

FOUR AND TWENTY BLACKBIRDS

(Sing a Song of Christmas)

Three-Part Mixed Voices with Piano

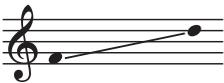
Traditional

Arranged by
Steve Kupferschmid

BriLee Music
Part-by-Part 

For Accompaniment and Rehearsal Audio
Go to: BriLeeMusic.com/BL1274

Ranges:

Part 1  Part 2 
Part 3 

Language: English

Use: Holiday

Time: Approx. 2:20

*Difficulty: Moderate

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the Voice of Choral Music

Arranger's Notes

An English rhyme meets a French folk tune in this delightful choral showcase for developing mixed choirs. My idea to put them together began with my fascination with the words. Imagine sitting down to eat a piece of pie and discovering blackbirds inside, not cooked, but singing! The traditional melody that goes with the rhyme *Sing a Song of Sixpence* was not familiar to me; the French melody of *At Pierrot's Door* was familiar, and it had the same rhythmic structure, so I decided to use it instead. The tune is also known by the title *Au Clair de la Lune* (By the Light of the Moon).

The voice parts sing independently as they become the singing birds, assisted by chirping flourishes in the piano. The key to a successful performance is balance. Especially in the *fa la la* passages, the vocal lines should be equally strong, to maximize the birdsong effect.

You could add drama by using a crown and a robe to costume the choir member who performs the spoken solo of the king. His imperious demand for his Christmas goose adds a touch of drama to the feast, setting the stage for the blackbirds to honor him with their generous gift of music: *fa la la, fa la la la la!*

About the Arranger

Steve Kupferschmid began his music career as a trombonist, then worked for many years as a choral editor for a leading music publisher. In recent years he has been a choral catalog editor for a major educational sheet music dealer. In his spare time he enjoys writing arrangements for young and developing choirs.

Four and Twenty Blackbirds

(Sing a Song of Christmas)

for Three-Part Mixed Voices* with Piano

Words based on
Sing a Song of Sixpence (Traditional)

Music by
STEVE KUPFERSCHMID
based on *At Pierrot's Door* (Traditional)

Bright (♩ = 80)

Part 1

Part 2

Part 3

Bright (♩ = 80)

Piano

mf

7

mf

Sing a song of Christ - mas, the feast-ing day was

mf

Sing a song of Christ - mas, the feast-ing day was

mf

Sing a song of Christ - mas, the feast-ing day was

mp

* Also available for Two-Part Treble Voices (BL1162).

12

nigh; four and twen - ty black - birds, baked in a pie.

nigh; four and twen - ty black - birds, baked in a pie.

nigh; four and twen - ty black - birds, baked in a pie.

17

When the pie was o - pened the birds be - gan to sing. Fa la la, fa la

When the pie was o - pened the birds be - gan to sing. Fa la la,

When the pie was o - pened the birds be - gan to sing.

32

When the pie was o - pened, the birds be - gan to fly;

When the pie was o - pened, the birds be - gan to fly;

When the pie was o - pened, the birds be - gan to fly;

37

four and twen - ty black - birds rose in - to the sky.

four and twen - ty black - birds rose in - to the sky.

four and twen - ty black - birds rose in - to the sky. Then the king was

42

an - gry the birds had got - ten loose. Fa la la, Fa la la la

47

la la la la la. *(spoken)* And the king said:
 fa la la la la. *(spoken)* And the king said: **King Solo** *(shouted)*
 la la la. *(spoken)* And the king said: Bring more food!

52

Bring more food! Bring the Christ - mas goose!

mf

58

mf
When the goose was eat - en, sing - ing filled the air;

mf
When the goose was eat - en, sing - ing filled the air;

mf
When the goose was eat - en, sing - ing filled the air;

mp

73

set be-fore the king, and through-out his king - dom they heard the black-birds

set be-fore the king, and through-out his king - dom they heard the black-birds

set be-fore the king, and through-out his king - dom they heard the black-birds

78

sing. Fa la la, fa la la, fa la la la la la

sing. Fa la la, fa la la, fa la la la

sing. Fa la la la la la,

82

f

la. Fa la la, fa la la, fa la la la la la

f

la. Fa la la, fa la la, fa la la la la la

f

fa la la la la, fa la la la la, fa la

mf

86

la la la. Fa la la!

la la la. Fa la la!

la la la. Fa la la!

f

BriLee Music

the Voice of Choral Music

BriLee Music, founded by the late Brian Busch in 1997, is the leader in publishing choral music written specifically for the developing middle school and junior high singer.

With writing guidelines carefully developed by Brian, teachers who buy from the BriLee catalog know they will always find the following in music written by BriLee composers:

- Range appropriate – specifically for the adolescent changing voice
- Moderate in length
- Interesting, appealing and varied texts
- Accessible accompaniments

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