

The Legend of John Henry

Solo Tuba with String Orchestra, Percussion, and Narrator

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"In the days following the Civil War, many a former slave found themselves free men. Looking for work in the new frontier, the west provided good work at a solid wage, and purpose. The rails were steady work, and the men were strong. None more so than John Henry."

The musical score is written in 4/4 time with a tempo of 144 beats per minute. It begins with an upbeat. The Narrator part consists of a single whole note. The Tuba part features a melodic line starting in the fifth measure, marked *legato* and *mp*. The string ensemble (Violin I, Violin II, Viola, Violoncello, and Double Bass) is marked *Narrator speaks* and *p*. The Anvil part consists of a steady rhythmic pattern of quarter notes, marked *p*. The score is divided into two systems, with the second system starting at measure 11. The Tuba part continues with a more complex melodic line in the second system, while the strings and anvil maintain their respective parts.

42

Nar.

Tuba

Vln. I

Vln. II

Vla.

Vc.

D.B.

Anvil

50

Nar.

Tuba

Vln. I

Vln. II

Vla.

Vc.

D.B.

Anvil

"But the men of the rail were hard, tough men. They fought their way through the mountain, losing a thousand workers along the way. The men that were left had to breath the dirt-filled air all the day long, and couldn't see their hammers in front of them."

73 75

Nar.

Tuba

Vln. I

Vln. II

Vla. *final time only*
f

Vc. *mf*

D.B. *mf*

Anvil

79

Nar.

Tuba

Vln. I

Vln. II

Vla.

Vc.

D.B.

Anvil

95

Nar.

Tuba

Vln. I

Vln. II

Vla.

Vc.

D.B.

Anvil

100

100

104

Nar.

Tuba

Vln. I

Vln. II

Vla.

Vc.

D.B.

Anvil

"Well, don't ya know it was near the end of the tunnel bein' dug that there came to be a salesman at the camp. He was selling a steam-powered drill, something so powerful he claimed it could dig faster than any man alive. Well now, John Henry wasn't 'bout to let a challenge like that go! So, a contest was set up between the two, John Henry with a hammer in each hand against that steam dri

"Now let me tell ya folks, that was one heck of a contest. There was dust everywhere! The sound of the hammers against the steam-powered drill was louder than anything the men had every heard, so loud the ground itself shook with every hammer blow. Through it all, the men were hootin' and hollerin', cheering on ol' John Henry."

The musical score is arranged for a vocal soloist (Nar.) and a full orchestra. The vocal line is written in a single staff with a treble clef and a key signature of one flat. The instrumental parts include Tuba, Violin I and II, Viola, Violoncello (Vc.), Double Bass (D.B.), and Anvil. The score begins at measure 114, with a rehearsal mark at measure 116. The vocal line features the lyrics "John John Hen-ry" repeated across several measures. The instrumental parts provide accompaniment, with the strings and woodwinds playing a rhythmic pattern. The anvil part is marked with a treble clef and contains a series of rests.

114

Nar.

114

Tuba

114

Vln. I

John John Hen-ry

pp Chant-like, with a slow crescendo

Vln. II

John John Hen-ry

pp Chant-like, with a slow crescendo

Vla.

John John Hen-ry

pp Chant-like, with a slow crescendo

Vc.

D.B.

114

Anvil

138

Nar.

Tuba

Vln. I

Vln. II

Vla.

Vc.

D.B.

Anvil

145

Nar.

Tuba

Vln. I

Vln. II

Vla.

Vc.

D.B.

Anvil

"The noise was so loud, the men didn't realize that ol' John Henry was swayin' and teeterin'."

159
159 fast, with excitement!

Nar.

Tuba

Vln. I

Vln. II

Vla.

Vc.

D.B.

Anvil

167

167

167 rit...
mf rit...

Nar.

Tuba

Vln. I

Vln. II

Vla.

Vc.

D.B.

Anvil

198

Nar.

198

Tuba

rit.

198

Vln. I

Vln. II

Vla.

Vc.

D.B.

198

Anvil

Detailed description: This page of a musical score, numbered 15, is titled 'The Legend of John Henry'. It features seven staves. The top staff is for Narrator (Nar.), which is mostly blank with a double bar line at the end. The second staff is for Tuba, showing a melodic line starting at measure 198. The third staff is for Violin I (Vln. I), the fourth for Violin II (Vln. II), and the fifth for Viola (Vla.), all of which are blank. The sixth staff is for Violoncello (Vc.), showing a bass line with chords. The seventh staff is for Double Bass (D.B.), which is blank. An eighth staff at the bottom is for Anvil, which is also blank. A 'rit.' (ritardando) marking is placed above the Tuba staff in the fifth measure. The number '198' is written above the first measure of each staff.