

SATB

The Eve of Christmas

\$2.25

The Eve of Christmas

Music by
Christopher Alexander

SATB and Piano

Also available in SAB and SSA

cantareworks

THE MUSIC OF CHRISTOPHER ALEXANDER

About the Work

This gentle setting of Tennyson's text features lyrical writing and simple harmonic sequences that bring a gentle expression to the beautiful message from the poetry. This accessible work will be an exquisite experience for your choir at their next yuletide performance.

*With trembling fingers did we weave
The holly round the Christmas hearth;
A rainy cloud possess'd the earth,
And sadly fell our Christmas-eve.*

*At our old pastimes in the hall
We gambol'd, making vain pretence
Of gladness, with an awful sense
Of one mute Shadow watching all.*

*We paused: the winds were in the beech:
We heard them sweep the winter land;
And in a circle hand-in-hand
Sat silent, looking each at each.*

*Then, who-like our voices rang:
We sang, tho' every eye was dim,
A merry song we sang with him
Last year: impetuously we sang:*

*We ceased: a gentler feeling crept
Upon us: surely rest is meet:
'They rest,' we said, 'their sleep is sweet,'
And silence follow'd, and we wept.*

*Our voices took a higher range;
Once more we sang: 'They do not die
Nor lose their mortal sympathy,
No change to us, although they change;*

*Rapt from the fickle and the frail
With gather'd power, yet the same,
Pierces the keen seraphic flame
From orb to orb, from veil to veil.'*

*Rise, happy morn, rise, holy morn,
Draw forth the cheerful day from night:
O Father, touch the air, and light
The light that shone when Hope was born.*

— Alfred, Lord Tennyson
(1809-1892),
from "In Memoriam, A.H.H."

About the Composer



Mr. Christopher Alexander is an award-winning composer and arranger from St. Joseph, Missouri. He received his Bachelor of Science in Vocal Music Education degree from Missouri Western State University in 2009. A self-taught pianist, his compositions and arrangements ranging from instrumental works to vocal solo and choral literature. Mr. Alexander has been commissioned numerous times by singing groups and church choirs within the northwest Missouri and northeast Kansas regions. He is also active in musical theatre productions as a music director and pianist. His works have been published with GIA Music Publications, Hal Leonard, and Excelcia Music Publishing.

In 2016, he was awarded the St. Joseph Allied Arts Council Mayor's Award for Artist of the Year. In 2023, he was inducted into the New Generation Singers Hall of Fame.

Mr. Alexander currently serves as the pianist and primary arranger for The New Generation Singers, a Christian singing youth group based in St. Joseph, Missouri. He is a member of NAfME, ACDA, MCDA, and Phi Mu Alpha Sinfonia Fraternity.

He is available for commissions and conducting events on request.

THE EVE OF CHRISTMAS

SATB and Piano

Words by
ALFRED, LORD TENNYSON (1809-1892)

Music by
CHRISTOPHER ALEXANDER

Adagietto dolce espressivo (♩ = c. 74-78)

PIANO

mf

poco rit.

Pedal harmonically

The piano introduction is in 3/4 time, starting with a mezzo-forte (mf) dynamic. The right hand features a melodic line with eighth and sixteenth notes, while the left hand provides a harmonic accompaniment with chords and single notes. The tempo is marked as Adagietto dolce espressivo, with a quarter note equal to approximately 74-78 beats per minute. The piece concludes with a 'poco rit.' (slightly slower) marking and a fermata.

5

SOPRANO, ALTO
a tempo

TENOR, BASS
a tempo

mp a tempo

unis. mp

With

This section contains measures 5 through 8. The vocal parts (Soprano, Alto, Tenor, Bass) enter in measure 5 with a whole note, marked 'a tempo'. The piano accompaniment begins in measure 5 with a mezzo-piano (mp) dynamic. The vocal parts are marked 'unis. mp' (unison mezzo-piano). The piano accompaniment consists of a simple harmonic pattern in the right hand and a bass line in the left hand.

9

trem-bling fin - gers did we weave The hol - ly round the Christ-mas hearth; A

9

This section contains measures 9 through 12. The vocal parts enter in measure 9 with the lyrics 'trem-bling fin - gers did we weave The hol - ly round the Christ-mas hearth; A'. The piano accompaniment continues with the same harmonic pattern. The lyrics are distributed across the vocal staves: Soprano/Alto sing 'trem-bling fin - gers', Tenor/Bass sing 'did we weave', Soprano/Alto sing 'The hol - ly round', and Tenor/Bass sing 'the Christ-mas hearth; A'.

Also available in SATB and SSA.

The Eve of Christmas - SATB

13 *mf*

rain - y cloud po - ssessed the earth, And sad - ly feel our Christ - mas Eve. — Then

unis.

13

14

ech - o - like our vo - ces sang; We sung, though ev - ery eye was dim, A

17 *mf*

21 *unis.* *mp*

mer - ry song we sang with him Last year: im - pet - uous - ly we sang:

unis.

21 *mp*

25

Our

25

28

voi - ces took a high - er range; Once more we sang: They do not die Nor

mf

29

33

lose their mor - tal sym - pa - thy, Nor change to us, al - though they

mf

33