

# Wade in the Water

Trad. African American

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Dm C B $\flat$  A7 Dm C B $\flat$  A7

Wade in the wa - ter, Wade in the wa - ter, chil - dren,

5 Dm C B $\flat$  A7 Dm A Dm *Fine*

Wade in the wa - ter, God's gon - na trou - ble the wa - ter.

9 Dm

1. See that host all dressed in white,
2. See that band all dressed in red,
3. See those chil - dren all dressed in black,
4. Riv - er Jor - dan is deep and cold,

11 A Dm

God's gon - na trou - ble the wa - ter, The  
 God's gon - na trou - ble the wa - ter, It  
 God's gon - na trou - ble the wa - ter, They  
 God's gon - na trou - ble the wa - ter, It

13

lead - er looks like an Is - rael - ite,  
 looks like the band that Mo - ses led,  
 come a long way and they won't turn back,  
 chills my bod - y but not my soul,

15 A Dm *D.C. al Fine*

God's gon - na trou - ble the wa - ter.  
 God's gon - na trou - ble the wa - ter.  
 God's gon - na trou - ble the wa - ter.  
 God's gon - na trou - ble the wa - ter.

# Wade in the Water

Trad. African American

Trad., arr. Harry T. Burleigh, 1922

Wade \_\_\_ in the wa-ter, Wade \_\_\_ in the wa-ter, chil-dren,

The first system of the sheet music for 'Wade in the Water'. It consists of a vocal line in treble clef and a piano accompaniment in bass clef. The key signature has one flat (B-flat) and the time signature is 4/4. The lyrics are 'Wade \_\_\_ in the wa-ter, Wade \_\_\_ in the wa-ter, chil-dren,'.

Wade \_\_\_ in the wa-ter, God's-a-gon-na trou-ble the wa-ter.

*Fine*

The second system of the sheet music. It continues the vocal line and piano accompaniment. The lyrics are 'Wade \_\_\_ in the wa-ter, God's-a-gon-na trou-ble the wa-ter.' The system ends with the word 'Fine'.

1. See that host all dressed in white,  
2. See that band all dressed in red, \_\_\_  
3. See those children all dressed in black,

The third system of the sheet music. It features three verses of lyrics: '1. See that host all dressed in white,', '2. See that band all dressed in red, \_\_\_', and '3. See those children all dressed in black,'. The piano accompaniment consists of simple chords.

God's a - gon - na trou - ble the wa - ter, They  
God's a - gon - na trou - ble the wa - ter, It  
God's a - gon - na trou - ble the wa - ter, They

The fourth system of the sheet music. It features three lines of lyrics: 'God's a - gon - na trou - ble the wa - ter, They', 'God's a - gon - na trou - ble the wa - ter, It', and 'God's a - gon - na trou - ble the wa - ter, They'. The piano accompaniment continues with simple chords.

Public domain text, tune, and arrangement.

13

look like the child-ren of the Is - rael - ites, —  
looks like the band that — Mo - ses led, —  
come a long way — and they won't turn back,

13

*D.C. al Fine*

15

God's a - gon - na trou - ble the wa - ter.  
God's a - gon - na trou - ble the wa - ter.  
God's a - gon - na trou - ble the wa - ter.

15

*Additional verses (incl. "floating verses" used in other spirituals):*

See those children dressed in red...  
Must be the children that Moses led.

Jordan's water is chilly and cold...  
Chills the body but not the soul.

River Jordan is deep and wide...  
Meet my people on the other side.

If you get there before I do...  
Tell my friends that I'm coming too.

According to Arthur C. Jone, professor at Univ. of Denver, this spiritual was used by Harriet Tubman to give instructions on escaping from slavery. When a person wades in water, they leave no scent trail to be followed by dogs used by slave-catchers (*Wade in the Water: The Wisdom of the Spirituals*, Orbis, 1993, 51-52).