

# **think why i chase you**

from  
**the laurels**

libretto by  
michael lewis maclellan

music by  
jeffrey ryan

**baritone and piano**

Perusal Copy

# Think why I chase you

from  
the laurels

**Vocal Range:** Bb2 to Ab4

**Original Instrumentation:**

Bb clarinet, percussion, harp, violin, viola, cello, contrabass  
Score and ensemble parts are available

**Performance Notes:**

In the opera, Laurel runs through a large city park at night, chased by a male Stranger. We are initially invited to see the Stranger as a dangerous stalker and to “read” the woman as a helpless victim. In the course of the story, however, clues are slipped which suggest that the victim isn’t so innocent. Through music, word and action, the opera reveals that “The Stranger” is in fact part of Laurel’s psyche, and his pursuit of her is with a more complex purpose. When she stabs him and explains her motives, talking of “killing a man tonight,” we think she is referring to The Stranger we have just seen her stab. But when The Stranger stirs, not killed, we realise that he is not the victim. He is haunting her, a voice she cannot escape which offers her the only way to properly silence him. The piece ends in this place of heightened dilemma.

In the first part of the opera, The Stranger appears from a distance, but as Laurel runs, panicked, yet he grows steadily nearer to her. As the aria *Think Why I Chase You* begins, The Stranger has come up behind Laurel, who knows he is there but will not turn to look at him. The Stranger entreats her, reaches out to her, and assures her as friend, not foe, but to Laurel his words are a sinister, taunting dance of seduction.

**Think Why I Chase You**  
(Michael Lewis MacLennan)

Think why I chase you,  
The one who still loves you  
Now, even now.

I am not your wolf  
You are not my lamb

Even in flight, you urge me on:  
The winds fling your hair  
So it flies back to me  
Your rampant legs blush  
Bare in the night.

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$\text{♩} = 64$

$(\text{♩} = 96 \text{ ♩} = 192)$

(THE STRANGER is right behind LAUREL now, but he still does not touch her. Feeling his presence, she refuses to look at him.)

1 Gently rocking  $\text{♩} = \text{♩}$

STRANGER: *mf dolce*

Think— why— I—

(hp)

(clar.) *mf*

(vc + pizz. bass)  
*con ped. ad lib*

6

S — chase you, The— one who— still—

10

S — loves you Now, — e - ven

14 *p* *mf*

S now. I am not your wolf

19 *poco rit.* *A tempo*  $\text{♩} = 96$

S You are not my lamb E - ven in

(clar/stgs) *mf*

23

S flight, you urge me on: The winds

26

S — fling your hair So it flies

29 *p* *mf*

S back to me Your ram-pant

32

S legs blush

35 *molto rit.* *Freely, colla voce*

S Bare in the night.

*p* *p* *mf*

*Sva*

*Sub*