

for Lindsay

In the Bleak Midwinter

SATB, *divisi*, a cappella

Christina Rossetti (1830–1894)

Gustav Holst (1874–1934)
arranged by Lee R. Kesselman

Peacefully, serenely ♩ = ca. 76

S *pp*

In the bleak mid-winter, frost-y wind made moan,

A

5

earth stood hard as i-ron, wa-ter like a stone;

pp

oo oo

9 S *p*

snow had fall-en, snow on snow, snow on snow,

A

oh oh

T *pp*

oh oh

B

Notes from the arranger:

This arrangement was written for my daughter's early music sextet at Michigan State University. The first performances were sung with one singer on a part, so the soprano (mm. 1–16), bass (mm. 56–71) and measures 84–85 can easily be performed by solo voices. The song departs from the original melody at the end of verse three and in verse five, where the lyrics and the spirit of the song continue, but the actual tune disappears into the harmony and texture. Like many timeless carols, *In the Bleak Midwinter* paints a picture of the single believer confronted with the humble birth of Jesus in the darkest, coldest time of year. When faced with the question of “What gift do I have to bring Jesus?”, one realizes that ‘my heart’ is the greatest gift of all.

Duration: 4:15

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13

in the bleak mid - win - ter, long a - go.

oo long a - go.

oo long a - go.

oo long a - go.

pp

17

mp

Our God, heav'n can - not hold him,

mp

Our God, heav'n can - not hold him,

mp

Our God, heav'n can - not hold him,

mp

Our God, heav'n can - not hold him,

21

nor earth sus - tain; heav'n and earth shall flee a - way

nor earth sus - tain; heav'n and earth shall flee a - way

nor earth sus - tain; heav'n and earth shall flee a - way

nor earth sus - tain; heav'n and earth shall flee a - way

25 *mf*

when he comes to reign. In the bleak mid - win - ter a

when he comes to reign. In the bleak mid - win - ter

when he comes to reign. In the bleak mid - win - ter

when he comes to reign. mid - win - ter

29 *mp*

sta - ble place suf - ficed the Lord God Al - might - y,

sta - ble place suf - ficed Lord God Al - might - y,

sta - ble place suf - ficed the Lord God Al - might - y,

sta - ble place suf - ficed Lord God Al - might - y,

33 *rit.* Lightly, with a pastorale feeling $\text{♩} = \text{ca. } 48$ *p*

Je - sus Christ. E - nough for him, whom

Je - sus Christ. loo loo loo loo loo loo loo loo loo loo

Je - sus Christ. loo loo loo loo loo loo loo loo loo loo

Je - sus Christ. doo doo doo doo

37

cher - u - bim wor - ship night and day, a breast - ful of

loo loo loo loo loo loo loo loo loo loo loo loo loo loo loo

loo loo loo loo loo loo loo loo loo loo loo loo loo loo loo

doo doo doo

41

milk, and a man - ger full of hay; —

loo loo loo loo loo loo loo loo —

loo loo loo loo loo loo loo loo — e - nough for him, whom

doo doo doo doo e - nough for him, whom

45

the ox and ass and

loo loo loo loo

an - gels fall down be - fore, — loo loo loo loo

an - gels — fall down be - fore, — doo

Slowly

49 *rit.* *p*

cam - el _____ which a -

loo loo loo loo loo loo loo loo loo loo loo loo which a -

loo loo loo loo loo loo loo loo loo loo which a -

_____ doo doo _____ which a -

Tempo I

54 *p*

dore. _____ oo _____

dore. _____ oo _____

dore. _____

dore. _____ (opt. solo) *mf* An - gels and arch - an - gels may have gath-ered

59

oo _____ oo _____

oo _____ oo _____

there, cher - u-bim and ser - a-phim thronged the air; but