

A Donkey's Tale

by
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Lay Reader

It must be thirty years or more
Since I bore Mary to the door
Of some old stable, lined with straw
Where she gave birth to Jesus,
Though bearing child, she seemed so light
As she, and Joseph, holding tight,
Left on the journey, into night
To reach our destination.
When he was born, Three Wise Men came
And angels sang aloud, "Proclaim!"
"This child will take away our shame!"
"Sing! Glory! Alleluia!"
Now Jesus sits upon my back.
I take him down a crowd-filled track
And people cheer. There is no lack
Of love and admiration.
Yet something makes me ill at ease.
It's not *just* that they push and squeeze
Or that there's no refreshing breeze
To cool us as we journey.
The baby now, of course has grown,
And rarely seems to be alone.
He teaches, and in learned tone,
He thrills all those who listen,
Yet some who heard began to fear
This gentle man, this loving seer
And they began to hate, then sneer,
Whenever he had spoken.
So they have plotted to destroy
The king, whose message may annoy
The unbeliever, but the joy
Will stay with those who listen.
I'm old, and so my burden weighs
So much. Can it be *just* my days
Are numbered and my nosy brays
Will not be heard much longer,
Or is it that my Lord, like me,
A man who should be light and free
And eager for his destiny
Is carrying a burden?
I've heard he will be crucified

By those he has ignored, defied,
And those who cheated and who lied
And those who simply fear him,
Can one man carry *all* the sins
Of all the world and, if he wins,
Will he go free? New life begins?
His fate seems quite uncertain.
I've known him since I was a foal,
And we have both fulfilled our role,
Yet now it seems the only goal
Is pain and death, for certain,
And yet my master travels on
And as for doubts and fears, has none.
All thoughts of compromise have gone
From those who would accuse him.
He will endure his Master's will
And let the wicked have their kill
Upon the top of some "green" hill
They use to do their business.
When he has gone, I will retire
And stand beside a warming fire.
I'll think of him, the angels' choir
And Three Wise Men, who loved him,
And I will know that we have served
And travelled on and never swerved,
No matter how the way was curved.
My love for him? Eternal