

# O What Is That Sound

Tell Me The Truth About Love, n. 8

W. H. Auden (1907-1973)

A. Strappa, © 2001

♩. = 40

(first time)

The musical score is written in 3/8 time with a key signature of two flats (B-flat and E-flat). It features a vocal line and a piano accompaniment. The vocal line consists of nine staves, each with a repeat sign and a corresponding lyric line. The piano accompaniment is shown in a grand staff (treble and bass clefs) at the bottom. The lyrics are: "O what is that sound which what is that light I see what are they doing with why have they left the ha - ven't they stopped for the it the par - son they must be the far - mer who where are you going? bro - ken the lock and". The piano part starts with a mezzo-piano (*mp*) dynamic and later becomes fortissimo (*f*).

O  
what is that sound which  
(2nd time)  
what is that light I see  
(3rd time)  
what are they doing with  
(4th time)  
why have they left the  
(5th time)  
ha - ven't they stopped for the  
(6th time)  
it the par - son they  
(7th time)  
must be the far - mer who  
(8th time)  
where are you going?  
(9th time)  
bro - ken the lock and

*mp* *f*

so thrills the ear, Down in the val - ley  
fla - shing so clear O - ver the di - stance  
all that gear, What are they doing this  
road down there, Why are they sudden - ly  
doc - tor's care, Ha - ven't they reined their  
want, with white hair, Is it the par - son,  
lives so near. It must be the far - mer so  
Stay with me here! Were the vows you swore de -  
splin - tered the door, O it's the gate where they're

drum - ming, drum - ming?  
brigh - tly, brigh - tly?  
mor - ning, this mor - ning?  
whee - ling, whee - ling?  
hor - ses their hor - ses?  
is it, is it?  
cun - ning, so cun - ning?  
cei - ving, de - cei - ving?  
tur - ning, tur - ning;

*p cresc.*

On - ly the scar - let sol - diers,  
 On - ly the sun on their wea - pons,  
 On - ly their u - sual ma - noeuvres,  
 Per - haps a change in their or - ders,  
 Why, they are none of them woun - ded,  
 No, they are pas - sing his gate - way,  
 They have passed the farm - yard al - rea - dy,  
 No, I pro - mised to love you,  
 Their boots are hea - vy on the

dear, The sol - diers co - ming.  
dear, As they step ligh - tly.  
dear, Or per - haps a war - ning.  
dear. Why are you knee - ling?  
dear, None of these for - ces.  
dear, With - out a vi - sit.  
dear, And now they are run - ning.  
dear, But I must be lea - ving.  
floor And their eyes are bur - ning.

The musical score consists of ten vocal staves and a piano accompaniment. The vocal parts are arranged in a four-part setting (Soprano, Alto, Tenor, Bass). The piano accompaniment features a steady eighth-note melody in the right hand and a bass line with chords in the left hand. The lyrics are: 'dear, The sol - diers co - ming. dear, As they step ligh - tly. dear, Or per - haps a war - ning. dear. Why are you knee - ling? dear, None of these for - ces. dear, With - out a vi - sit. dear, And now they are run - ning. dear, But I must be lea - ving. floor And their eyes are bur - ning.'

Musical score for page 21, featuring vocal lines and piano accompaniment. The score is in a key signature of two flats (B-flat and E-flat) and a 4/4 time signature. The vocal lines consist of ten staves, with lyrics appearing in the fifth, sixth, and ninth staves: "O is", "O it", and "O it's". The piano accompaniment is shown in the bottom two staves, starting with a forte (*f*) dynamic. The score includes various musical notations such as notes, rests, and slurs.