

"THE VERY FIRST MUSIC, THE VERY LAST MUSIC"

The very first music that anyone heard
Was the song of a bird.
(Which of course is absurd –
For nobody heard the song of that bird
For nobody yet had occurred).

But then man came along
And he heard the birds' song
And he got it all wrong.
For he took a bamboo
And he blew, and he blew
And the air went straight through.

So he took a firm grip
And he tightened his lip
And the bamboo let rip
Soon he found that the sound
Could be ordered around
If he made his lip tighter
The note grew in height –
If he made a few holes
He could play barcarolles
Pretty preludes as well –
Any tune you could want
Like Moonlight in Vermont
Or the Liberty Bell.

So the very next music was played on his flute –
It was nice. It was cute.
So he then followed suit
With the brass and the strings
And more intricate things.
And the music that followed
Was innocent, free,
And chirpy and cheerful
And mostly in C.

Man got clever – his hand
Tired of working the land –
He learned how to make steam
And he started to dream
Of beam engines and schemes
Where he dammed all the streams,
Bent the world to his will.
And he built the first mill –
It belched smoke and power –
(Black dirt and white flour)
And his ambition grew every hour.

He picked up the world and he ground it to powder
And so the next music was grander and louder,
More capable, complex – less folksy and pretty
With less of the countryside, more of the city.
With more of the metal and less of the wood
Man thought the next music was pretty damn' good.

He dug the world's coal, and he set it on fire.
He drilled the world's oil and the fire burned higher.
He muddied the clouds and he crudded the ground
And he studded the sea with the blackened and drowned.

He fashioned the train, and created the car,
The tractor, the toaster, the home whirlpool spa,
And this genius, at last, in a final crescendo
Gave civilisation the Super Nintendo.

Now Mario's were super, and hedgehogs were sonic
And bleepers and bloopers sang songs electronic
Their drumkits went pish and their pixels went pip
For the very next music was sung by a chip.

Outside the sea blackened, and all nature died
But man didn't care – he was safely inside.
Day in and day out ev'ry day he would bend o-
Ver Gameboy, Sega and the faithful Nintendo.
He spun, flew and kicked each street fighter to death.
(In the real street outside no-one dared take a breath)
But he never went out – it was not bright and clean
Like the primary colours he saw on his screen.
The black sky outside let in no glimpse of heaven –
So what? He was hot – he had got level seven!
Who cared that the air was all laden with grot?
The screen said "Mankind – you're a genius – not!"

And the birds tried to sing through the oil on their beaks
But oil, as is well known, is there to stop squeaks
And the very last music
Which nobody heard
Was the song of the very last bird.