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# FJH BEGINNING STRINGS

Grade 1

## HOUSE OF UNTOLD HORRORS

(FOR NARRATOR AND STRING ORCHESTRA)

Lauren Bernofsky

### Instrumentation

- 1 - Conductor's Full Score
- 8 - Violin 1
- 8 - Violin 2
- 5 - Violin 3 (Viola T.C.)
- 5 - Viola
- 5 - Violoncello
- 5 - Double Bass
- 1 - Rehearsal Piano
- 1 - Narrator

FJH is now using a high-speed sorting system for parts.  
As a result, all single page parts are collated before multiple page parts.

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I N C.

Frank J. Hackinson

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## The Composer

Lauren Bernofsky holds an undergraduate degree in violin and composition from the Hartt School, a master's degree in composition from New England Conservatory of Music, and a doctorate in composition from Boston University.

Lauren's catalog of compositions totals over 50 works and is written for children as well as professional musicians. She is a recipient of grants from the National Foundation for the Advancement of the Arts, American Composers Forum, American Music Center, the American Embassy in Norway, and the American Embassy in Iceland. She has had commissions and performances of her music from groups throughout the United States, as well as in Canada, Norway, Iceland, Germany, England, Wales, New Zealand, and Australia.

## About the Music

I am not only a composer but a music mom. At the time I wrote this piece, my son, Nicholas, was seven and studying the cello at the Indiana University String Academy. When his teacher Cara Miller asked me to write a piece for the annual cello Halloween concert, I happily agreed — I'm always looking for ways to make music-making fun. Cara and I wanted a piece that the kids would have a great time playing. I later arranged the work for string orchestra.

I thought that having an actual story would be a fun basis for the piece. And it's not really a scary story — well, not until the very end, but by then it's just funny. The story of course justifies the many unusual sound effects called for in the piece, which will broaden students' palette of sounds that they know how to produce on their instruments. And these sound effects, strange as they may seem, also have pedagogical value. For instance, the rain sound effect, made by tapping fingers on the tops of the instruments, actually serves to develop strong curved fingers in both hands. Two of the sound effects, the scuttling rats and the scream, were invented by Nicholas!

*House of Untold Horrors* was premiered on October 27, 2007, at Indiana University by the String Academy cello ensemble, directed by Cara Miller. Our wonderfully "horrible" narrator was Dr. Joss Marsh, Professor of English at Indiana University, whom I would also like to thank for her help in editing the text of the story. Through a stroke of luck, we were able to arrange for Joss to narrate on the FJH recording as well.

String Editing: Soon Hee Newbold

## House of Untold Horrors

by Lauren Bernofsky

[RAIN] [Wait several seconds before beginning.]

It was raining that night, as Willoughbus Wallaby walked slowly down Nunnery Lane. It was a light rain, a gentle rain, but just enough to send a *chill* [CHILL] down the spine.

Willoughbus Wallaby walked along, listening to the sounds of the night. He heard an owl [OWL], a frog [FROG], a shark [SHARK] — [Quietly, aside] a shark? [Shake head and look more closely at script.] — and, from far, far away, the sound of a lonely violinist practicing scales [SCALE].\*

But suddenly it started to rain harder [RAIN louder]. Yes, it was a heavy rain now. Willoughbus Wallaby quickened his pace, and as the wind started to blow in great gusts [WIND], he began to look frantically around for a place, any place, to seek shelter. Suddenly, he saw a house with a large porch and a light on inside. He climbed the steps up to the porch [STEPS] — finally, shelter from the rain [RAIN much quieter].

But not from the wind! [WIND] — that wind, that cruel, harsh wind — it seemed to rip away at his clothing as if it had chosen him, Willoughbus Wallaby, as its *victim!*

Willoughbus Wallaby's heart started to beat faster [HEARTBEAT]. He knocked on the door [KNOCK].

Slowly, *s-l-o-w-l-y*, the door opened [DOOR] [RAIN stops]. But no one was there! Wait, someone was there! Willoughbus Wallaby looked down, and there, standing before him, was a *single ... solitary ... ghostly-white ...* [Look down, then slowly back up at audience, in horror.] kitty [MEOW].

The kitty approached him. It rubbed itself against his leg and purred loudly, as if to say, "*Dare to enter this house, and you shall never leave alive!*"

But, for some reason, Willoughbus Wallaby found himself being drawn into that house, as if controlled by a force greater than he.

[VAMP] Willoughbus Wallaby entered the house. He found himself being drawn from room to room, as if guided by a ghostly presence that he could neither see nor feel. He entered a sort of library. There was a heavy, musty smell in the room. He heard the sound of scuttling rats [RATS]. Through the dim light he could make out bookcases towering above him — never before had he seen such tall bookcases! His eye followed the bookcases all the way up to what seemed like an impossibly high ceiling! [VAMP stops] [BOOKCASE] He heard, from somewhere, a clock striking nine [GRANDFATHER CLOCK].

[VAMP] [Wait about 5 seconds.] He felt himself being drawn into the kitchen. There were those scuttling rats again [RATS]. And then he saw it [VAMP stops] — on the table, sitting *right there on the table*, just inches away from him! Oh, it was too horrible to picture, yet picture it we must! Yes, sitting right there on the table, on a flowery china plate was a ... a ... a ... *cupcake!* [GASP] And on top of that cupcake was sickly-looking orange frosting, and on top of that a ... a ... a ... *jelly bean!* [GASP longer] And it was (could it be?), yes, the jelly bean was ... *licorice!* [SCREAM]

The sheer horror of this sight was enough to shock him back into consciousness! [VAMP resumes, getting faster] Now, having fully regained his senses, one thought and one thought only flashed in his mind like a strobing neon light: *Escape!* [HEARTBEAT, fast]

Willoughbus Wallaby bolted out of the room, down the corridor, through yet more rooms, another corridor, doors bursting open as he flew, like a rocket, through the house. He arrived at the front entryway. But standing before him again was ... the purring kitty! However, the kitty was no match for his frenzy, and he sped towards that front door. Oh, wait — the kitty *was* a match [VAMP and HEARTBEAT stop].

[Speak simply, and with a shrug.] The kitty ate him [CHEWING].

[Speak plainly.] The end [ENDING].

LAUREN BERNOFSKY  
(BMI)

“... a frog ...”

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"... the sound of a lonely  
violinist practicing scales. \*"

**12 A tempo**

"But suddenly it started  
to rain harder."

Violin 1, Violin 2, Violin 3 (Vla. T.C.), Viola, Violoncello, Double Bass, and Reh. Pno. staves. The score for measures 11-14 shows a solo for Violin 1, marked *p* (piano). The other instruments are marked *tutti* and *p*. The Violoncello and Double Bass parts are marked with a slash and a percent sign, indicating they are to be substituted or omitted.

11

\*Note: Any snippet of music or instrument may be substituted.  
(Narration should be changed accordingly.)

14

"... as the wind started  
to blow in great gusts ..."

**17**

"... he began to look  
frantically around  
for a place ..."

"He climbed the steps  
up to the porch."

Violin 1, Violin 2, Violin 3 (Vla. T.C.), Viola, Violoncello, Double Bass, and Reh. Pno. staves. The score for measures 15-18 shows a wind instrument (V) playing a melody marked *f* (forte). The Violoncello and Double Bass parts are marked with a slash and a percent sign, indicating they are to be substituted or omitted. The Reh. Pno. part is marked with a slash and a percent sign, indicating it is to be substituted or omitted.

15

16

\*Bow with long strokes on  
top of bridge (approx. 5 sec.)

18

"Finally, shelter from the rain.

But not from the wind!..."

wind  
□ (V) (□) (V)

Score for measures 20-22, 3/4 time signature.

**Vln. 1**  
**Vln. 2**  
**Vln. 3 (Vla. T.C.)**  
**Vla.**  
**Vcl.**  
**D.B.**  
**Reh. Pno.**

Measures 20-22 show various musical notations including rests, notes, and dynamic markings (*f*, *p*, *tutti*). The Vcl. and D.B. parts feature a "Solo scrunch\*" marking in measure 20 and a "tutti" marking in measure 21. The Vln. parts have a "wind" marking in measure 22.

\*Bow scrunches with very heavy weight so that there is no pitch.

20

21

22

23 "Willoughbus Wallaby's heart started to beat faster." **accel.**

Score for measures 23-27, 3/4 time signature.

**Vln. 1**  
**Vln. 2**  
**Vln. 3 (Vla. T.C.)**  
**Vla.**  
**Vcl.**  
**D.B.**  
**Reh. Pno.**

Measures 23-27 show various musical notations including rests, notes, and dynamic markings (*f*). The Vcl. part features a "Solo heartbeat\*\*" marking in measure 23. The Vln. parts have an "accel." marking in measure 23.

\*\*Tap fingertips on belly of instrument under bridge.

24

25

26

27

"He knocked on the door."

33 **A tempo**  
knock\*

Vln. 1

Vln. 2

Vln. 3 (Vla. T.C.)

Vla.

Vcl.

D.B.

Reh. Pno.

28 29 30 31 32

\*Knock with knuckles on top of instrument.

"Slowly, s-l-o-w-l-y the door opened."

Vla. Solo scrunch\*

Vln. 2 Solo meow

"... a single ... solitary ... ghostly-white ... kitty."

Vln. 2 Solo meow

"... as if controlled by a force greater than he."

Vln. 1

Vln. 2

Vln. 3 (Vla. T.C.)

Vla.

Vcl.

D.B.

Reh. Pno.

34 35 37

\*Play one very long, slow bow-scrunch on a fingered note (very heavy bow pressure so that there is no pitch).

Precise pitch not necessary.

"Willoughbus Wallaby entered the house ...."  
(Cut off vamp at, "... to what seemed like an  
impossibly high ceiling!")

**39 Vamp (♩ = 88)**  
play pizz.

Vln. 1 *mp* *pont.*

Vln. 2 *mp* *pont.*

Vln. 3 (Vla. T.C.) *mp* *pont.*

Vla. *mp* *pont.*

Vcl. *f* *pizz.*

D.B. *mp* *pizz.*

Reh. Pno. *mp*

On Cue: 2 Players scuttle\*  
Vcl. *f* *pizz.*

41 42 43

\*Make a scuttling sound with finger nails making little scratches down top of cello in unmeasured rhythm. Approx. 2 sec. Play once after the line, "He heard the sound of scuttling rats."

**44** *arco gliss.\**

Vln. 1 *arco gliss.\**

Vln. 2 *mp* *arco gliss.\**

Vln. 3 (Vla. T.C.) *mp* *arco gliss.\**

Vla. *mp* *arco gliss.\**

Vcl. *arco gliss.\**

D.B. *arco gliss.\**

Reh. Pno.

"He heard, from somewhere, a clock striking nine."

\*Play a slow, upward *glissando* on highest string.



47

## 49 Vamp (♩ = 88)

\*Play once after the line,  
*There were those rats again.*"

*“jelly bean!”*

56

gasp, longer

Vln. 1

gasp, longer

Vln. 2

gasp, longer

Vln. 3 (Vla. T.C.)

gasp, longer

Vla.

gasp, longer

Vcl.

gasp, longer

D.B.

Reh. Pno.

... yes, the jelly bean was licorice!"

arco

ff

normale

ff

normale

ff

normale

ff

arco

ff

arco

ff

ff

"The sheer horror of this sight was enough to shock him back into consciousness!"

58

\*\*\*Grasp highest string between  
fingerboard and bridge, with thumb  
on top and fingers below, holding mouth  
wide open and eyes wide, as if screaming.

61 ♩ = 88 Poco a poco accel.

"Now, having fully regained ..." (Repeat vamp until cut off and go on to measure 66, ... Oh, wait – the kitty was a match.")

Vln. 1 *pizz.*  
*mp* *pont.*  
 Vln. 2 *mp* *pont.*  
 Vln. 3 (Vla. T.C.) *mp* *pont.*  
 Vla. *mp*  
 Vcl. *pizz.*  
*mp* *pizz.*  
 D.B. *mp*  
 Reh. Pno. *mp*

On Cue: Solo heartbeat\*

*f*

63 64 65

\*Start playing after ... one thought only flashed in his mind like a strobing neon light: ESCAPE!" Tap like a heartbeat in a tempo independent of the other parts and slightly faster than the previous heartbeat sound effect. Continue until vamp stops.

66 "The kitty ate him."  
 Vln. 1 (pizz.)  
*mf*  
 Vln. 2 *mf* *pizz.*  
 Vln. 3 (Vla. T.C.) *mf* *pizz.*  
 Vla. *mf* *pizz.*  
 Vcl. (pizz.)  
*mf*  
 D.B. (pizz.)  
*mf*  
 Reh. Pno. *mf*

2 Players crunch\*

2 Players crunch\*

69 70

\*Put bows horizontally under instrument with bow hair to instrument back. Press bow sticks into the hair and rotate bows to slowly grind against instrument back, making crunching sounds.