

Steal Away

Source:

J.B.T. Marsh

*The Story of the Jubilee Singers,
with Their Songs* (1880)

Reprint, New York: AMS Press, 1971

Chorus:

Steal a - way, steal a - way, steal a - way to Je - sus!

Steal a - way, steal a - way home, I ain't got long to stay here. Fine

My Lord calls me, he calls me by the thun - der;
Green trees are bend - ing. Poor sin - ners stand tremb - ling;

The trum - pet sounds it in my soul: I ain't got long to stay here. D.C.

3. My Lord calls me,
He calls me by the lightning;
The trumpet sounds it in my soul:
I ain't got long to stay here.
(Chorus)

4. Tombstones are bursting,
Poor sinners are trembling;
The trumpet sounds it in my soul:
I ain't got long to stay here.
(Chorus)

Background Information

According to the old emancipated black folk that were living twenty or twenty-five years after the end of the Civil War, "Steal Away to Jesus" was used as a signal spiritual to notify the slaves of a secret meeting somewhere in the swamps or backwoods where they would assemble to pray to God for deliverance.

Whenever the meeting was to be held, the leader would hum the first phrase of the spiritual to one of the slaves and he would, in turn, hum the same phrase to another. This signal was given all day until everyone was notified. They would hum softly the good message all during the day and the slave master would never know what was going on.

Boatner, Edward, *The Story of the Spirituals*