

GWYNETH WALKER

Carol of the Brown King

for SATB Chorus (divisi) and Organ

Composed as a gift for the choir and congregation of Middle Collegiate Church, New York, NY

Carol of the Brown King

for SATB Chorus and Organ

Langston Hughes (1902-1967)

Gwyneth Walker

I: Foundations, Principals and Flutes

II: Solo Reed

$\text{♩} = 66$
as the gait of camels bearing the Wise Men to Bethlehem *mf* **A**

Tenor

Bass

Organ

$\text{♩} = 66$

I. *mf* II. *p* **A** *mf* I.

Ped. Man. Ped.

6

S
A

(1.) *tacet* (sing only on verses 2 & 3)
(2.) star... _____
(3.) gold... _____

T

came to the King, _____ One was a brown man, So they sing. _____
fol - lowed the Star, _____ One was a brown King, From a - far _____
spi - ces and gold _____ In jew-eled box - es Of beau-ty un - told. _____

B

II. *p* *mf*

Man. Ped.

10 *(p)* *unis. p*

S
A
T
B

(2.) far... _____
(3.) told... _____

(1., 2. & 3.) Ah, _____

One was a brown man, So they sing. _____
One was a brown King, From a - far. _____
In jew-eled box - es Of beau-ty un - told. _____

II. I. *p* *mf* I. II.

Man. Ped. Man.

14 **B** *mf*

S
A
T
B

Jour-ney on, _____ jour-ney on, _____ jour-ney on to Beth-le -

B II. I. II. I.

(mf) Ped. Man.

19 | 1., 2., 3. *unis.* *p (gentle rhythmic pulse)* *mf*

S
A
T
B

hem. _____ na na na na na na na na na

2. Of the
3. They

| 1., 2., 3. II. *p*

(mf) Ped. Man.

23 4. *unis.* *p* (gentle rhythmic pulse)

S A hem. na na na na na na na na na na

(mf) *p*

Ped. Man.

27 C *(p)* very rhythmically *unis.*

S A Al - le - lu - ia, al - le - lu - ia, al - le - lu - ia, to the Prince of Peace.

C *(p)*

I. Ped. Man.

31 *mf*

S A Al - le - lu - ia, al - le - lu - ia, al - le - lu - ia, al - le - lu - ia, al - le - lu - ia!

(mf)

Ped. (Ped.)

35 D *(mf)*

S A Al - le - lu - ia!

unis. mf

T B Un - to His hum - ble Man - ger they came — And bowed their heads In Je - sus' name. —

D *mf*

II. I. I. Ped. Man. Ped.

40

S A Al - le - lu - ia!

T B Three Wise Men, one dark like me - Part of His Na -

II. I. I. Man. Ped.

45

S A Ah Jour - ney on, **E** *mf*

T B tiv - i - ty. **E**

I. I. (mf) II. Man. Ped.

50

S A jour - ney on, jour - ney on to Beth - le - hem. *unis.*

T B Ah *unis. p*

I. II. I. Man. Ped.

55 **F** (*mf*)

S
A
T
B

Jour-ney on, jour - ney - on.

Jour-ney on, jour - ney on.

F II. I. II.

60 *rit.* **f**

T
B

Three Wise Men, One dark like me - Part of His Na - tiv - i -

Three Wise Men, One dark like me - Part of His Na - tiv - i -

rit. I. **f**

Ped. **f**

65 **G** *a tempo* *mf* **f**

S
A
T
B

Ah Al - le - lu - ia!

Ah Al - le - lu - ia!

p cresc. **f**

mf **f**

G *a tempo* I. **p** *cresc.* **f**

Man. Ped. **f**

70

S
Al - le - lu - ia! Al - le - lu - ia to the Prince of

A
Al - le - lu - ia! Al - le - lu - ia to the Prince of

II. 3 I. II. 3 I. Man. I.

(Ped.)

75 **H** *unis.*
dim. poco a poco

S
Peace.

A

T
B

H I. *f* *mf*

79 *rit. to end*

S
unnoticed *pp* *mf* with quiet pride *p* bow head at the manger

A

T
B
Hmm One was a brown man, dark like me.

rit. to end *p* *pp*

Man.

Carol of the Brown King

Of the three Wise Men
Who came to the King,
One was a brown man,
So they sing.
Of the three Wise Men
Who followed the Star,
One was a brown king
From afar.
They brought fine gifts
Of spices and gold
In jeweled boxes
Of beauty untold.
Unto His humble
Manger they came
And bowed their heads
In Jesus' name.
Three Wise Men,
One dark like me –
Part of His Nativity.
– *Langston Hughes*

Notes

The poem *Carol of the Brown King* is found in a collection of children's Nativity poems by Langston Hughes. This poem describes the three Wise Men traveling to Bethlehem. "One was a brown king, so they sing."

The musical interpretation of the poem focuses on several, primary elements in the poem. The first element is one of travel. Thus, the general rhythm of the music, introduced at the beginning, sways to and fro, as camels walking to Bethlehem. Also, inserted into the song are traveling refrains of "Journey on, journey on to Bethlehem."

The second element is the three Wise Men. In this case, the men's voices often divide into three-part chords, especially when singing significant lines of the poem such as, "Three Wise Men, One dark like me." At the close of the song, the voices of the Magi descend into the low range as the Wise Men bow at the Manger.

– *Gwyneth Walker*