

A visit from St. Nicholas.
Twas the night before Christmas,
when all through the house
Not a creature was stirring,
not even a mouse;
The stockings were hung
by the chimney with care,
In hopes that St. Nicholas
soon would be there;
The children were nestled
all snug in their beds,
While visions of sugar-plums
danced in their heads;
And mama in her kerchief,
and I in my cap,
Had just settled our brains
for a long winter's nap,
When out on the lawn there
arose such a clatter,
I sprang from my bed
to see what was the matter
Away to the window

I flew like a flash,
 Tore open the shutters
 and threw up the sack.
 The moon on the breast
 of the new-fallen snow
 gave the lustre of mid-day
 to objects below,
 When, what to my wondering
 eyes should appear,
 But a miniature sleigh,
 and eight tiny reindeer,
 With a little old driver,
 so lively and quick,
 I knew in a moment
 It must be St. Nick.
 More rapid than eagles
 his couriers the same,
 And he whistled, and shouted,
 and called them by name;
 "Now, Dasher! now Dancer!
 now, Prancer, and Vixen!
 On, Comet! on Cupid! on, Dunder and Blitzen!"

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To the top of the porch!
to the top of the wall!
Now dash away! dash away!
dash away all!"

As dry leaves that before
the wild hurricane fly,
When they meet with an obstacle,
mount to the sky,
So up to the house-top
the coursers they flew,
With the sleigh full of toys,
and St. Nicholas too.

And then, in a twinkling,
I heard on the roof
The prancing and pawing
of each little hoof.
As I drew in my head
and was turning around,
Down the chimney St. Nicholas
came with a bound.

He was dressed all in fur,
from his head to his foot,

And his clothes were all tarnished
 with ashes and soot;
 A bundle of toys he had
 slung on his back,
 And he looked like a peddler
 just opening his pack.
 His eyes - how they twinkled!
 his dimples how merry!
 His cheeks were like roses,
 his nose like a cherry!
 His droll little ^{mouth} was drawn up like a bow,
 And the beard on his chin
 was as white as the snow;
 The stump of a pipe he held
 tight in his teeth,
 And the smoke - it encircled
 his head like a wreath;
 He had a broad face
 and a little round belly,
 That shook, when he laughed,
 like a bowlful of jelly.
 He was chubby and plump,
 a right jolly old elf,

And I laughed when I saw him,
 in spite of myself;
 A wink of his eye
 and a twist of his head,
 Soon gave me to know
 I had nothing to dread;
 He spoke not a word,
 but went straight to his work,
 And filled all the stockings;
 then turned with a jerk,
 And laying his finger
 aside of his nose,
 And giving a nod,
 up the chimney he rose;
 He sprang to his sleigh,
 to his team, gave a whistle,
 And away they all flew
 like the down of a thistle.
 But I heard him exclaim,
 ere he drove out of sight
 "Happy Christmas to all,
 and to all a good-night."

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