

# A Christmas Story

T'was the night before Christmas,  
 And all through the house,  
 Not a creature was stirring,  
 Not even a mouse.  
 The stockings were hung,  
 By the chimney with care,  
 In the hopes that St. Nicholas,  
 Soon would be there.  
 The children were nestled,  
 All snug in their beds,  
 While visions of sugarplums,  
 Danced in their heads.  
 Ma in her kerchief,  
 And I in my cap,  
 Had just settled down 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 shutter,  
 And threw up the sash.  
 The moon on the breast,  
 Of the new fallen snow,  
 Gave luster of midday,  
 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 coursers they came,  
 And he whistled and shouted,  
 And called them by name.  
 Now Dasher, now Dancer,  
 Now Prancer and Vixen,  
 On Comet, on Cupid,  
 On Donner and Blitzen.  
 To the top of the porch,  
 To the top of the wall,  
 Now dash away, dash away,  
 Dash away all.  
 As dry leaves before  
 A wild hurricane fly,  
 When they meet with an obstacle,  
 Mount to the sky.  
 So up to the housetop,  
 The coursers they flew,  
 With a 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.  
 And 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,  
 His clothes were all tarnished,  
 With ashes and soot.  
 A bundle of toys,  
 He had flung 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 incircled,  
 His head like a reef.  
 He had a broad face,  
 And a little round belly,  
 That shook when he laughed,



like a bowl full of jelly.  
 He was chubby and plumb,  
 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.

Then 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 dawn of a thistle.  
 But I heard him exclaim,  
 As he drove out of sight,  
 Happy Christmas to all,  
 And to all a good night!

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## The Traveller

i first saw you  
 oppressed by surrounding egos  
 smilingly you chatted  
 i wanted the escape of winter  
 so we walked to see the owls  
 hidden in crags and hills of snow  
 finally they emerged  
 impossibilities became realities  
 we stayed in the salt-box house  
 woodstove to warm us  
 feather bed above kitchen heat  
 outhouse pathway through yellow grasses  
 you left in the spring  
 your purple socks remained  
 an i now a traveller told to others on your journeys  
 if we meet again it will be on spice scented coasts  
 i singed flesh from Madagascar  
 you dusty with Mediterranean adventures  
 we shall hunt antillean shells  
 instead of snowy owls