

BEHOLD A SILLY TENDER BABE (New Prince, New Pomp)

Robert Southwell (1560-1593)

Trad. Harmonized by Charles Wood

Treble

1 Be - hold a sil - ly ten - der babe in freez - ing win - ter
2 De - spise not Him for ly - ing there, first what He is en -

Alto

3 This sta - ble is a Prin - ce's court, the crib His chair of
4 With joy ap - proach, O Christ - ian wight, do hom - age to thy

Tenor

1 Be - hold a sil - ly ten - der babe, in free - zing win - ter
2 De - spise not Him for ly - ing there, first what He is en -

Bass

3 This sta - ble is a Prin - ce's court, the crib His chair of
4 With joy ap - proach, O Christ - ian wight, do hom - age to thy

Tr.

night In home - ly man - ger trem - bling lies, a -
-quire: An or - ient pearl is of - ten found in

A.

state: The beasts are par - cel of His pomp, the
King: And high - ly prize this hum - ble pomp which

T.

night In home - ly man - ger trem - bling lies, a -
-quire: An or - ient pearl in of - ten found in

B.

state: The beasts are par - cel of His pomp, the
King: And high - ly prize this hum - ble pomp which

Tr.

-las, a pit - eous sight; The inns are full, no man will yield this
depths of dir - ty mire. Weigh not His crib, His wood - en dish, nor

A.

wood - en dish His plate; The persons in that poor at - tire His
He from heav'n doth bring, With joy ap - proach, O Christ - ian wights, do

T.

-las, a pit - eous sight; The inns are full, no man will yield this
depths of dir - ty mire. Weigh not His crib, His wood - en dish, nor

B.

wood - en dish His plate; The persons in that poor at - tire His
He from heav'n doth bring, With joy ap - proach, O Christ - ian wights, do

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Tr. lit - tle pil - grim bed; But forced He is with
beasts that round Him feed, Weigh not His Moth - er's

A. roy - al liv - 'ries wear, The Prince Him - self is
hom - age to thy King, And high - ly prize this

T. lit - tle pil - grim bed; But forced He is with
beasts that round Him feed, Weigh not His Moth - er's

B. roy - al liv - 'ries wear, The Prince Him - self is
hom - age to thy King, And high - ly prize this

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Tr. sil - ly beasts in crib to shroud His head.
poor at - tire, nor Jo - seph's sim - ple weed.

A. come from heav'n, this pomp is pri - zed there.
hum - ble pomp, which He from heav'n doth bring.

T. sil - ly beasts in crib to shroud His head.
poor at - tire, nor Jo - seph's sim - ple weed.

B. come from heav'n, this pomp is pri - zed there.
hum - ble pomp, which He from heav'n doth bring.

This beautiful poem by Robert Southwell was set by Charles Wood (1866-1926) to a traditional tune and published in the Cambridge Carol Book, SPCK, 1957. The tune, thought to date from the early eighteenth century and known by some as 'Dives and Lazarus', first saw publication in English Country Songs in 1893. Lucy Broadwood noted the tune's prevalence in Worcestershire, and in Warwickshire towards the end of the nineteenth century.

Charles Wood cited his source as Chappell's Popular Music of the Olden Time, Vol II, pub. 1856, with the tune's title 'We are poor frozen-out gardeners'. Ralph Vaughan Williams went on to base the hymn 'Kingsfold' on the same tune in The English Hymnal, pub. 1906, set to Horatius Bonar's 'I Heard the Voice of Jesus Say'.

Southwell's text was also favoured by Benjamin Britten in his Ceremony of Carols, 1942. See also variant late twentieth-century recordings by Van Morrison and also by the Pogues, as 'The Star of the County Down'. With several emendations, including text revision, © this edition Shelwin Music, Oxford, 2023.