The Night before Christmas
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 sugarplums
danced through their heads;
And mamma 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,

The moon, on the breast of
the new-fallen snow.

Tore open the shutters
and threw up the sash.

Gave a lustre 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! now, Vixen!
On, Comet! on, Cupid! on,
    Donder 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 that before the 
wild hurricane fly, 
When they meet with an obstacle 
mount to the sky,

So up to the housetop 
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
flung on his back,
And he looked like a pedlar
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 round little belly
That shook, when he laughed,
  like a bowl full 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 spake not a word,
built went straight to his work,
And filled all the stockings;
them 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!"