**Away From the Manger**

**Song 1: The Radiant Riders**

**CHORUS (men)**

**The air is chill; the sky above is clear;**

**Four radiant, happy men on donkeys now draw near.**

**The air is chill; a sea of stars their guide;**

**Four radiant, laughing men on plodding donkeys ride.**

**Who are these men? We really wish we knew.**

**Where do they come from?**

**What do they do, what do they do, what do they do?**

**Song 2 : The Shepherds’ Story**

**We are the shepherds who watched our flocks by night,**

**When suddenly we all were bathed in a dazzling light;**

**This chap appeared, as the Gospel tells you,**

**With golden wings and a bright yellow halo.**

**Shep 1**

**No! No! I thought I saw two.**

**Shep 2**

**I saw them too.**

**Shep 3**

**No! No! No, but I am sure**

**That there were four.**

**Shep 4**

**Maybe even more,**

**All**

**Yes, maybe even more.**

**A host of angels to be sure.**

**Shep 4**

**Yes, maybe even more,**

**All**

**Yes, maybe even more.**

**A host of angels to be sure.**

**All**

**We saw them in the dazzling light,**

**We saw that star that shone so bright.**

**A host of angels, a host of angels for sure,**

**For sure.**

**Chorus**

**They were sore afraid, called God:**

**Sheps**

**God!**

**Chorus**

**Called God to their aid.**

**Sheps**

**Help! God!**

**Chorus**

**A star hovered over,**

**They huddles even closer.**

**Sheps**

**Closer! Closer!**

**Chorus**

**A strange figure appeared,**

**So they were even more afeared.**

**Shep 1**

**I’m afeared.**

**Shep 2**

**I’m afeared too.**

**Shep 3**

**I’m really afeared.**

**Shep 4**

**Me too.**

**Chorus**

**One heav’nly star shone clear and bright;**

**The angel wings glowed in the light.**

**With open mouths the shepherds**

**Did gape in wonder and awe,**

**And awe.**

**Song 3: The Shepherds’ Wonder**

**Solo Shepherd**

**“Don’t be frit!”**

**All Shepherds**

**Said this golden Gabriel bloke,**

**Solo**

**“Go seek Christ the King.”**

**Chorus**

**Christ the King!**

**Solo**

**“As it is bespoke.**

**All Shepherds**

**In a manger, in a manger,**

**All Shepherds and Chorus**

**In a manger, in a manger,**

**All Shepherds**

**In Bethlehem,**

**I kid you not.**

**Christ your Saviour you’ll find in a cot!”**

**Shepherd 1**

**Christ our Saviour,**

**Shepherd 2**

**Christ our Saviour,**

**Shepherd 3**

**Christ our Saviour**

**Shepherd 4**

**In a cot,**

**All Shepherds**

**In a cot.**

**And so they did as they were bid.**

**A babe they found there safe and sound;**

**Asleep there in a manger.**

**What could be stranger**

**For sure? For sure?**

**Chorus**

**Solo**

**Jesus was his name!**

**All Chorus**

**Jesus! Jesus!**

**Solo**

**Jesus was his name!**

**All Chorus**

**Jesus! Jesus!**

**Solo**

**Jesus was his name,**

**Soon wide was his fame.**

**All Chorus**

**Jesus! Jesus! Jesus!**

**Solo**

**They marvelled**

**All Chorus**

**Jesus!**

**Solo**

**They were the ones chosen,**

**First footers at this**

**All Chorus**

**Jesus!**

**Solo**

**Miraculous**

**All**

**Showdown.**

**Solo**

**Why was it**

**All**

**Shepherds**

**Solo**

**Who had been so honoured?**

**Well, on the way there,**

**All Chorus**

**Oo ah, on the way there,**

**Solo**

**On the way there**

**They wondered and pondered.**

**All Chorus**

**Mm…**

**They wondered and pondered.**

**Solo**

**Mm…**

***(Repeat from ‘They marvelled’ to the end of the Chorus’s ‘They wondered and pondered’.)***

**Chorus**

**And on the way home they pondered and they wondered,**

**They pondered and they wondered**

**Why were they so honoured?**

**They marvelled greatly, they were the ones chosen.**

**Shepherd 1**

**But what was our Lord doing in a manger?**

**Shepherd 2**

**With a bale of straw?**

**What could have been stranger?**

**All Shepherds**

**What about the dazzling light?**

**Shepherd 3**

**Don’t see that round here much at night.**

**Shepherd 4**

**Let’s face it, it’s a miracle,**

**All Shepherds**

**Beyond our ken;**

**Shepherd 4**

**We are mortal, yes, mortal,**

**All Shepherds**

**We are ordinary men.**

**We are ordinary men.**

**Of course the answer is blazingly clear:**

**He’s the Lamb of God held so dear.**

**We are the shepherds who all know what is what;**

**And all of us have what it takes, yes, we’ve got the lot.**

**Watching over Baby Jesus, on our best behaviour,**

**Watching over him with love, hosanna to our Saviour!**

**Shepherd 1**

**Behold! Glory shines around.**

**Shepherd 2**

**Let love abound.**

**Shepherd 3**

**Behold! Praises sing on high**

**All Shepherds**

**Up in the sky.**

**Shepherd 4**

**Even in our pastures we’ll be gleaming with glory,**

**Where just our sheep will spread the story.**

**All Shepherds**

**Even in our pastures we’ll be gleaming with glory –**

**Where just our sheep will spread the story!**

**Chorus**

**How could they prove it was no lie?**

**To tell the news no help was nigh;**

**How could the shepherds**

**Announce the message at all to all?**

**Chorus and Shepherds**

**But lo! and behold, yes, at last**

**Soon the tale was told, the die was cast**

**Of Jesus born in Bethlehem**

**To save all men and women,**

**So the wondrous word was hurled**

**By land and sea across the world**

**That God cares for the rich, the poor**

**And those in need, those in need,**

**Regardless of age, race or creed.**

**Jesus had been born in Bethlehem**

**Ready to save, ready to save humankind.**

**Ready to save all humankind.**

**Song 4: Mrs Innkeeper**

***(Mrs Innkeeper enters)***

**Shepherds *(separately or together)***

**But who is this?**

**We really wanna know.**

**Where do you come from,**

**What do you do?**

**You come in dressed up to the nines,**

**Hot, modern lines.**

**What a show-off!**

**You’ve got all the signs.**

**Mrs Innkeeper**

**You’d better believe it…**

**You’d better believe it…**

**I am the innkeeper**

**In Bethlehem town;**

**Hotel Paradiso, local joy and pride,**

**Gets a lovely piece-o in the Good Food Guide –**

**Open wide!**

**I ay! ay! ay! own the inn**

**Which has won rosette and crown,**

**Hotel Paradiso,**

**Stay when you are able,**

**We’ve a deluxe stable that is**

**My! Oh My!**

**Special rates apply.**

**Shepherds**

**We know the inn, we know the inn,**

**That inn’s an inn which we’ve been in,**

**That inn’s the ‘inn-est’ inn that we’ve been in!**

**But out the back, lodged in a stable,**

**No bed, no chair and no table,**

**Who d’you think we found there?**

**How d’you think we got there?**

**We found the lad there,**

**His mum and dad there,**

**By following a star.**

**Mrs Innkeeper**

**A star?!**

**You saw a star?**

**Piddlin’ stuff, one single star!**

**We’ve a *five*-star rating,**

**Got a rosette too,**

**Hotel Paradiso**

**Don’t need scum like you!**

***(Sheep impersonation)* Baa-aa!**

**What with the folk who came to the census,**

**The tourist trade and those on adventures,**

**And those whose religion seeks to find,**

**Like Jews, Moslems and Christian kind.**

**We are overflowing ev’ry night,**

**Dripping with gold,**

**High as a kite.**

**It’s a tale you all should go and tell –**

**Here your troubles cease-o**

**At the Paradiso,**

**Stay when you are able,**

**We’ve a deluxe stable**

**That is My! Oh My!**

**Special rates apply…**

**You’d better believe it…**

 **Song 5: Lament of the Beasts and Birds**

**VARIOUS GIFTED ANIMAL AND BIRD IMPERSONATORS**

**Moo!**

**Baa!**

**Neigh!**

**Heehaw!**

**Chirrup! Chirrup! Toowit toowoo!**

**Cluckety-cluck! The same to you!**

**CHORUS *(deeply serious singing)***

**What’s this we see?**

**Or can our eyes be tricking us?**

**GIFTED PERSON**

**Moo!**

**CHORUS**

**A whole menagerie descending on us!**

**G.P.**

**Baa!**

**CHORUS**

**What’s this we see?**

**It’s animals with attitude!**

**G.P.**

**Heehaw!**

**CHORUS**

**And birds on ev’ry tree in very angry mood!**

**ALL BIRD IMPERSONATORS DO THEIR SOUNDS AD LIB.**

**THEN ANIMAL IMPERSONATORS JOIN THEM OVER INTRO TO SONG.**

**BEASTS & BIRDS**

**You’ve forgotten us! You’ve forgotten us!**

**Yes, you rotters!**

**Forgotten we are, forgotten we are,**

**Yes, quite forgotten!**

**Unfair, but typical,**

**Yes, it’s simply rotten!**

***(Under the next two lines half the BIRDS & BEASTS sing a repeated* Rotten, forgotten!)**

**Creatures of flesh and fur and feather,**

**We were in that stable all together!**

**TUTTI**

**To see the birth and mother-and-child activity**

**We beasts and birds were first at the Nativity!**

**Forgotten us! You’ve forgotten us!**

**Yes, you rotters!**

**Forgotten we are, forgotten we are,**

**Yes, quite forgotten!**

**Unfair, but typical,**

**Yes, it’s simply rotten!**

**OX, ASS and a SHEEP**

**True…**

**BEASTS & BIRDS**

**Forgotten, discarded,**

**Excluded and disregarded.**

**Now we’re replaced by reindeer!**

**Christmas has gone quite quirky!**

**We’re left out in the rain, dear,**

**They’re inside eating roasted turkey,**

**Plenty of pies and puddings,**

**Ev’ry year it’s such a fuss**

**For foodies -**

**Ev’ry eye is open wide**

**To see the groaning table!**

***(Suddenly quiet and serious)***

**We have come a long way since**

**The baby in the stable.**

***(Bright and loud)***

**Cooks for ever huffing,**

**Puffing with the stuffing,**

**But they’ve forgotten us!**

**Wah! Wah! Wah!**

**Then there’s this chap called Santa,**

**Bearded and bluff and blotto;**

**Kids love his ho-ho banter**

**When they are taken to his grotto;**

**We think he looks quite Russian**

**In his scarlet raincoat plus**

**His snow boots;**

**Whizzing through the sky in something**

**Very like a troika,**

**Slidin’ down yer chimney pot,**

**This oik could not be oik-er!**

**People call him merry**

**‘Cos he drinks their sherry,**

**But they’ve forgotten –**

**Aren’t they rotten?**

**Yes, they’ve forgotten**

**Us!**

**Forgotten, rotten,**

**Forgotten, rotten,**

**Forgotten…**

**But goodness! Here come more!**

**Three men in strange clothes…**

**SHEPHERD 1**

**Who are you? We really want to know.**

**SHEPHERD 2**

**Where do you come from?**

**SHEPHERD 3**

**What do you do?**

**SHEPHERD 4**

**We want to know, we want to know.**

**SHEPHERD 1**

**Are you wise? You look extremely clever.**

**SHEPHERD 2**

**Masters, are you wizards?**

**SHEPHERD 3**

**What do you do?**

**SHEPHERD 4**

**We want to know, we want to know.**

**ALL**

**Tell us, Masters, who you are, pray do.**

**Song 6: The Wise Men**

**WISE MEN**

**We are those wise men**

**Who predicted Christ’s arrival**

**SOLO**

**On Earth.**

**WISE MEN**

**Yes, we’re the wise men,**

**Not embarrassed, no, not harassed,**

**Though we cocked up**

**‘Cos we rocked up**

**So long after**

**SOLO**

**The birth.**

**WISE MEN**

**And meanwhile other wise men,**

**Priests and scribes**

**And likewise men**

**Told the newborn news to King Herod,**

**Boasting to the king.**

**But we upon the baby did confer**

**Gold, frankincense and myrrh,**

**But never told our news to King Herod,**

**Jealous, evil king.**

**CHORUS**

**Yes, they dropped their prezzies off**

**At the lowly manger,**

**Then they quickly disappeared,**

**Knowing Herod was a danger.**

**So, let this be a lesson to you,**

**Should a virgin birth occur,**

**Approach the baby saying “Coochy-coo,**

**“Have some nice gold, frankincense and myrrh!”**

**Then on yer camel!**

**Drive that mammal!**

**Leave Judea**

**In the rear,**

**Get away before the massa-ker!**

**Song 7: The Three Kings**

**Shepherd 2**

**That talk of frank incest, and then that talk of mirth?**

**Is that proper at a baby’s birth?**

**Shepherd 4**

**But what about that gold all on the floor?**

**Gold is only for the rich – never for us lowly poor.**

**Yet we saw the babe before the rich men:**

**All Shepherds**

**Yes, in the stable we were valued more.**

**Goodness! Even more!**

**They look up for it I’m sure!**

**Who are you? Wish we knew.**

**Where d’you come from? Wish we knew.**

**Looking oh, so haughty,**

**With a manner oh, so jaunty!**

**Did you come far?**

**Won’t you tell us, men of myst’ry, who you are?**

**Three Kings**

**We three kings from the Orient are;**

**Casper, Moloch, Balthazar;**

**We’re in the Bible, disguised as you wise men,**

**State secrecy and our safety clearly the reason.**

**But look at the paintings in the galleries,**

**Men with gold, chaps with high salaries,**

**Carrying bags of frankincense and myrrh –**

**Do we look like scribes or priests?**

**No, sir!**

**So we rest our case.**

**Yes, sir!**

**So we rest our case!**

**We’re the followers, yes, sir!**

**Wise Men**

**Imposters! Fraudsters and rascals!**

**Three Kings**

**You doddery old men must now give way to us!**

**Wise Men**

**You’re not in the Bible or Gospels!**

**Three Kings**

**Yes, sir! We rest our case!**

**Shepherds**

**Get gone! Get gone!**

**Three Kings**

**We’re from the Orient, yes, sir!**

**Wise Men**

**Nothing but con men,**

**We’ve got your number!**

**Three Kings**

**Three kings named Casper, Moloch and Balthazar!**

**Shepherds**

**Get gone!**

**Three Kings**

**We’re true followers!**

**Wise Men**

**Mutton dressed up as lamb!**

**Three Kings**

**This is our place!**

**Shepherds**

**Get gone!**

**Wise Men**

**We can see through your scam!**

**Three Kings**

**Seen in galleries!**

**Shepherds**

**Get gone!**

**Wise Men**

**Get back into your frames!**

**Shepherds**

**Back in your frames!**

**Three Kings**

**We rest our case!**

**We rest our case!**

**Wise Men**

**That’s enough fun and games!**

**Shepherds**

**Right!**

**Wise Men and Shepherds**

**We’re the true actors in the Christmas pageant!**

**Three Kings**

**No!**

**Orient are we,**

**Kings all the way!**

**Wise Men and Shepherds**

**We are the stars**

**In the Nativity Play!**

**Angels**

**Stop it!**

**Stop this unseemly row!**

***(Short pause; then as animated as before)***

**Three Kings**

**Orient are we,**

**Kings all the way!**

**Wise Men and Shepherds**

**We are the stars**

**In the Nativity Play!**

**Angels**

**Stop it! Stop it! Stop it! Stop it!**

**Stop it!**

**Stop all your bickering!**

**Right now!**

***(They clear their throats and resume their dignity)***

**Now hear the angels.**

**Hope is abroad, peace is the goal;**

**And friendship is assured**

**And love lights up the soul.**

**The Holy Spirit draws us all near;**

**When love is everywhere**

**There is nothing to fear.**

**Christ is the shepherd;**

**Ah oo –**

**Christ is the king;**

**Ah oo –**

**God is the wise man,**

**So the angels sing.**

**That’s what the angels sing,**

**That’s what the angels, what the angels sing.**

***(Enter Mrs Innkeeper)***

**Mrs Innkeeper**

**And I feel the love from above**

**Sops and Altos**

**Ay! Ay! Ay!**

**Mrs Innkeeper**

**For all mankind;**

**Sops and Altos**

**Ay! Ay! Ay!**

**Mrs Innkeeper**

**Magic is around us,**

**Sops and Altos**

**Ay! Ay! Ay!**

**Mrs Innkeeper**

**Swirling in the air,**

**Sops and Altos**

**Ay! Ay! Ay!**

**Mrs Innkeeper**

**You can feel the power, power everywhere,**

**Everywhere!**

**Got a stable bare - suit a pair!**

**Cut-price twin-room share – very fair!**

**With a cot for a tot with a halo in his hair!**

**All**

**I declare!**

**Three Kings and Wise Men**

**We three**

**Three Kings**

**Kings –**

**Wise Men**

**Men!**

**All 6**

**Never mind the who and what!**

**Wise Men**

**Though we’re right!**

**Three Kings**

**So are we!**

**All 6**

**Quite a lot, yes, a lot!**

**If we are wrong it’s occasionally by a jot;**

**But our mission is not to let the whole world go to pot.**

**For, Christ is shepherd, Christ the king;**

**God is the wise man, so the angels sing.**

**Wise Men**

**We found the Christ child –**

**Three Kings**

**We did too!**

**All 6**

**Do we agree we’re brilliant?**

**We do!**

**Shepherds**

**While of course we shepherds will just continue working;**

**In our boots and overalls and our leather jerkin;**

**We shall keep the world going, never shirking;**

**Knowing we have help if there is danger lurking –**

**For, Christ is the shepherd, Christ the Lord;**

**God is the wise man, loved, adored.**

**We saw the angels,**

**We heard the angels all sing,**

**All sing:**

**Angels (softly)**

**The air is chill; the sky above is clear;**

**The Holy Spirit draws everybody near.**

**Song 8:Love and Light (Finale)**

**Everybody *(bright gospel)***

**The Holy Spirit draws everybody near;**

**When Love is all around us there’s nothing to fear,**

**Nothing to fear, no, nothing to fear,**

**When Love’s everywhere**

**When Love’s everywhere**

**When Love’s everywhere**

**There’s nothing to fear.**

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