

# Coventry Carol

Words: Anonymous; based on Matthew 2:16-18; revised in 1534 by Robert Croo; in "The Coventry Nativity Play of the Company of Shearmen and Tailors." *Everyman and Other Plays*, edited by Ernest Rhys (London: 1909), p. 102; altered

Music: Anonymous; revised in 1591 by Thomas Mawdyke

Tune name: COVENTRY CAROL

Arrangement: Jason Hunsaker, 2002; © 2002 by Jason Hunsaker

S  
A  
T  
B

Unison

Lul - ly, lul - lay, Thou lit - tle child, By, by, lul - ly lul - lay!

9

S  
A

*mp tenderly*

Oh sis - ters too, How may we do For to pre - serve this day

Oh sis - ters too, How may we do For to pre - serve this day

17

S  
A

This poor young - ling, For whom we sing? (ng) By, by, lul - ly, lul - lay!

This poor young - ling, For whom we sing? (ng) By, by, lul - ly, lul - lay!

26

T  
B

*mf non legato*

Her - od the king, In his rag - ing, Com - mand - ed he this day, (Lul - ly, lul - lay!)

Her - od the king, In his rag - ing, Com - mand - ed he this day,

**By, by:** As in *by and by*; immediately, right now (cf. KJV:Mark 6:25). Also as a variant of *bye*, as in *goodbye*.

**Lully, lullay:** To lull, calm, pacify, or soothe; to cause to sleep. Also slang (ca. 15th & 16th centuries) for *I saw* or *I see*, possibly as in *until I see you again*.

Like all nativity poems, the poet often imagines a dialogue between Mary and the infant Jesus. Such dialogues often foreshadow the events to follow: the events of the Crucifixion. It appears that lullabies unrelated to Christmas and to the Slaughter of the Holy Innocents are a comparatively recent development.

## Coventry Carol

34

S  
Lul - ly, lul - lay.

A  
Lul - ly, lul - lay.

T  
8 *with intensity* His men of might In his own sight All chil-dren young to *hollow, no vibrato* slay!

B  
*with intensity* His men of might In his own sight All chil-dren young to *hollow, no vibrato* slay!

43

S  
*ff with anguish* Then woe is me Poor child for thee! And ev-er mourn this day. For thy part-

A  
*ff with anguish* Then woe is me Poor child for thee! And ev-er mourn this day. (Lul-lay!) For thy part-

T  
8 *ff with anguish* Then woe is me Poor child for thee! And ev-er mourn this day. For thy part-

B  
*ff with anguish* Then woe is me Poor child for thee! And ev-er mourn this day. For thy part-

52

S  
*rit. al fine* *hollow, no vibrato* *f* *mf* *mp > pp*  
ing Nor say nor sing (ng) (Lul - lay!) By, by, lul - ly, lul - lay!

A  
*rit. al fine* *hollow, no vibrato* *f* *mf* *mp > pp*  
ing Nor say nor sing (ng) (Lul - ly!) (Lul - ly, lu...) By, by, lul - ly, lul - lay!

T  
8 *rit. al fine* *hollow, no vibrato* *f* *mf* *mp > pp*  
ing Nor say nor sing (ng) (Lul - lay!) By, by, lul - ly, lul - lay!

B  
*rit. al fine* *hollow, no vibrato* *f* *mf* *mp > pp*  
ing Nor say nor sing (ng) (Lul - ly, lu...) By, by, lul - ly, lul - lay!