

**Alastair Boyd**

# **Nowel, Nowel!**

**Christmas Carol for  
Unaccompanied SATB**

**Words adapted from a 15<sup>th</sup> century  
English source (Selden MS)**

### A Note on the Text

For the sake of singers and listeners alike, in my setting I have included a version with modern English spellings and pronunciations (where they exist) for many of the original 15<sup>th</sup> century words. Both texts are also given below.

*Nowel, nowel!*

Owt of your slepe aryse and wake,  
For God mankind nowe hath ytake <sup>1</sup>  
Al of a maide without eny make; <sup>2</sup>  
Of al women she bereth the belle.

*Nowel, nowel!*

And thorwe a maide faire and wyse  
Now man is made of ful grete pris;  
Now angelys knelen to mannys servys,  
And at this tyme al this byfel.

*Nowel, nowel!*

Now, blessyd brother, graunte us grace  
A domesday to se thy face  
And in thy courte to have a place,  
That we mow there synge 'Nowel'.

*Nowel, nowel!*

—15<sup>th</sup> Century (*Selden MS*)

*Nowel, nowel!*

Out of your sleep arise and wake,  
For God mankind now hath ytake,  
All of a maiden without any make,  
Of all women she beareth the bell.

*Nowel, nowel!*

And through a maiden fair and wise  
Now man is made of full great price;  
Now angels kneelen to man's service,  
And at this time all this befell.

*Nowel, nowel!*

Now blessed brother, grant us grace  
At doomesday to see thy face  
And in thy court to have a place.  
That we may there sing 'Nowel'.

*Nowel, nowel!*

<sup>1</sup>For God has now taken on manhood

<sup>2</sup>Without any husband

### A Note on Performance

Choirs may wish to vary the four occurrences of the "Nowel, nowel" chorus. One effective option would be as follows:

- *First chorus (1-7)*: sopranos only, or even a solo treble;
- *Second chorus (24-30)*: sopranos and tenors only;
- *Third and fourth choruses (47-53, 70-77)*: full choir.

# Nowel, Nowel!

Andante ♩ = 84

*p* *rit.*

S  
No - wel, no - wel, no - wel, no - wel, no-wel, no - wel, no - wel, no - wel, no - wel!

A  
No - wel, no - wel, no - wel, no - wel, no-wel, no - wel, no - wel, no - wel, no - wel!

T  
*p*  
No - wel, no - wel, no - wel, no-wel, no - wel, no - wel, no - wel, no - wel! —

B  
*p*  
No - wel, no - wel, no - wel, no-wel, no - wel, no - wel, no - wel, no - wel!

Andante

Piano (rehearsal)  
*p* *rit.*

*a little faster*

8  
Out of your sleep a - rise and wake, For God man - kind now hath y - take,  
Owt of your slepe a - ryse and wake, For God man - kynd nowe hath y - take,

Out of your sleep a - rise and wake, — For God man - kind now hath y - take, —  
Owt of your slepe a - ryse and wake, — For God man - kynd nowe hath y - take, —

8  
Out of your sleep a - rise and wake, — For God man - kind now hath y - take, —  
Owt of your slepe a - ryse and wake, — For God man - kynd nowe hath y - take, —

Out of your sleep a - rise and wake, — For God man - kind now hath y - take, —  
Owt of your slepe a - ryse and wake, — For God man - kynd nowe hath y - take, —

*a little faster*

8



*a little faster*

31

And through a mai - den fair and wise Now man is made of full great price;  
 And thorwe a mai - de faire and wys Now man is made of ful grete pris;

8

And through a mai - den fair and wise Now man is made of full great price;  
 And thorwe a mai - de faire and wys Now man is made of ful grete pris;

And through a mai - den fair and wise Now man is made of full great price;—  
 And thorwe a mai - de faire and wys Now man is made of ful grete pris;—

*a little faster*

31

*rit.*

39

Now an-gels knee - len to man's ser - vice, And at this time all this be fell.  
 Now an-gelys kne - len to mannys ser - vys, And at this tyme al this by - fel.

8

Now an - gels knee-len to man's ser - vice, And at this time all this be - fell.  
 Now an - gelys kne - len to mannys ser - vys, And at this tyme al this by - fel.

Now an - gels knee-len to man's ser - vice, And at this time all this be - fell.  
 Now an - gelys kne - len to mannys ser - vys, And at this tyme al this by - fel.

*rit.*

39

*Tempo primo*

47 *mf* *rit.*

No - wel, no - wel, no - wel, no - wel, no-wel, no - wel, no - wel, no-wel, no - wel!

No - wel, no - wel, no - wel, no - wel, no-wel, no - wel, no - wel, no - wel, no - wel!

No - wel, no - wel, no - wel, no - wel, no - wel, no - wel, no - wel, no - wel! —

No - wel, no - wel, no - wel, no-wel, no - wel, no - wel, no - wel, no - wel!

47 *mf* *rit.*

*a little faster*

54 *a little faster*

Now, bles-sed bro - ther, grant us grace At doom - es - day to see thy face  
 Now bles-syd bro - ther, graunte us grace A do - mes - day to se thy face

Now, bles - sed bro - ther, grant us grace At doom - es - day to see thy face  
 Now bles - syd bro - ther, graunte us grace A do - mes - day to se thy face

Now, bles - sed bro - ther, grant us grace At doom - es - day to see thy face  
 Now bles - syd bro - ther, graunte us grace A do - mes - day to se thy face

54 *a little faster*

