

*Commissioned by White Snake Projects*

# **A Braided Light**

**Libretto by Wendy Steiner**

**Music by Paul Richards**

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### *Dramatis Personae*

**Leila** [mezzo-soprano], 65, diagnosed the day before with early-stage dementia.

**Mira** [soprano], **Leila's** daughter, 33, a rising star in the State Department; she has not seen her mother or brother for a long time.

**Nate** [baritone], **Leila's** son, 28, lives in the same city as **Leila**, but not with her.

### *Instrumentation*

**Violin**

**Cello**

**Piano**

### *Duration*

18 ½ minutes

### *Setting*

A pleasant living room just before sunset on a Saturday evening. A table stands near a china cabinet holding the ritual objects of Havdalah—a ceremonial wine cup, a filigreed spice box, and a braided candle lying on a plate. On the windowsill are silver candlesticks with tangled rivulets of hardened wax from the Sabbath candles lit the night before.

### *A Note on the Havdalah Ceremony*

Havdalah is performed at the end of the Jewish Sabbath every Saturday evening after the third star appears in the sky. It is a liminal ritual, combining the holiness of the departing Sabbath with the physicality and struggle of the ensuing six days. The function of Havdalah is to mitigate the loss of Sabbath holiness with reminders of the God-given pleasure of the five senses.

The Havdalah ceremony consists of four prayers, each followed by a ritualized sensory experience. After the first prayer, celebrants pass a wine cup from hand to hand (touch) and sip from it (taste). After the second, they take turns inhaling the fragrance from a spice box (smell). After the third, the Havdalah candle is lit, a delicate braid of two or more thin candles, symbolizing the complexity of ordinary life (as opposed to the clarity and purity of the Sabbath, symbolized by the two large candles lit on Friday night). Havdalah celebrants draw near the braided candle to observe its holy light reflecting off their fingernails (sight). And after the fourth and final prayer, the candle is doused with wine to produce a sizzling sound (hearing), at which point the Sabbath is over and everyday life has returned.

## *Program note*

The scene has been repeated every Saturday at sunset since Leila's children were tiny: the wine cup placed beside the filigreed spice box, a braided candle waiting to be lit, family members gathering to enact a ritual as familiar as breathing...until a few years ago. Then things changed, and Leila has been left to celebrate Havdalah on her own. But things have changed again. Yesterday the doctor said she had Alzheimer's, and her children have rushed home to be with her for Havdalah.

It is a fitting ceremony. Tonight, there are two Leila's in the living room: her old self and a stranger she fears will overtake her. Havdalah, likewise, is a hinge across two incompatible realities: the rapture of the departing Sabbath and the mundane struggle of the workweek ahead. Havdalah's rituals reconcile observants to the loss of holiness with the God-given pleasures of the senses, which infiltrate the everyday like the holy light of the braided candle reflected on their rough fingernails. Caught up in the beauty of this vision, Leila wants Havdalah to go on forever.

## IPA pronunciation guide for certain words

Shabbat = ʃa'bat  
Havdalah = hav'da:la  
Mireleh = 'mirələ  
Yarmulke = 'jaməkə

## IPA pronunciation guide for Hebrew transliteration used in the score

a = a  
e = ε  
i = i  
o = ɔ  
u = ʊ  
ai = aɪ  
ei = eɪ  
' = ə  
ch = χ

## Havdalah prayers with English and IPA transliterations

Blessing over the wine:

בְּרוּךְ אַתָּה יי, אֱלֹהֵינוּ מֶלֶךְ הָעוֹלָם, בּוֹרֵא פְּרִי הַגָּפֶן.

*Baruch atah, Adonai Eloheinu, Melech haolam, borei p'ri hagafen.*

ba'ruχ a'ta adou'nai elou'heinu meleχ ha:ou'lam bou'rei pə'ʔi ha'gafən

Blessing over the spices:

בְּרוּךְ אַתָּה יי, אֱלֹהֵינוּ מֶלֶךְ הָעוֹלָם, בּוֹרֵא מִיְנֵי בְּשָׂמִים

*Baruch atah, Adonai Eloheinu, Melech haolam, borei minei v'samim.*

ba'ruχ a'ta adou'nai elou'heinu meleχ ha:ou'lam bou'rei mi'nei vəsa'mim

Blessing over the flame:

בְּרוּךְ אַתָּה יי, אֱלֹהֵינוּ מֶלֶךְ הָעוֹלָם, בּוֹרֵא מְאוּרֵי הָאֵשׁ.

*Baruch atah, Adonai Eloheinu, Melech haolam, borei m'orei ha-esh*

ba'ruχ a'ta adou'nai elou'heinu meleχ ha:ou'lam bou'rei mə:ou'rei ha'eɪʃ

Blessing of separation:

בְּרוּךְ אַתָּה יי, אֱלֹהֵינוּ מֶלֶךְ הָעוֹלָם, הַמְבַדֵּיל בֵּין קֹדֶשׁ לְחוֹל, בֵּין אוֹר לְחֹשֶׁךְ, בֵּין יִשְׂרָאֵל לְעַמִּים, בֵּין יוֹם  
הַשְּׂבִיעִי לְשִׁשֶׁת יְמֵי הַמַּעֲשֶׂה. בְּרוּךְ אַתָּה יי, הַמְבַדֵּיל בֵּין קֹדֶשׁ לְחוֹל.

*Baruch atah, Adonai Eloheinu, Melech haolam,*

*hamavdil bein kodesh l'chol, bein or l'choshech,*

*bein Yisrael laamim,*

*bein yom hash'vi-i l'sheishet y'mei hamaaseh.*

*Baruch atah Adonai, hamavdil bein kodesh l'chol.*

ba'ruχ a'ta adou'nai elou'heinu meleχ ha:ou'lam  
hamav'dil bein 'koudeʃ lə'ħouʃl bein ouʔ lə'ħouʃeχ  
bein jisʔa'el la:amim  
bein joom hafviʔi lə'ʃeɪʃet jə'mei hama:aseɪ  
ba'ruχ a'ta adou'nai hamav'dil bein 'koudeʃ lə'ħouʃl

# A Braided Light

commissioned by White Snake Productions

Music by PAUL RICHARDS  
Libretto by WENDY STEINER

[Leila is standing by the window, running her fingers over the tangled wax on the candlesticks, as Nate takes pains to smooth out a lace cloth over the table.]

♩ = 80 **plaintive**  
Con sord. *rall.*

Violin

Cello

Piano

♩ = 60 *molto rubato*

Vln.

Vc.

Pno.

*rit.* *molto* ♩ = 90 *accel.*

Leila

Was it Fri-day? Just yes-ter-day?

*gliss.* *rit.* *molto* ♩ = 90 *accel.*

Vln.

Vc.

Pno.

*8va*

14 [Nate looks anxiously at his watch.]  $\text{♩} = 120$  *rit.* **p**

Leila  
Yes, I re-mem-ber now: It was

Vln. *Senza sord.*  $\text{♩} = 120$  *rit.* **pp** *sul pont. change to*

Vc. **p**

Pno. *(8va)*

19 *recit. (senza misura)* **mf** [Nate's phone rings; he walks across the room hoping Leila won't hear] *[breaks off, lost in thought]*  $\text{♩} = 132$  **agitated** *p (unsure)*

Leila  
yes-ter-day.... You went with me, did-n't you? —

Vln. *recit. (senza misura)* **mf**  $\text{♩} = 132$  **agitated** *sub. ff* *sub. mp*

Vc. **mf** *sub. ff* *sub. mp*

Pno. **mf** *sub. ff*

22 *mf*

Nate *mf*  
Mi-ra, — where are you? How much lon-ger be-fore you get here?

Vln.

Vc.

Pno.

*mp*

27 *recit. (senza misura)* *mp* *a tempo*

Nate [Pause for Mira's reply.]  
Oh God, it was aw-ful, Mi-ra.

Vln. *f* *recit. (senza misura)* *a tempo*

Vc. *f* *p*

Pno.

31 *recit.* *a tempo* *recit.* *slightly slower* (♩ = 120)

Nate *recit.* *a tempo* *recit.* *slightly slower* (♩ = 120)  
The doc-tor said he wan-ted To be straight with her, But it just seemed cruel:

Vln.

Vc. *p* *f* *p*

Pno.

35

Nate

Me - mo-ry loss, \_\_\_\_\_ Cog - ni-tive im - pair - ment, —

Vln.

Vc.

Pno.

*p*

*p*

*p*

3

gliss.

39

Nate

A - my-loid plaques, Neu - ro - fib - ril - la - ry tan - gles. —

Vln.

Vc.

Pno.

*p*

*p*

*p*

3

*V*

43

Nate

He did - n't say "Alz - hei - mer's," But she knew.

Vln.

Vc.

Pno.

*recit.*

*a tempo poco accel.*

[Pause for reply]

*mp*

*p*

*arco*

*p*

*mf*

*mf*

*mf*

*mf*



46  $\text{♩} = 132$  *mf*

Nate  
No, she would-n't talk a-bout it, Made me drop her

Vln. *mp* *p*

Vc. *mp* *p*

Pno. *p*

49 [Pause for reply]

Nate  
off at the house To do Shab - bat, on her own.

Vln. *ppp* *pp* *sub. f*

Vc. *p* *sub. f*

Pno. *f*

[Defensively:]

53 *f* *mp*

Nate  
Yes, I let her! She's o - kay, on her own... still. And I knew

Vln.

Vc. *pizz.* *mp*

Pno. *mp*

[Angrily:] **f**

57

Nate  
once she lit the can - dles— You know how she gets— In the zone. Be-

Vln.  
*p* *mp* *mp* change to sul pont.

Vc.  
arco change to sul pont.  
*mp*

Pno.  
*mp*

61

Nate  
sides, You're not the on-ly one With a life. Yes, I heard...

Vln.  
ord. *f* *ff* *mf*

Vc.  
*f* *ff* *mf*

Pno.  
*f* *ff* *mf*

[Pause for reply]

65

Nate  
the Mid-dle East cri-sis. Of course I un-der-stand. It's just it

Vln.

Vc.

Pno.

69 [interrupted by reply]

Nate  
al-ways falls on me, you know, To be here. — When Dad-dy died...

Vln. *pp* *mf*

Vc. *p*

Pno. *mf* *p* *mf*

73 *mp*

Nate  
O-kay, o-kay. At least we'll have Hav-da-lah to-ge-ther.

Vln. *pizz.* *p*

Vc. *mf*

Pno. *p*

[Nate walks back to Leila near the table, not sure how much she has heard.]

77 *recit.* *f*  $\text{♩} = 60$  *plaintive* *molto rubato*

Nate  
It will mean a lot to her. Bye. Hur-ry!

Vln. *recit.* *p* *Con sord.* *arco* *molto rubato*

Vc. *Con sord.*

Pno. *p*

80 *rit.*

Vln.

Vc.

Pno.

86 *recit. (senza misura)* *p* [*intent on getting it right:*]

Leila

Af - ter you dropped me off, Nate, On Fri - day, yes - ter - day, I co - vered my head and said The

*recit. (senza misura)*

Vln.

Vc.

Pno.

*pp*

*pp*

89

Leila

bles - sings: bread, Can - dles— just this tan - gled mess now— But

Vln.

Vc.

Pno.

♩ = 80 rapturous

91

Leila

oh, — then, When I struck the match The flames — flared up — And

Vln.

Vc.

Pno.

*p*

*p*

*p*

94

Leila

time stopped. Thought stopped. I was be - ing lif - ted

Vln.

Vc.

Pno.

*rit.*

*rit.*

♩ = 132 wistful

*mf*

97

Leila

up, up — When you were lit-tle We used to lift you

Vln.

Vc.

Pno.

*mf*

*mf*

*mf*

*Senza sord.*

*Senza sord. pizz.*

*p*

100 *poco rit.* *a tempo*

Leila up, Dad - dy and I, One and two and three, and up!

Vln. *mf* *p* *mf* *poco rit.* *a tempo*

Vc. *p* *mf*

Pno. *mf* *p* *mf*

103 *poco rit.* *a tempo*

Leila Re-mem-ber? We al - ways coun - ted to - ge - ther: One

Vln. *p* *mf* *mf* *poco rit.* *a tempo*

Vc. *p* *mf*

Pno. *p* *mf*

106 *poco rit.* *a tempo*

Leila  
 — and two and three, and up! *mf*

Nate  
 Of course I re-mem-ber, Mam-ma.

Vln.  
*poco rit.* *a tempo*

Vc.  
*arco sul pont.* *mf* *pp* *p* *ord.*

Pno.

[The window is dark; again Nate checks his watch. Leila, peering out the window spots a star and counts it, and then a second and a third:]

109 *recit. (slowly)* *mp* *a tempo* (♩.=132)

Leila  
 One... and two... and three! The third star! Time \_\_\_ for Hav - da - lah.

Vln.  
*recit. (slowly)* *pp* *a tempo* (♩.=132)

Vc.  
*pp*

Pno.  
*pp*

112  $\text{♩} = \text{♩} (= 132)$  energetic *mf*  
 [going to the cabinet:]  
 I'll bring out the wine <sup>3</sup>

Vc. *f* pizz. *mp* <sup>3</sup>

Pno. *p* *f* *mp*

116 *mf*  
 And the braid - ed can - dle. \_\_\_\_\_  
 [putting the three objects on the table:]  
 and \_\_\_\_\_ spice box. And the braid-ed can-dle,

Vc. <sup>3</sup>

Pno. *8va*





$\text{♩} = 60$  **plaintive**  
*molto rubato* *rit.* *rit.* *molto*

131

Vln.

Vc.

Pno.

*p* *ppp*

$\text{♩} = 60$  **mp** [Smiling:] *rit.*  $\text{♩} = 54$  **wistful**

136

Leila

Lei-la! Still Lei-la. An - gel Lei-la!

Vln.

Vc.

Pno.

$\text{♩} = 60$  *rit.*  $\text{♩} = 54$  **wistful**

*pp*  
Con sord.  
pizz.

*pp*

[As if talking to Mira as a child long ago:] **p**

140

Leila

Mi-re-leh, did you know I was named for an an-gel? A fe-male

Vln.

Vc.

Pno.

143 *mf* *rall.* [Uneasy:]  
Leila an - gel! The on - ly fe - male an - gel... — Lei - la, An - gel of  
Senza sord. *rall.*

Vln. *p* *arco* *mp*

Vc. *p* *mp*

Pno. *p* *mp* *f*

[Doorbell rings. Nate rushes over. Enter Mira.]  
Leila *a tempo* Night. *♩ = 132 energetic*

Vln. *a tempo* *f* *♩ = 132 energetic* *f* *arco*

Vc. *f* *f*

Pno. *f* *f*

[ignoring Nate:]

**f**

Mira *[ignoring Nate:]*  
Mam-ma!

Leila *[turning from the mirror:]*  
Mi - ra, you've come such a

Nate **f**  
Fi - nal - ly! —

Vln. **mf** *mp*

Vc. **mf** *mp*

Pno. **mf** *mp*

Mira **mf**  
Oh Mam-ma, please. I

Leila  
long way! I guess you felt you had to.

Vln.

Vc.

Pno.

Mira 157  
 wish I \_\_\_\_\_ could have been there... yes-ter - day.

Vln. 157

Vc. 157

Pno. 157

Leila 160 *[instantly forgiving her:]*  
 Well, you're here now, Mi - ra, Just in time for Hav - da - lah, We'll have a

Vln. 160

Vc. 160

Pno. 160

Mira 163  
 I can't stay long, Mam-ma. I'm fly-ing back to-night— The

Leila 163  
 chance To catch up af-ter-ward.

Vln. 163

Vc. 163

Pno. 163

167 *rall.* **f** **p** [Leila is visibly hurt and Nate is furious.]

Mira: talks are heat-ing up. — They need me.

Vln. *rall.* **mp** sul pont. change to ord.

Vc. *rall.* **mp** sul pont. change to ord.

Pno. **f** **p** **mp** **ff**

*recit. (fast, angry, sarcastic)*

170 **ff**

Nate: The fate of na-tions at stake, Mi-ra? How could you tear your-self a-way?

*recit. (fast, angry, sarcastic)*

Vln. **ff** change to sul pont.

Vc. **ff** change to sul pont.

Pno. **ff** **mp**

[Nate pours wine into the cup and they sing the first Havdalah blessing:]

Mira *♩ = 90 rit.* *♩ = 80 plaintive*  
 Leila *pp*  
 Nate *[Regaining control of himself:] mp* *pp*  
 Vln. *♩ = 90 rit.* *♩ = 80 plaintive*  
 Vc.  
 Pno.

*Ba-ruch a-tah A-do - nai E-lo-*  
*Ba-ruch a-tah A - do - nai E - lo-*  
 I'm sor-ry. Let's make Hav - da - lah. *Ba-ruch a-tah A-do - nai E-lo-*

Mira *175*  
 Leila *175*  
 Nate *175*  
 Vln. *175* *Con sord.* *pp*  
 Vc. *Con sord. ord.* *pp*  
 Pno. *175* *pp*

*hei - nu, Me-lech ha - o - lam, Bo - rei p'ri ha - ga - fen.*  
*hei - nu, Me-lech ha - o - lam, Bo - rei p'ri ha - ga - fen.*  
*hei - nu, Me-lech ha - o - lam, Bo - rei p'ri ha - ga - fen.*

180 *mp*

Mira  
Bles-sed art— Thou, Lord our God, King of the u - ni -

Leila  
Bles-sed art— Thou, Lord our God, King of the u - ni -

Nate  
Bles-sed art— Thou, Lord our God, King of the

180 *mp*

Vln.

Vc.

180 *mp*

Pno.

*[In turn, they pass the wine cup from hand to hand, stroking the cool surface before drinking. Leila is the last to do so, taking her time, marveling at the touch and taste.]*

184

Mira  
verse, Who ma - keth the fruit of the vine.

Leila  
verse, Who ma - keth the fruit of the vine.

Nate  
u - ni-verse, Who ma - keth the fruit of the vine.

184

Vln.

Vc.

184

Pno.



[trying to lighten the mood:]

188 *mf*

Leila Ah yes, the fruit of the vine! \_\_\_\_\_ You know: a

Vln.

Vc. *pp* *mp*

Pno.

[Naughtily, she takes an extra sip, then walks over to the table and sets the cup down, counting her steps as she goes:]

191

Leila wine \_\_\_ glass a day \_\_\_ Keeps the doc-tor a-way. \_\_\_\_\_ One

Vln.

Vc.

Pno.

194 *poco rit.* *a tempo* *rit.*

Leila \_\_\_ and two and three, and up! He loved to lift you up, Your fa - ther.

*poco rit.* *a tempo* *rit.*

Vln. *p*

Vc. *p*

Pno. *p*

197 **slower** (♩ = 72) **plaintive**  
[Sighing:] ***p***

Leila  
How ma - ny times, my dar - lings, Have we made Hav - da - lah With - out him?

Vln. ***pp*** ***pp***

Vc. ***pp***

Pno. ***pp***

201 ***mp*** ***rall.***

Leila  
A hun - dred times? And then a hun - dred times more — With - out the two of you.

Vln. ***p*** ***rall.***

Vc. ***p***

Pno. ***p***

205 *[Dejected:]* *a tempo* *mf* *rit.*

Leila: You pro-ba-bly pi-ty me, Don'tyou? A hun-dred Hav-da-lahs Of pi-ty.

Nate: *mp* Oh Mam-ma, don't! The

Vln.: *a tempo* *mp* *rit.* change to sul pont.

Vc.: *mp* change to

Pno.: *mp*

209  $\text{♩} = 66$

Nate: doc-tor said you could go on As you are now For years. I'll come a-gain on Sa-tur-days For Hav-da-lah, And

Vln.: *pp* *ppp* *ord.* *pp*

Vc.: *pp* *ppp* sul pont.

Pno.: *pp*

$\text{b}^{\flat}\text{E}$   $\text{b}^{\flat}\text{E}$

Mira *mp*

Nate *[Suddenly registering the burden of what he's promising:]* Of

a - ny oth - er days you want me. And Mi - ra will come, too— Won't you, Mi - ra? \_\_\_

Vln. *ppp*

Vc.

Pno.

Mira *rit.*  $\text{♩} = 80$

course I will— Once things calm down In the Mid<sup>3</sup>-dle East. \_\_\_

Vln. *pp* *rit.*  $\text{♩} = 80$  *sub. mf*

Vc. *ord. Senza sord.*

Pno. *sub. mf*

[Hastily picking up the spice box from the table and handing it to Leila:]

216 *recit. mf* *a tempo mp*

Mira: Now the spice box, Mam-ma! Ba - ruch a - tah A - do - nai E - lo -

Leila: Bles-sed art - Thou, Lord our

Nate: Ba - ruch a - tah A - do - nai E - lo -

Vln. *mp*

Vc. *mp*

Pno. *mp*

219

Mira: hei - nu, Me-lech ha-o - lam, Bo - rei mi - nei v' - sa - mim.

Leila: God, King of the u - ni - verse, Who ma - keth va - ri - e - ties of

Nate: hei - nu, Me-lech ha-o - lam, Bo - rei mi - nei v' - sa - mim.

Vln.

Vc.

Pno.

Mira

Leila

Nate

Vln.

Vc.

Pno.

223

spi - - - ces.

*rit.*

*ppp*

*p*

[Leila inhales the fragrance of the spices deeply and then passes the box to Nate. As he and then Mira take their turns, Leila is reliving another memory: stirring the contents of an imaginary mixing bowl and talking to Mira as if she were a child:]

♩ = 72 wistful

Leila

Vln.

Vc.

Pno.

226

*mp*

It is

♩ = 72 wistful  
pizz.

*pp*

*p*

*pp*

*p*

[not sure how to respond:]

*mp*

Mira  
Leila  
Vln.  
Vc.  
Pno.

Yes, Mam-ma.  
al-ways best, Mi-re-leh, To use va - ri - e - ties of spi - ces. No,

[Shaking imaginary spices into the bowl:]

Leila  
Vln.  
Vc.  
Pno.

no, dar-ling, All-spice is just one spice. Gin-ger and cin-na-mon, Nut-meg and mace,

*♩ = 144* agitated

235

Leila

Cloves and car-da-mom— And all-spice. Can you count them? Try, Mi-re-leh.

Vln.

Vc.

Pno.

*♩ = 144* agitated

238

Mira

Se-ven?

Leila

That's right! Se-ven! \_\_\_\_\_ The doc-tor asked,

Vln.

Vc.

Pno.

*mp* *mf* *f*

*arco*

[Suddenly distressed, to Mira:]



243 *rit. p* [*Hesitantly:*]

Leila *rit.*

"Can you count down by se-vens? Try, Lei - la." So I tried. One

Vln.

Vc.

Pno.

*♩ = 120 poco a poco accel.*

248

Leila

hun - dred... nine - ty-three... eigh-ty - six...

*♩ = 120 poco a poco accel.*

Vln.

Vc.

Pno.

252 *f*  $\text{♩} = 144$

Leila *f* It was-n't real-ly ve - ry hard.

Nate *f* You did it per-fect-ly, Mam-ma.

Vln. *f*  $\text{♩} = 144$

Vc. *f*

Pno. *f*

256

Leila But what a way To spend a Fri-day! I

Nate You got e-very num - ber right.

Vln.

Vc.

Pno.

260

Leila

should have been home, — Ba - king for — Shab - bat.

Vln.

Vc.

Pno.

263

Leila

Se - ven - ty - nine... se - ven - ty - two... six - ty - five... Six-ty-five?

Vln.

Vc.

Pno.

267

[To Nate:]

Leila

Don't you think six-ty-five — Is aw - ful - ly young To be count - ing down by se - vens?

Vln.

Vc.

Pno.

pizz.

*mp*

271  $\text{♩} = 72$  wistful *mp* *poco rit.*

Leila  
It's bet-ter to be coun-ting up, By stars. One and two and three— and up!

Vln. *poco sul tasto arco*

Vc. *p*

Pno. *p*

[Still "lifted up", Leila lights the braided candle, as Mira almost breaks down and Nate attempts to comfort her:]

276 *a tempo* *rall.*  $\text{♩} = 80$  plaintive

Leila  
A vast va - ri - e - ty of stars!

Vln. *a tempo* *poco sul tasto* *rall.*  $\text{♩} = 80$  plaintive ord. *ppp* *mp* ord.

Vc. *ppp* *mp*

Pno. *mp*

Mira *pp*

Leila *mf*  
Ba - ruch a - tah A - do - nai E - lo -

Vln. *mf*

Vc. *mf*

Pno. *mf*

Mira *f*  
— don't think I can get through this, Nate. —

Leila  
hei - nu, — Me - lech ha - o - lam, *pp*

Nate I'll

Vln. *f*

Vc. *f*

Pno. *f*

284

Leila

Bo - rei — m' - o - rei ha -

Nate

— sing with — you. Try,

Vln.

Vc.

Pno.

286

Mira

Bles - sed art — Thou, Lord our

Leila

eish. Bles - sed

Nate

— Mi-re - leh. Bles - sed art — Thou, Lord our

Vln.

Vc.

Pno.

289

Mira  
God, King of the U - ni -

Leila  
art Thou, Lord our God, King

Nate  
God, King of the U - ni -

289

Vln.  
Vc.

Pno.

291

Mira  
verse, Who ma - keth the lights of the

Leila  
of the U - ni - verse, Who

Nate  
verse, Who ma - keth the lights of the

291

Vln.  
Vc.

Pno.

[During *Leila's* aria, all three ritualistically stare at their fingernails to catch sight of the light of the braided candle reflecting off them.]

Mira  
fire.

Leila  
ma - keth the lights of the fire. The lights of the

Nate  
fire.

Vln.  
Vc.  
Pno.

[As if to the child Nate:]

Leila  
fire. Did you hear that, Na - than: Lights: plu - ral? Va - ri - e - ties of lights Re -

Vln.  
Vc.  
Pno.



299 *rit.*

Leila flec-ting off our fin-ger-nails, Ho-li-ness right there, Right on us! And Mi-re-leh, braids! Vast va-

3 *rit.*

Vln. sul pont.

Vc. *pp* change to sul pont.

Pno.

303 *mf* *[Counting on her fingers:]* ♩ = 60 wistful

Leila ri - e - ties of braids! A braid - ed can - dle With braid - ed wicks...

3 *mf* ♩ = 60 wistful

Vln. ord. pizz.

Vc. *p*

Pno.

306

Leila Braid - ed flames... A braid - ed light! You used — to trace the loops — And

306 *ord.* *mp*

Vln. *mp*

Vc. *mp*

Pno.

309

Leila

cur - li-cues of wax With your fin - ger-tip. In - ter - wo - ven: You learned that

Vln.

Vc.

Pno.

312

Leila

word one Hav-da - lah, And in - tri-ca - cy! A-noth-er word from Hav-da - lah. You

Vln.

Vc.

Pno.

*mp*

315

Leila

loved — the sil - ver fi - la - ments Twis-ted in the fi - li - gree On the

Vln.

Vc.

Pno.

*arco*

*mp* *mf* *mf*

319 *f rit.* [Distressed:] *mp*

Leila spice box. Twis - ted... tan - gled.

Vln. *f* *mp* *pp*  
change to sul pont. ord. change to

Vc. *f* *mp* *pp*

Pno. *f* *mp* *pp*

324 *slower* (♩ = 48) *pp* *rit.* [touching her head] *a tempo p*

Leila He said— the doc-tor said I have tan - gles... here... One

Vln. *slower* (♩ = 48) *rit.* *Con sord.* *pp* *a tempo*  
sul pont. change to ord. change to sul pont.

Vc. *pp*

Pno. *pp*

330 ♩ = ♩ (= 96) *rall.*

Leila hun - dred... nine - ty-three... eigh-ty - six... Se-ven - ty-nine... se-ven - ty-two.

Vln. *rall.*

Vc. *pp* *ord. pizz.*

Pno. *pp*

[Suddenly her mood brightens:]  
a tempo

335 *mf* *freely*

Leila Na-than, Mi-ra, Re-mem-ber our game? Let's count our bles-sings down from

Vln. *a tempo* *freely*

Vc.

Pno. *mp*

338 *f* *slightly slower* ( $\text{♩} = 88$ )

Mira the se-venth day, And af-ter

Leila se - ven. Nate, you go first! the se-venth day,

Nate Shab - bat: the se-venth day, the day of rest.

338 *f* *slightly slower* ( $\text{♩} = 88$ ) *Senza sord.*

Vln. *mf*

Vc. *mp* *mf*

Pno. *mf*

*sul pont. arco*

*ord.*

341

Mira *mf* that, *mf* Six days of la - bor. *mf* five

Leila *mf* Six But in be - tween, Hav - da-lah's joys For the *mf* five sen - ses. —

Nate *mf* Six *mf* five

341

Vln. *mf*

Vc. *mf*

Pno. *mf*

343

Mira *mf* four And at the start, *mf* three stars, —

Leila *mf* four *mf* three And then

Nate *mf* For Hav-da - lah, four prayers. *mf* three

343

Vln. *mf*

Vc. *mf*

Pno. *mf*

*poco accel.* [All laugh.]

Mira  
 two One braid - ed light!

Leila  
 two can - dles in - ter - wo - ven in - to One braid - ed light!

Nate  
 two One braid - ed light!

Vln.  
*f*

Vc.  
*f* *p*

Pno.  
*f*

*♩ = 60 plaintive*

Vln.  
*ff* *rit.*

Vc.  
*ff*

Pno.  
*ff*

[Mira checks her watch and looks anxiously at Nate. The two begin the final, long Hebrew prayer as Leila wanders over to the mirror and sings over them in English, speaking to God:]

Mira 351

Leila

Nate

Vln.

Vc.

Pno.

Ba - ruch a - tah A - do - nai E - lo -

Is Lei - la one Lei - la, Lord,

Ba - ruch a - tah A - do - nai E - lo -

351  $\text{♩} = 80$

*mp* *mf*

Mira 355

Leila

Nate

Vln.

Vc.

Pno.

hei - nu, me - lech ha - o - lam,

Or just a vast va - ri - e - ty Of tan - - -

hei - nu, me - lech ha - o - lam,

355

*mp*

358

Mira *Ha - mav - dil - bein - ko - desh l' - chol,*

Leila *- gles? Is Lei - la still Lei - la,*

Nate *Ha - mav - dil - bein - ko - desh l' - chol,*

358

Vln.

Vc.

Pno.

361

Mira *Bein - or - l' - cho - shech,*

Leila *Or is she go - ing out, Like a braid - ed can -*

Nate *Bein - or - l' - cho - shech,*

361

Vln.

Vc.

Pno.



364 *mf*

Mira  
bein Yis - ra - el la - a - mim, — Bein

Leila  
— dle — Doused in wine — With a siz-zle?

Nate  
bein Yis - ra - el — la - a - mim, — Bein *mf*

364

Vln.  
Vc.

Pno.

367

Mira  
yom hash' - vi - i l' - shei - shet y' -

Leila  
[Wistfully:] *f*  
What good are the plea-sures of the sen - ses, Lord, To a wo - man lo - sing her sen - ses?

Nate  
yom hash' - vi - i l' - shei - shet y' -

367 *mf*

Vln.  
Vc.

Pno. *mf*

369 *rall.*

Mira  
*mei ha - ma - a - seh.*

Leila  
 What good are a hun-dred Hav - da - lahs With - out a self?

Nate  
*mei ha - ma - a - seh.*

369 *rall.*

Vln.  
*f*

Vc.  
*f* sul pont.  
 √ change to  
*p*

Pno.  
*f*

371 *a tempo*  
*p*

Mira  
*Ba - ruch a - tah A - do - nai,*

Leila  
*mf*  
 Lei - la... and then, poof!...no Lei-la. And Lord, if Lei-la lo-ses Lei-la, Will she lose You,

Nate  
*p*  
*Ba - ruch a - tah A - do - nai,*

371 *a tempo*

Vln.  
*p*

Vc.  
 ord.  
*f* *p*

Pno.  
*p*

Mira *rit.* ♩ = 54  
 ha - mav - dil — bein ko - desh l' - chol.

Leila  
 — too? Will You drop her... in - to night?

Nate  
 ha - mav - dil — bein ko - desh l' - chol.

Vln. *rit.* ♩ = 54  
*f*

Vc. *sub. f*

Pno. *sub. f*

Mira *rit.* *molto*

Leila

Nate

Vln. *rit.* *molto*

Vc. *sub. f*

Pno. *sub. f*

380  $\text{♩} = 80$  *mf*

Mira  
O Lord, pre-serve this mo - ment, Its ho - li - ness in - ter - wo -

Leila  
*mp*  
Bles - sed art — Thou, Lord our God, King of the U - ni -

Nate  
*mf*  
O Lord, pre-serve this mo - ment, — Its ho - li - ness in - ter - wo -

380  $\text{♩} = 80$

Vln.  
*mp* arco *pp*

Vc.  
*mp*

Pno.  
*mp*

383

Mira  
- ven With the sad-ness of the e - very-day, The third — star Et - ching the

Leila  
- verse, Who keep - eth the ho - ly from the e - very-day, And

Nate  
- ven With the sad-ness of the e - very-day, The third — star Et - ching the

383

Vln.  
*mp*

Vc.

Pno.

386 *poco rit.* *a tempo*

Mira  
dar-ken-ing twi - light In in - tri-ca-cy.

Leila  
light from dark - ness. Bles-sed art Thou, Lord our

Nate  
dar-ken-ing twi - light In in - tri-ca-cy.

Vln.  
386 *poco rit.* *a tempo*  
*mf*

Vc.  
*mf*

Pno.  
386 *mf*

[Mira's phone rings. She instantly silences it, but noting the caller, she looks agitated:]

389

Leila  
God, King of the U - ni - verse, Who keep - eth Is-ra-el from the

Vln.  
389

Vc.  
389

Pno.  
389

393 *f* [riled up:]

Mira: What sort of bles-sing is it, Lord, To keep Is-ra-el from the rest? We are

Leila: na - tions.

Vln.

Vc.

Pno.

396 *poco rit.* *a tempo*

Mira: vast va-ri-e-ties of na-tions, Lord, And all na-tions are one.

Leila: Bles-sed art — Thou, Lord our

Nate: O Lord, why — lift our mo-ther up to—

Vln.

Vc.

Pno.

399

Leila  
God, King of the U - ni -

Nate  
night To show her she is fal - ling? She has not asked for a - ny-thing But the

Vln.

Vc.

Pno.

401

Leila  
verse, Who keep - eth the Sab - bath from the

Nate  
chance to love her chil - dren, Her Nate, her Mi - re - leh, The lights of her

Vln.

Vc.

Pno.

403 *rit.*

Leila  
six days of toil.

Nate  
soul. Keep Hav - da - lah a-live in her In days to come.

Vln.

Vc.

Pno.

*p*

[Nate and Mira are anguished, intent on finishing the fourth prayer:]

406 **agitated**  
*a tempo*  
**f**

Mira  
Bles-sed art Thou, Lord, Who keep - eth The ho - ly from the

Nate  
Bles-sed art Thou, Lord, Who keep - eth The ho - ly from the

Vln.

Vc.

Pno.

**f**

3

3



**faster** (♩ = 120) [Headlights flash in the window and *Mira* signals to the car outside to wait a moment.]

*rall.* *rit.*

409

Mira  
e - very-day.

Nate  
e - very-day.

Vln.  
*rall.* **ff** *faster* (♩ = 120) *pp* *rit.* **mf**

Vc.  
*rall.* **ff** *faster* (♩ = 120) *pp* *rit.* **mf**

Pno.  
*rall.* **ff** *faster* (♩ = 120) *pp* *rit.* **mf**

[oblivious to everything but the uplift of Havdalah:]

*rit. molto* **pp** ♩ = 66 rapturous

413

Leila  
O Lord, At the touch of the wine cup My fin - ger-tips tin- gle. At the

Vln.  
*rit. molto* **pp**

Vc.  
*rit. molto* **pp** poco sul tasto

Pno.  
*rit. molto* **pp**

418 *rall.*

Leila taste of the fruit of the vine My lips re - joice. At the

Vln.

Vc.

Pno. *pp*

422  $\text{♩} = 80$  *mp* *rall.* *f* *sub. mp*

Leila frag - rance of spi - ces— Vast va - ri - e - ties of spi - ces— My<sup>3</sup> nos - trils thrill. My

Vln.  $\text{♩} = 80$  *p* *rall.* *mf*

Vc. *ord.* *p* *mf*

Pno. *p* *mf*

426 *a tempo* *rall.* *mp*

Leila eyes de - light At the flame re - flec - ting Off my fin - ger - nails. I am

Vln. *a tempo* *p* *rall.*

Vc. *p*

Pno. *p*

430 *a tempo* *rall.*

Leila  
Lei - la, Lord: \_\_\_\_\_ An - gel of Night. But in Hav -

Vln. *a tempo* *rall.*  
*mp* *f > mp*

Vc. *mp* *f > mp*

Pno. *mp* *f*

434 *a tempo* *rit.* *a tempo* *rit.* *ff* *rit.*

Leila  
da - lah I count the stars And know my - self In the

Vln. *a tempo* *rit.* *a tempo* *rit.*  
*f* *ff*

Vc. *a tempo* *rit.* *a tempo* *rit.*  
*f* *ff*

Pno. *mf* *ff*

*a tempo rit.* **plaintive**  
*a tempo*  
***p***

438  
Leila  
braid - ed beau - ty Of Your light.

*a tempo rit.* **plaintive**  
*a tempo*  
***p***

438  
Vln.  
***p***

Vc.  
***p*** ***pp***

438  
Pno.  
***p***

[Stealing himself, **Nate** douses the braided candle with the wine left in the ceremonial cup. We hear a sizzling sound as the flame flickers and goes out. The three are left standing in the darkness.]

***pp*** (non-rit.) **FINE**

442  
Mira  
Ba-ruch a - tah A-do - nai.

***pp***

442  
Leila  
Ba-ruch a - tah A-do - nai.

***pp***

442  
Nate  
Ba-ruch a - tah A-do - nai.

douse candle in wine cup

***pp*** (non-rit.) **FINE**

442  
Vln.  
***pp***

Vc.

442  
Pno.  
***pp***