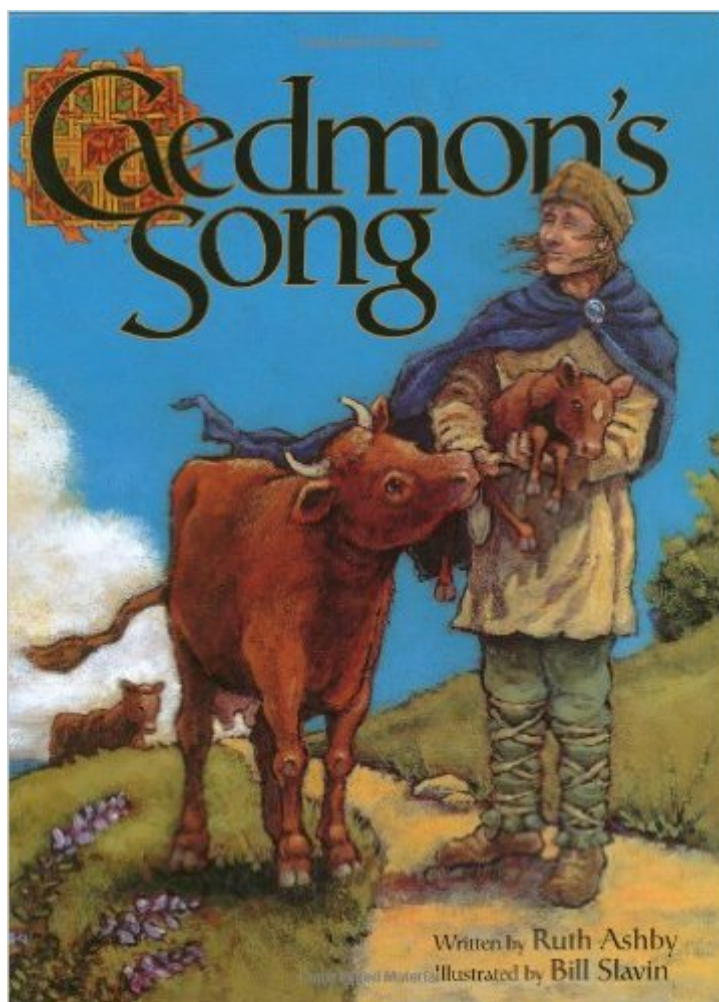


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# Caedmon's Song



## Synopsis

Long ago, when hardly anyone knew how to read or write, people recited stories by heart. They sat around the hearth at night, telling of heroes and monsters, great battles fought, and fortunes made and lost. On feast days, they passed the harp around the room so that everyone could sing a poem. But when the harp reached Caedmon, his thoughts dried up. He opened his mouth and nothing at all came out. It was embarrassing. No wonder he hated poetry. A quiet man who loved tending his cows, Caedmon couldn't recite poetry because he thought he had no stories to tell. Then after one especially upsetting experience, Caedmon stormed home, fell asleep in the barn, and began to dream. That night, everything changed for Caedmon . . . . With jovial, heartwarming illustrations and beautifully illuminated letters, this tale is based on the true story of Caedmon, the seventh-century cowherd who became known as the first English poet.

## Book Information

Hardcover: 32 pages

Publisher: Eerdmans Books for Young Readers (January 1, 2006)

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Product Dimensions: 8.9 x 0.4 x 11.4 inches

Shipping Weight: 15.2 ounces (View shipping rates and policies)

Average Customer Review: 4.8 out of 5 stars See all reviews (6 customer reviews)

Best Sellers Rank: #85,450 in Books (See Top 100 in Books) #42 in Books > Children's Books > Biographies > Literary

Age Range: 6 - 10 years

Grade Level: 1 - 7

## Customer Reviews

Caedmon's Song is a book I like for many reasons. I found this story many years ago and have used it for our medieval studies. I love the history of the real Caedmon that it is based upon and this book brings that to life. Surrounded by storytellers, yet unable to bring his thoughts to life in that way, we learn what changes Caedmon. A plain cowherd, he is surrounded by cattle and the open sky. His life is simple, but the glory of the world around him reflects the glory of God. He is changed by a dream. "There is no poetry in me." "There is poetry in everyone," the man replied. "Now, sing me a song." "But I have nothing to sing about." "Surely you do. Sing about the things you know." "What did

he know? Caedmon thought. As his dream continued, Caedmon thought about the warm breath of cows on a frosty morning and the bleats of newborn calves. He thought about cool green dawns and fiery red sunsets. About meadows sparkling with dew and hawks circling the sky. About gray seas and purple flowers. He thought about the stars. And he opened his mouth and sang... "His life is changed. It is a story about stories, about a time long gone when people sat around the fire and shared history through poetry and minstrelsy. It is a lovely book.

This charmingly illustrated book retells the story of Caedmon, the first Anglo Saxon poet known to us by name, from Bede's Ecclesiastical History of the English people. Caedmon, a cowherd, flees the great hall each night when the harp is passed to him, since he is unable to compose a song / poem to sing to his companions. One night, however, a mysterious stranger instructs him in a dream in the art of poetry, and Caedmon returns to his companions able to sing and compose poems about all that has happened "since the creation of world and the beginnings of the human race." The text is accompanied by a biographical note that includes the Old English text of Caedmon's Hymn (the only surviving fragment of Caedmon's poetry) and a brief introduction to Old English vocabulary. Recommended for anyone interested in introducing children to the history and literature of Anglo Saxon England.

Written by Ruth Ashby and illustrated by Bill Slavin, Caedmon's Song is a picturebook rendition of the true story of Caedmon, the seventh-century cowheard who became known as the first English poet. For years, during festivals, Caedmon was unable to take the harp passed around and sing of bloody or savage battles - but one night inspiration struck, and he thought to sing of what he knew. He sang of his faith in the Lord, and praise for God's creations. He found his true calling as a monk, and his place in history. A profound spiritual tale, brought beautifully to life with full-color artwork.

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