

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.

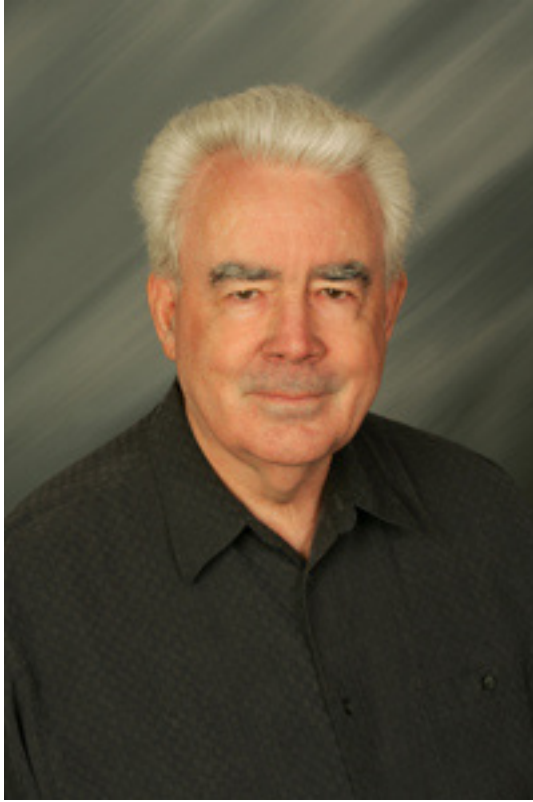
Well, I'm in a frump
and you're in a frump—
let's go have some tea,
you and me.

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 varyd
was tiggy varomund,
then cladry falgarondo
with pleggy fabripund



Alan Harris

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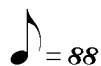
Theosophical Society

Illinois State Poetry Society

Arizona State Poetry Society

Lullaby

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Voice

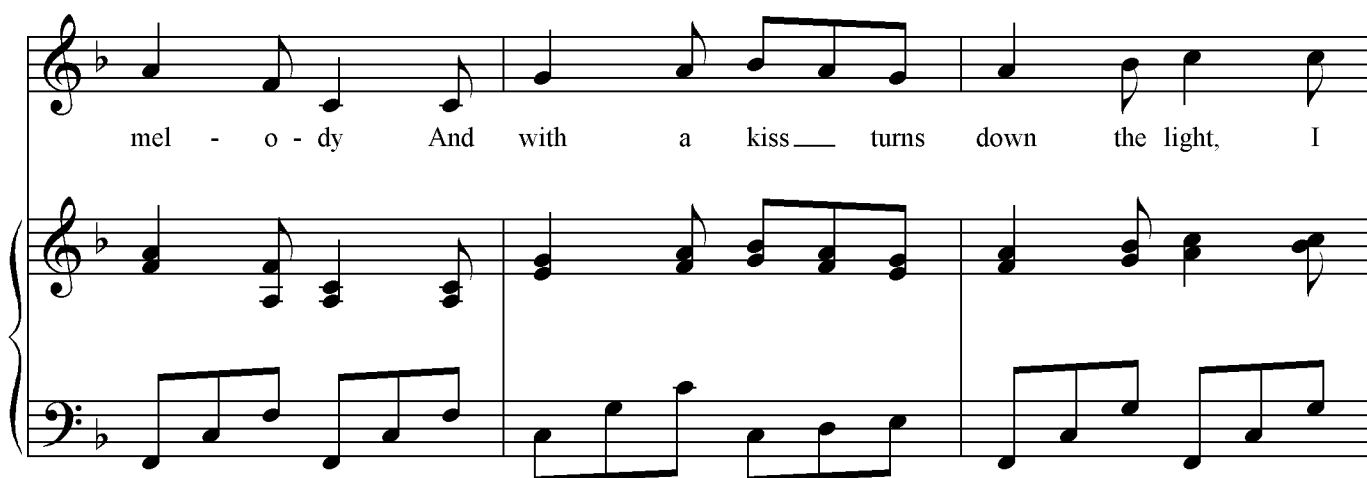
mf When Mom sings me a

Piano

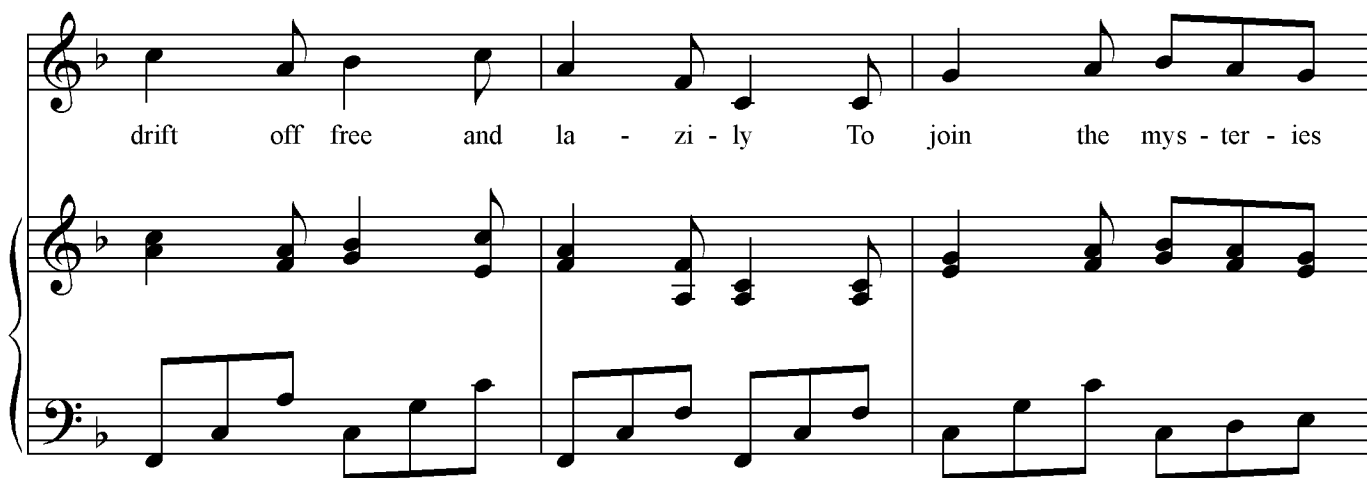
mf



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



Lullaby

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

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 treble clef with a key signature of one flat (B-flat) and a 4/4 time signature. The lyrics are: 'of the night. A - cross the sky soft clouds go by, In'. The piano accompaniment is written in grand staff notation, with the right hand in a treble clef and the left hand in a bass clef. The right hand features a series of chords and dyads, while the left hand plays a steady eighth-note accompaniment.

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

The second system of the musical score continues the vocal line and piano accompaniment. The vocal line lyrics are: 'each a face — I've known by day. They sing and sigh a'. The piano accompaniment maintains the same rhythmic and harmonic structure as the first system.

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

The third system of the musical score concludes the vocal line and piano accompaniment. The vocal line lyrics are: 'lull - a - by which soothes, de - lights, and fades a - way. In'. The piano accompaniment continues with the same eighth-note accompaniment and chordal structure.

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

The first system of the musical score consists of three staves. The top staff is the vocal line, written in a treble clef with 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 middle and bottom staves are the piano accompaniment, with the middle staff in a treble clef and the bottom staff in a bass clef. The piano part features a steady accompaniment with chords and moving lines in both hands.

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

The second system of the musical score consists of three staves. The top staff is the vocal line, with lyrics: "lit - tle boat That sails a zone of un - der - tone And". The middle and bottom staves are the piano accompaniment. The piano part continues with a consistent accompaniment, featuring a mix of chords and moving lines in both the treble and bass clefs.

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

The third system of the musical score consists of three staves. The top staff is the vocal line, with lyrics: "keeps me safe as I dream and float. Now the clouds be - gin to". The middle and bottom staves are the piano accompaniment. The piano part continues with a consistent accompaniment, featuring a mix of chords and moving lines in both the treble and bass clefs.

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 a treble clef with a key signature of one flat (B-flat) and a 4/4 time signature. The lyrics are: 'wane and thin, The last one show-ing my mo - ther's face. She strokes my chin and'. The piano accompaniment is in a grand staff (treble and bass clefs) with a key signature of one flat and a 4/4 time signature. The piano part features a steady eighth-note bass line and a treble line with chords and moving lines.

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

The second system of the musical score continues the vocal line and piano accompaniment. The vocal line lyrics are: 'brings me in From far a - drift to her warm em-brace'. The piano accompaniment continues with the same rhythmic and harmonic patterns as the first system.

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

The third system of the musical score concludes the piece. It includes dynamic markings: *p* (piano) at the beginning, *rit.* (ritardando) in the middle, and *pp* (pianissimo) towards the end. The vocal line ends with a fermata and the marking *ten.* (tenuto). The piano accompaniment also ends with a fermata.



GOLDEN BARREL
ECHINOCACTUS GRUSONII
SAN LUIS POTOSI MEXICO
CACTUS FAMILY HYDROPHYLACEAE