

There Shall Be Christmas Day

Joyce Kilmer (1886-1918)
"Wartime Christmas"

Joan Szymko
2011

♩ = 56

S
A

mf Led by a star, a gold - en star, The young - est star, an old - en

T
B

mf Led by a star, a gold - en star, The young - est star, an old - en

mp

5

S
A
T
B

p **Piu mosso** *cresc.* *mf* *f* *dim.*

star, Here the kings and the shep - herds are A kneel - ing on the

p *cresc.* *mf*

star, Here the kings and the shep - herds are

p *cresc.* *mf*

star, Here the kings and the shep - herds are A -

p *cresc.* *mf*

star, Here the kings and the shep - herds are

5

Piu mosso

p *cresc.* *mf*

9 *dim.* *mp* *Poco piu mosso* ♩=68 *mf*

ground. What did they come to the

dim. *mf*

[ah] What did they come to the

dim. *mf*

8 kneel-ing on the ground. at did they

dim. *mf*

[ah] What did they

9 *Poco piu mosso* ♩=68 *mf*

12 *poco accel.* *A tempo* *ff*

inn to see? God in the High - est, and this is He,

ff

inn to see? God in the High - est, and this is He,

ff

8 come to see? God High - est and this is He,

ff

come to see? God High - est and this is He,

12 *poco accel.* *A tempo* *ff*

16 *p* A ba - by a - sleep — on His moth - er's knee *rit.* *pp*

p A ba - by a - sleep — on His moth - er's knee *pp*

p on His moth - er's knee *pp*

p on His moth - er's knee *pp*

16 *p* on His moth - er's knee *pp*

p on His moth - er's knee *pp*

Tempo primo

20 *mp* And with her kiss - es crowned, *f* And with her kiss - es crowned, *mp*

mp And with her kiss - es crowned, *mf* And with her kiss - es crowned, *mp*

24 *p* And with her kiss - es crowned. *pp* Now is the

p And with her kiss - es crowned. *pp* Now is the

28

earth a drea - ry place, A trou-bled place, a wea - ry place.

earth a drea - ry place, A trou-bled place a wea - ry place.

32 **Piu mosso**
mp

Peace has hid-den her love - ly face And turned in tears a -

Peace has hid - love - ly face

Peace hid-den her love - ly face And

Peace has hid-den her love - ly face

32 **Piu mosso**

Poco piu mosso

35

mp way.

mp

mp turned in tears a - way. *mf* Yet the sun through the war-cloud, see[s]—

mp *mf* Yet the sun, through war-cloud sees

35

mf *mp*

poco rit.

A tempo

40

mf on their *mp dim.* *p*

Ba - bies a - sleep on moth - er's knees. While there are

mf *mp dim.* *p*

Ba - bies a - sleep on moth - er's knees. While there are

mp dim.

on moth - er's knees.

mp dim.

Ba - bies a - sleep on moth - er's knees.

40

mp *p*

mp *p*

44 *pp* **Tempo primo**
mp
 love and home— and these— There shall be

48 *mf* **poco accel.**
 Christ - mas Day here shall be Christ - mas
 Christ - mas Day There shall be Christ - mas

51 **Poco piu mosso**
f *mf* *f*
 Day. While there are love and home and these— There shall be
 Day. While there are love and home and these— There shall be
 Day. While there are love and home and these— There shall be
 Day. While there are love and home and these— There shall be

51 **Poco piu mosso**



55

Christ-mas Day. There shall be Christ-mas Day.

Christ-mas Day. There shall be Christ-mas Day.

Christ-mas Day. There shall be Christ-mas Day.

Christ-mas Day. There shall be Christ-mas Day.

55 rit.

Wartime Christmas

*Led by a star, a golden star,
The youngest star, an olden star,
Here the kings and the shepherds are
A kneeling on the ground.*

*What did they come to the inn to see?
God in the Highest, and this is He,
A baby asleep on His mother's knee
And with her kisses crowned.*

*Now is the earth a dreary place,
A troubled place, a weary place.
Peace has hidden her lovely face
And turned in tears away.*

*Yet the sun, through the war-cloud, sees
Babies asleep on their mother's knees.
While there are love and home—and these—
There shall be Christmas Day.*

American poet Alfred Joyce Kilmer (1886-1918) is best known for his poem, "Trees." ("I think that I shall never see/ A poem lovely as a tree...") He displayed a talent for language arts and public speaking early on, as a young boy in grammar school. He attended New York's Columbia University, with a teaching career in mind, but he quickly turned his attention toward writing, becoming a full time journalist, lecturer, and poet, working for publications such as *Funk and Wagnalls* and the *New York Times*. He left a successful career and his wife and family to enlist for military service immediately upon US declaration of war on Germany in 1917. He served as a sergeant with the "Fighting 69th" regiment in France. Kilmer actively sought out hazardous combat duty. He was killed by a sniper's bullet in July of 1918. Joyce Kilmer was a man of ardent religious faith. He adored his wife and five children. Family life, his faith and his experience on the front lines of WWI France lend a poignancy to "A Wartime Christmas," a poem most certainly penned during his tour of duty in France.

Joan Szymko's (b.1957) music is performed by distinguished choral ensembles across North America and abroad. Her works have been sung at international festivals and competitions, and at five consecutive national conferences of the American Choral Directors Association. Abundant lyricism, rhythmic integrity and vigorous attention to text are hallmarks of Szymko's diverse and distinctive choral writing. She is the composer of the ACDA's prestigious Raymond W. Brock commission for 2010. For more information, see www.joanszymko.com.

"Joan Szymko has earned a reputation for setting interesting texts with skill and finesse..." —CHORAL JOURNAL