Infinite Hands

Singing a part of the history of free software

Original: Finity's End, filked with permission from C.J. Cherryh and Leslie Fish

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C   Am   D   Am   E   G

In - fi nite Hands build a world to be free, the di - gi tal space we all

Am   C   Am   D   Am

know.   Un li mi-ted use has the code that we write, and

C   G   Am

free - dom's the badge we all show   The

C   D   Am   D

stuff runs our servers our desk tops and grids by uncoun-ted hands it was

Am   C   D   Am

made   set out in the wild on the day it is born for our

C   D   Am

free run-ning long co - ding trade.   For

C   Am   D   Am   E   G

no law shall bind us or keep us for long, for in - fini-ty's ours and in-

G   **Am**   **C**   **Am**   **D**

fini-ty's free   and no company owns us and no lands our

Am   **C**   **G**   **Am**

own   for in - finite ha·nds are we.

    C   a   D   a
Infinite Hands build a world to be free,
     E   G   a
the digital space we all know,
     C   (a)   D   a
unlimited use has the code that we write,
     C   G   a
and freedom's the badge we all show.

     C   D   a
The stuff runs our servers, our desktops and grids,
      D   a
by uncounted hands it was made,
    C   D   a
set out in the wild on the day it is born,
     C   D   a
for our free running, long coding trade.

Ref:
     C   a   D   a
And no law shall bind us or keep us for long,
     E   G   a
for infinity's ours and infinity's free,
     C   a   D   a
and no company owns us, and no land's our own,
     C   G   a
for Infinite Hands are we.

The companies thought that they'd pay us for lines
and have all the code for their own.
"You're company people and company teams,
Your code will now serve us alone."

R. Stallman was only a student that day,
and he said to himself thinking deep:
Farewell to a job, all my code shall be free,
for what they don't own they can't keep.

-Ref-

The miracle came, he did not change his mind
and gathered around him a crew,
and people could buy his free programs from him,
sent by mail and his money got through.

At times others came and they said, "We're free, too,
you can take code as if in a mall.
It will be only yours then, just say it's from us,
and it runs and compiles where you call."

-Ref: But... -

Now Richard M. Stallman was vexed and annoyed,
and he sent out the word as before:
"All code must be free, free to use and improve,
which our license ensures evermore."

But still many coders were lured from our ranks,
now for Windows and Apple they strived,
- spoken in background: And for Amiga, BeOS, IBM,
* and many many more -*
their call to awake came from Finland one day,
as to GNU a free kernel arrived.

-Ref- (percussion)

We open our source as an act to be free
from chains of lock-ed down trash
but some people lost the philosophy
and started to see only cash.

So the term "Open Source" became marketing slang
from people who seemed to be guides,
but freedom, or social, or changing the world? (spoken)
They talk about money, not rights.

-Ref- (vocal)

"Then patent it all", came a call spreading wide,
"for money is all you should see",
 - *So noone but you can make progress bars, trash cans,*
   one-click shops, footnotes or spell checking...
   ...except if that's already patented but not enforced -
but Richard M. Stallman still sent out the word,
that all code from now on must be free.

So code would stay free and our teams did grow strong,
but some loopholes remained in our side,
which traitors like TiVo exploited to steal,
so we needed a change in the right.

- Ref-

... no words ...

So our license reshaped by the people and GNU,
for code contributed to trade,
and orders be none to withhold us or bind,
   C   E   a
no law on our code but the license we made.

Ref:
     C   a   D   a
Just that law shall bind us and keep us for long,
     E   G   a
for infinity's ours and infinity's free,
     C   a   D   a
and no company owns us, and no land's our own,
     C   G   a
for Infinite Hands/Lines are we,
     C   E   C   (G) a
are we, for Infinite Hands/Lines are we.

This is a part of the history of free software, although it misses some details. While "Finity's End" from C.J. Cherryh (which is the story the original lyrics told) was a work of fiction, this story really happened and happens today.

More information on the history of free software is available from GNU.org.

More about "Infinite Hands" can be found on infinite-hands.draketo.de.