

## 8. THE ANIMALS' CAROL by Charles Causley

**Christus natus est!** the cock  
Carols on the morning dark.

**Christ is born**

**Quando?** croaks the raven stiff  
Freezing on the broken cliff.

**When?**

**Hoc nocte,** replies the crow  
Beating high above the snow.

**This night**

**Ubi? Ubi?** booms the ox  
From its cavern in the rocks.

**Where?**

**Bethlehem,** then bleats the sheep  
Huddled on the winter steep.

**Bethlehem**

**Quomodo?** the brown hare clicks,  
Chattering among the sticks

**How?**

**Humiliter,** the careful wren  
Thrills upon the cold hedge-stone.

**Humbly**

**Cur? Cur?** sounds the coot  
By the iron river-root.

**Why?**

**Propter hominess,** the thrush  
Sings on the sharp holly-bush.

**For the sake of man**

**Cui? Cui?** rings the chough  
On the strong, sea haunted bluff.

**To whom?**

**Mary! Mary!** calls the lamb  
From the quiet of the womb.

**Mary**

**Praeterea ex quo?** cries  
The woodpecker to pallid skies

**Who else?**

**Joseph,** breathes the heavy shire  
Warming in its own blood-fire.

**Joseph**

**Ultime ex quo?** the owl

Solemnly begins to call.

**Who above all?**

**De Deo**, the little stare

Whistles on the hardening air.

**Of God**

**Pridem? Pridem?** the jack snipe

From the harsh grass starts to pipe.

**Long ago?**

**Sic et non**, answers the fox

Tiptoeing the bitter lough.

**Yes and no**

**Quomodo hoc scire potest?**

Boldly flutes the robin redbreast

**How do I know this?**

**Illo in eandem**, squeaks

The mouse within the barley-sack

**By going there**

**Quae sarcinae?** asks the daw

Swaggering from head to claw.

**What luggage?**

**Nulla res**, replies the ass

Bearing on its back the Cross.

**None**

**Quantum pecuniae?** shrills

The wandering gull about the hills.

**How much money?**

**Ne nummum quidem**, the rook

Caws across the rigid brook.

**Not a penny**

**Nulla resne?** barks the dog

By the crumbling fire-log

**Nothing at all?**

**Nil nisi cor amans**, the dove

Murmurs from its house of love.

**Only a loving heart**

**Gloria in excelsis!** Then

Man is God and God is Man