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That First, Best Christmas Night

Margaret Deland

Like some curled feathers, white and soft,
The little clouds went by,
Across the moon and past the stars,
And down the western sky.
In upland pastures, where the grass
With frosted dew was white,
Like snowy clouds the young sheep lay,
That first, best Christmas night.

With finger on her solemn lip,
Night hushed the shadowy earth,
And only stars and angels saw
The little Saviour's birth;
Then came such flash of silvery light
Across the bending skies,
The wandering shepherds woke, and hid
Their frightened, dazzled eyes.



And all the gentle sleeping flock
Looked up, and slept again,
Nor knew the light that dimmed the stars
Brought endless peace to men;
Nor even heard the gracious words

That down the ages ring,
"The Christ is born, the Lord has come,
Good will on earth to bring."

Then o'er the moonlit misty fields,
Dumb with the world's great joy,
The shepherds sought the white-walled town,
Where lay the baby boy.
And oh! the gladness of the world,
The glory of the skies,
Because the longed-for Christ looked up
In Mary's happy eyes.

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