

Dedicated to the Chamber Music Society of Lincoln Center

A FIDDLER'S TALE

Music & Story by Wynton Marsalis
Words by Stanley Crouch

Part I:

NARRATOR:

It always starts somewhere. In this case, up in the sky. But with the turning of the earth, up in the sky can become down in the sky. Either way, the subject is war. Here it is.

(While Bass and Perc. play)

A rather shining individual appears. He beams like Klondike gold. But he is made, part by part, of absolute darkness. Some say he is slick, and sticky. Is he an oil spill standing on two legs and walking like a man? Whatever he is, his clothes are contrived to imitate the contours of light, light so warm and fresh you feel like you could cut off a piece of it, and put it in your pocket. Lock it up. This man made of darkness must say something. He says this:

DEVIL (*laughing*):

Watch me now. I'm that old low down Nicky. Some call me The Kid. I used to be called Sweet Daddy Scratch. But Bubba is who I actually am. Bubba Beals. Oh, yeas. Bubba Z. Beals. The B.Z.B. All right now. I take care of me some pure business. Uh oh. I find myself sniffing. (Inhales and exhales with great pleasure.) Uh oh. I smell a meal marching this way.

(Music Stops)

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NARRATOR: Up and down. Up and down the Fiddler's Band travels the road. People love them: they carry the story of the national soul and of the soul in the world. Parks, schools, prisons, churches, small concerts. Parades. They love to play, but they don't really get along. Then there's the drummer.

I. Fiddler's March

3 $\text{♩} = 162$
Bass Drum
muffled

He has a nice groove and
he's happy all the time.

Perc. *mf*

Hi Hat

10 *p*

Bass *arco*
mf

The bass man really doesn't say much.

Unlike the bassoonist, who talks non-stop and in everyone else's register.

15

Perc.

Bass

4

Bsn. *f*

Perc.

Bass

23

Bsn.

Perc.

Bass

The trombone is always late and loud.

27

Bsn.

Perc.

Bass

He wants to blow that bassoonist right off the bandstand

31

5

Bsn.

Tbn.

Perc.

Bass

36

Bsn.

Tbn.

Perc.

Bass