LISTENING GUIDE
Symphony No. 5 in C-sharp minor
Gustav Mahler (1860-1911)

PART 1

12 min. Trauermarsch
Opening trumpet solo
Funeral march theme
Calmer secondary theme
Turmoil represented in brass and upper strings
Trumpet call returns with extra instrumentation
Funeral march theme returns
Secondary theme returns
Variation of the funeral march
Opening trumpet call returns and slowly fades to silence

FUN FACT: The opening trumpet solo is in the same rhythm as the opening of Beethoven’s Fifth Symphony.

PART 2

15 min. Stürmisch bewegt, mit größerer Vehemenz
Opening statement and "sighs" that transform into...
1st theme: "Rage" Fast scales and leaps
2nd theme: "Melancholy" Features cello solo
Alternating themes of melancholy and rage with building tension throughout
Triumphant brass chorale that quickly fades back into rage and turmoil
Quiet ending featuring strings and brief wind solos

FUN FACT: This movement is said to represent Mahler’s love to his wife Alma Schindler.

PART 3

17 min. Scherzo
Horn opens this bright and optimistic movement
Ländler theme
Horn interjection
With contrapuntal development
Waltz theme
Beautiful horn solo with cello accompaniment
Elaborate pizzicato passage with wind solos
Horn and trumpet solos return
Waltz theme featuring percussion
Opening horn call returns
Return of the fugue on ländler and waltz themes
Exciting overlaying of waltz and ländler themes
Final horn solo
Active strings and triumphant brass brilliantly close the movement

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PART 4

9 min. Adagietto
Serenity and beautiful first theme accompanied by a harp
Developing intensity
Second theme: Passionate and more active
Return of the contemplative and calm first theme
Upper strings drive the melody while accompanied by bass to close the movement

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PART 5

15 min. Rondo finale
Opening bassoon solo (quote from Mahler’s "Wunderhorn")
Lush horn solo
Complex fugal passage
Return of the opening content and fugue
The Adagietto’s theme is featured but in a fast upbeat variation
Alternation of fugal material with quotes from the Adagietto
Cello solo featuring horn solo and woodwind solos reminiscent of ländler motives
Building tension in brass; slow opening theme
Glorious restatement of the chorale from Mvmt 2 that leads to...
The "final finale to end all finales" (The Guardian)