

For the the choir of Wells Cathedral and Jeremy Cole
Commissioned by Cathedral Commissions of Wells Cathedral

A TENDER SHOOT

Versified by
OTTO GOLDSCHMIDT

Translated by
WILLIAM BARTHOLOMEW

Music by
KERENSA BRIGGS
(b 1991)

Andante con rubato ♩ = 96

SOPRANO *p*
A ten - der shoot hath start - ed Up from a root of

ALTO *p*
A ten - der shoot hath start - ed Up from a root of

TENOR *p*
A ten - der shoot hath start - ed Up from a root of

BASS

Andante con rubato ♩ = 96

PIANO
(for rehearsal only)

4 *mp* grace, *mp* As an - cient seers *mf* im - par - ted, From

mp grace, *mp* As an - cient seers *mf* im - par - ted, From

mp grace, *mp* As an - cient seers *mf* im - par - ted, From

mp As an - - - cient seers *mf* im - part - ted, From

p Jes - se's ho - ly race, It blooms with-out a blight, *mf* it

p Jes - se's ho - ly race, It blooms with-out a blight, *mf* it

p Jes - se's ho - ly race, It blooms with-out a blight, *mf* it

p Jes - se's ho - ly race, It blooms with-out a blight, *mf* it

11 *p* blooms with-out a blight, Blooms in the cold bleak

p blooms with-out a blight, Blooms in the cold bleak

p blooms with-out a blight, Blooms in the cold bleak

p blooms with-out a blight, Blooms in the cold bleak

rit

14

win - ter, Turn - ing our dark - ness in - to

win - ter, Turn - ing our dark - ness in - to

win - ter, Turn - ing our dark - ness in - to

win - ter, Turn - ing our dark - ness in - to

mp

mp

mp

mp

rit

a tempo

18

light. This shoot I - sai - ah taught us From Jes - se's root should

light. This shoot I - sai - ah taught us From Jes - se's root should

light. This shoot I - sai - ah taught us From Jes - se's root should

light.

p

p

p

p

a tempo

spring; The Vir - gin Ma - ry brought us The

spring; The Vir - gin Ma - ry brought us The

spring; The Vir - gin Ma - ry brought us The

The Vir - - gin Ma - ry brought us The

branch of which we sing; Our God of end - less might, our

branch of which we sing; Our God of end - less might, our

branch of which we sing; Our God of end - less might, our

branch of which we sing; Our God of end - less might, our

*the soprano 3 part may instead be sung by alto 1

29

mp *mf* *>*

God of end - less might Gave her this child to save us,

God of end - less might Gave her this child to save us,

God of end - less might Gave her this child to save us,

God of end - less might Gave her this child to save us,

33

mp *rit* *p* *pp*

Thus turn - ing dark - ness in - - to light.

mp *p* *pp*

Thus turn - ing dark - ness in - to light.

mp *p* *pp*

Thus turn - ing dark - ness in - to light.

mp *p* *pp*

Thus turn - ing dark - ness in - to light.

rit

Composer's note

A tender shoot is a new setting of the 15th-century German poem, versified by Otto Goldschmidt and translated into English by William Bartholomew in the 19th century. Commissioned by Cathedral Commissions of Wells Cathedral in 2020, the carol utilises expressive harmony to support a memorable tune depicting Christ as the 'tender shoot' that sprang from the root of Jesse.

Duration: c2 minutes

Text

A tender shoot hath started
Up from a root of grave,
As ancient seers imparted,
From Jesse's holy race,
It blooms without a blight,
Blooms in the cold bleak winter,
Turning our darkness into light.

This shoot Isaiah taught us
From Jesse's root should spring;
The Virgin Mary brought us
The branch of which we sing;
Our God of endless might
Gave her this child to save us,
Thus turning darkness into light.

Kerensa Briggs

Kerensa Briggs is an award-winning composer based in London. Her music has been performed internationally at venues including St Paul's Cathedral and the Sistine Chapel, and has been broadcast on BBC Radio 3, Classic FM and BBC Radio Scotland by ensembles such as The Tallis Scholars and the BBC Singers. It also features on a number of CDs including 'Advent Carols from King's College London' and 'All things are quite silent' by the Choir of Pembroke College, Cambridge. Kerensa was winner of the National Centre for Early Music Young Composers Award 2014 and the 'Passiontide at Merton' Composition Competition 2017. She was also a finalist in the 'New Music for St Paul's Composition Competition' in 2019. Her love of sacred music emanates from her choral background, singing in the Gloucester Cathedral Youth Choir and later for choirs including Trinity College Cambridge and King's College London, where she held a Choral Scholarship and undertook an MMus in Composition.



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