

## Christmas Carols

### "The Gift"

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A poor orphan girl named Maria  
Was walking to market one day  
She stopped for a 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  
But 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 townfolks brought presents  
To lay by the manger that night  
There were diamonds and incense and perfumes  
In packages fit for a king  
But for one ragged bird in a small cage  
Maria had nothing to bring

She waited 'til 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 and let me see."  
Though 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  
Whose beauty was fit for a king

Now Maria felt blessed just to listen  
To that cascade of notes sweet and long  
As her offerings was lifted to heaven  
By the very first nightingale's song

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