

The Christmas Story



A short cantata in popular style for voices and narrator(s)

Words and Music

by

Andrew D. Boden

1981

The Christmas Story

1. The Annunciation

Andrew D. Boden

♩ = 115

Piano introduction in G major, 12/8 time. The right hand features a melodic line with eighth and sixteenth notes, while the left hand provides a steady bass line with dotted eighth and sixteenth note patterns.

4 Verse 1

At Naz - a - reth, a town in

Musical notation for measures 4-6, including vocal line and piano accompaniment.

7

Gal - il - ee, — There lived a girl whose name was Ma - ry, she — was a

Musical notation for measures 7-9, including vocal line and piano accompaniment.

10

gen - tle as a lamb, she was as sweet as app - le pie, and so an An - gel came to vis - it her from

Musical notation for measures 10-12, including vocal line and piano accompaniment.

13

Heav - en on high_ and said she was go - nna be the

This system contains measures 13, 14, and 15. It features a vocal line in treble clef with lyrics and a piano accompaniment in G major with treble and bass staves. The piano part consists of chords and single notes.

16

moth - er of a love - ly lit - tle ba - by.

This system contains measures 16, 17, and 18. It features a vocal line in treble clef with lyrics and a piano accompaniment in G major with treble and bass staves. The piano part consists of chords and single notes.

19

Verse 2

Now

This system contains measures 19, 20, and 21. It features a vocal line in treble clef with lyrics and a piano accompaniment in G major with treble and bass staves. The piano part consists of chords and single notes.

22

Jo - seph was a nice young car - pen - ter;_ Ma - ry was in love with him and

This system contains measures 22, 23, and 24. It features a vocal line in treble clef with lyrics and a piano accompaniment in G major with treble and bass staves. The piano part consists of chords and single notes.

25

he loved_ her,_ but when he heard a - bout the ba - by, well he felt quite_ sad_ 'cos he was

This system contains measures 25, 26, and 27. It features a vocal line in the upper staff and a piano accompaniment in the lower staff. The key signature has one sharp (F#) and the time signature is 4/4. The lyrics are: "he loved_ her,_ but when he heard a - bout the ba - by, well he felt quite_ sad_ 'cos he was".

28

ab - so - lut - ely cer - tain that he was - n't its dad!_ but hold tight: it's all__

This system contains measures 28, 29, and 30. It features a vocal line in the upper staff and a piano accompaniment in the lower staff. The key signature has one sharp (F#) and the time signature is 4/4. The lyrics are: "ab - so - lut - ely cer - tain that he was - n't its dad!_ but hold tight: it's all__".

31

right. Just wait ar - ound and you'll be - gin to see the_ light_

This system contains measures 31, 32, and 33. It features a vocal line in the upper staff and a piano accompaniment in the lower staff. The key signature has one sharp (F#) and the time signature is 4/4. The lyrics are: "right. Just wait ar - ound and you'll be - gin to see the_ light_".

34

This system contains measures 34, 35, and 36. It features a vocal line in the upper staff and a piano accompaniment in the lower staff. The key signature has one sharp (F#) and the time signature is 4/4. The vocal line in measure 34 is a whole rest, and the piano accompaniment continues with chords and moving lines.

37

Verse 3

The An - gel came a - gain to vis - it Jo - seph, He_ said "You

This system contains measures 37, 38, and 39. It features a vocal line and a piano accompaniment. The key signature has one sharp (F#) and the time signature is 4/4. The piano accompaniment consists of chords in the right hand and a bass line in the left hand.

40

go a - head and ma - rry_ Ma_ ry;_ If_ you are think - ing of this child, well Jo - seph,

This system contains measures 40, 41, and 42. It continues the vocal line and piano accompaniment from the previous system.

43

that's O_ K_ Just go and have a look at what the proph - ets_ say, So don't

This system contains measures 43, 44, and 45. It continues the vocal line and piano accompaniment.

46

cry. The time is nigh for the birth - day of our Lord, the Son of

This system contains measures 46, 47, and 48. It concludes the vocal line and piano accompaniment for this section.

49

Musical score for measures 49-50. The system includes a vocal line and a piano accompaniment. The key signature is one sharp (F#). The vocal line begins with the lyrics "God on High..." and features a long note on "on" followed by a melodic phrase. The piano accompaniment consists of chords in the right hand and a bass line in the left hand.

51

Musical score for measures 51-53. The system includes a vocal line and a piano accompaniment. The key signature is one sharp (F#). The vocal line is mostly silent, indicated by a long rest. The piano accompaniment continues with chords in the right hand and a bass line in the left hand, ending with a double bar line.

The Christmas Story

A short cantata in popular style for voices & narrator(s).

Words & Music by Andrew D. Boden (1981)



Song 1 - The Annunciation

At Nazareth, a town in Galilee,
There lived a girl whose name was Mary, she
Was as gentle as a lamb, she was as sweet as apple pie,
And so an angel came to visit her from Heaven on high
And said she Was gonna be
The mother of a lovely little Baby.

Now Joseph was a nice young carpenter;
Mary was in love with him, and he loved her:
But when he heard about the baby, well he felt quite sad,
For he was absolutely certain that he wasn't its Dad!
But hold tight It's all right
Just wait around and you'll begin to see the light.

The angel came again to visit Joseph, He said
"You go ahead and marry Mary. If you are
Thinking of this child, well Joseph, that's OK -
Just go and have a look at what the prophets say;
So don't cry The time is nigh
For the birthday of the Lord, the Son of God on high".

Narrator A

So Joseph did as the angel told him, and took Mary as his wife. Now there went out an order from Caesar Augustus that a great census should be taken. For this, every man had to return to his town of origin to be registered; and so Joseph set off with his bride to the town of Bethlehem in Judea. It was a long, slow journey.

The Christmas Story

2. The Journey to Bethlehem

q = 120

Musical notation for the first system, measures 1-3. The system includes a vocal line (treble clef) and a piano accompaniment (grand staff). The key signature is one flat (B-flat) and the time signature is 12/8. The piano accompaniment features a steady eighth-note bass line and chords in the right hand.

Musical notation for the second system, measures 4-6. The system includes a vocal line (treble clef) and a piano accompaniment (grand staff). The piano accompaniment continues with the eighth-note bass line and chords.

Musical notation for the third system, measures 7-9. The system includes a vocal line (treble clef) and a piano accompaniment (grand staff). The lyrics are: "Ri - ding, ri - ding, it's a long way down the road, Wea - ry, wea - ry, we need a place to stay." The piano accompaniment continues with the eighth-note bass line and chords.

Musical notation for the fourth system, measures 10-12. The system includes a vocal line (treble clef) and a piano accompaniment (grand staff). The lyrics are: "Ma - ry, Jo - seph, and the No - ter room af - ter". The piano accompaniment continues with the eighth-note bass line and chords.

13

don - key hau - lin' the load. We're on our way to Beth - le - hem, A
ri - ding all of this way. The on - ly place that we can find is

The musical score for measures 13-16 consists of a vocal line and a piano accompaniment. The vocal line is in a single staff with lyrics. The piano accompaniment is in two staves (treble and bass clef). The music is in a 3/4 time signature and a key signature of one flat. The piano part features a steady bass line and chords in the right hand.

17

lit - tle rest and then we just keep ri - ding, ri - ding, The
in a sta - ble, we don't mind; we're wea - ry, wea - ry, it's

The musical score for measures 17-20 continues the vocal and piano parts. The lyrics are: "lit - tle rest and then we just keep ri - ding, ri - ding, The in a sta - ble, we don't mind; we're wea - ry, wea - ry, it's". The piano accompaniment maintains the same rhythmic and harmonic structure as the previous section.

21

long way down the road
been a long, long day

The musical score for measures 21-23 shows the vocal line ending with a double bar line. The piano accompaniment continues for two measures before also ending with a double bar line. The lyrics are: "long way down the road been a long, long day".

24

rall.

The musical score for measures 24-26 features a piano accompaniment. The first two measures are empty staves. The piano part begins in measure 24 with a series of chords in the right hand and a bass line in the left hand. A "rall." (rallentando) marking is placed above the piano part in measure 25. The piece concludes with a double bar line at the end of measure 26.



Song 2 - The Journey to Bethlehem

Riding Riding,
It's a long way down the road;
Mary Joseph
And the donkey haulin' the load.
We're on our way to Bethlehem;
A little rest, and then we just keep
Riding Riding,
The long way down the road.

Weary Weary,
We need a place to stay.
No roomafter
Riding all this way.
The only place that we can find
Is in a stable We don't mind;
We're weary Weary,
It's been a long, long day.

Narrator B

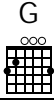
Because of the overcrowding Mary and Joseph could find no proper place to stay, and so they spent the night in a stable, where at least it was warm and dry. Here Mary's baby was born. She wrapped him in blankets and laid him to sleep in a manger.



The Christmas Story

3. Lullaby

q = 90



Hush, my lit - tle one,

7 Am D7 G Em A D7

Sleep, my pret - ty one, Mo - ther will keep you safe from harm.

13 G Am D7 G Em

Warm - ly wrapped and in a man - ger, Peace - ful - ly rock - ing, so

19 Am D7 G Em Em7 C B7 Em

ten - der and calm. An - gels will sing of the birth of this ba - by, the Son of

26

Em7 A7 D7 G Am

God, ly - ing in the hay. Hush, my lit - tle one, Sleep, my

32

D7 G Em Am B7

pret - ty one, Mo - ther will watch 'til the dawn of the **rall.**

36

Em A7 G B7 E7 Am D7 G

Lento

day. Mo - ther will watch 'til the dawn of the day.

Song 3 - Lullaby

Hush, my little one, sleep my pretty one,
Mother will keep you safe from harm;
Warmly wrapped and in a manger,
Peacefully rocking, so tender and calm.

Angels will sing of the birth of this baby,
The Son of God, lying in the hay.
Hush, my little one, sleep my pretty one,
Mother will watch 'til the dawn of the day.
Mother will watch 'til the dawn of the day.

Narrator A

On the hillside above the town some shepherds were guarding a flock of sheep. It was a cold, dark night; but suddenly the sky lit up and the shepherds heard angelic voices



The Christmas Story

4. The Angels

q = 110

Glo - ri - a in ex - cel - sis. In ex - cel - sis De - o. Et in

(for rehearsal only)

This system contains the first five measures of the piece. It features a vocal line in treble clef and a piano accompaniment in grand staff (treble and bass clefs). The key signature is one sharp (F#) and the time signature is 4/4. The lyrics are: "Glo - ri - a in ex - cel - sis. In ex - cel - sis De - o. Et in". The piano part includes a rehearsal mark in the second measure.

6

ter - ra pax.

This system contains measures 6 through 11. The vocal line continues with the lyrics "ter - ra pax." and then has a whole rest for the remainder of the system. The piano accompaniment continues with chords and a moving bass line. A rehearsal mark is present at the beginning of the system.

12


Wake up from your sleep, Do not be a - fraid,
Ev' - ry one will sing the prais - es of this child. the

This system contains measures 12 through 14. The vocal line begins with the lyrics "Wake up from your sleep, Do not be a - fraid, Ev' - ry one will sing the prais - es of this child. the". The piano accompaniment features a more active melody in the right hand and a steady bass line in the left hand.

15

Go and see the ba - by in the man - ger_ laid. Down in Beth - le - hem,
Son of God, born of a maid - en meek and_ mild. Go to Beth - le - hem and


This system contains measures 15 through 17. The vocal line continues with the lyrics "Go and see the ba - by in the man - ger_ laid. Down in Beth - le - hem, Son of God, born of a maid - en meek and_ mild. Go to Beth - le - hem and". The piano accompaniment continues with a similar rhythmic and harmonic pattern.



Sleep - ing in the hay, the Bles - sed Sav - iour of the world is born to - day.
see the King a - sleep, He will lead man - kind just as you lead your sheep.



Glo - ry to God in the High - est, Peace on earth, good -



will to men.

rall.

Song 4 - The Angels

Gloria in excelsis.
In excelsis Deo.
Et in terra pax.

Wake up from your sleep,
Do not be afraid,
Go and see the baby in the manger laid.
Down in Bethlehem,
Sleeping in the hay,
The blessed Saviour of the world is born today.

Glory to God in the highest;
Peace on earth, goodwill to men.

Ev'ryone will sing
The praises of this child,
The Son of God, born of a maiden meek and mild.
Go to Bethlehem
And see the King asleep;
He will lead mankind just as you lead your sheep.

Glory to God in the highest;
Peace on earth, goodwill to men.

Narrator B

When the shepherds heard this they decided to go down into the town to look for the new-born King, and they found Mary, Joseph and the baby in the stable, and they knelt before the child.

Narrator A

At the moment Jesus was born a strange, bright star appeared in the sky in Eastern lands. Three wise men saw this star and recognised it as the sign of a great event, and so they set out to find where the child was born. As they journeyed the star seemed to go before them, leading and guiding them to Bethlehem.

On the way they stopped at Jerusalem where they told King Herod of their pilgrimage. He asked them to find the new-born King and then return to tell him, so that he could go and pay homage himself.

The Christmas Story

5. The Three Kings

q = 90

The first system of the musical score consists of three staves. The top staff is a single treble clef staff with a whole rest in each of the four measures. The middle staff is a grand staff (treble and bass clefs) with a whole rest in the treble clef and a series of chords in the bass clef. The bottom staff is a bass clef staff with a series of chords. A repeat sign is placed at the end of the first two measures.

5

The second system of the musical score consists of three staves. The top staff is a single treble clef staff with a whole rest in the first two measures, followed by a melodic line in the last two measures. The middle staff is a grand staff with a whole rest in the treble clef and a series of chords in the bass clef. The bottom staff is a bass clef staff with a series of chords. The lyrics are written below the top staff.

We come from East - ern lands a -
We car - ry pres - ents for a
Her - od has told us to re -

8

The third system of the musical score consists of three staves. The top staff is a single treble clef staff with a melodic line. The middle staff is a grand staff with a whole rest in the treble clef and a series of chords in the bass clef. The bottom staff is a bass clef staff with a series of chords. The lyrics are written below the top staff.

far, _____ Led by the point - ing of a star. _____
King. _____ Gold, myrrh and frank - in - cense we bring. _____
turn. _____ Tell him of all that we may learn. _____

11

1. & 2.

We come to where a ba - by lies, We saw the sign writt - en in the skies.
We kneel be - fore the ho - ly boy, Sent to the world to bring us joy.
But, by an an - gel in a dream, We have been told of his

1. & 2.

15

3.

e - vil scheme.

3.

17

rall.

Song 5 - The Wise Men

We come from Eastern lands afar.
Led by the pointing of a star.
We come to where a baby lies;
We saw the sign written in the skies.

We carry presents for a King.
Gold, myrrh and frankincense we bring.
We kneel before the holy boy,
Sent to the world to bring us joy.

Herod has told us to return.
Tell us of all that we may learn.
But, by an angel in a dream,
We have been told of his evil scheme.

Narrator B

Having been warned in a dream that Herod wanted the baby killed, the three wise men returned home a different way. When Herod found out he sent soldiers to kill every child aged two or less in Bethlehem and its neighbourhood. Fortunately Joseph had been warned of this in a dream and had escaped with his wife and child to Egypt.

Narrator A

The time came that Herod died; and an angel appeared to Joseph in Egypt and said “rise up, take the child and his mother, and go with them to the land of Israel, for the men who threatened the child’s life are dead”. So Joseph returned to Nazareth with Mary and Jesus, thereby fulfilling all that had been written by the prophets.



The Christmas Story

6. Finale - Freedom

q = 120

Piano introduction in G major, 4/4 time. The right hand features a melodic line with eighth and sixteenth notes, while the left hand provides a steady bass line with quarter notes.

5

Back from E - gypt Jo - seph came, Brought his wife and child home a - gain.

Musical notation for measures 5-8, including vocal line and piano accompaniment.

9

Back to Naz - a - reth in Gal - i - lee, Free from Her - od's ty - ran - ny.

Musical notation for measures 9-12, including vocal line and piano accompaniment.

13

Now all fear and trou - ble can cease, Now the world may live in peace, the

Musical notation for measures 13-16, including vocal line and piano accompaniment.

17

lit - tle child_of_ ho - ly birth_ will rise to rule_ o'er_ all_ the earth. He brings us

This system contains measures 17 through 20. The vocal line features a melody with eighth and quarter notes. The piano accompaniment consists of chords in the right hand and a bass line with eighth and quarter notes in the left hand. The key signature has one sharp (F#).

21

free - dom_ he brings us free - dom,_ that comes to us from God a - bove._ He brings us

This system contains measures 21 through 24. The vocal line continues with a similar melodic pattern. The piano accompaniment maintains the harmonic structure with chords and a steady bass line. The key signature remains one sharp.

25

free - dom,_ he brings us free - dom,_ that we may live in_ love.

This system contains measures 25 through 28. The vocal line concludes with a final note on a whole note. The piano accompaniment features a final chord in the right hand and a bass line ending with a quarter note. The key signature is one sharp.

29

This system contains measures 29 through 32. The vocal line is silent, indicated by a whole rest on the staff. The piano accompaniment continues with a rhythmic pattern of chords and a bass line. The key signature is one sharp.

33

Now has come the time of the Lord... Go and spread his mess-age a- broad...

This system contains measures 33 through 36. It features a vocal line in the upper staff and a piano accompaniment in the lower staves. The key signature is one sharp (F#). The lyrics are: "Now has come the time of the Lord... Go and spread his mess-age a- broad..."

37

Peace on earth, good-will to men, Now and ev-er-more, A-men. He brings us

This system contains measures 37 through 40. It features a vocal line in the upper staff and a piano accompaniment in the lower staves. The key signature is one sharp (F#). The lyrics are: "Peace on earth, good-will to men, Now and ev-er-more, A-men. He brings us"

41

free-dom, He brings us free-dom, that comes to us from God a-bove... He brings us

This system contains measures 41 through 44. It features a vocal line in the upper staff and a piano accompaniment in the lower staves. The key signature is one sharp (F#). The lyrics are: "free-dom, He brings us free-dom, that comes to us from God a-bove... He brings us"

45

free-dom, he brings us free-dom, that we may live in love. He brings us

This system contains measures 45 through 48. It features a vocal line in the upper staff and a piano accompaniment in the lower staves. The key signature is one sharp (F#). The lyrics are: "free-dom, he brings us free-dom, that we may live in love. He brings us". A first ending bracket labeled "1." spans the final two measures of the system.

49

Musical score for measures 49-52. The system includes a vocal line and a piano accompaniment. The vocal line starts with a first ending bracket over measures 49 and 50, with a '2.' marking above measure 50. The lyrics 'we may live in love.' are written below the vocal line. The piano accompaniment features a treble and bass clef with a key signature of one sharp (F#) and a 2/4 time signature. The piano part includes chords and melodic lines in both hands.

53

Musical score for measures 53-56. The system includes a vocal line and a piano accompaniment. The vocal line consists of whole rests for all four measures. The piano accompaniment continues with a treble and bass clef, key signature of one sharp (F#), and 2/4 time signature. The piano part features chords and a melodic line in the bass clef. A 'piss.' marking is present in the piano part at the end of measure 56.

Song 6 - Freedom

Back from Egypt Joseph came;
Brought his wife and child home again.
Back to Nazareth in Galilee,
Free from Herod's tyranny.

Now all fear and trouble can cease;
Now the world may live in peace.
The little child of holy birth
Will rise to rule o'er all the earth.

CHORUS

He brings us freedom; He brings us freedom
That comes to us from God above.
He brings us freedom; He brings us freedom,
That we may live in love.

Now has come the time of the Lord;
Go and spread his message abroad.
Peace on earth, goodwill to men,
Now and evermore, Amen

CHORUS x two



The Christmas Story

Performance notes & suggestions.

The Christmas Story by Andrew D. Boden was first performed by pupils at Burnwood High School, Stoke-on-Trent, Staffordshire as part of the Christmas Carol Concert - 1981.

A rhythm unit was used to accompany songs 1 & 6. For song 1 it was set to a fast **swing** rhythm and two **Rock** rhythms were used for song 6 - one for the verse and the other for the chorus.

A bass guitar was used to double the bass line for songs 1, 5 & 6.

For song 3 an acoustic guitar played a quaver fingerpick pattern - e.g.

Guitar

or

Guitar

Song 4 had instruments (e.g. recorder, violin, clarinet) doubling the voice parts for the Gloria, and the main tune song and chorus was arranged for wind quartet (with the piano).

For song 5 a glockenspiel doubled the right-hand piano part for the intro., Between verses and at the end. A tambour was used to gently tap out the repeated rhythm (piano left hand) and an oboe played a counter-melody during the verses.

Oboe

10

All songs can be sung by full chorus, though it is obvious that certain songs could be solo or small-group items - e.g. Song 3 could be a solo and Song 5 could be a trio.

During the performance the story was displayed (acted out) in tableaux on the stage.

With modern digital technology the accompaniments could easily be arranged and sequenced to provide the backing of a full band.