

[1] Sleep, Holy Babe

(Edward Caswall, 1814–78)

Sleep, Holy Babe! Upon Thy mother's breast;
Great Lord of earth and sea and sky,
How sweet it is to see thee lie
In such a place of rest.
Sleep, Holy Babe! Thine angels watch around,
All bending low with folded wings,
Before The Incarnate King of Kings,
In rev'rent awe profound.
Sleep, Holy Babe! While I with Mary gaze,
In joy upon that face awhile,
Upon the loving infant smile
Which there Divinely plays.
Sleep, Holy Babe! Ah! Take Thy brief repose,
Too quickly will Thy slumbers break,
And Thou to lengthened pains awake,
That Death alone shall close.

[2] A Lullaby

(Text from a Greek folk-song

Translation by M.D. Calvocoressi, 1877–1944)

Rock my baby, rock my baby.
Lightning is flashing, flashing in the East
(Rock my baby, nanny. Rock him to sleep!)
Westwards, hark, there's thunder loudly rolling.
(Rock my baby nanny, lest the storm awake him,
Rock him gently may his dreams be happy!)
Sleep, my darling son, while mother o'er thee watches.
Rock my baby. Rock my baby.
Take him and lull him kindly to sleep!
(Sleep, my darling, baby safe in thy cot!)
Bring him sweet dreams and kindly sleep!
(Sleep, my darling, baby safe in thy cot!)
Three, three watchers have I summoned
In the sky the sun, the eagle on the mountain
over the sea the keen cool north wind blowing,
over thee will watch avert from thee all danger.

[3] O Emanuel

(Advent Antiphon No. 7 for 22 or 23 December

Source: Österreichische Nationalbibliothek; 1534/9)

O Emanuel, Rex et legifer noster,
Expectatio gentium et Salvator earum:
Veni ad salvandum nos Domine Deus noster.

(O Emmanuel, our King and our legislator,
The hope of the people and their Saviour:
Come and save us, O Lord our God.)

[4] O magnum mysterium

(4th Matin Responsory for Christmas Day)

*O magnum mysterium,
Et admirabile sacramentum.
Ut animalia viderent Dominum natum,
jacentem in praesepeio.*

(O great mystery,
and wonderful sacrament,
that animals should see the newborn Lord,
lying in a manger.)

[5] Magnificat

(Canticle of The Blessed Virgin Mary

Text from the Bible, (Vulgate version) Luke 1: 46–55

Translation from The Book of Common Prayer)

*Magnificat: anima mea Dominum.
Et exultavit spiritus meus: in Deo salutari meo.
Quia respexit humilitatem ancillae suae:
ecce enim ex hoc beatam me dicent omnes generationes.
Quia fecit mihi magna, qui potens est:
et sanctum nomen eius.
Et misericordia eius, a progenie et progenies:
timentibus eum.
Fecit potentiam in brachio suo:
dispersit superbos mente cordis sui.
Deposuit potentes de sede:
et exaltavit humiles.
Esurientes implevit bonis:
et divites dimisit inanes.
Suscepit Israel puerum suum:
recordatus misericordiae suae.
Sicut locutus est ad patres nostros:
Abraham, et semini eius in saecula.
Gloria Patri et Filio: et Spiritui Sancto.
Sicut erat in principio et nunc et semper: et in saecula saeculorum. Amen.*

(My soul doth magnify the Lord:
and my spirit hath rejoiced in God my Saviour.
For he hath regarded:
the lowliness of his hand-maiden.
For behold, from henceforth:
all generations shall call me blessed.
For he that is mighty hath magnified me:
and holy is his Name.
And his mercy is on them that fear him:
throughout all generations.
He hath shewed strength with his arm:
he hath scattered the proud in the imagination of their hearts.
He hath put down the mighty from their seat:

and hath exalted the humble and meek.
He hath filled the hungry with good things:
and the rich he hath sent empty away.
He remembering his mercy hath holpen his servant Israel:
as he promised to our forefathers, Abraham and his seed, for ever.
Glory be to the Father, and to the Son: and to the Holy Ghost;
As it was in the beginning, is now, and ever shall be, world without end. Amen.)

[6] Sleep, my dreaming one

(Text from 'The Virgin Mary to the Child Jesus' by
Elizabeth Barrett Browning, 1806–61
Adapted by Hilary Campbell, b. 1983)

Sleep, sleep, mine Holy One!
My flesh, my Lord! What name? I do not know
A name that seemeth not too high or low,
Too far from me or Heaven.
We sate among the stalls at Bethlehem.
The dumb kine from their fodder turning them,
Softened their horned faces
To almost human gazes
Towards the newly born.
The simple shepherds from the star-lit brooks
Brought visionary looks,
As yet in their astonished hearing rung
The strange, sweet angel-tongue.
So, let all earthlies and celestials wait
Upon thy royal state!
Sleep, mine Holy One!
Sleep, my saving One!
Sleep, my dreaming One!
Sleep, my Kingly One!

[7] Sing Lullaby

(Sabine Baring-Gould, 1834–1924)

Sing lullaby!
Lullaby baby, now reclining, Sing lullaby!
Hush, do not wake the infant King.
Angels are watching, stars are shining
Over the place where he is lying: Sing lullaby!
Sing lullaby!
Lullaby baby, now a-sleeping, Sing lullaby!
Hush, do not wake the Infant King.
Soon will come sorrow with the morning,
Soon will come bitter grief and weeping: Sing lullaby!
Sing lullaby!
Lullaby baby, now a-dozing, Sing lullaby!
Hush, do not wake the Infant King.
Soon comes the cross, the nails, the piercing,
Then in the grave at last reposing: Sing lullaby!
Sing lullaby!

Lullaby baby, now awaking? Sing lullaby!
Hush, do not stir the Infant King.
Dreaming of Easter, gladsome morning,
Conquering Death, its bondage breaking:
Sing lullaby!

[8] Quid Petis, O Fili?

(Text anon., source: British Library MS Additional 31922
Chorus translation adapted from M.E. Rickert, 1871–1938)

*Quid petis, O fili?
Mater dulcissima baba.
O pater, O fili,
michi plausus oscula dada.*

(What seekest Thou, O my son?
The sweetest mother kisses.
O father, O my Son.
Clapping hands, give me kisses.)

The mother, full mannerly, and meekly as a maid
Looking on her little son, so laughing in lap laid.
So prettily, so pertly, so passingly well apay'd
Full softly and full soberly unto her sweet son she said:

*Quid petis, O fili?
Mater dulcissima baba.
O pater, O fili,
michi plausus oscula dada.*

I mean this by Mary, our Maker's Mother of might
Full lovely looking on our Lord, the lantern of light.
Thus saying to our Saviour; this saw I in my sight;
This reason that I rede you now, I rede it full right.

*Quid petis, O fili?
Mater dulcissima baba.
O pater, O fili,
michi plausus oscula dada.*

Musing on her manners so nigh marr'd was my main,
Save it pleased me so passingly that past was my pain;
Yet softly to her sweet son, me-thought I heard her sain:
Now gracious God and good sweet babe,
yet once this game again:

*Quid petis, O fili?
Mater dulcissima baba.
O pater, O fili,
michi plausus oscula dada.*

[9] Magnificat—See track [5]

[10] O Babe, born bare

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O babe, O babe born bare
the humblest birth that we might dare
to live this life so bitter-sweet
to taste the fruit borne from despair.
O babe, we brought the finest scent and gold
and lost our sense to growing old
now must we bow our heads for shame
we spat, and cursed you – you for silver sold.
O babe, we thank you for the gift of grace
to wonder at the Christ child's face
we pray when time is done and trumpets sound
that we in joy beside you take our place.

[11] Coventry Carol

(From The Pageant of the Shearman and Tailors, 15th century)

Lully, lullay, Thou little tiny child,
By by, lully, lullay,
O sisters too, how may we do,
For to preserve this day,
This poor youngling for whom we sing,
By by lully, lullay. Lully, lullay.
Herod the king, in his raging,
Charged he hath this day
his men of might, in his own sight,
all children young to slay.
That woe is me poor Child for Thee,
And ever mourn and mourn and sigh
For thy parting neither say nor sing,
Lully lullay, By by, Lully lullay.

[12] Lullay my Liking

(Text anon. early 15th century)

Lullay, my liking, my dere son, my sweeting.
Lullay, my dere herte, my own dere darling.
I saw a fair maiden sitten and sing.
She lulled a little child, a swete Lording.
Lullay, my liking, my dere son, my sweeting.
Lullay, my dere herte, my own dere darling.
That eternal Lord is He that made alle thing:
Of alle lordes He is Lord, Of alle kinges King.
Lullay, my liking, my dere son, my sweeting.
Lullay, my dere herte, my own dere darling.
There was a mickle melody At that childes birth:
Alle that were in Hev'ne bliss They made mickle
mirth, they made mickle mirth.
Lullay, my liking, my dere son, my sweeting.

Lullay, my dere herte, my own dere darling.
Angels bright they sang that night, and saiden to that child:
Blessed be thou, and so be she That is both meek and mild,
Lullay, my liking, my dere son, my sweeting.
Lullay, my dere herte, my own dere darling.
Pray we now to that child, And to his mother dere,
Grant them his blessing, That now maken cheer.
Lullay, lullay, my liking, my dere son, my sweeting.
Lullay, my dere herte, my own dere darling.