

Stopping by Woods on a Snowy Evening

for SATB and Piano

Text by

Robert Frost

Music by

Joshua Shank

B&F Music
Joshua Shank

Note from the composer

I don't have much to say about what attracted me to this legendary poem except that, as someone who grew up in the Midwest, I understand completely how transfixing witnessing a quiet snowfall can be. It can make you forget things you need to momentarily forget and remind you of the beauty of the natural world. I also love how ambiguous Frost treats the final stanza—we don't know what those promises are or where those miles will take the speaker of the text—and how he allows us to fill in those things from experiences in our own lives.

Stopping by Woods on a Snowy Evening was commissioned by the Hopkins High School Concert Choir during the time it was conducted by Philip Brown but premiered by its subsequent director, Katie Irvin. It is dedicated with love and gratitude to the former and received its premiere on December 17, 2019.

The Text

By Robert Frost (1874-1963)

Whose woods these are I think I know.
His house is in the village though;
He will not see me stopping here
To watch his woods fill up with snow.

My little horse must think it queer
To stop without a farmhouse near
Between the woods and frozen lake
The darkest evening of the year.

He gives his harness bells a shake
To ask if there is some mistake.
The only other sound's the sweep
Of easy wind and downy flake.

The woods are lovely, dark and deep,
But I have promises to keep,
And miles to go before I sleep,
And miles to go before I sleep.

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“This illegal copy will self destruct in 5...4...3...”

Commissioned by the Hopkins High School Concert Choir
Katie Irvin, Conductor

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for Philip Brown

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Gently (♩ = 76)

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mp Whose
mp Whose

p *mf*

ped. *ped.* *ped.*

7

woods these are _____ I think I know. His house is in the

woods these are _____ I think I know. His house is in the

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ped.

28

p

S My lit - tle horse must think it queer To stop with -

p

A My lit - tle horse must think it queer To stop with -

24

Leo.

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34

mp

out a farm-house near Be - tween the woods and fro - zen lake The dark - est

poco rit. - a tempo

mp

out a farm-house near Be - tween the woods and fro - zen lake The dark - est

34

mp *simile* *poco rit. - a tempo*

Leo. *Leo.* *simile*

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Joshua Shank

“This illegal copy will self destruct in 5...4...3...”

80

pp *mp*

Oh, The woods are love - ly, —

pp *mp*

Oh, The woods are love - ly, —

pp *mp*

Oh, — The woods are love - ly,

pp *mp*

Oh, — The woods are love - ly,

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80

mp

ped. *ped.*

91 A bit slower (♩ = 76)

86

mf *rit.*

dark and deep, — But I have pro - mi - ses to keep, — And miles to go —

mf *rit.*

dark and deep, — But I have pro - mi - ses to keep, — And miles to go —

mf *rit.*

dark and deep, — But I have pro - mi - ses to keep, — And miles to go —

mf *rit.*

dark and deep, — But I have pro - mi - ses to keep, — And miles to go —

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Joshua Shank

86

mf *rit.*

ped. *ped.* *ped.* *ped.*

95 Gently (♩ = 76)

92 *rit.* *mp*

be - fore I sleep. be - fore I sleep,

rit. *mp*

be - fore I sleep. be - fore I sleep, be - fore I

rit. *mp*

be - fore I sleep. be - fore I sleep, be -

rit. *mp*

be - fore I sleep. be - fore I sleep, be - fore I sleep, be -

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Joshua Shank

99 *mp* *p*

be - fore I sleep, be - fore I sleep, be - fore I sleep, be -

mp *p*

sleep, be - fore I sleep, be - fore I sleep, be - fore I sleep, be -

mp *p*

fore I sleep, be - fore I sleep, be - fore I sleep, be -

mp *p*

be - fore I sleep, be - fore I sleep, be - fore I sleep, be -

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Joshua Shank

99 *p* *mp* *p*

bring out upper notes

"This illegal copy will self destruct in 5...4...3..."

105

fore I sleep, _____ be - fore I sleep, be fore I sleep, _____ be - fore I sleep, _____

_____ be - fore I sleep, _____ be - fore I sleep, _____ be - fore I sleep, _____

fore I sleep, _____ be - fore I sleep, be - fore I sleep, _____ be - fore I sleep, _____

_____ be - fore I sleep, _____ be - fore I sleep, _____ be - fore I sleep, _____

105

111

ppp almost imperceptible rit. n.

(m) _____

ppp almost imperceptible rit. n.

(m) _____

ppp almost imperceptible rit. n.

(m) _____

ppp almost imperceptible rit. n.

(m) _____

111