





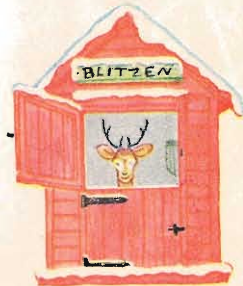


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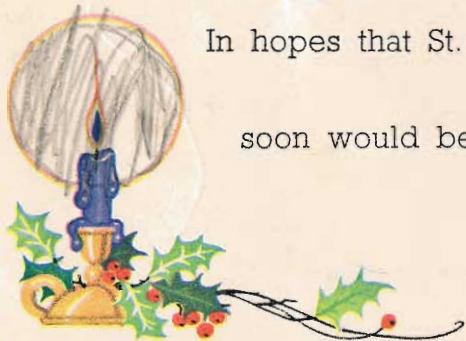
A
*Father
Tuck*
LITTLE
BOOK



WAS 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.

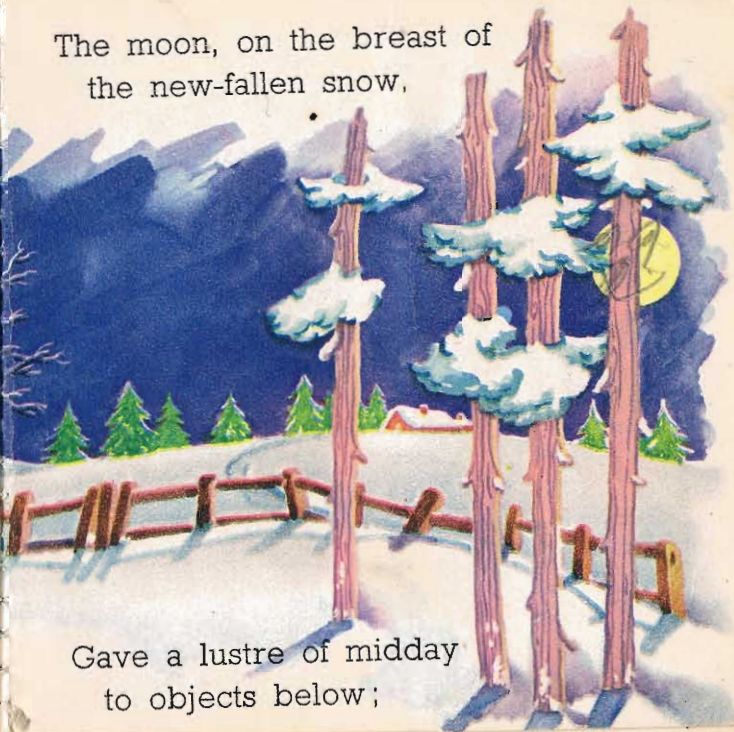


Away to the window
I flew like a flash,



Tore open the shutters
and threw up the sash.

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



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,

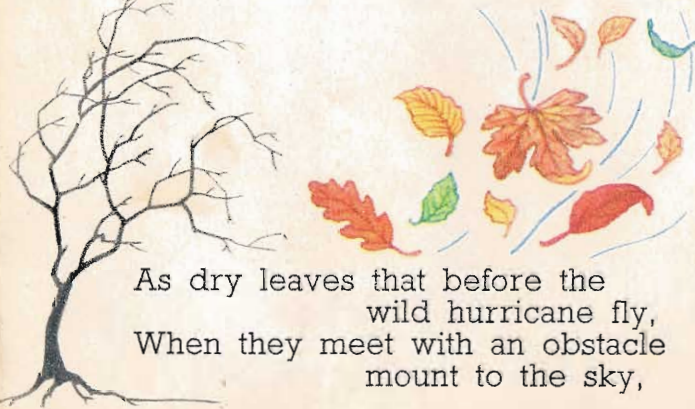


And he whistled, and shouted,
and called them by name:
"Now, Dasher! now, Dancer!
now, Prancer! now, Vixen!
On, Comet! on, Cupid! on,
Donder and Blitzen!—



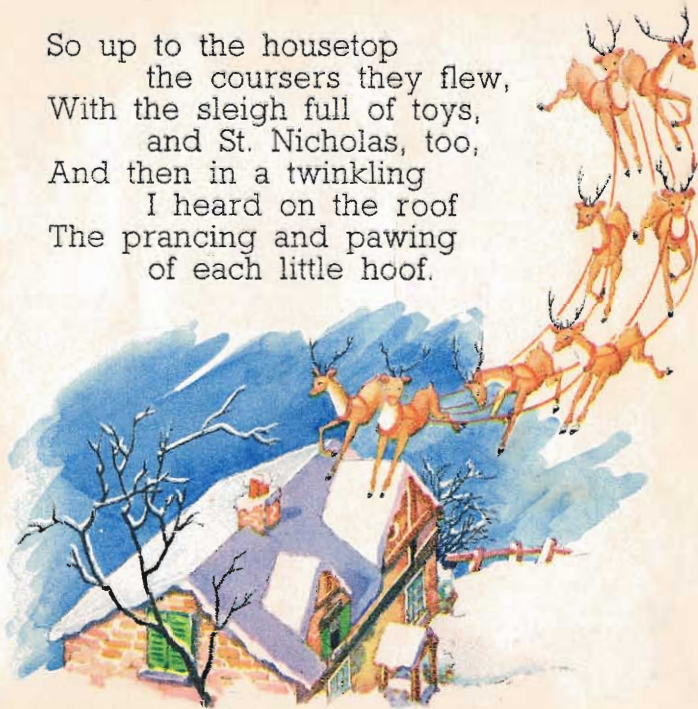


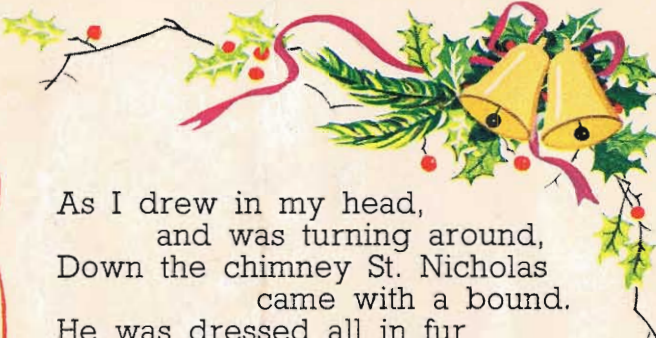
To the top of the porch,
to the top of the wall!
Now, dash away, dash away,
dash away all!"



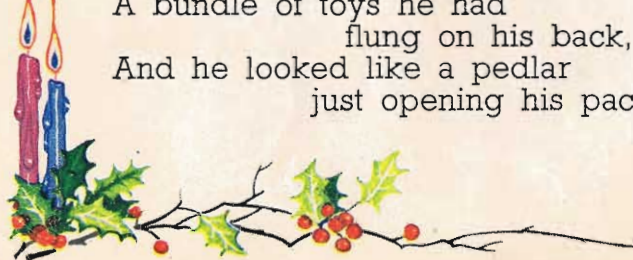
As dry leaves that before the
wild hurricane fly,
When they meet with an obstacle
mount to the sky,

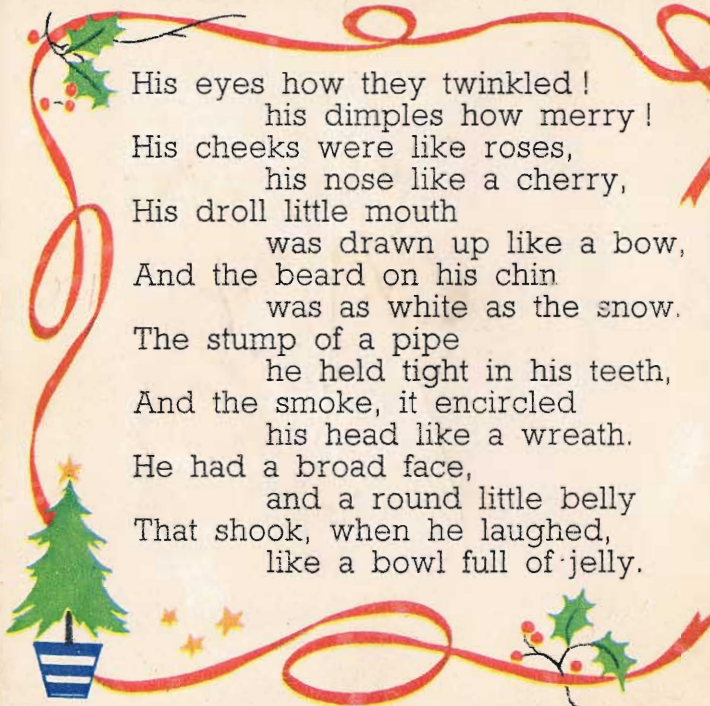
So up to the housetop
the coursers they flew,
With the sleigh full of toys,
and St. Nicholas, too,
And then in a twinkling
I heard on the roof
The prancing and pawing
of each little hoof.





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,
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.



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!"

