

# Choral music for Christmas

## Three Irish Poems

- 1) Prayer For A Child
- 2) Irish Lullaby
- 3) A Noble Boy

**Ken Johnston**

### **VOCAL SCORE**

**2 part voices (2<sup>nd</sup> part optional)**  
with piano and (optional) strings

**Words:** 1) Winifred M. Letts  
2) Alfred Percival Graves  
3) Anonymous

Composed 1997 and revised 2002

**Duration of individual songs:** 1) 3' 2) 4' 3) 4'

Versions of this piece are also available for the following voice combinations:

SSA (or SAA)  
SATB  
SAB

Each version has the same accompaniment options as above

For each version, a FULL SCORE and a VOCAL SCORE (voices + piano) is available

String parts are available separately

Vocal score -  
2 part (2nd part optional)

# Three Irish Poems

## 1) Prayer For A Child

Poem -  
Winifred M. Letts

for 2 part voices (2nd part optional\*) and piano with (optional) strings\*\*

Music -  
Ken Johnston

Slow and gentle ♩ = 60

Piano

The piano introduction consists of two staves. The right hand plays a series of chords in a 4/4 time signature, while the left hand plays a simple bass line. The tempo is marked 'Slow and gentle' with a quarter note equal to 60 beats per minute. The key signature has two sharps (F# and C#). The introduction ends with a fermata over the final chord.

*p*

*Ped.* *ped.* (sim.)

5 (solo or small group ad lib.)

1 *p*

The vocal line (part 1) begins with a fermata. The piano accompaniment continues with chords. The lyrics are: "God keep my jewel this day from dan- ger, From tin- ker and poo-ka and". The time signature changes from 4/4 to 6/4 and back to 4/4.

God keep my jewel this day from dan- ger, From tin- ker and poo-ka and

8

1

The vocal line continues with the lyrics: "black- heart- ed stran- ger. From harm of the wa- ter, from hurt of the fire. From the". The piano accompaniment continues with chords. The time signature changes from 4/4 to 6/4 and back to 4/4.

black- heart- ed stran- ger. From harm of the wa- ter, from hurt of the fire. From the

11

1

The vocal line continues with the lyrics: "horns of the cows going home to the byre." A fermata is placed over the end of the phrase. A box labeled 'A' is placed above the final note of the vocal line. The piano accompaniment continues with chords. The time signature is 4/4.

horns of the cows going home to the byre.

A

14

1

(tutti) *p*

The vocal line continues with the lyrics: "From the sight of the fair- ies that". The piano accompaniment continues with chords. The time signature is 6/4.

From the sight of the fair- ies that

Duration: 3'

\* The melody is always in part 1. The optional line is part 2.  
\*\* The optional string parts are not written on this vocal score.

18

1

may - be might change her... From teas - ing the ass... when he's

20

1

tied to the man - ger... From stones that would bruise her, from

22

1

thorns of the briar. From ev - il red ber - ries that wake her de - sire...

25

1

From hunt - ing the gan - der and

2 (optional 2nd part) *p*

*poco cresc.* *mp*

29

1 vex-ing the goat. From the depths o' sea wa-ter by Dan-ny's old boat. From

2 oo oo

32

1 cut and from tum-ble, from sick-ness and weep-ing; May God have my jewel this

2 pp oo

*p*

*pp*

*p*

35

1 day in his keep-ing.

2

38

*rit.*

*dim.*

# Three Irish Poems

## 2) Irish Lullaby

Poem -  
Alfred Percival Graves

Music -  
Ken Johnston

**Flowing** ♩ = 90

1

*p* 1) I'd\_ rock my own\_ sweet

*p* Ped. (sim.)

7

1

chil - die to rest\_ in a cra - dle of gold\_ on a bough of the wil - low, To the

13

1

sho - heen ho of the wind of the west\_ and the lul - la lo\_ of the

19

1

soft sea\_ bil - low. Sleep, sleep, ba - by dear,

(optional 2nd part) *p* Sleep, sleep, sleep,

2

Duration: 4'

25

1 *poco cresc.*  
Sleep with-out fear, Mo- ther\_ is here\_\_\_\_\_ be - side your

2 *poco cresc.*  
Sleep with-out fear, Mo- ther\_ is here\_\_\_\_\_ be - side your

*poco cresc.*

30

1 *mp*  
pil - low. Sleep, sleep, ba - by dear,\_\_\_\_\_

2 *mp*  
pil - low. Sleep, sleep, sleep, sleep,

*mp*

35

1 *dim.* *mp*  
Sleep, sleep with-out fear.\_\_\_\_\_ 2) I'd\_

2 *dim.* *mp*  
Sleep, sleep with-out fear.\_\_\_\_\_

*dim.* *p*

41 **B**

1  
2

put my own sweet child to sleep in a silver boat on the

*mp*

47

1  
2

beau - ti - ful ri - ver, Where a shonee whisper the white cas - cades, and a

53 **C**

1  
2

lul - la lo to the green flags shi - ver... Sleep, Sleep,

59

1  
2

sleep, ba - by dear, Sleep with - out fear, Mo - ther is sleep, sleep, Sleep with - out fear, Mo - ther is

*poco cresc.*

64

1 here with you for e- ver... Sleep, sleep,

2 here with you for e- ver... Sleep, sleep,

*mf*

69

1 ba-by dear, Sleep, sleep with-out fear.

2 sleep, sleep, Sleep, sleep with-out fear.

*dim.*

*mp*

75

1 3) Lull lo, lull lo to the rise and fall of

2 ah

*p* **D**

*p*

81

1  
mo - ther's bo - som tis sleep has bound you, And O, my

2  
ah And O, my

86

1  
child, what co - si - er nest for ro - si - er rest could love have

2  
child, what co - si - er nest for ro - si - er rest could love have

92

1  
found you? Sleep, sleep, ba - by dear,

2  
found you? Sleep, sleep, sleep,

E

97 *poco cresc.*

1 Sleep with-out fear, Mo- ther's two arms\_\_\_\_\_ are clasped a -

2 Sleep with-out fear,\_\_\_\_\_ Mo- ther's two arms\_\_\_\_\_ are clasped a -

*poco cresc.*

102 *mp*

1 round you. Sleep, sleep,\_\_\_\_\_ ba-by dear,\_\_\_\_\_

2 round you... Sleep, sleep, sleep, sleep,

*mp*

107 *dim.* **F** *p*

1 Sleep, sleep with-out fear.\_\_\_\_\_ Sleep, sleep,\_\_\_\_\_

2 Sleep, sleep with-out fear.\_\_\_\_\_ Sleep, sleep,

*dim.* *p*

113 *dim.* *poco rit.*

1 ba-by dear,\_\_\_\_\_ Sleep, sleep with-out fear.\_\_\_\_\_

2 sleep, sleep, Sleep, sleep with-out fear.\_\_\_\_\_

*dim.*

# Three Irish Poems

## 3) A Noble Boy

Poem -  
Anonymous

Music -  
Ken Johnston

Rhythmical and light ♩ = 144

Piano

The piano introduction consists of three measures. The right hand features a rhythmic pattern of eighth notes and chords in a D major key signature. The left hand plays a steady eighth-note accompaniment. The dynamic marking is *mf*.

1

The vocal line begins at measure 4 with a rest, followed by the lyrics: "The wo-man was old and fee-ble and grey, And". The piano accompaniment continues with the same rhythmic pattern as the introduction. The dynamic marking is *mf*.

7

The vocal line continues with the lyrics: "bent with the chill of the win-ter's day; The street was wet with the re-cent". The piano accompaniment remains consistent. The dynamic marking is *mf*.

10

The vocal line concludes with the lyrics: "snow, And the wo-man's feet were wea-ry and slow." The piano accompaniment continues to the end of the piece. The dynamic marking is *mf*.

Duration: 4'

13 *mf* **A**

1 *mf* **A**

2 (optional 2nd part) She stood at the cros - sing and wai - ted long, A -

16

1 lone, un - cared for, a - mid the throng.

2 lone, un - cared for, a - mid the throng.

19 **B** *mf*

1 Down the street, with laugh - ter and

2 Down the street, with laugh - ter and

22 *mf*

1 shout, Glad in the free - dom of 'school let out', Came the

2 Down the street, with laugh - ter and shout, Glad in the free - dom of 'school let

25

1 boys, like a flock of sheep; Hail - ing the snow, piled white and

2 out', Came the boys, like a flock of sheep;

28

1 deep. Past the wo - man, so old and grey, Hast - ened the chil - dren

2 Hail - ing the snow, piled white and

**C** *f*

32

1 on their way, Nor of - fered a help - ing hand to her, So meek, so ti - mid, a - fraid to

2

**10**  
**8**

14  
36

1  
2

stir.

39

1  
2

*mf* **D**

At last came one of the mer - ry — troop, ————— The

*mf*

*dim.* *mf*

42

1  
2

bright - est boy of all the group; ————— He paused be - side her, and whis - pered

*dim.*

45

1  
2

low, ————— 'I'll help you a - cross if you wish to go'; —————

*p* *p*

48 *mf* **E**

1 He gui-ded the trem-bling feet a-long, Proud that his own were firm and

2 *mf*

52

1 strong.

2

55 *mf* **F**

1 Then back a-gain to his friends, he went, His

2 *mf*

Then back a-gain to his friends, he

58

1 young heart hap-py, and well con - tent, 'She is some-bo-dy's mo-ther, boys, you

2 went, His young heart hap-py, and well con - tent, 'She is

61

1 know, Al-though she is old and poor and slow. And I

2 some-bo-dy's mo-ther, boys, you know, Al-though she is old and poor And I

*f*

64

1 hope some o-ther will lend a hand To help my mo-ther, you un - der-stand, If e'er she be poor and

2

**G**

69

1  
2

old and grey, When her own dear boy is far a - way.'

72

**molto rit.**

*dim. poco a poco*

*dim. poco a poco*

75

**H** Slow and gentle ♩ = 60

*p*

Ped. Ped. (sim.)

80

1

(unison) *p*

And 'some - bo - dy's mo - ther' bowed low her head, In her

83

1

home that night, and the prayer she said was, 'God be kind to the

*pp*

86

1

no - ble boy, Who is some - bo - dy's son, and pride, and joy!.....

89

1

*rit.*