

1-27-2011

# Christmas Poem

Alan Stringer

Mary Oliver

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## Recommended Citation

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# Christmas Poem

Mary Oliver

Alan Stringer  
Using the 12 Century tune,  
"The Friendly Beasts"

Cheerfully, ♩ = 108

Mezzo-Soprano

Says a coun - try le - gend

Piano *pp*

Mez.

told eve - ry year:

Pno.

Mez. 
  
 7  
 Go to the barn on Christ-mas Eve and see - what the crea - tures do

Pno.

Mez. 
  
 10  
 as that long night tips ov - er. Down on their knees

Pno.

Mez. 
  
 13  
 they will go, the fire of an old mem - or - y whist - ling through their

Pno.

Mez. <sup>16</sup>

minds!

Pno.

Mez. <sup>19</sup>

I went.

Wrapped to my eyes a -

Pno.

Mez. <sup>22</sup>

gainst the cold I creaked back the barn door and peered in. From town the

Pno.

25

Mez. church bells spilled their mid - night mus - ic, and the beasts lis - tened -

Pno.

28

Mez. yet they lay in their stalls like stone.

Pno.

31

Mez. Oh the her - e - tics! Not to re - mem - ber Beth - le - hem, or the star as

Pno.

Mez. <sup>34</sup> 3 3  
 bright as a sun, or the child born on a bed of straw!

Pno. <sup>34</sup> 3 3 3 3 3

Mez. <sup>37</sup> 3  
 To know on - ly of the dis - solv - ing Now!

Pno. <sup>37</sup> 3 3 3 3

Mez. <sup>40</sup> *mp*  
 Still they drowed on -

Pno. <sup>40</sup> *pp* 3 3 *mp*

43

Mez.

cit - i - zens of the pure, the phy - si - cal world, they loomed in the

Pno.

47

Mez.

dark: pow - er - ful of bod - y, peace - ful of mind,

Pno.

50

Mez.

in - no - cent of his - to - ry. Bro - thers! I whis - pered. It is Christ - mas!

Pno.

Mez. <sup>53</sup>

And you are no her - e - tics, but a mir - a - cle, im -

Pno. <sup>53</sup>

Mez. <sup>56</sup>

mac - u - late still as when you thun - dered forth on the morn - ing

Pno. <sup>56</sup>

Mez. <sup>59</sup> *rit.* // A Tempo

of cre - a - tion! As for Beth - le - hem,

Pno. <sup>59</sup> *rit.* //



62

Mez. that blaz - ing star still sailed the dark, but on - ly

Pno.

65

Mez. looked for me. Caught in its light, list - ening a - gain to its

Pno.

68

Mez. sto - ry, I curled a - gainst some sleep - y beast, who nuz - zled my

Pno.

Mez. 71  
hair as though I were a child, and warmed me the best it

Pno. 71

Mez. 74  
could all night.

Pno. 74

Mez. 77

Pno. 77