci - fied Him. Steal a-way to Je - sus. Oh, Oh,
Lord, when they nailed my Je - sus.

p

2 11 poco rit. A tempo

singhiozzando

Solo Oh, Some-times it caus-es me to trem-ble, trem-ble,

Sop Oh, Oh. Steal a-way. Steal a-way. Caus - es me to, caus - es me to

Alt Oh, Oh. Steal a-way. Steal a-way. Caus - es me to, caus - es me to

Ten Oh, Oh. Steal a-way. Steal a-way. Caus - es me to, caus - es me to

Bas Oh, Oh. Steal a-way. Steal a-way. Caus - es me to, caus - es me to

poco rit. A tempo

16 *f sub.* *pp sub.* **molto rit.** (2nd time)

Solo trem-ble. Were you there when they cru - ci - fied my Lord? Were you there when they nailed Him to the tree?

Sop trem-ble. Oh, ain't got long to stay 'round, stay, stay, stay 'round here.

Alt trem-ble. Oh, ain't got long to stay 'round, stay, stay, stay 'round here.

Ten trem-ble. Oh, ain't got long to stay 'round, stay, stay, stay 'round here.

Bas trem-ble. Oh, ain't got long to stay 'round, stay, stay, stay 'round here.

molto rit. (2nd time)