

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 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 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 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!"

~Clement C. Moore~

"Son -- this book is very valuable. I believe its that old 20th century STF we've heard so many rumors about -- "

rae

A CHRISTMAS STORY

by RAE



Christmas Special STF TRENDS
Supplement

Aron and Dane were playing in a cave they had found while waiting on their father who was buying some land outside the city. Pretending this was a planet not yet discovered and that they were the space patrol, they began to explore it. Going back farther into the cave Dane found a pile of old books, but since they were so dirty and worn he paid no attention to them. Aron, however, was intrigued with a funny old man on one of the covers, although he could barely make it out. Hearing their father call, Aron picked up the book and took it with him.

That evening the boys were working on their model spaceships, and their father was watching video. When Aron tired of his space ship he began looking at his discovery. Wondering what it said, he showed it to his father. Zan, his father, jumped with excitement, for he realized that it must be centuries upon centuries old. Of course this made no difference to Aron, all he wanted to know is what it said. After many questions from his father, and hurried explanations from the two boys, their father began to read --

'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 through 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 sash.
The moon on the breast of the new-fallen snow
Gave a lustre of mid-day to objects below,
When, what to my wondering eyes did appear,
But a miniature sleigh, and eight tiny reindeer,
With a little old driver, so lively and quick,
I knew in a moment he 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 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.