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The Song of the Bats

By ROBERT E. HOWARD

The dusk was on the mountain
 And the stars were dim and frail
 When the bats came flying, flying
 From the river and the vale
 To wheel against the twilight
 And sing their witchly tale.

“We were kings of eld!” they chanted,
 “Rulers of a world enchanted;
 “Every nation of creation
 “Owned our lordship over men.
 “Diadems of power crowned us,
 “Then rose Solomon to confound us,
 “Flung his web of magic round us,
 “In the forms of beasts he bound us,
 “So our rule was broken then.”

Whirling, wheeling into westward,
 Fled they in their phantom flight;
 Was it but a wing-beat music
 Murmured through the star-gemmed night?
 Or the singing of a ghost clan
 Whispering of forgotten night?