

In the Cathedral of the Animals

Oh, there is a mountain far away
Where no man ever has stood
Where only God and the animals walk
In the cathedral in the wood
It is a church of pine and oak
Of ash and cedar and birch
Made hallowed by the touch of God
This is the animal's church
And once each year, on that sacred place
The spirit of Christ descends
And the animals gather to worship
Where predator and prey are as friends
The choir are cardinals and finches and jays
The doormen are the puma and the deer
The squirrels and foxes lead the prayer
Too lovely for humans to hear
And one by one the animals tell
The story their ancestors told
Of a child born in a stable
On a night so clear and cold

How a bird's wings fanned a fire
To warm the child there
How the cattle gave up their blankets
For the child had none to wear
How the curly-horned ram surrendered his wool
To be a pillow for the newborns head
And a spider weaved a pillowcase
To be used in the manger bed
Of the dog from the street who stood as a guard
O'er the place where the child lay
Of a beetle who carried an angel-spark
To light the stable 'til day
An alley cat who heard the babe
Crying in the night so deep
The cat climbed into the straw and purred
To lull the small one to sleep
The donkey who'd served as transport
For the weary family
And had been the first to notice
The unborn child's divinity
The horse who gave up his stall just so
The young prince would be out of the wind

And the dove who gave to the tiny Lord
The prettiest song she could sing

Oh, the animals tell these tales the way
They`ve been told for 2000 years
And when they`re done, every eye
Is filled with an animal`s tears
Then the animals pray and thank the Lord
In a language that only they know
For the part their ancestors played that night
In Bethlehem long ago
They stand on that mountain far away
Untouched by mortal hand
And remember the history-changing birth
Of the Holy Son of Man
Just an acre of virgin forest
Draped in a silent snow
A place where the animals worship
And the wind whispers soft and low
Tonight, among countless millions
You`ve been one of the chosen few
To witness the Miracle of Christ
From an animal`s point of view
Tonight you`ve stood in the animal`s church
And you`ve heard what the animals say
You`ve seen each bird and beast kneel down
And you heard the animals pray

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