

Aselin Debison, The Gift

The Gift
by:Aselin Debison

A poor orphan girl named Maria
was walking to market one day
she stopped for to rest by the road side
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 clean 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 were diamonds, incense and perfumes
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