

THE WAY WE TELL A STORY

Seán Doherty
2020
SAT and Piano

TEXT

The Way We Tell a Story

Says I to him, I says, says I,
Says I to him, I says, The thing, says I, I says to him,
Is just, says I, this ways.

I hev', says I, a gret respeck
For you and for your breed,
And onything I could,
I says, I'd do, I wud indeed.

I don't know any man, I says,
I'd do it for, says I, As fast, I says, as for yoursel',
That's tellin' ye no lie.

There's nought, says I, I wudn't do
To plase your feyther's son, But this, I says, ye see, says I,
I says, it can't be done.

John Stevenson (1850–1932)

PROGRAMME NOTE

Sure I know... lookit... this is it...*yah, yah, yah*...desperate...I'm sure...

These and similar expressions will be familiar to anyone who's ever had a conversation in Ireland. Known to linguists as 'back channeling', they are verbal and non-verbal cues used to signal that the listener is paying attention to the story. The speaker and the listener collaborate in telling the story through these expressions. Back channeling is among the hallmarks of Irish conversation that I have incorporated into this song, along with the fast pace, rhetorical repetitions, talking across each other, disagreement couched in the mildest of terms, and the Ulster dialect of English.

PERFORMANCE NOTE

It is encouraged that performers include extra theatrical elements of their own creation that highlight the sense and character of the song.

NOTATION CONVENTION

Spoken



Crossed noteheads indicate unpitched material and gestures

Sure look,

Duration: *c.* 3 mins

Seán Doherty Music

seandohertymusic.com

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John Stevenson (1850–1932)

SEÁN DOHERTY

Allegro ♩ = 100

Pno. *f con moto*



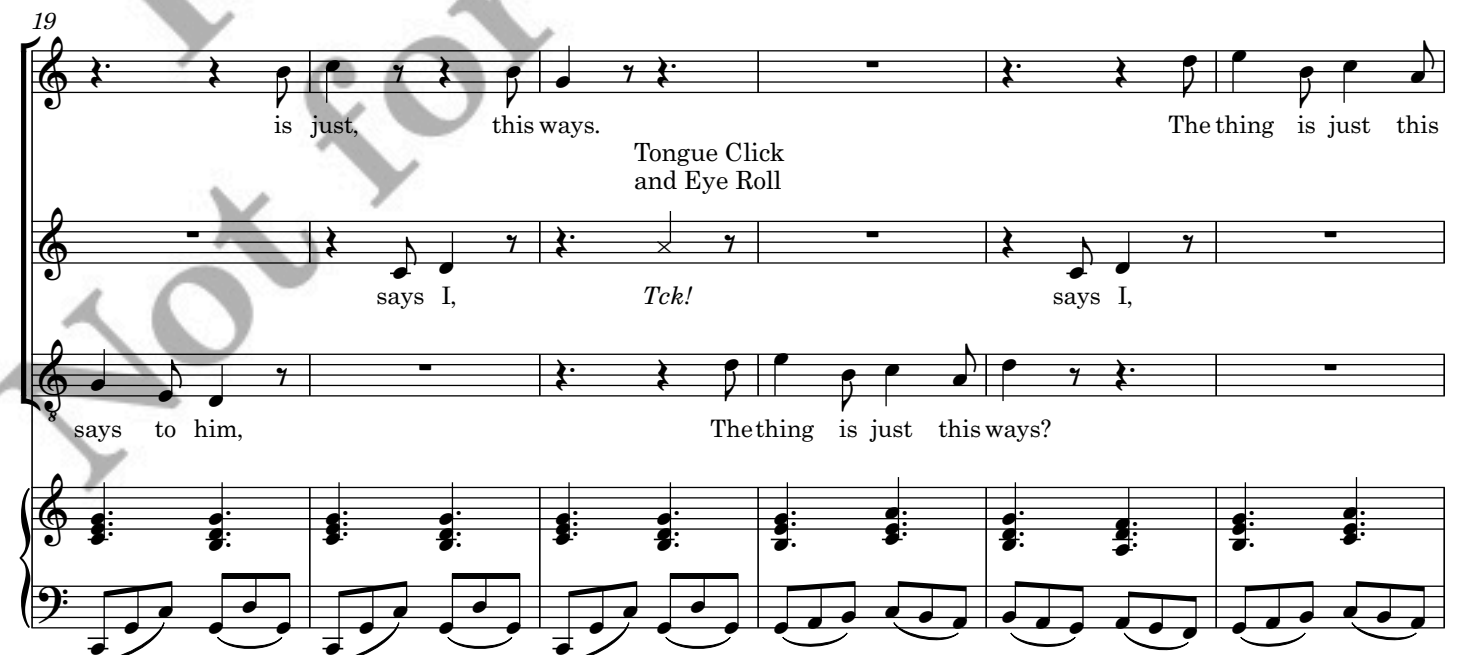
7



S. *f*
Says I to him, Says I to him, The thing,
A. *f*
says I, Haah! says I,
T. *f*
I says, I says, I
Pno. *mp sub.*



19
is just, this ways. The thing is just this
Tongue Click
and Eye Roll
says I, Tck! says I,
says to him, The thing is just this ways?
Pno.



25

ways. Spoken Says I to him, Sung Says I to him, Spoken
 Sure look, says I, Sure this is
 I says, I says.

30

f I have a gret res-peck for you and for your
 it. *f* says I,
mfsub.

37

breed, And o-ny-thing I could I'd do, I wud in deed. For
 Inhale Tongue Click and Eye Roll
 Haah! Tck! says I,
f I says, For you and for yourbreed?

44

you and for your breed. And o-ny-thing I could I'd do, I wud in deed.

Spoken Sure look, Spoken Sure this is

I says,

f

50

I don't know a - ny man, I'd do it for

it. says

I says,

f

mp sub.

57

As fast, as for your - sel', that's tell - in' ye no lie,

Tongue Click and Eye Roll

I, Inhale Tck! says I,

Haah! I says, that's tell - in' ye no lie?

mf

64

that's tell-in' ye no lie. I don't know a - ny man I'd do it for As fast,

Says I.

Spoken Sure look, Spoken Sure this is

70

There's nought I wud - n't do To plase your fey - ther's

Says I,

it.

mf sub.

77

son, Butthis, ye see, it can't be done. But

Inhale Tongue Click and Eye Roll

Haah! says I, Tck! says I,

I says, I says, Butthis it can't be done?

84

this it can't be done. There's nought I wud - n't do To plase your fey - ther'sson.

Spoken Sure look, Spoken Sure this is

I says,

f

90

mp Says

it.

mp

98

I to him, it can't be done. Says I to him, I says, says I, it can't be done. I

mp says I, says I, Says I to him, I

mp I says, I says, Says I to him, I says, says I, it

mp sub.

105 *mf* 1.

says, says I, Says I to him, I says, says I, it can't be done. I says, says I, Says

says, says I, it can't be done. I says, says I, Says I to him, I says, says I, it

can't be done. I says, says I, Says I to him, I says, says I, it can't be done. I

mf

110 2. *f*

says, says I, Staawp!— Go wan Says I to him, I says, says I, it

says, says I, Staawp!— Go wan it can't be done. I says, says I, Says

can't be done. Staawp!— Go wan I says, says I, Says I to him, I

f

114 1. 2. *ff*

can't be done. I says, says I, Says says, says I, C' mere Go 'way Says

I to him, I says, says I, it says, says I, C' - mere Go 'way it

says, says I, it can't be done. I can't be done. C' mere Go 'way I

ff

118

1.

I to him, I says, says I, it can't be done. I says, says I, Says
 can't be done. I says, says I, Says I to him, I says, says I, it
 says, says I, Says I to him, I says, says I, it can't be done. I

Optional Coda

Mutter independently

122 2.

says, says I, says I! G'luck! G'luck! Gluck!

Mutter independently

says, says I, Says I! Bye! Bye! Bye!

Mutter independently

can't be done. says I! At's us nai!