

# When The Rain Came

*for countertenor & piano*

PERUSAL ONLY

*Joshua Ballance*

**2018**



*It seems I have no tears left. They should have fallen -  
their ghosts, if tears have ghosts, did fall,  
Are forever smearing the air with grief.*

*Then the rain came, like stammered kisses at first  
on the back of my neck. I turned up my face,  
And water flooded my mouth, baptised my head.  
Rain, midnight rain, nothing but the wild rain,  
and solitude, and me.*

*But nebulous and tremulous through the tears  
that filled my eyes, your face appeared to me;*

*O God! You too are crying  
As if a world were dying  
It is a world that is for us the whole world, the only world,*

*But, though I have wept and fasted, wept and prayed,  
All was washed clean with the flood.  
Since, with the tears you sense a touch of peace  
through a bright cloud of tears,  
and should some why completely weep*

*And the rain clouds gathered like midnight overhead,  
And the rain came down like a lover comes to bed.*

## *Composer's Note*

*When The Rain Came* melds imagery of rain and tears, two subjects which are of course visually similar, and often related metaphorically. The text is drawn from a wide range of poetic sources, with small fragments from each stitched together to produce something of a narrative. Though images are often juxtaposed with little to explicitly or logically draw them together, the implications of the two primary topics are enough to maintain the flow of the discourse. Whether there is any progression through time in this narrative, and thus across the course of the piece, is unclear. Though the very act of thinking/speaking/singing inherently takes time, there is a sense of stasis to the text: it is ambiguous as to whether the rain *actually* does fall, or is imagined.

Essentially a soliloquy for a single protagonist, we spectate as they grapple alone with memories of a past lover. The purity of the countertenor voice is ideal for conveying the emotional delicacy of the situation, whilst the rejection of conventional gender-stereotypes inherent in the nature of the voice universalises the pain and grief that the protagonist feels. This is similarly matched in the harmonic language: chromatic, but not always abrasive, to capture this intense emotional frailty and vulnerability.

Duration: c. 9'

## *Notation*

### Singer

Where text is given in square brackets, e.g. b. 2, is not to be sung, but is included to indicate the word from which it comes, and thus pronunciation.

♯ indicates one quarter sharp

♭ indicates one quarter flat

### Piano

Crossed note-heads: pianist should mute the string with finger (otherwise play as normal).

Diamond note-heads: notes should be depressed silently, and sustained with the middle pedal.

### Fermatas

^	Short
◡	Medium
▭	Long

*first performed on Sunday 25th February 2018  
by Joseph Zubier & Donal McCann*

for Joe Zubier  
When The Rain Came

Joshua Ballance

♩ = c.51 fragile, unsure

some vib. - narrow, not too fast

It i[t] i[t] i[t] it\_\_\_\_\_ seems

♩ = c.51 fragile, unsure

(muted)

ppp

5 ♩ = c.60 more active

flustered

mf > pp

uncertain

p > pp

seems\_\_\_\_\_ see\_ see\_ seems\_ I have I have

♩ = c.60 more active

p > pp

growing in certainty

senza vib.

mf > p

ppp

ff

10 I have no tears no tears\_\_\_\_\_ left\_\_\_\_\_

p mf p

14 original vibrato *(ff)* (sustain to the barline)

They should should have fall - en

*mf* very heavy, bell-like *pp* plaintive

15<sup>ma</sup>

18 *ppp* very smooth *ff* suddenly violent *ppp* very smooth senza vib. *p* poco vib. with cresc.

their ghosts, if tears have ghosts, their ghosts did fall\_\_\_\_\_

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23 *p* even *poco rit.*

are for - e - ver smear - - ing the air with

*poco rit.*



26 **Tempo**

grief. \_\_\_\_\_

**Tempo** everything absolutely even:  
no sense of metre

*ppp* very crisp *f* violent outburst *ppp*

(silent)

30 **poco accel.** ..... ♩ = c.60

**poco accel.** ..... ♩ = c.60

*ppp* 5

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33

*sempre staccato*

35

Musical score for measures 35-36. The system includes a grand staff with three staves. The top staff is empty. The middle staff contains a melodic line with eighth and sixteenth notes. The bottom staff contains a bass line with a triplet of eighth notes. Dynamics are marked as *ppp*, *p*, and *ppp* under the triplet.

37

Musical score for measures 37-38. The system includes a grand staff with three staves. The top staff is empty. The middle staff contains a melodic line with eighth and sixteenth notes. The bottom staff contains a bass line with a triplet of eighth notes. Dynamics are marked as *ppp*, *mf*, and *ppp* under the triplet. A large red watermark "PERUSAL ONLY" is overlaid on the middle staff.

39

Musical score for measures 39-40. The system includes a grand staff with three staves. The top staff is empty. The middle staff contains a melodic line with eighth and sixteenth notes. The bottom staff contains a bass line with eighth notes. Dynamics are not explicitly marked in this system.

41

Musical score for measures 41-42. The score is in 3/4 time. It features a vocal line with a whole rest in measure 41 and a half note in measure 42. The piano accompaniment consists of a right hand with eighth-note chords and a left hand with triplet eighth notes. Dynamics include *ppp*, *f*, and *ppp*. A large red watermark 'PERUSAL ONLY' is overlaid on the piano part.

43

Musical score for measures 43-44. The score is in 3/4 time. The vocal line has lyrics: "Then, then, then the,". The piano accompaniment features a right hand with eighth-note chords and a left hand with triplet eighth notes. Dynamics include *mp uncertain; concerned*, *ppp*, and *f*. A large red watermark 'PERUSAL ONLY' is overlaid on the piano part.

45

Musical score for measures 45-46. The score is in 3/4 time. The vocal line has lyrics: "the, the rain". The piano accompaniment features a right hand with eighth-note chords and a left hand with triplet eighth notes. Dynamics include *p*, *f*, *mp*, and *ppp*. A large red watermark 'PERUSAL ONLY' is overlaid on the piano part.

47 *senza vib.*  
*pp even*  
came,

15/16 15/16 15/16 15/16

48 *standard level of vib.*  
*fp* *fp* *f* *fp* *fp* *ff*  
the rain, the rain

15/16 11/16 5/4 11/16 5/4 11/16 5/4

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50 *pp calm & smooth*  
came,

3/4 3/4 3/4 3/4

51 *fp* growing increasingly frustrated *fp* *fp*

li[k]e\_ li[k]e\_ li[k]e\_  
lʌ ɪ lʌ ɪ lʌ ɪ

*f* *p* *f* *p*

53 *p* surprised to get the word out *ff* assertive, defiant *(ff)* frustrated: increasingly forced & aggressive

like\_ like\_ sta[m]  
lʌ ɪk lʌ ɪk

*p* *ff* *(ff)*

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55

sta[m] sta - mmer'd sta - mmer'd

*f*



61

neck. *pp*

I

*pp*  
(lift middle pedal)

\*

63

turn'd *ppp* 13

up 16

my 13

face, 16

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*ppp* 13

*ppp* 16

65

(strictly in time) ♩ = c.51

*ff* very heavy

And wa - ter floo - ded my

(strictly in time) ♩ = c.51

*ff*

Red.

67

mouth, bap-tis'd my head. Rain, mid-night rain, no - thing but the

*f* *f bell-like*

71

wild rain no so - li - tude,

*mf* *mf* *mp*

74

and me. But ne-bu-lous

*p* *pp fragile* *ppp* *ppp*

Very fast & supple arpeggiation

Ped.



78

and t[rem] tre-mu-lous through the tears that fill'd my eyes,

Ped.

With portamento on descending intervals, if desired

80

your your face a-ppear'd to me; O O

*f* blurred out *f* very fluid

absolutely full-length

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83

O God! You too are cry -

*mp* less certain of oneself

*mp* questioning *plaintive*

*mf* Ped. Ped.

87 *p* 3

ing c c c cry - ing As if a world were  
cə cə cə cə

91 *as if finding peace* *ff as if screaming*

dy - ing It is a world that is for us the  
Repeat continuously, as fast as possible

*f* 5

*Red.* \*

95 *ffp* *ffp* *ffp*

whole world, the on - ly o[nly] o[nly] o[nly]

sim. *f* 5

99

*ffp* > *ffp* > *ff*

o[nly] o[nly] the on - ly world,

\*

103

But, though I have wept and fast - ed,

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*mf* sempre tenuto

\*

\*(sim.)

106

wept and pray'd, All was wash'd clean with the flood

gradually rit. & dim. al niente

110

*p* *mf* *p*

Since, with the tears you sense a touch of

*p dolce* *mf* *p*

114

*pp* *f*

peace through a bright cloud of tears,

*mf* *p* *mp*

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119

*pp* *p gentle*

and should some why com - plete - ly

*p*

123 **molto accel.**

weep

**molto accel.**

*pp* *mp* *p* *mf* *mp* *f*

Ped. (to end)

126

♩ = c.160

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*mf* *ff* *fff*

♩ = c.160

128

Free time: approximately speech-rhythm

*p* quite plain and even, almost factual

And the rain clouds gather'd like mid - night o - ver - head,

16

129  $\text{♩} = \text{c.50}$   $\text{♩} = \text{c.40}$

*ppp* delicate

6

3

3

*ppp* And the

131

(but an echo)

rain came down like a lo - ver a lo - ver comes to bed.

(muted)

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Cambridge, February 2018

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