

# The Gift

Aselin Debison

A poor orphan girl named Maria  
Was walking to market one day  
She stopped for to rest by the roadside  
Where a bird with a broken wing lay  
A few moments passed till she saw it  
For its feathers were covered with sand  
And soon cleaned and wrapped it was traveling  
In the warmth of Maria's small hand  
She happily gave her last peso  
On a cage made of rushes and twine  
She fed it loose corn from the market  
And watched it grow stronger with time  
Now the gift-giving service was coming  
And the church shone with tinsel and light  
And all of the town folk brought presents  
To lay by the manger that night  
There where diamonds, incense and perfume  
And packages fit for a king  
But for one ragged bird in a small cage  
Maria had nothing to bring

She waited till just before midnight  
So no one would see her go in  
And crying she knelt by the manger  
For her gift was unworthy of him  
Then a voice spoke to her through the darkness  
?Maria, what brings you to me?  
If the bird in the cage is your offering  
Open the door, let me see?  
So she trembled, she did as he asked her  
And out of the cage the bird flew  
Soaring up into the rafters  
On a wing that had healed good as new  
Just then the midnight bells rang out  
And the little bird started to sing  
A song that no words could recapture  
For its beauty was fit for a king  
Now Maria felt blessed just to listen  
To that cascade of notes sweet and long

As her offering was lifted to heaven  
By the very first nightingale's song

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