

## Blume's Church Music

"Christmas will soon be here", said Squeaky, "Do you remember how they brought a big green tree into the church last year, and decorated it with coloured balls and twinkling lights?"

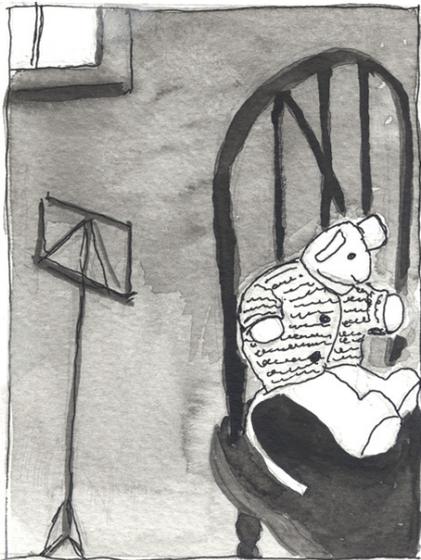
"Yes, it was marvellous", said Hoppy, "it made the church smell like a forest and I loved to sleep under it at night. What did you like best about Christmas, Blume?"

"I liked the choir most of all", Blume's soft little voice replied. "I always love to hear singing and the songs they sang at Christmas were especially beautiful. But I can't remember them now. I'm really looking forward to hearing them again."

"Music makes the church feel different, doesn't it", said Squeaky, "When there are concerts or the organ plays and people sing, it seems like the whole church fills with something very special, something you can't see but you can feel it inside you. I think it may be what people call magic."

Blume was very quiet that day and seemed a little sad. "I wonder what Blume is thinking about", remarked Squeaky, "I thought he would be really excited now that Christmas is coming."

When evening came, Blume tried to cheer himself up by remembering all the concerts he had heard in church and thinking about the Christmas Carols: but the church was very quiet, dark and lonely, and he was bored. It seemed to Blume that there was a lot of time



*The church was very quiet*

like this, when the church was empty and nothing was happening there at all. It was a very big space to be so empty, with just tiny creatures like moths, beetles, spiders and mice creeping about in little corners or asleep in cracks and crevices. Then Blume had an idea. "I wonder", he said to himself, and "Would it be possible?" So he began to make plans until he fell asleep.

The next day Blume asked Hoppy and Squeaky to call some of the other creatures together for a meeting. "Well, Blume certainly looks more cheerful", said Squeaky, "I wonder what he wants a meeting for".

Soon a number of little folk, beetles, moths, spiders and the rest were gathered in front of Blume, waiting to hear what he had to say.

"I've called you together to talk about music", said Blume importantly. "People really enjoy singing and playing instruments. We have concerts

here, a choir, even the children now have bands in Sunday Club. And of course everyone sings hymns on Sundays. But there is a lot of time when the church is silent because the humans have gone away. Do you think we could have a band and a choir of our own to keep music going in the church?"

"Goodness, gracious", said everyone at once, "What an idea – no one's ever thought of such a thing". And they all began chattering at once, amazed at Blume's strange idea.

“Pipe down a minute”, spoke up Hoppy, “It might be possible you know. We would make only little noises that only we could hear, but it might give us something really exciting and fun to do when the church is empty of people. Let’s all think about how we could make some music.”

There was a choir rehearsal that very night, which Blume loved of course, but this time he didn’t only listen: he concentrated hard and learned some of the words and tunes of the hymns and carols. After a while he felt he could sing snatches of them in his little voice. Meanwhile in various corners of the church other creatures were making sounds in various ways. Spiders were spinning extra strong strings in their webs and plucking them to make thrumming sounds. Beetles were gently tapping their hard bodies against each other and moths were flapping their wings to make swishing noises. The mice practiced



*There was a choir rehearsal that night*

squeaking together on different notes and tapping their feet in rhythm.

When the choir rehearsal was over and all the people had gone, Hoppy and Squeaky quickly pushed Blume to a corner where all his creature friends had planned to meet. He was able to sing little bits of hymns while his friends joined together making all the sounds they had been practising. At first it sounded like just a jumble of funny noises, but Hoppy began to tap his foot in rhythm and soon the other creatures kept their sounds in rhythm too. Blume sang,

“We three kings all foreign are,  
Star of wonder night-time star,  
Angels singing from above,  
Jesus is the king of love”.

I know the words were not quite right but they were what he could remember and how he heard them. It sounded just fine to the joyful band – they thought Blume was a great singer. What fun they had that night, playing until they were all so tired they fell asleep together just where they were.

Over the next three weeks they practised regularly, learning new little songs as Blume made them up from what he heard people singing and then he even made one up about his friends, which was everyone's favourite song.

“Little moths who flap and fly,  
Spiders in their webs so fine,  
Beetles, mice and birds so high,  
Glad I am you're friends of mine.”

By Christmas Blume and his friends were ready for their own concert after the Christmas Eve Service. And although the Christmas tree lights were no longer gleaming, a bright star shone in through the window on the beautifully decorated tree while Blume and his band sang and played their own praises to Christmas, knowing they could fill a little corner of the church with their own special music and keep the magic of music alive even after the people had all gone home.



*Their own special Music*