Gustav Holst’s *In the Bleak Midwinter* was written at the request of Ralph Vaughan Williams, the editor of the English Hymnal. Holst used Christina Rossetti’s popular poem, written in 1872, for the text. The carol was first published in the English Hymnal in 1906 and quickly became a favorite among congregations. The frigid northern landscape that Rossetti paints with her text combined with the divinely melancholy nature of Holst’s melody provides the perfect backdrop for the winter holidays. The first and last sections of this arrangement incorporate the same melody and major key as the original, but the middle section, while in a minor mode, juxtaposes Holst’s melody with one of the most beloved chant melodies from the Gregorian chant repertoire, *Ave Maria*. The original chant, shown below, can be sung in conjunction with the piece. This unique arrangement will be exciting for any women’s chorus to sing. The flute and violin parts can be played by any two C-instruments.

**Vocal Ranges**

1. In the bleak midwinter frosty winds made moan, Earth stood hard as iron, water like a stone; Snow had fallen, snow on snow, snow on snow, In the bleak midwinter long ago.

2. Our God, Heav'n cannot hold him nor earth sustain; Heav'n and earth shall flee away when he comes to reign: In the bleak midwinter a stable place sufficed. The Lord God Almighty Jesus Christ.

3. Angels and archangels may have gathered there, Cherubim and seraphim thronged the air; But only his mother in her maiden bliss Worshipped the Beloved with a kiss.

4. What can I give him poor as I am? If I were a shepherd I would bring a lamb, If I were a Wise Man I would do my part, Yet what I can I give him, give my heart.

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**Ave Maria**


**Translation**

Hail Mary, full of grace, the Lord is with thee; blessed art thou amongst women, and blessed is the fruit of thy womb, Jesus. Holy Mary, Mother of God, pray for us sinners, now and at the hour of our death. Amen.
In The Bleak Midwinter

for SSAA chorus, Flute, & Violin (or two C intruments)

Text by Christina Rossetti (1830-1894)

Music by Gustav Holst (1874-1934)

Arranged by Mark Templeton

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snow had fallen, snow on snow, snow on snow; in the bleak midwinter,
snow had fallen, snow on snow, snow on snow, in the bleak midwinter,
snow had fallen, snow on snow, snow on snow; in the bleak midwinter,
snow had fallen, snow on snow, snow on snow, in the bleak midwinter,

long ago. Our God, heav’n can not hold him, nor earth su
long ago. Our God, heav’n can not hold him, nor earth su
long long ago. Our God heav’n can not hold him, nor earth su
long long ago. Our God, heav’n can not

* Melody taken from Gregorian Chant, Ave Maria
In The Bleak Midwinter

Stain; heav'n and earth shall flee a-way when he comes to reign: in

Him, nor earth sus-tain;

The bleak mid-winter a sta-ble place suf-ficed the Lord God in car-nate,

In the bleak mid-winter a sta-ble place suf-ficed the Lord God in car-nate,
In The Bleak Midwinter

Je - sus Christ. Angels and arch - angels may have gathered there,

Jesus Christ. Angels and archangels may have gathered there,

Jesus Christ. Angels and archangels may have gathered there,

Je - sus Christ. Angels and arch - angels may have gathered there,

che - rubim and se - raphim thronged the air; but his mother only, in

cherubim and seraphim thronged the air; but his mother only, in

cherubim and seraphim thronged the air; but his mother only, in

cherubim and seraphim thronged the air; but his mother only, in
In The Bleak Midwinter

Fl.

Vln.

S 1

her maid-en bliss, worshiped the be-loved with a kiss,
in her maid-en bliss. worshiped the be-loved with a kiss,

S 2

A 1

A 2

mother only worshiped the be-loved

with a kiss. Ah

with a kiss. Ah

with a kiss. Ah

with a kiss. Ah

...
In The Bleak Midwinter

What can I give him, poor as I am? If I were a shepherd,

What can I give him, poor as I am? If I were a shepherd,

What can I give him, poor as I am? If I were a shepherd,

What can I give him, poor as I am? If I were a shepherd,

I would bring a lamb; If I were a wise man, I would do my part; yet

I would bring a lamb; If I were a wise man, I would do my part; yet

I would bring, I'd bring a lamb; If I were a wise man, I would do my part; yet

I would bring a lamb; If I were a wise man, I would do my part; yet
In The Bleak Midwinter

what I can I give him, give my heart.

what I can I give him, give my heart.

what I can I give him, give my heart.

what I can I give him, give my heart.
Flute - In The Bleak Midwinter

Mark D. Templeton

Tenderly ($q = c. 80$)

Flute - In The Bleak Midwinter

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Mark Templeton, born 1974, is an American choral composer, conductor, and countertenor. Templeton’s music has been performed across the world at various international festivals and ACDA conventions. Some of his music is published by Santa Barbara Music Publishing, and he has recently started to self-publish. He teaches and resides with his wife, Becca, at West Nottingham Academy in Colora, Maryland, the oldest boarding school in the United States. He also enjoys coaching, playing, and watching soccer when he is not working. He is available for commission upon request.

Other choral music composed and arranged by Mark Templeton

- ODI ET AMO
- AVE MARIA
- PIE JESU
- BENEDICTUS
- I SAID A PRAYER
- GAUDETE
- HELP US, LORD
- I WILL ARISE (MEDLEY)
- WILL THE CIRCLE BE UNBROKEN?
- SWINGIN’ DOWN TO THE RIVER
- MISSA BREVIS
- COMPLINE

SATB, a cappella
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SA(T)B, Flute, & Piano
TTBB, a cappella
TTBB, a cappella
SATB, a cappella
SSATTB, a cappella
SATB, a cappella (larger work)
SATB divisi, a cappella (larger work)

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