

# *Rhyming Poems*



***Alan Harris***



# *Rhyming Poems*

***Written by Alan Harris***

**Life is no more opposite of death  
than breathing is the opposite of breath.**

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## **America the Beautiful Revisited**

America, while breathing gaseous skies,  
Converts her amber waves of grain to gold.  
She logs her mountains' purple majesty  
And risks her fruited plains in futures sold.

How could the selfless pilgrims have foreseen  
The fiscal dust their sturdy feet would raise?  
When did their quest for freedom of belief  
Become obsessed with how much interest pays?

The early heroes' hearts were filled with fire,  
Replaced of late by nuclear doomsday fear.  
When greed fails in these days to get its way,  
Then hired generals flatten all that's dear.

Those patriot dreamers failed to forecast years  
Of lotteries and bets on football games,  
Nor could they know what poverty and fears  
Would lurk in cities bearing brave men's names.

America! My poor America!  
Thy crown of brotherhood is hard to see.  
Thy god is Gold; thy goodness yields to law,  
And lawyers fight from fee to shining fee.

## **Animal Tao**

A cat is mostly yin;  
of the Cosmos she is the twin.  
Like the mysterious Cosmic Laws,  
she keeps well-hidden her claws  
until some urgent necessity.

A dog is thoroughly yang,  
with his boisterous bark and his fang.  
Ignoring the subtler laws  
and concealing none of his flaws,  
he pursues life and cats with avidity.

A dog is always searching,  
but a cat is content with perching.  
The dog loves to follow his nose,  
while the cat simply sits there and—knows.  
Activity ends in tranquillity.

## Another Sonnet to Another Spring

Young Aries climbs the virgin vernal sky  
And tickles winter's seeds until they burst  
In bright-green chlorophyllous flame, well-nursed  
By throbs of heat and chill, of wet and dry.  
Earth breathes her gentle procreative sigh  
Into a billion billion eggs, her first  
Prolific breath of love since blizzards cursed  
In Capricorn and cold clouds choked the sky.

When hungry lungs inhale spring's balmy breath  
And birds sing out "Rebirth!" from every tree,  
Our souls trade withered shrouds of icy death  
For flowing robes of immortality.  
We read in every birth a crisp new page  
Of Nature's Scripture, passed from age to age.

## **As Far Beyond as Here**

Perhaps your mind, when still, has reached a brink  
Beyond which bottom, top, and sides release  
Their hold, immersing all you are and think  
In boundlessly profound, peculiar peace.

Set free, aware, and only slightly caught  
Within the web you've spun of tickling flesh,  
You feel you understand why you were brought  
To live within earth's tantalizing mesh.

What sage or mystic ever wrote a line  
Containing more than hints of what you feel  
And almost know to be the life divine  
Which tinglings from the vast unknown reveal?

Experienced have you this thunderbolt?  
And savored have you since then every volt?



## Continuity

Yesterday the sun went down;  
this morning it came up—

as it has,  
as it will.

A nagging question plagues philosophers:  
why does the sun rise in the East at dawn  
instead of rising in the West at eve?  
They meant to solve this problem yesterday;  
they met with failure once again today—

as they have,  
as they will.

While one wise solver contemplates,  
twelve folks toil to fill their plates.  
Some produce, some sell their wares;  
all seek exit from their cares—  
one of which is not the sun  
(save that their day's work is done).  
West or East or Dawn or Eve  
to philosophers they leave—

as they have,  
as they will.

## Dudely May

Y'know, I'm into these lilac scents  
And the birds that chirp and sing  
Before the dawn in trees near the fence—  
It's a totally awesome thing.

My vibes become, like, optimum  
When the May air stirs my pad—  
I'm clueless where that rush comes from  
But it's totally, totally rad.

I groove with the falling of way cool rain,  
And I dig (oh, wow!) the space  
Of, like, thunderstorms (they fry my brain)  
With subwoofer-quality bass.

Since the Dude laid down this happenin' season,  
I'm thinkin' He must have meant it,  
And if May should croak for any reason,  
We'd have to, like, reinvent it.

## Excuse Me, God

Excuse me, God,  
I didn't see you there.  
To my nearsighted eyes  
you looked like air.

You cleared your throat  
with jarring thunderbolt,  
but I heard nothing deep,  
just felt a jolt.

I built my house  
with quite a clever plan,  
but didn't see the sign  
that said, "God's land."

I walked through woods  
and thought the cool smell  
was only natural,  
from trees that fell.

I thought it quaint,  
the orange western stain;  
I thought it nice that clouds  
wrung out their rain.

I saw the stars  
through shallow telescope,  
and saw eternity  
as just a hope.

I meant no harm—  
I had my glasses off;  
so next time, if I'm near,  
please cough.

## Experts and Folk

Oh whilliker thistledown, angel-may-care  
if the pins of all dumbledom fly through the air  
and tinkle quite prinkly with scatter and scorn—  
who am I, I ask you, and how was I born?

Universe, schmuniverse, big bang or no,  
let comets be vomits lit up as they go;  
let galaxies stretch till they reach golly gee,  
but where was I, why am I, who will I be?

Theological thinkers and scholarly fakes  
pretend with Godthority, footnotes, and spakes,  
assuring, demurring to cover their gap,  
but all they produce is implausible crap.

Oh wiffle-ball shuffle-through, devil-be-joke,  
instead of the experts, I'll hang with the folk  
who don't know from nothin' how we became we  
but never were not and will never not be.

## Flower in Vase

This budding daffodil contains  
A universe in birth:  
Each molecule a galaxy,  
Each quark a tiny earth.

And what we call our universe,  
All matter, time, and space,  
May be a single atom of  
A macrocosmic vase.

Thus up and down the scale of size  
Throughout Infinity,  
Both “small” and “large” are limitless  
And join Eternity.

Great men have puzzled over God  
To place Him in their plan,  
As Primal Cause, or Sourceless Source,  
Or vast Omniscient Man.

But God can never be confined  
Within a man-made phrase;  
He hides behind unnumbered veils  
Impossible to raise.

And yet we see His evidence  
In every time and place—  
Behind each seed and universe,  
Within each flower and vase.

Inside our inmost soul of souls,  
If we can meditate,  
We find a spark of light divine  
And feel it radiate.

While nowhere, and yet everywhere,  
Our God resides within;  
Though still and small, His guiding voice  
Transcends life’s noisy din.

To hear His voice and understand,  
Then fearlessly obey,  
Is that which mystics, martyrs, saints,  
And wise men call “The Way.”

Consider every universe  
And every point in space  
As God in God in God in God,  
As vase in flower in vase.

## **Friendlight**

### **A Good-Bye Poem**

When certain folks  
become good friends  
a candle lights  
and remains aglow

and when these folks  
round separate bends  
this light stays lit  
and will always show.

## **Gifts That Stay**

### *A Wedding Poem*

How fortune made us meet  
we cannot say,  
but soon two pairs of feet  
will walk the way.

We mirror each to each  
the lessons needed  
to learn what love may teach  
if only heeded.

We give as best we can,  
this wedding day,  
a woman and a man  
as gifts that stay.

## **God's Spirit Dwells**

God's spirit dwells  
in private hells  
where broken dreams  
cause curdling screams.

Our souls God lifts,  
and of His gifts  
the most obscure  
cause cleanest cure.

We rant, we rave  
for God to save,  
but God saves all  
who prostrate fall.

Away by Christ  
our sins were sliced;  
now His great reign  
rids Death's domain.

Dear God, we pray  
that all we say  
and all we pen  
be Thine. Amen.



## Healing Meditation

Gentle go the waves  
that heal me in the night.  
Soft are the sounds  
that give my body light.

Now my room is dark  
and sleep is nowhere near,  
but hints of future joy  
are warding off all fear.

Soon will come a time  
when pain has gone away,  
when Yes, a healthy Yes,  
will have its mellow way.

With medicine to comfort  
and universe to cure  
I see no need to worry  
as impure turns to pure.

## Here and the Ground

The shiny car you drive is  
going into the ground.  
All the neighborhood trees are  
going into the ground.

Buildings, all of them, are  
going into the ground.  
Your sofa and your dog are  
going into the ground.

But soul—have you a soul  
that won't go into the ground?  
What force can keep your essence  
from going into the ground?

Suppose your body quits and  
does go into the ground—  
where will your soul then be?  
My own says, "Here, right here.

"The love that makes life life is  
dwelling in your here,  
and all you ever gave is  
coming back to your here.

"Thing and thing and thing may be  
going into the ground,  
but where can your here ever go  
except—exactly here?"

## **How I Clean**

As a vaccer  
I'm a slacker;  
as a hacker  
I'm a stacker.

I have trouble  
sorting rubble  
till it's double  
triple double.

I go all out  
till I stall out,  
then I haul out  
all the fallout.

## **Just Asking**

I ask how eyes know when to wake  
and lovers, when to love,  
how engines feel when pulling trains,  
why planets need to spin.

Does every point in cosmic space  
touch every other point?  
Can money buy creative thought?  
Is dark the price of light?

Does every pain result in gain?  
Does living have a goal?  
And what's left out when parts fall short  
of summing up the whole?

## Lullaby

*For a new grandchild*

When Mom sings me a melody  
And with a kiss turns down the light,  
I drift off free and lazily  
To join the mysteries of the night.

Across the sky soft clouds go by,  
In each a face I've known by day.  
They sing and sigh a lullaby  
Which soothes, delights, and fades away.

In waves unknown I rock alone  
As if my bed were a little boat  
That sails a zone of undertone  
And keeps me safe as I dream and float.

Now the clouds begin to wane and thin,  
The last one showing my mother's face.  
She strokes my chin and brings me in  
From far adrift to her warm embrace.

## Mother's Secret

*A Ballad*

*Tell me a secret of living, dear Mother,  
a new one I've never been told—  
some hint about life to remember you by  
that will stay with me when I've grown old.*

“An overlooked secret of humans, my child,  
is that each is a seed that will flower,  
and that each has a future of limitless joy,  
whatever the pains of the hour.

“And I tell you that no love has ever been lost  
nor is anything out of place—  
that your work is to strive, to give and to know  
in this journey through time and space.

“Your grandmother told me the same when she died  
and I willingly pass it along.  
May your living go deeper than what you can see  
and your heart hear the Infinite Song.”

*Now rest, dear Mother, and sleep your sleep  
in a region where pain is unknown.  
As long as I live I will treasure your words  
and will pass them along to my own.*

## Music from Hannah

When Hannah comes over to visit our place,  
She fetches our old violin from its case  
And places it under her chin to be played  
With its missing E-string and its horsehair all frayed.

Under Hannah Moore's unafraid, amateur touch,  
The violin squeals and scratches so much  
That sooner or later some listener will say,  
"Oh, Hannah, let's please put the violin away."

Pretty soon she snaps open the old trumpet case,  
Tries out the three valves, puts the mouthpiece in place,  
And blows such a blast for a trumpeter's call  
That the pictures all rattle and sway on the wall.

When Hannah brings over her flute, however,  
We can sit here and listen for nearly forever  
To her musical phrases both smooth and staccato  
Which pleasantly shimmer with a heartfelt vibrato.

She has listened to Mozart from A to Z,  
And she loves any Beethoven symphony;  
Carmina Burana, the Nutcracker Suite—  
The best compositions to her are a treat.

Our piano's been host to her musical fingers  
Playing Mozart sonatas with feeling that lingers.  
Just give her an instrument, fancy or poor,  
And you'll soon hear some music from Hannah Paige Moore.

## **A New Beatitude**

Blessed are the shrinks  
who'll listen to you hollah  
for just a hundred dollah  
when life completely stinks.



## Night Thoughts

Sleepless tonight inside my skin and bones,  
I feel that life must be a cruel curse—  
Begun with squall, cut off with pain and groans,  
A little joke told by the universe.

Why am I here? What accident of fate  
Breathed life into this form I occupy?  
What kind of God would bother to create  
A fragile human life, then let it die?

A voice within my heart says, “Mend your ways,  
And light inside your consciousness will gleam.  
Your bleakness, like the earth, delays dawn’s rays,  
But love and hope will end your desperate dream.

“Depression fills agnosticism’s night,  
But soon your soul must rise and follow light.”

## The Only Christian

He went to church one cloudy morn,  
somewhat forlorn.  
He was the first one there, he guessed,  
and sat to rest.  
He studied all the stained-glass art;  
soon church would start.  
The clock swung round to half past eight—  
the folks were late.  
No organist was there to play,  
no preacher to pray;  
no choir stirred the air with song—  
what could be wrong?  
Twelve worn-out candles stood unlit  
(this wasn't fit),  
and Bibles, hymnals, all were closed  
in silent rows.  
A full half-hour he waited there,  
then said a prayer.  
He prayed that God would gird his heart  
to do his part  
and asked forgiveness for us all—  
then felt his call.  
He took his Bible from his pew,  
for now he knew  
the only Christian left was he;  
he held God's key.  
His work now would be hard and long,  
but he'd be strong.  
He prayed that Christ would live again  
in hearts of men,  
then opened wide the large front door  
and stayed no more.  
He stepped outside without remorse;  
he knew his course.  
The door through which crowds once had flocked  
he left unlocked.  
Then, "Wait!" he spoke out with a start,  
"I'm not so smart."  
Today, to his profound dismay,  
was Saturday.

## **The Other Door**

To take a perfect bolt  
and start the nut awry  
and twist it with a jolt  
is like a lie.

To grab a kiss or touch  
without her matching mood  
won't gratify as much  
as tasteless food.

To batter down a door  
whose fault is being locked  
won't satisfy us more  
than having knocked.

For every door locked tight  
a second unlocked door  
will open with no fight  
and please us more.

The one who knocks and waits,  
then seeks an unlocked way,  
transcends life's petty hates  
and learns to pray.

## Paths

Each path leads to another path  
And that one to a third,  
And on and on path leads to path  
Until the way seems blurred.

The beauty of *this* path lies in  
Its trodden permanence—  
It beckons us to wear it thin  
While traveling whence to hence.

This path winds gently left and right  
As if ignoring straight—  
Perhaps its founder had no sight  
Or trod it very late.

Or did he follow waves of sound  
That most folks fail to hear,  
Which led him up and down and round  
As far-off goals came near?

How paths begin we'll never know  
(The woods will never say),  
But all who have a place to go  
Are thankful for The Way.

## Relief in Relife

Does evening raise a fear of no more dawns?  
Does autumn's chill forever kill our lawns?  
If not, then why dread gray hair in a mirror?  
If dawns and lawns recur, is death to fear?

Is body all I am, a soft robot  
conditioned by blind chance, then left to rot?  
Is heaven just a slide shone on the sky  
to keep believers honest till they die?

To think extinction ends our too-short life—  
to think a void replaces child and wife—  
to think a shroud blanks out all consciousness—  
all far too grim for me, I must confess.

I'm reassured from deep in bone and heart  
that when I and my body come to part,  
I'll slip it off and leave it like a coat,  
retaining what I know, but free to float.

Our breath comes in, goes out, and so do we  
who end each earthly life, but then are free  
to roam bright inner realms with opened eyes  
which see through physicality's bleak lies.

We thrive in heaven's symphony of mind  
uncounted blissful years, until we find  
we thirst again to join the physical  
where atoms quickly teach what's practical.

Like gravity, a pull of destiny  
reels in our soul from near infinity  
and helps us choose as home some mother's womb—  
what most call birth, our trammeled soul deems tomb.

Then choice and aftermath on earth are learned—  
like school, where each promotion must be earned.  
With open-hearted deeds we all progress;  
with selfish acts we duly retrogress.

If death is no more end than western sun—  
if Soul appears through bodies, one by one—  
then life is no more opposite of death  
than breathing is the opposite of breath.

## A Retreat Ahead

Here's to Blaine and Jean Harker, those lovable two,  
with joy so contagious and counseling so true.  
A mourner in grief is a magnet to Jean,  
since few are the pains she's not suffered or seen.

At the parties they give there is greatness of table,  
and every last diner eats more than he's able.  
Jean's food pantry likewise, for the hungry and poor,  
was much like her heart—a wide open door.

Their lives are committed to lifting the fallen,  
through talkin' and workin' and sweatin' and bawlin'.  
An unspoken concern here is needful of saying—  
for Jean's own self-healing we are fervently praying.

While Blaine may have yet to get milk from a cow,  
in spite of the Amish folks showing him how,  
he's mastered the art of infectious laughter  
that shatters the silence from floor-joist to rafter.

They've moved to the country near Old Shipshewana,  
but they can't quite move in yet, as much as they wanna—  
while waiting for lodgers to kindly dislodge  
they have set up their home in a large upper garage.

We honor the Harkers today, Blaine and Jean,  
and the Power behind them, so strong yet unseen.  
May God bless their home, the retreat of their dreams,  
granting laughter which heals, and the grace which redeems.

## Roses

If only one rose  
ever in history  
were seen to bloom,  
what awe might be!

Now people yawn  
at roses by dozens,  
pretty weeds to eyes  
that won't see.

If we but knew  
we're each a rose  
asleep in a bud,  
might bloom we?

## Safe

I have floated like a maple leaf  
to the sky below an autumn pond,  
to an inner place of rich relief  
from gusty winds now slipped beyond.

I sense eternal love from high  
(or is it deep?) inside my being,  
and find this view before my eye  
requires a lighter, wider seeing.

Odd now, the fear those final sighs  
would turn out all my lights within,  
when light now brings these newer eyes  
envisionings of friends and kin.

Since here I live within a force  
that moves me anywhere I ask it,  
let no one feel the least remorse  
upon the closing of my casket.



# Spirits and Spooks

## A Rhyme for Halloween

Today is the ghost of the future's past—  
your now is a ghost,  
my now is a ghost,  
for whatever we do will last.

There's hope for tomorrow's yesterday—  
you are a hope,  
I am a hope,  
if we nourish each other today.

Regrets are old spooks that may rattle their chains—  
fear is a spook,  
hate is a spook,  
and so are diseases and pains.

So a spirit sits down in your rocking chair—  
What can it do?  
Can it say boo?  
Just smile so it knows that you care.

Halloween raises our old spooks and bummers—  
feelings that dump,  
nights that go bump,  
and dumbs that evolve into dumbers.

But the morning will bring in the Day of All Saints,  
who were able to clear  
their existence of fear  
and their motives of self-serving taints.

What saints may have done, surely any can do  
if we make a start  
and open our heart  
so that giving and love may flow through.

Today is the ghost of the future's past—  
your now is a ghost,  
my now is a ghost,  
for whatever we do will last.

## Symposium

I sing a song of joyous life,  
Tra-lee, tra-la, tra-lee;  
I dance about my dainty wife  
and tip a glassful of glee.

---

I tell a tale of mine olden age,  
and there, and so, and thus;  
life's wisdom is my single wage,  
and I can't see who's driving the bus.

## Taps

*New words for  
the familiar tune*

We are sad  
that you've gone  
from this world  
which is still  
racked with war,  
where from hate  
bombs make haste—  
to lay waste.

May we find  
Light within  
that will guide  
us through dark  
fears and pain.  
For this world  
may we care—  
peace be there.

We can long  
for good will  
in all minds,  
in all hearts,  
in all souls,  
but for now,  
here you lie—  
Friend, good-bye.

## **These Scales Tell Tales**

These scales tell tales of gravity  
against our mortal frames.  
They weigh who choose to step on them  
and have no use for names.

But let us weigh the scales themselves  
against more subtle things.  
Is heavier or lighter weight  
the chief divide life brings?

Do souls have weight? Do angels fall?  
Will goodness tip the scales  
a little more than ill repute?  
Just here gravity fails.

## **To a Telephone Pole**

You, sir, with triangular brace,  
have more common sense than the whole human race.

## **To Sister Marjorie**

For this may God be praised:  
our Christ was raised,  
the temple is secure,  
we shall endure.

The fellow with the tail  
can make us fail,  
can give us loneliness,  
grief, shame, and stress.

There will be sobs and tears  
and barren years  
and prayers that won't take wing  
and stares that sting.

The Father sees it all  
and hears our call.  
He sees our sorest needs,  
our hunger feeds.

Since food and clothes are sure,  
since love is pure,  
since prayers are always heard,  
trust in the Word.

## **Turvy**

I rise to sleep  
some bliss to take  
then fall awake  
to earn my keep.

## Two Songs

### *Song of Doubting Logic*

What an incongruity  
that in this flesh a soul can be!

---

### *Song of Spiritual Revelation*

What an incongruity  
that in this flesh a soul can be!



## Welcoming Patrick Keith Harris

August 7, 1994

Where have you been now, oh Patrick me boy,  
Before your grand entrance that brought so much joy?  
Were you out in the starlight quite happy and free?  
Had you any idea who your parents would be?

Were the comets your friends, Patrick Harris me boy?  
Did you reach toward the moon thinking "What a nice toy?"  
Wherever you've been, Patrick, welcome to Earth—  
It's a fairly nice place once you get past the birth.

You will have the best care you could ask for, me lad,  
From Mika and Brian (you know, Mom and Dad),  
Who will give you a bed, healthy food, and much love  
In a home where you'll heighten the blessings thereof.

Three things Grandma Linda and I wish for you:  
May the heaven within you guide all that you do;  
May the bumps on your path make you fearless and strong;  
And may life for you, Patrick, be happy and long.

Grandpa Alan Harris, poet  
Grandma Linda Harris, editor

## **When You're in a Frump**

You really don't care,  
you surely can't dare,  
and your house and your desk  
look a dump.

When no one calls up  
to go out for a cup  
you recline in your chair  
like a lump.

Your life has gone flat,  
you're verging on fat,  
and you'd easily pass  
for a grump.

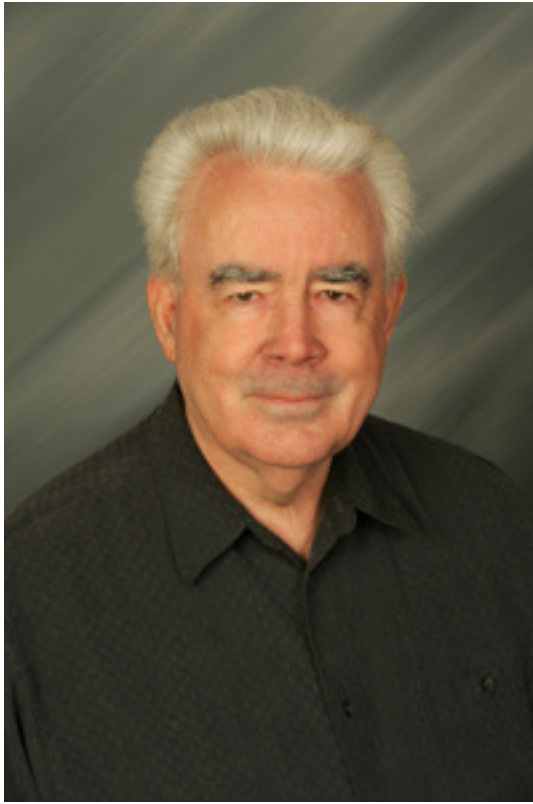
Well, I'm in a frump  
and you're in a frump—  
let's go have some tea,  
you and me.

## A Wiggy Sopsty

*Strictly nonsense*

I falt a wiggy sopsty  
and clev a vagger gand;  
no swegler fad a seggy  
nor vindo sendy mand.

When jigmer salgo vardy  
was tiggy varomund,  
then cladry falgarondo  
with pleggy fabripund



## **Alan Harris**

Born: 1943, Earlville, Illinois, USA

Current Residence: Tucson, Arizona, USA

B.A., English & Music, 1966 (Illinois State Univ.)

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# Lullaby

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 = 88

Voice

*mf* When Mom sings me a

Piano

*mf*

mel - o - dy And with a kiss — turns down the light, I

drift off free and la - zi - ly To join the mys - ter - ies

of the night. A - cross the sky soft clouds go by, In

The first system of the musical score for 'Lullaby'. It features a vocal line in G major (one flat) and 4/4 time. The lyrics are 'of the night. A - cross the sky soft clouds go by, In'. The piano accompaniment consists of a right hand with chords and a left hand with a simple eighth-note bass line.

each a face — I've known by day. They sing and sigh a

The second system of the musical score. The lyrics are 'each a face — I've known by day. They sing and sigh a'. The musical notation continues with the same vocal and piano parts.

lull - a - by which soothes, de - lights, and fades a - way. In

The third system of the musical score. The lyrics are 'lull - a - by which soothes, de - lights, and fades a - way. In'. The system concludes with a final note in the vocal line.

waves un - known I rock a - lone As if my bed were a

The first system of the musical score for 'Lullaby' consists of a vocal line and a piano accompaniment. The vocal line is written in a single staff with a treble clef and a key signature of one flat (B-flat). The lyrics are 'waves un - known I rock a - lone As if my bed were a'. The piano accompaniment is written in two staves (treble and bass clefs) with a key signature of one flat. The melody is simple and lullaby-like, with a slow tempo indicated by the wide intervals and the nature of the piece.

lit - tle boat That sails a zone of un - der - tone And

The second system of the musical score continues the vocal line and piano accompaniment. The vocal line lyrics are 'lit - tle boat That sails a zone of un - der - tone And'. The piano accompaniment continues with the same simple, lullaby-like melody. The key signature remains one flat.

keeps me safe as I dream and float. Now the clouds be - gin to

The third system of the musical score concludes the vocal line and piano accompaniment. The vocal line lyrics are 'keeps me safe as I dream and float. Now the clouds be - gin to'. The piano accompaniment continues with the same simple, lullaby-like melody. The key signature remains one flat.

## Lullaby

wane and thin, The last one show-ing my mo - ther's face. She strokes my chin and

The first system of the musical score for 'Lullaby' consists of a vocal line and a piano accompaniment. The vocal line is in G major (one flat) and 4/4 time. It begins with a half note G4, followed by a quarter note A4, a quarter note B4, and a half note C5. The piano accompaniment features a steady eighth-note pattern in the right hand and a similar pattern in the left hand, with chords providing harmonic support.

brings me in From far a - drift to her warm em-brace

The second system continues the melody and accompaniment. The vocal line has a half note G4, a quarter note A4, a quarter note B4, and a half note C5. The piano accompaniment maintains the same rhythmic and harmonic structure as the first system.

*p* *rit.* *pp* *ten.*

The third system concludes the piece. It begins with a piano (*p*) dynamic marking. The tempo is marked *rit.* (ritardando). The system ends with a *pp* (pianissimo) dynamic marking and a *ten.* (tenuto) marking over the final note. The piano accompaniment features a steady eighth-note pattern in the right hand and a similar pattern in the left hand, with chords providing harmonic support.





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