

8. Why?
(Mile 48)

Frederic Rzewski (1999)
Text: adapted from Chekhov
(In The Ravine)

In Anton Chekhov's story "In the Ravine", a young peasant woman (Lipa) brings the body of her dead baby back to her village from the hospital, where she had brought it after it had been burned with boiling water. On the road she meets a group of peasants, who offer her a ride. She tells her story to the leader of the group, an old man:

Slow, plodding

The musical score is written in 4/4 time and consists of three systems. The first system includes a Voice part and a piano accompaniment (M.D. and M.S.). The second system continues the piano accompaniment with a tremolo effect on the keyboard lid. The third system includes a second Voice part and piano accompaniment.

System 1:

- Voice:** "My little boy / Moi synochek / suffered / vyes / the whole day," / dyen muchilsya,— / said / Lipa. / Lipa. / Lipa.
- M.D.:** cow moo: (indicated by an 'x' on the staff)
- M.S.:** *f* (first measure), *mp* (second measure), *p* (third measure)

System 2:

- Voice:** "He looks at me / Glyadit / with his little eyes and is still / svoimi glazochkimi i molchit. / and he wants to talk / i hochet skazat / and he can't talk. / i nie mozhnet.
- M.S.:** *mp* (first measure), *pp* (second measure), *mf* (third measure), *p* (fourth measure), *pp* (fifth measure). Includes instruction: *tremolo with fingernails on keyboard lid:*

System 3:

- Voice:** Lord our Father! / Gospodri batiushka! / Queen of Heaven! / Tsarytsa Nyebesnaya! / I felt so bad / Ya s gorya tak / I just fell down / Vsyo i padala
- M.D.:** cow moo: (indicated by an 'x' on the staff)
- M.S.:** *f* (first measure), *p* (second measure)

on the floor.
na pol.

I stand there
Stoyu

and I fall down
i upadu

next to his bed.
voslie krovati. (T)

tremolo with fingernails on keyboard lid:

pp *f* *p*

Tell me, Grandpa,
I skazhi mne, dedyushka,

why a child
zachem malyenkomu

must suffer
piered

before
smiertyu

it dies?
muchitsya?

f *p* *mf* *p*

cow moo:

When a grownup
Kogda muchayetsya

person suffers,
bolshoi chelovek,

a man
mu-zhik

or a woman,
ili zhenshchina,

their sins are forgiven,
to grekhi proshchaiutsya,

tremolo with fingernails on keyboard lid:

mf *p* *cresc.*

but why a zachem a child, malyenkomu when kogda it u has nievo no nyet sin? grechov? Why?" Zachem?

poco rit.

cow moo: (M.S.)

(tremolo with fingernails on keyboard lid)

f *p* *pp* *f*

a tempo

"Ah, —A kto who knows?" answered otvyetil the old man. starik.

ff *p* *p* *f*

They went on Proyekhali

tremolo with fingernails on keyboard lid:

pp *una corda*

cow moo:
 for a half hour
 s polchasa
 in silence.
 molcha.

tremolo with fingernails on keyboard lid:
cow moo:

f
 "We can't know
 —Vsievo znat
tremolo with fingernails on keyboard lid:
 everything,
 nelzya,
 why and how,"
 zachem da kak,—
p
 said the old man.
 skazal starik.
 A bird
 Ptitsye polozheno
mf
we corde
p
mp

	<p>is given not four wings, but two, because it can fly with two;</p> <p>nie chetyrie kryla, a dva, potomu chto i na dvukh lyetet</p>	<p>cow moo:</p>	<p>tremolo with fingernails on keyboard lid:</p>	<p>Cadenza: (improvise, r.h. alone, on wooden surfaces only)</p>
	<p>so a human can know not all, but only half or a quarter.</p> <p>tak i cheloveku polo: zheno znat' nie vsyo, a tolko polovinu ili chetviert.</p>			<p>Cadenza: (l.h. alone, keys only)</p>
	<p>Only what you need to know in order to live; that is all you know."</p> <p>Skolko nado yemu znat' chtob prozhit', stolko i znayet.</p>	<p>rall.</p> <p>tremolo with fingernails on keyboard lid:</p>	<p>a tempo (non rit.)</p> <p>cow moo:</p>	