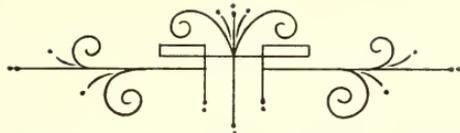




I am sending with this the general directions concerning the musical accompaniment for the story of "The Legend of the Christ-child." In case you use it please state that the music was selected by Mr. Frances M. Arnold. Before the story teller begins, parts of Beethoven's Pastoral Symphony are played, growing softer and softer. As the story begins the pastoral music changes into the music of "The Holy Night."

Through the first part of the story this music is played in the major key. When the first rebuff comes, at the words "Go down off the steps," the music changes into the minor key and continues in this plaintive key until the words "there appeared a bright single ray of light." With these words of cheer the music changes, by means of a few introductory notes, into the Choral of the Ninth Symphony. The Choral is continued, growing stronger and stronger as the child approaches the little home and swells into joy as the welcome is given to him by the mother and her children. With the words "His ragged clothes had changed to garments white and beautiful" the music changes to the motif of the "Holy Grail" in Parsifal and continues until the words "At last he disappeared from sight." The remainder of the story is told without many musical accompaniments. The last paragraph is omitted in telling the story. As the story-teller ceases speaking the words "And the mother answered in a low tone "Yes," the music again takes up "The Holy Night" and plays it through, the story-teller remaining standing until it is finished. When well told and well played it is very impressive.



THE LEGEND OF THE CHRIST CHILD

A Music Story for Christmas Eve.

Adapted from the German 

BY

Elizabeth Harrison

WITH

Piano Accompaniment

Arranged by

Francis M. Arnold



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Introduction

Lights and shadows must be considered in story-telling just as inevitably as they are in architecture or painting, and these lights and shadows should be varied according to the character of the audiences.

The outline here given is to be altered to suit the circumstances under which the story is told. The pathetic side may be shortened and the transfiguration of the little stranger may be emphasized if the listeners are very young, or if they have experienced sadness or neglect. On the other hand if the audience is composed of well-cared for children, or adults indifferent to the needs of neglected childhood the little wanderer's longings for a touch of human love may be given with details containing more local color and the climax be a short but glorious ending.

All moralizing must be avoided. If the story is felt by the story-teller and the musician it will carry its own message. Otherwise it is a failure, and should not be presented.

It is also necessary for the pianist to adapt the music to the story in every way, not only as regards to speed and force but also to enlarge or contract.

Certain parts of the accompaniment have repeat marks; these may be observed or the music may be stopped and resumed when the change occurs in the story.

It is necessary for the story-teller and the pianist to be together where catch word is printed. If the pianist is able to improvise on these melodies, the music can follow the story with greater freedom. However, they should practice together until story and music are counterparts.

PRELUDE

Part I.

Once upon a time, long, long ago, on the night before Christmas, a little child was wandering all alone through the streets of a great city. There were many people on the street, fathers and mothers, sisters and brothers, uncles and aunts and even gray-haired grandfathers and grandmothers, all of whom were hurrying home with bundles of presents for each other and their little ones. Fine vehicles rolled by, express wagons rattled past, even old carts were pressed into service, and all appeared to be in a hurry and glad with expectation of the coming Christmas morning.

The little child seemed to have no home and wandered about listlessly from street to street. No one noticed him. The north wind blew against him and pierced his ragged garments through and through, causing him to shiver with cold. Home after home he passed, looking with longing eyes through the windows, in upon the happy children, most of whom were helping to trim the Christmas tree for the coming morrow.

"Surely," said the child to himself, "Where there is so much gladness, some of it must be for me." With timid steps he approached a large and handsome house. Through the windows he could see a beautiful Christmas tree already lighted. Many presents hung upon it. Its green boughs were trimmed with gold and silver ornaments. Slowly he climbed up the broad steps and gently rapped at the door. It was opened by a tall, stately footman.

The bright light and the warm air, filled with the fragrance of the Christmas pine, rushed out and seemed to greet the little wanderer with a kiss. The footman looked at the child for a moment, then sadly shook his head and said; "Go down off the steps. There is no room for such as you here."

Part II.

As the child turned back into the cold and darkness, he wondered why the footman had spoken so, for surely, thought he, those little children would love to have another companion join them in their joyous Christmas festival. But the little children inside did not even know that he had knocked at the door.

The street seemed colder and darker than before, and the child went sadly forward, saying to himself; "Is there no one in all this great city who will share this Christmas with me?"

Farther and farther down the street he wandered, to where the homes were not so large and beautiful. There were little children inside nearly all the homes. They were dancing and frolicking about. There were Christmas trees in every window, with dolls and trumpets and picture books, and balls, and tops, and other wonderful toys hung upon them. In one window the child noticed a little white lamb made of soft white wool. Around its neck was tied a red ribbon. It had evidently been hung on the tree for one of the younger children. The little wanderer stopped before this window and looked long and earnestly at the beautiful things inside, but most of all he was drawn toward this white lamb. At last, creeping up to window pane he gently tapped upon it. A little girl came to the window and looked out into the dark street where the snow had now begun to fall. She saw the child, but she only shook her head and said, "Go away and come some other time. We are too busy to take care of you now." Back into the street he turned again. The wind whirled past. It seemed to say, "Hurry on, hurry on, we have no time to stop. 'Tis Christmas eve and everybody is in a hurry tonight."

Again and again the child rapped softly at door or window pane. The hours passed; later grew the night; colder blew the wind, darker seemed the street. Farther and farther the little one wandered. There was scarcely anyone left upon the street by this time, and the few who remained took no notice of the child.

Part III.

Suddenly ahead of him there appeared single ray of bright light. It shone through the darkness into the child's eyes. He looked up smiling and said, "I will go where the little light beckons, perhaps they will share their Christmas with me".

Hurrying past all the other houses he soon reached the end of the street and went straight to the window from which the light was streaming. The house was old and small, but the child cared not for that. The light seemed still to call him. What do you suppose the light came from? Nothing but a tallow candle which had been placed in an old cup with a broken handle, in the window, as a glad token of Christmas eve. There was neither curtain nor shade to the little square window and as the child looked in he saw standing upon a small table a little Christmas tree. The room was plainly furnished, but was very clean. Near the fire-place sat a lovely faced mother with a two-year old child on her knee and an older child beside her. The children were looking into their mother's face and listening to a story. She must have been telling them a Christmas story, I think. Some bright coals were burning in the fire-place, and all seem light and warm within.

The little wanderer crept closer to the window pane. So sweet seemed the mother's face, so loving seemed the children, that he took courage and tapped gently, very gently, on the door. The mother stopped talking, the children looked up. "What was that mother? asked the little girl at her side. "I think it was some one tapping on the door," replied the mother. "Run as quickly as you can and open it, dear, for if it too cold a night to keep any one waiting in this storm." Oh, mother, I think it was the bough of the tree tapping against the window pane," said the little girl. Do please go on with our story." Again the little wanderer tapped upon the door. "My child, my child," exclaimed the mother rising, "That certainly was a rap on the door. Run quickly and open it. No one must be left out in the cold on Christmas Eve.

Part IV.

The child ran to the door and threw it wide open. The mother saw the ragged little stranger standing without, cold and shivering, with bare head and almost bare feet.

She held out both hands and drew him into the warm, bright room. "Oh, you poor, dear child, come in as quickly as you can, and get warm! Where did you come from, and where are you going? Have you no home? Have you no mother? Have you no Christmas to celebrate?"

She put her arms around the strange child, and drew him close to her. "He is very cold, my children," said she. "We must warm and feed him." "And" added the little girl, "we must love him and give him some of our Christmas, too." "Yes" said the mother, "but first let us warm his cold hands and feet."

Saying this she sat down beside the fire with the child on her lap, and her own two little ones warmed his half frozen hands in their own. The mother smoothed his tangled curls, and bending low over his head, kissed the child's face. She gathered the three little ones close to her; the candle and the fire light shone over them, and for a few moments the room was very still. I think she must have been praying. Then she whispered to the little girl. The child ran into the next room and soon returned with a roll of bread and a bowl of milk which had been set aside for her own breakfast the next morning. The small two-year old, slipping away from his mother's side, brought his wooden spoon and gave it to the little stranger. Then he smiled brightly for he was happy to think he too could help.

By and by the little girl said softly to her mother, "May we not light the Christmas tree, and let the little child see how beautiful it will look?" "Yes," replied the mother. With that, she seated the child on a low stool beside the fire, and went herself to fetch the few simple ornaments which from year to year she saved for her children's Christmas tree. They were soon busy preparing the tree and lighting the candles.

So busy were they that they did not notice the room had filled with a strange and beautiful light. They turned and looked at the spot where the little wanderer had sat. He had risen. His ragged clothes had changed to garments white and glistening. His tangled curls seemed now a halo of golden light about his head, but most beautiful of all was his face, which shone with a light so dazzling that they could scarcely look upon it. In silent wonder they gazed at the child. The small room seemed to grow larger and larger, the roof of their low house seemed to rise higher, and higher, and higher, until it almost reached the sky. With a sweet and gentle smile the beautiful child looked upon them for a moment and then slowly rose and floated through the air, above the tree tops, beyond the church spire, higher even than the clouds themselves, until at last he appeared to them to be a shining star in the sky above, and then he disappeared.

The wondering children turned in hushed awe to their mother and said in a whisper, "Oh, mother, it was the CHRIST CHILD, was it not?"

The Legend of The Christ Child

Story adapted by
ELIZABETH HARRISON

Music arranged by
FRANCIS M. ARNOLD

Prelude

The first system of the Prelude consists of two staves. The upper staff is in treble clef with a 6/8 time signature, featuring a sequence of chords and eighth notes. The lower staff is in bass clef, providing a harmonic accompaniment with chords and eighth notes.

The second system continues the musical theme from the first system, with similar chordal textures and rhythmic patterns in both staves.

The third system concludes the Prelude, showing a final cadence with sustained chords in the upper staff and a melodic line in the lower staff.

Part I

Once upon a time.

The first system of Part I is marked *animato mf*. It features a more active melody in the upper staff, with eighth and sixteenth notes, and a steady eighth-note accompaniment in the lower staff.

The second system of Part I continues the melodic and accompanimental themes, maintaining the *animato mf* character.

The first system of music consists of two staves. The treble clef staff contains a series of chords, primarily triads and dyads, with some eighth-note movement. The bass clef staff features a steady eighth-note accompaniment.

The second system includes a vocal line in the treble clef staff. The lyrics "But the little child" are written above the notes. The piano accompaniment continues in the bass clef staff.

The third system shows the piano accompaniment continuing. The treble clef staff has chords and some eighth-note patterns, while the bass clef staff maintains the eighth-note accompaniment.

The fourth system continues the piano accompaniment. The treble clef staff features chords and eighth-note patterns, and the bass clef staff has the eighth-note accompaniment.

The fifth system concludes the piano accompaniment. The treble clef staff has chords and eighth-note patterns, and the bass clef staff has the eighth-note accompaniment.

The first system of music consists of two staves. The upper staff is in treble clef and contains a melodic line with eighth and sixteenth notes, including a sharp sign. The lower staff is in bass clef and provides a harmonic accompaniment with chords and some eighth notes.

The second system of music consists of two staves. The upper staff continues the melody with chords and eighth notes. The lower staff continues the accompaniment with chords and eighth notes.

The third system of music consists of two staves. The upper staff continues the melody with chords and eighth notes. The lower staff continues the accompaniment with chords and eighth notes.

The fourth system of music consists of two staves. The upper staff continues the melody with chords and eighth notes. The lower staff continues the accompaniment with chords and eighth notes.

"Go down off the steps"

The fifth system of music consists of two staves. The upper staff begins with a fermata over a whole note chord, followed by a melodic line with eighth notes. The lower staff begins with a fermata over a whole note chord, followed by a bass line with eighth notes. Dynamics markings *f* and *p* are present.

Part II

"As the child turned back"

The first system of musical notation consists of a grand staff with a treble and bass clef. The treble clef part begins with a series of chords and a melodic line that includes a trill. The bass clef part provides a steady accompaniment. The key signature has two flats (B-flat and E-flat), and the time signature is 4/4. A piano (*p*) dynamic marking is placed below the treble staff.

The second system continues the musical piece. The treble clef part features a melodic line with some grace notes and rests. The bass clef part continues with a consistent accompaniment pattern.

The third system of musical notation shows a change in dynamics. The treble clef part has a more active melodic line. The bass clef part remains accompanimental. A forte (*f*) dynamic marking is placed below the treble staff.

The fourth system continues the musical piece. The treble clef part features a melodic line with some grace notes and rests. The bass clef part continues with a consistent accompaniment pattern.

The fifth and final system of musical notation on this page. The treble clef part features a melodic line with some grace notes and rests. The bass clef part continues with a consistent accompaniment pattern.

The few who remained did not seem to see the child, when suddenly ahead of him.

The child ran to the door.

faster mf

Part III *)

She held out both hands

mf

f

mf

Part IV

So busy were they that they didn't notice

pp

p

*) Repeat Part III as many times as necessary.

The first system of musical notation consists of two staves. The upper staff is in treble clef with a key signature of three flats (B-flat, E-flat, A-flat) and a common time signature. It features a complex rhythmic pattern with many beamed sixteenth notes. The lower staff is in bass clef with the same key signature and time signature, providing a more melodic accompaniment.

The second system continues the piece. The upper staff has a key signature change to two sharps (F# and C#) and a common time signature. The lower staff begins with a piano (*p*) dynamic marking and continues with a melodic line.

The third system continues the piece. The upper staff has a key signature change to two sharps (F# and C#) and a common time signature. The lower staff continues with a melodic line.

The fourth system features a key signature change to two sharps (F# and C#) and a common time signature. The upper staff includes the instruction "then slowly rose" and "very slowly" above the notes. The lower staff includes the instruction "dim e rit" above the notes. The system concludes with a fermata over the final notes.

The fifth system features a key signature change to two sharps (F# and C#) and a common time signature. The upper staff includes the instruction "poco a poco rit e dim" above the notes. The lower staff includes the instruction "8va" above the notes. The system concludes with a fermata over the final notes.

