

# BALULALOW

for SATB choir a cappella,  
with soprano and baritone soloists

Some individual singing is required from all singers,  
and all four sections are divisi at various points.

A piano reduction is provided when required,  
for rehearsal purposes only.

Text in Scots (16th century), from  
"The Gude and Godlie Ballads"  
by J., J. & R. Wedderburn,  
believed to be a translation into Scots  
of Martin Luther's "Von Himmel Hoch"

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## Full text

I come from hevin heich to tell  
the best nowells that e'er befell.  
To you thir tythings trew I bring  
and I will of them say and sing:  
This day to you is born ane Child  
of Marie meik and Virgin mild.  
That blissit bairn bening and kind  
sall you rejoyce baith hart and mind.

Lat us rejoyis [now] and be blyth  
and with the Hyrdis go full swyth,  
and see what Godis grace hes done  
throu Christ to bring us to his throne.  
My saull and life, stand up and see  
wha lysis in ane cribbe of tree.  
What Babe is that, sa gude and fair?  
It is Christ, Godis Son and Air.

The silk and sandell thee to eis  
ar hay and sempill sweilling clais  
wharin thou gloris greitest King  
as thou in hev'n war in thy ring.  
And war the warld ten times sa wide  
cled ouer with gold and stanes of pride  
unworthie yit it were to thee  
under they feet ane stule to be.

O my deir hart, yung Jesus sweit,  
prepair thy creddill in my spreit!  
And I sall rock thee in my hart  
and never mair fra thee depart.  
Bot I sall praise thee evermoir  
with sangis sweit unto thy gloir.  
The kneis of my hart sall I bow  
and sing that rycht Balulalow.

## Pronunciation and glossary

"Balulalow" should rhyme with "now" (so that it rhymes with "bow" in the last couplet).

If there is doubt about the pronunciation of a word, it may be pronounced to match the modern English equivalent. This is an approximation of Scots pronunciation (words which are pronounced as they look - e.g. war, wharin, sa - are omitted):

v.1: heich: "hee", then a ch as in loch (high)

Marie: same as English "Mary"

meik: as English "meek"

bening: "ben" then ing as in "ring" (benign)

sall: as if it was the opening syllable of "Sally"

v.2: Lat: as written (let)

rejoyis: as "rejoice", but with the diphthong partly split into two syllables; "rih-jaw-ees".

blyth: as English "blithe"

swyth: rhymes with "blithe" (swift)

throu: same as "through"

gude: same as "good"

Air: same as "heir" (the h is silent)

v.3: eis: ay-ees (ease)

sweilling: swee-ling (swaddling)

clais: clay-ees (clothes)

greitest: gree-test (greatest)

ouer: ah-oor (ow'r, over)

stule: same as "stool"

v.4: sweit: same as "sweet"

spreit: spreet (spirit)

evermoir: same as "evermore"

sangis: "sang-is" (songs)

gloir: rhymes with "more" (glory)

kneis: same as "knees"

rycht: richt (i sound as in lift, ch sound as in loch) (right, appropriate)

# Balulalow

Words: from *The Gude and Godlie Ballatis* (J, J & R Wedderburn),  
16th century

Accompanist's edition: a piano reduction is  
provided from page 5 onwards  
(where the choir is in more than 2 parts)

Chris Hutchings

This PDF is for sample purposes only: to order a copy for your choir, email [chris@hutchingsmusic.co.uk](mailto:chris@hutchingsmusic.co.uk).

**Calmato**,  $\text{♩} = \text{c. } 140$

The musical score is written for Soprano (Sop.) and Alto (A) voices. It begins with a treble clef, a key signature of one sharp (F#), and a 5/4 time signature. The tempo is marked 'Calmato' with a quarter note equal to approximately 140 beats per minute. The score is divided into systems, with measures 1-2, 3-4, 5-8, 9-11, and 12-14 shown. The lyrics are: 'Ba - - - lu - - - la - - - low, I come from ba - - - lu - - - la - low, he - vin heich to tell The best no wells that lu - - - la - low, ba - - - lu - - - e'er be\_fell; To you thir ty-things trew I la - low, ba - - - lu - - - la - low, bring And I will of them say and sing: Ba - - - lu - - - la - low,'. Dynamic markings include *pp*, *p*, *mp*, and *mf*. The score includes a 'Soprano solo' section in measures 3-4. A large watermark 'SAMPLE COPY NOT FOR PERFORMANCE © www.hutchingsmusic.co.uk' is overlaid on the score.

Balulalow

4

Tutti

15 *mf*

S This - day to you is born ane child Of Ma - rie meik and

A *mp*  
— This day to you is born ane child Of Ma - rie

18 *piu cresc.*

S Vir - gin mild. That bli - ssit bairn be ning \_\_\_\_\_ and \_\_\_\_\_

A *piu cresc.*  
meik and Vir - gin mild; That bli - ssit bairn be - ning \_\_\_\_\_ and

21 *f*

S kind, That bli - ssit \_\_\_\_\_ bairn be - ning and kind

A *f*  
kind, That bli - ssit \_\_\_\_\_ bairn be - ning and kind

24 *mp*

S sall you re - joyce baith hart and mind.

A *mp*  
sall you re - joyce baith hart \_\_\_\_\_ and mind.

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27 **Animato, ♩ = c. 180**

T *f* Let us re - joy - is and be blyth And

B *f* Let us re - joy - is, let us re - joy - is and be blyth\_\_\_\_\_

30

T with\_ the hy - rdis go full swyth\_\_\_\_\_ And see what

B \_\_\_\_\_ And with\_ the hyr - dis go full swyth\_\_\_\_\_ To

33

T *rit.* *f* Go - dis grace hes done Throu Christ *mf* to bring us

B *rit.* see\_ what Go - dis grace\_ hes done Throu Christ to bring us

36 **Piu moderato, ♩ = c. 150**

A *f* My saull and life, stand up and see

T *mf* to his throne. My saull\_ and life, stand up and

B to his throne. My saull and life, stand up and see

36

36

Balulalow

6

39

S *mf cresc.*  
What babe is that, sa

A *mf cresc.*  
Wha ly - is in ane cribbe of tree; What babe \_\_\_ is

T *mf cresc.*  
see Wha ly - is in ane cribbe \_\_\_ of tree; What babe \_\_\_ is

B *mf cresc.*  
Wha ly - is in \_\_\_ ane cribbe of tree. What babe is that, sa

39



Piano accompaniment for measures 39-41, featuring a treble and bass clef with a key signature of two sharps (F# and C#) and a 6/4 time signature. The music consists of chords and moving lines in both hands.

42

S *warm p*  
gude \_\_\_ and \_\_\_ fair? What babe is that, sa

A *warm p*  
that, sa gude and fair? What babe is that, sa

T *warm p*  
that, sa gude \_\_\_ and fair? What babe is that, sa

B *warm p*  
gude \_\_\_ and \_\_\_ fair? What babe is that, sa

42



Piano accompaniment for measures 42-44, continuing the musical texture with chords and moving lines in both hands, maintaining the key signature and time signature.

Maestoso,  $\text{♩} = c, 120$   
reverently *mf*

S  
gude and fair? It is Christ, God - is Son and

A  
gude and fair? It is Christ, God - is Son and

T  
gude and fair? It is Christ, God - is Son and

B  
gude and fair? It is Christ, God - is Son and

Tempo I *pp*

S  
Air. Ba

A  
Air. lu

T  
Air. la

B  
Air. low

Balulalow

Baritone solo

*p*

52

Bar. *p* The silk and

S Ba Ba

A lu

T la

B low

55

Bar. *piu cresc.* san - dell thee to eis Ar hay and sem pill

S Ba - - - lu - - - -

A lu lu Ba - - - lu - - - -

T la Ba - - - lu - - - -

B low Ba - - - lu - - - -

55



Balulalow

58 *mp*

Bar. swei ling clais whar - in thou glo ris grei - test King

S la - - - low, ba - - - lu - - - la - low,

A la - - - low, ba - - - lu - - - la - low,

T la - - - low, ba - - - lu - - - la - low,

B la - - - low, ba - - - lu - - - la - low,

61 *p*

Bar. — As thou in hev'n war in thy ring.

S — ba - - - lu - - - la - - - low, —

A — ba - - - lu - - - la - - - low, —

T — ba - - - lu - - - la - - - low, —

B — ba - - - lu - - - la - - - low, —

64 *p cresc. poco a poco*

S And war the warld — ten times sa wide, Cled ouer with gold — and

A *p cresc. poco a poco*  
And war the warld ten times sa wide, cled ouer with

T *p cresc. poco a poco*  
And war the warld — ten times sa wide, cled ouer with

B *mp cresc. poco a poco*  
And war the warld ten times sa wide, Cled ouer with gold and

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67

S stanes of pride, Cled ouer with gold — and stanes — of —

A gold and stanes — of pride, Cled ouer with gold — and —

T gold and stanes — of pride, Cled ouer with gold — and —

B stanes of pride, cled ouer with gold and stanes — of —

70 *a tempo* *p*  
Sop. Un wor — thie yit it were to — thee

70 *a tempo* *p*  
Bar. Un wor - thie yit it were to thee

*f* *a tempo* *pp*  
S pride, ba lu la low,

*f* *a tempo* *pp*  
A stanes of pride, ba - - - lu - - - la - - low,

*f* *a tempo* *pp*  
T stanes of pride, ba - - - lu - - - la - - low,

*ff* *a tempo* *pp*  
B pride, ba - - - lu - - - la - - low,

70 (RH 8ve higher ad lib.)

70

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# Balulalow

73

Sop. Un der thy feet ane stule to be.

Bar. Un der thy feet ane stule to be.

S ba lu la low.

A ba - - - lu - - - la - - - low.

T ba - - - lu - - - la - - - low.

B ba - - - lu - - - la - - - low.

The notes in boxes are to be sung in any order, freely being repeated as required, by each member of the section, ad lib. Bring in each note *pp*, with a swell in the middle (volume should never be more than *mp*, usually *p*), and fade it off with a diminuendo; leave a slight rest before the next

76

Sop. *p* O my deir hart, yung Je - sus

(start about 5" after B)

(Baritone in octave unison with soprano)

S *pp* Ba lu la low

A *pp* Ba - lu la low

T *pp* Ba lu la low

(start about 5" after S&A)

B *pp* Ba lu la low

(start about 5" after T)

76

Only the choir's held notes are included in the piano reduction here, to save space. The trill line indicates to play the held notes repeatedly but quietly if the choir need support (one note at a time rather than repeating the whole chord, a sort of multi-note tremolo). Durations are not exact.

80

Sop. sweet, pre pair \_ thy cred - dill in my spreit, And I sall rock thee in my

S Ba lu la low Ba lu la low

A Ba lu la low Ba lu la low

T Ba lu la low Ba lu la low

B Ba lu la low Ba lu la low

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Begin to fade out (over about 5 seconds) when "depart" is sung: all singers should sing "low" as their last syllable before fading out.

86

Sop. hart and ne - ver mair frae thee de part;

S Ba lu la low (niente)

A Ba lu la low (niente)

T Ba lu la low (niente)

B Ba lu la low (niente)

**Calmato**, ♩ = c. 140  
Tutti

89 *mp*

S Bot I sall praise thee e - ver - moir with sang - is sweet un - to thy gloir,

A Bot I sall praise thee e ver moire with sang - is sweet un - to thy gloir,

T *pp*  
ba - - lu - - - la - low, ba - - lu - - - la - low,

B *pp*  
ba - - lu - - - la - low, ba - - lu - - - la - low,

89

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93 *mp* *poco rit.* **Maestoso** *f ma dolce*

S with sang - is sweet un - to thy gloir; The kneis of my hart sall

A *mp* *f ma dolce*  
with sang - is sweet un - to thy gloir; The kneis of my hart sall

T *mp* *f ma dolce*  
with sang - is sweet un - to thy gloir; The kneis of my hart sall

B *mp* *f ma dolce*  
with sang - is sweet un to thy gloir; The kneis of my hart sall

93

97

S *mp* *rall. al fine* *p*  
I bow, And sing that rycht Ba - lu - la - low.

A *mp* *rall. al fine* *p*  
I bow, And sing that rycht Ba - lu - la - low.

T *mp* *rall. al fine* *p*  
I bow, And sing that rycht Ba - lu - la - low.

B *mp* *rall. al fine* *p*  
I bow, And sing that rycht Ba - lu - la - low.

97

97

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The conductor should give a signal about 10" before he/she wishes the piece to end; at this point, everyone should make their next syllable "low" (on the notes of a D major chord) entering individually within 1-3 seconds of the conductor's signal, and fade off gradually on that syllable.

101

S *pp*  
— (about 5" after A & T) ba lu la low (niente)

A *pp*  
ba lu la low (niente)

T *pp*  
ba lu la low (niente)

B *pp*  
— (about 5" after A & T) ba lu la low (niente)

101

101