

MOZART

MASS IN C MINOR

Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart (1756 - 1791): Mass in C Minor, K.427 'Great' (1782/3)

Since the autumn of 1781, Mozart had been engaged in a second attempt to establish himself as a freelance composer and musician, outside the dependency on a sole patron required of a musician appointed, like his father, Leopold, to a court. His first attempt had been made, against his father's wishes, when, in 1777, he resigned from the service of Hieronymus Colloredo, Archbishop of Salzburg, to seek employment in Mannheim and Paris. However, the infrastructure for musical commission that he sought had not yet developed sufficiently and his attempts to find work were effectively ended when his mother, who had travelled with him, died in Paris in the summer of 1778. Having failed to find work in Mannheim and Munich, as he made his way back reluctantly to Salzburg, Leopold formally petitioned the Archbishop on Wolfgang's behalf for the post of court organist – similar to one at Versailles that he had turned down as uninteresting whilst in Paris a year earlier. Mozart was appointed in January, 1779, but with the stipulation that any new works he composed, in addition to his court and chapel duties, should neither last too long, nor deploy operatic conventions! Despite these constraints, or perhaps to compensate for them, in the next two years he created some of his most outstanding church music, of which the *Vesperae solennes de confessore* and the *Coronation Mass* can be considered as the finest examples, displaying within the structural order of traditional compositional forms the imaginative originality of his mature style.

Mozart's frustrations mounted, however, and he resigned from the Archbishop's court in June, 1781, whilst it was in Vienna, writing to his father: "No more Salzburg for me! I hate the Archbishop almost to

fury!". He remained in Vienna and married Constanze Weber in August, 1782, promising her the composition of a large-scale Mass as a wedding present, to be performed in Salzburg on their first visit as man and wife. This was to be the *Mass in C Minor*, of which Mozart was able to write to his father on 4 January, 1783, that he had "the score of half a Mass...lying here waiting to be finished". He had earlier written to him that although "for quite a time we have gone to Mass and confession and communion together,...I found that I have never prayed so fervently or confessed or communicated so devoutly as at her side, and it was the same for her". Whilst this may explain Mozart's pious initiative, Constanze was already expecting their first child and Mozart was therefore reliant wholly on his own enterprise to provide an income for his prospective family: the Mass, consisting thus far of the Kyrie, Gloria, Credo, Sanctus and Benedictus, may have been 'waiting to be finished' because he was also more or less simultaneously engaged in the composition of three piano concertos (K. 413-415), the *C Minor Serenade for Wind Instruments*, the first of a set of six string quartets that would be dedicated to Haydn and the '*Haffner*' *Symphony*.

The visit to Salzburg duly took place in the autumn of 1783, and the Mass was performed in St Peter's church on October 23. Since it is inconceivable that an incomplete Mass could have been performed in a liturgical setting at that time, presumably Mozart drew from his own earlier works for the missing movements. He would have had no compunction in doing so, following the parodic convention, employed by most baroque composers, of contrafactum – setting new words to music composed for earlier work.

Bach and Handel both resorted frequently to this practice, and Mozart had become closely acquainted with their music in 1782 through playing it at the Sunday musicales in Baron van Swieten's apartments, adding their contrapuntal techniques to his own galant style, and thus extending his musical language into the brilliance characteristic of his late work. The practice also served him well under comparable pressure three years later, at the beginning of 1785, after he had accepted the commission for *Davidde penitente* from the Viennese Society of Musicians, by recycling music from the *C minor Mass* to a text comprised of ten brief selections from an Italian translation of the Lenten Penitential Psalms. The Mass had not yet been heard in Vienna and Mozart would surely have hoped that its display of his compositional skills might lead to further commissions. This suggests that the Mass remained unfinished, not least, perhaps, because the expansiveness of the existing movements indicate a work that would have required more than one hour and a half to perform – far too long for the liturgical conventions of the time, as indicated by the stipulations in his earlier contract with Archbishop Colloredo. Yet the contemporary idiom for mass settings in the Austrian church was to set the text according to the Italianate genre of separate sections in different styles, putting declamatory choral movements, with detailed orchestral accompaniments, alongside operatic solo numbers and contrapuntal choruses. This followed the pattern of so-called cantata masses developed by Alessandro Scarlatti and his successors, although the best-known example of such a setting, of which Mozart would certainly have been aware, is Bach's *B minor Mass*, another work considered unperformable according to both

Catholic and Protestant liturgical conventions in its own time, and which Bach took a leisurely fifteen years to complete. When Mozart's score was eventually published in 1840, even the completed movements were not all finished – there are missing lines and parts in the Credo, Incarnatus and Osanna – and there was no Agnus Dei. The version of the Mass that will be sung this evening was prepared by H C Robbins Landon for the Mozart bicentennial in 1956, published by Eulenberg in a scholarly edition that provides the minimum needed to make the incomplete movements performable.

Following Bach's structure, Mozart had organised the completed parts of his *C Minor Mass* into separate, cantata-style numbers. The chorus opens the Kyrie at a stately *andante moderato*, developed by sopranos and altos, latterly underpinned rhythmically by basses and tenors reinforced by strong orchestration, into a sustained expression of solemn grandeur. This is intensified by a shimmering display of virtuosity by the soprano soloist on the *Christe eleison*, which evolves, with mounting intensity through dazzling arpeggios and series of trills, into the core of the movement before the chorus returns for its sombre close.

The Gloria opens in a strident affirmation by the chorus to trumpet and drum accompaniment before morphing softly into *Et in terra pax*, prefacing the technically elaborate second soprano aria on *Laudamus te*, in which orchestra and voice respond lyrically to each other. The chorus then return for the *Gratias* with a sober *adagio* in which sopranos divide to deepen the sonority of its strong, harmonic rhythms. The *Domine Deus* which follows returns to the *allegro moderato* of the Kyrie but with a much lighter, almost lilting, rhythm

as a duet for both soprano soloists whose voices alternate serially in sensuous invocation of the divine. For the *Qui tollis*, the chorus divides, in a grandiloquent *largo*, with magnificent chromatic harmonies on long, deep vocal lines against which the dotted rhythms of the strings push incessantly. The soprano soloists are joined by the tenor in a trio for the *Quoniam*, each engaging serially with the others in complementary displays of vocal brilliance, punctuated by lively orchestral accompaniment. The chorus return with ecstatic cries of *Jesu Christe*, before embarking, led by basses, on the sustained fugue of *Cum sancto spiritu*, whose mounting energy, sustained by drums and brass, finally drives the Gloria to a close on a sequence of emphatic 'Amen's'.

After an opening orchestral introduction of strings and woodwind, the chorus's vigorous recitation of the Credo proceeds at a brisk *allegro*

maestoso, with fugal interpellations on 'per quem omnia', followed by confident, repetitive assertions of 'descendit de coelis'. A dramatic change of mood and pace to a gentle *andante* introduces the gorgeous quartet for first soprano soloist, with flute, oboe and bassoon, accompanied by soft strings and organ and concluding with a wonderfully delicate cadenza on 'homo factus est'. These two movements of the Credo are all that Mozart appears to have written for this mass. They are followed, therefore, by the Sanctus, for which Mozart again divides the chorus, as he had for *Qui tollis* in the Gloria, again in a magnificent *largo*, followed by a joyously elaborated fugue for double chorus on *Osanna in excelsis*. The full quartet of soloists then maintain a virtuosic exploration of the Benedictus before the double chorus returns to close the work with a reprise of *Osanna*.

Paul Filmer, December 2012



MOZART

MASS IN C MINOR

KYRIE (Soprano 1 & Chorus)

Kyrie eleison.
Christe eleison.
Kyrie eleison.

Lord have mercy.
Christ have mercy.
Lord have mercy.

GLORIA

Gloria (Chorus)

Gloria in excelsis, Deo.
Et in terra pax hominibus bonae voluntatis.

Glory be to God on high.
And on earth peace to men of good will.

Laudamus te (Soprano 2)

Laudamus te. Benedicimus te.
Adoramus te. Glorificamus te.

We praise thee. We bless thee.
We worship thee. We glorify thee.

Gratias agimus tibi (Chorus)

Gratias agimus tibi propter magnam gloriam tuam.

We give thee thanks for thy great glory.

Domine Deus (Sopranos 1 & 2)

Domine Deus, Rex caelestis, Pater omnipotens.
Domine Fili unigenite Jesu Christe.
Domine Deus, Agnus Dei, Filius Patris.

Lord God, heavenly King, God the Father almighty.
Lord, only begotten Son, Jesus Christ.
Lord God, Lamb of God, Son of the Father.

Qui tollis (Double Chorus)

Qui tollis peccata mundi,
miserere nobis.
Qui tollis peccata mundi,
suscipe deprecationem nostram.
Qui sedes ad dexteram Patris,
miserere nobis.

Thou that takest away the sins of the world,
have mercy upon us.
Thou that takest away the sins of the world,
receive our prayer.
Thou that sittest at the right hand of the Father,
have mercy upon us.

Quoniam tu solus sanctus (Sopranos 1 & 2, Tenor)

Quoniam tu solus sanctus.
Tu solus Dominus.
Tu solus altissimus.

For thou alone art holy.
Thou alone art the Lord.
Thou alone art the most high.

Jesu Christe - Cum Sancto Spiritu (Chorus)

Jesu Christe. Cum Sancto Spiritu, in gloria Dei Patris.
Amen.

Jesus Christ. With the Holy Spirit, in the glory of God
the Father. Amen.

CREDO

Credo in unum Deum (Chorus)

Credo in unum Deum, Patrem omnipotentem,
factorem caeli et terrae,
visibilia omnium et invisibilia.
Et in unum Dominum Jesum Christum,
Filius Dei unigenitum. Et ex Patre natum
ante omnia saecula. Deum de Deo,
lumen de lumine, Deum verum de Deo vero.
Genitum non factum, consubstantialem Patri:
per quem omnia facta sunt.
Qui propter nos homines,
et propter nostram salutem
descendit de caelis.

I believe in one God, the Father almighty,
maker of heaven and earth,
of all things, visible and invisible.
And in one Lord Jesus Christ,
the only begotten Son of God. Born of the Father
before all generations. God from God,
light from light, true God from true God.
Begotten not made, of one substance with the Father:
through whom all things were made.
Who for us men,
and for our salvation
came down from heaven.

Et incarnatus est (Soprano 1)

Et incarnatus est de Spiritu Sancto
ex Maria Virgine: et homo factus est.

And was incarnate by the Holy Spirit
of the Virgin Mary: and was made man.

SANCTUS (Double Chorus)

Sanctus, Sanctus, Sanctus
Dominus Deus Sabaoth.
Pleni sunt caeli et terra gloria tua.
Osanna in excelsis.

Holy, Holy, Holy
Lord God of Sabaoth.
Heaven and earth are full of thy glory.
Hosanna in the highest.

BENEDICTUS (Solo Quartet & Double Chorus)

Benedictus qui venit in nomine Domini.
Osanna in excelsis.

Blessed is he that cometh in the name of the Lord.
Hosanna in the highest.

INTERVAL

During the 20 minute interval, members of the audience are requested not to enter the performing area.

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A Pinkie Recalls

Who would have thought it? Who would have thought that when Mark Bunyan and Brian Kennedy got together (I like to imagine over a pint) in the winter of 1983 and decided to create a gay and lesbian choir, that the group would not only still be around but thriving three decades later?
That choir didn't even have a name at its first rehearsal on 7th April of that year, but shortly afterwards, "the Pink Singers" became a synonym for London's LGBT community choir.
Looking back thirty years, it isn't hard to see that the London into which the Pink Singers emerged was very different from the city



Rehearsal in 1987

we know today. 1983 marked the transformation of the U.K. Gay Pride Rally into Lesbian and Gay Pride, an event for which the Pink Singers was originally....
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OUT OF THE DEPTHS

MATTHEW KING

Matthew King (b 1967): *Out of the Depths* (2012)

- 1 Three Months (Introit)**
- 2 Suffering (Penitential Psalm)**
- 3 The Zanies of Sorrow (Kontakion)**
- 4 For us there is only one Season (Arioso)**
- 5 A Pedestal May Be a Very Unreal Thing (Blues-Fugato-Chorale)**
- 6 Three Months (reprise) (Antiphon)**

“From the point of view of form, the type of all the arts is the art of the musician.”

Oscar Wilde: Preface to *The Picture of Dorian Gray*

King describes the work as consisting “of six movements, arranged in a kind of arch, with the final movement recapitulating the hushed, declamatory material from the first two. Movements 3 and 5 set Wilde’s bitter, gnomic texts in a driving, rhythmic manner, derived in both cases from more popular styles of music: movement 3 is accompanied throughout by a heavily articulated 5-bar riff, while movement

5 alternates fugato and chorale writing over a 12-bar blues. Movement 4, with its soaring lines above a throbbing accompaniment, is the emotional heart of the piece, its circling lines inspired by the Doré/Van Gogh image of prisoners in Newgate Prison exercise yard. In the final movement, the chorus divides into two semi-choruses, the first singing in four parts, and the second (notated on a single line) speaking in a ghostly, half-whispered murmur”.

Two features of this work, one structural, the other metaphorical, are characteristic of King’s compositional practice. The structural feature is that of an arch: King tends to organise his work musically in an architectural manner through the ways in which different movements balance one another, at times in an inverted symmetry, as in the opposition here between movements 3 and 5, mediated by movement 4. Similarly, the opening and closing movements are arranged, through their subtitles (Introit and Antiphon) according

to the architectonics of the Proper of the catholic Mass, where the initial chant consists of one verse (here ‘Three Months’ in both movements) followed by the Gloria Patri (an asocial withdrawal into Naturalism at the end of movement 6). Within each movement, different chords relate to one another structurally also, in terms of what he calls their emotional character – this is particularly clear in the first two movements, where sequences of chords evolve and invert around the text of Wilde’s experiential responses to the remorselessness of the daily calendar and yearly seasons under conditions of incarceration. The seasons, indeed, are a key textual metaphor for King. His earlier work for NLC invokes eponymously the season of singing as a signifier for birth and renewal, where iterative, prelinguistic utterances (sighing, ululation, laughter) are transformed, through communal, rhythmic interaction, into the quintessentially social actions of singing itself as the highest form that

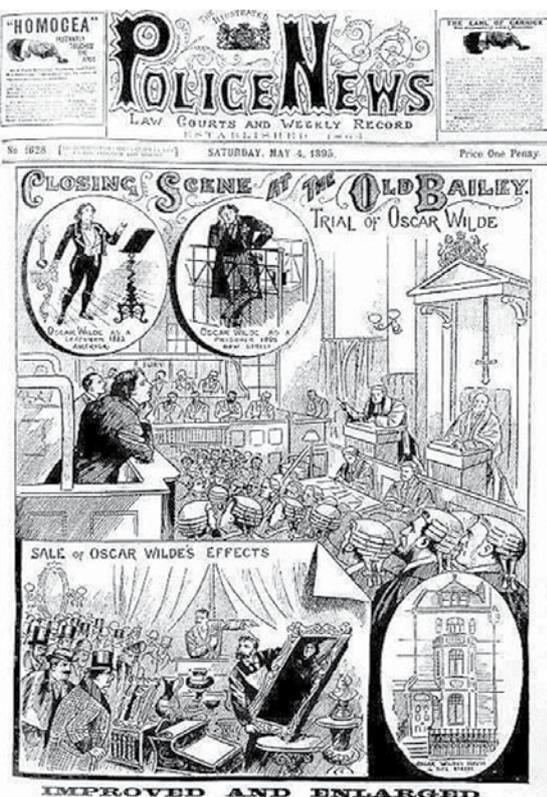
IN MEMORY OF BILL BROWN 1948 - 2009

Out of the Depths is a setting for chorus and orchestra of passages from *De Profundis* by Oscar Wilde. It is the second work commissioned from Matthew King by North London Chorus (the first was *The Season of Singing* in 2006) and has been made possible through a generous donation by Helen Brown, in memory of her husband, William Brown (1948-2009), a member of the chorus. After taking early retirement, Bill had become more active in music and had taken a composition class at Birkbeck College. One of his last completed pieces was a vocal composition based on Wilde’s *The*

Ballad of Reading Gaol. For many years, Bill had volunteered with the Board of Visitors at Wormwood Scrubs and was instrumental in achieving prosecution of prison officers for systematic abuse of prisoners there, at a difficult time before the enactment of human rights legislation. The connection, through Wilde, between Bill’s musical interests and his commitment to prison reform thus formed a basis for the choice of *De Profundis*, which Wilde wrote while a prisoner in Reading Gaol, as a text to set for the commission. Wilde’s reputation for wit also provided a link

with Bill’s strong sense of humour. Matthew King found it difficult to set, however: though “full of all sorts of things, it’s quite wordy and in the middle it gets quite theological... it’s all very, very heavy, which of course it has to be, it’s the intent of the piece...but the wit does come through...ever so slightly, in a very bleak kind of a way, but it is there...I wanted it not to be unremittingly grim, there are shards of sunlight... (the movement) about being on a pedestal or being in a pillory...sets a sort of classic Wildean epigrammatic statement”.

Paul Filmer



the reflexive experience of being human can take. Here, however, the metaphor provides a more baleful, though no less strong focus on imprisonment and its consequent experiences of individual suffering, humiliation and sorrow in the first two movements and the fourth, qualified eventually by redemptive (re-)discovery of the self in the fifth. The paralinguistics of laughter in movement 3 signify not the gaiety and enjoyment that energises *The Season of Singing* but the vicious mockery of a jeering mob, reducing human beings to clownish, zany buffoons, deprived of identity even when one of them is recognised (“As soon as they had been informed they laughed still more”).

The first movement, set at a painfully funereal *andante doloroso*, opens with a sequence of five chords accompanying the words ‘Three months go over the calendar’, indicating the repetitive daily prison round of conduct and labour extending through changes of season which are indicated only by ‘The

calendar that hangs outside my cell door’, recording the prisoner’s name and sentence and telling him ‘that it is May’. Voices and orchestration softly enunciate the deadening rhythm of repetition.

After a marginally more mobile, but still sombre orchestral introduction, the second movement, subtitled ‘Penitential Psalm’, develops a series of six recurring chord sequences which evolve through chromatic harmonies to explore the insidiousness of suffering as ‘one very long moment’. The time of that moment cannot be divided by seasons. The sufferers can only record the moods of the very long moment, ‘and chronicle its return’ – hence the recurrence of chord sequences, punctuated by an intensely chromatic ‘pain’ chord which concludes the reflection that ‘time itself does not progress. It revolves. It seems to circle round one centre of pain’. This leads to ‘the paralysing immobility of a life...regulated after an unchangeable pattern... (cont)



William (Bill) Brown was involved with the criminal justice system throughout his adult life, as a solicitor and a lecturer in law. In 1996 William (Bill) joined the Independent Monitoring

Board of HMP Wormwood Scrubs and became its Chairman in 2006. The prison is a closed world, so it's most important that people from the outside visit the prison on a regular basis. The Board members are lay volunteers, making unannounced visits to ensure that people in custody are being kept fairly and humanely. Much of the work is unglamorous: hours spent walking the landings, visiting the segregation unit, dealing with complaints about lost property, missing postal orders, difficulty in arranging visits - many of them the result of the constant turnover of prisoners within the system. Bill understood how important day-to-day issues were to men in custody. To serve as an IMB member for an

unbroken 13 years takes stamina and conviction about the importance of the role. Bill had both. He cared deeply about the big issues, the numbers of mentally ill people inappropriately placed in prison, the plight of foreign nationals detained beyond the end of their sentence. He was compassionate rather than sentimental about prisoners. He had a delightful and even, at times, wicked sense of humour. He particularly enjoyed anything that deflated the pretension. Bill treated all he encountered with courtesy, respect and patience. As a result he succeeded with apparent ease in winning the goodwill of those working with the prison whilst maintaining the independence so necessary for the role of the IMB.

OUT OF THE DEPTHS

MATTHEW KING

an iron formula' that 'seems to communicate itself to those external forces the very essence of whose existence is ceaseless change'. As this bitter, doleful catalogue of the inversion of normal life, and hope, unfolds so the earlier chord sequences are reversed in a musical representation of the regression. A new chord sequence introduces a lyrical pastoral image of the 'ceaseless change' as that of the seasons – 'Of seed time or harvest'. The sequence repeats, rising to a new chord accompanying the momentary vision of an 'orchard made white with broken blossoms or strewn with fallen fruit' before reverting in despair to the early sequence and the words: 'of these we know nothing and can know nothing' which bring the movement to a close.

Both of the first two movements are set like recitatives, in monumental, block-like passages, the chorus singing together in rich chords, revolving in ways which parallel the text about the interminable relentlessness and alienation of prison life. The third movement, by contrast, raises both the tempo and drama of suffering as humiliation. King characterises it as a *Kontakion*, a poetic form of Byzantine hymnography, sometimes described as a sermon in verse, accompanied by music. It is traditionally chanted by a cleric after a reading from the Gospels, whilst the choir or congregation join in a refrain. The etymology of the term is from the Greek *Kontax*, the pole around which a scroll of holy scripture is wound, signifying the way in which words on a scroll unfurl as it is read. Both the concept and its signification provide clear structuring resources for the sense of the movement and its place in the organisation of the work. Like a sermon, it contains a didactic narrative, of Wilde's journey from one prison to the other, and the opportunistic provision, during its course, of a site for his public humiliation 'on the centre platform of Clapham Junction...surrounded by a jeering mob' as 'the most grotesque'

of 'the zanies of sorrow...the clowns whose hearts are broken'. As the tragic narrative unfolds with a lyrical musicality that seems almost to defy its painfulness, we are reminded of the cruelty of the mob in the harsh, punctuating staccato of their vicious, mocking eight note iterations of Ha-ha. In parallel, the narrative's unfolding signifies an unwinding of the identities of the prisoners into zanies, their senses of self into buffoonery, as the clowns of sorrow. More than just their hearts are broken: their dignity as human beings is destroyed.

The fourth movement, which has the same tempo marking as the second (*andante con moto*), returns to the metaphor of progressive seasonal change – 'motion is no more' – and the denial of its experience imposed through incarceration. For the imprisoned, 'there is only one season, the season of sorrow...The very sun and moon seem taken from us. It is always twilight in one's cell, as it is always twilight in one's heart'. The diurnal 'sphere of time', as of thought, is reduced to a perpetual dusk. The mood of the movement is rather different, however: subtitled *Arioso*, the almost Mozartian character of its orchestration is appropriately marked *dolce cantabile*, suggesting through its gentle melodiousness a more constructive sense of reflection and understanding, perhaps resulting from the penitence of 'Suffering'. King's characterisation of this movement as 'the emotional heart of the piece' with 'its soaring lines above a throbbing accompaniment' and its broader dynamic range seems to open the work, for all its depiction of pain, to a possibility, however faint, of redemption. The choice of text indicates clearly enough the move towards a more metaphysical sense of being imprisoned, experiencing time in the constantly transitional state of twilight, as an occasion for exploring the relation between thought and feeling (heart).

These hints burst into realisation

with the rhythmic *allegro* of the fifth movement and the textual opposition between the unreal pedestal on which fame had set Wilde and the 'terrific reality' of the pillorying he had experienced as a prisoner. In the first part of the movement, the chorus explore this painful tension in an urgent fugue to the measured orchestral intervals of a twelve-bar blues, before moving into a calmer, warmer reflection on 'the ultimate achievement of wisdom' in recognising the unknowability of the soul and the ultimate mystery of the self. The sense of redemptive resolution of the cruel dilemmas raised earlier in the work is reinforced by a brief, gentler reinvocation of the zanies of sorrow from the third movement, but here with a sense that their broken hearts may have released the healing tension between pedestal and pillory. As the unknowability of soul and self are recalled, there follows a return to the diurnal relation of sun and moon, access to the temporal measures of which provide a properly restorative basis from which to contemplate these incalculable final mysteries, drawing the movement slowly to a close.

The reprise of *Three Months* to close the work elaborates a structural contrast between texts for both sung and spoken voice. As the main chorus repeat the desolate logic of the prison calendar, a semi-chorus recite a self-effacing, redemptive confessional in a ghostly murmur, as the singing voices softly summon again the naturalistic refuge of the second movement for the socially alienated prisoner to 'hang the night with stars and send the wind over my footprints'. This, murmur the speakers, will enable him to 'walk abroad in the darkness without stumbling so that none may track me to my hurt'. The redemption is realised, finally, as the chorus sings of the 'great waters' and 'bitter herbs' with which Nature will cleanse and make whole.

Paul Filmer, December 2012

Three Months

Three months go over.

The calendar of my daily conduct and labour that hangs on the outside of my cell door, with my name and sentence written upon it, tells me that it is May.

Suffering

Suffering is one very long moment. We cannot divide it by seasons. We can only record its moods, and chronicle their return.

With us time itself does not progress. It revolves. It seems to circle round one centre of pain.

The paralysing immobility of a life every circumstance of which is regulated after an unchangeable pattern, so that we eat and drink and lie down and pray, or kneel at least for prayer, according to the inflexible laws of an iron formula: this immobile quality that makes each dreadful day in the very minutest detail like its brother, seems to communicate itself to those external forces the very essence of whose existence is ceaseless change.

Of seedtime or harvest, of the reapers bending over the corn, or the grape gatherers threading through the vines, of the grass in the orchard made white with broken blossoms or strewn with fallen fruit: of these we know nothing and can know nothing.

The Zanies of Sorrow

On November the thirteenth, 1895,
I was brought down here from London.

We are clowns whose hearts are broken.

From two o'clock till half past two on that day I had to stand on the centre platform of Clapham Junction in convict dress, and handcuffed, for all the world to look at.

We are the zanies, the zanies of sorrow.

Of all possible objects I was the most grotesque.

When people saw me they laughed, each train as it came up swelled the audience.

Nothing could exceed their amusement.
That was, of course, before they knew who I was. As soon as they had been informed they laughed still more.

For half an hour, I stood there in the grey November rain surrounded by a jeering mob.

For a year after that was done to me I wept every day at the same hour, and for the same space of time.

For us there is only one Season

For us there is only one season, the season of sorrow.
The very sun and moon seem taken from us.
It is always twilight in one's cell,
as it is always twilight in one's heart.
And in the sphere of thought, no less than in the sphere of time, motion is no more.

A Pedestal May Be a Very Unreal Thing

A pedestal may be a very unreal thing. A pillory is a terrific reality.

But to recognise that the soul of a man is unknowable, is the ultimate achievement of wisdom.

The final mystery is oneself.

*We are the zanies, the zanies of sorrow
We are clowns whose hearts are broken*

When one has weighed the sun in the balance, and measured the steps of the moon, and mapped out the seven heavens star by star, there still remains oneself.
Who can calculate the orbit of his own soul?

Three Months (reprise)

Three months go over.

The calendar of my daily conduct and labour that hangs on the outside of my cell door, with my name and sentence written upon it, tells me that it is May.

What I suffered then, and still suffer is not for pen to write or paper to record.

I had disgraced that name eternally. I had given it to brutes that they might make it brutal, and to fools that they might turn it into a synonym for folly.

Society, as we have constituted it, will have no place for me, has none to offer; but Nature, whose sweet rains fall on unjust and just alike, will have clefts in the rock where I may hide, and secret valleys in whose silence I may weep. She will hang the night with stars so that I may walk abroad in the darkness without stumbling, and send the wind over my footprints so that none may track me to my hurt: she will cleanse me in great waters and with bitter herbs make me whole.

Text from Oscar Wilde's *De Profundis*, adapted by Matthew King