

Silent Night

A Christmas Story

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n a dark, rainy day in December, 1818, an old woman knelt in the Church of Saint Nicholas.

“...And, please, O Lord, allow the people in our village to be able to come tonight for Christmas Eve.”

As she was finishing her prayers, Father Joseph Mohr came in, a psalm book under his arm. “Good morning, Frau Schmidt,” he said pleasantly. “Will we see you tonight?”

“I hope I can come back this holy night, Father,” she said, “But the weather has been bad with all this rain and melting snow.”

“Yes it has been bad,” agreed the priest, trying not to let his worry show. “We will miss you if you cannot come.”

Frau Schmidt smiled, then blessed herself and went out into the driving rain.

As he explained the problem, Franz Gruber shook his head and chuckled in disbelief. "I am an untrained musician, Father. I play nothing but folk tunes."

"That may be true," said the priest, "but your folk music is beautiful and you are the only one I know who can help me write a song. We must have some music for midnight mass. Perhaps if we imagine that holy night in Bethlehem."



Soon the men began to toss thoughts back and forth to one another.

"The sky must have looked so bright when the angels appeared," said Franz Gruber.

"How quiet and calm it must have seemed in the stable," said Father Mohr.

"They say not even the animals made a sound," whispered Anna.

