

Johnny Cash

"The Masterpiece"

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There was an old stone cutter
Who lived in a cabin on the mountain side
And the old stone cutter
Knew it won't be long before he died

And all around his cabin
Were statues the man had made
Statues that the buyers said
Were all of a mediocre grade

With his calloused hands he lit a lamp
And laid down his head on his handmade table
And he softly whispered Lord I'm old and shaky
And I'm hardly able

But give me strength and wisdom
And give me a week at least
And I'll climb up to the top of this mountain
And chisel out a masterpiece

The very next morning he felt new strength
And he took his brand new hammer and the sharpest
chisel
He began to climb the mountain his old feet
Slipping in the freezing drizzle

When he finally reached the top
He shouted to a world that didn't hear
I'll carve my masterpiece
Out of this marble boulder here

So the hammer beat the chisel
And he hammered till an image grew
Then he stopped to look it over
To appraise his work when he was through

It was a boy carrying a crippled boy
And the old man said it isn't my masterpiece
I'll call it charity
And then a masterpiece of mine will be

So the hammer beat the chisel

Till another image in a marble grew
Then the wind began to blowing
And he sat and rested when he was through

It was the image of a mother holding her child
He said this is love as the world would know
But it isn't my masterpiece
And he began again as it began to snow

The hammer beat the chisel as the snow fell harder
And the wind grew and grew
He fell to his knees holding a stone
And he threw down his hammer and his chisel too

He lay frozen face down in the snow
But one hand was held for the world to see
Cut in the marble was his masterpiece
Three neatly carved letters G O D

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