

VARIOUS

CHRISTMAS CAROLS
AND MIDSUMMER
SONGS

Various
Christmas Carols and
Midsummer Songs

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Christmas Carols and Midsummer Songs:

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Christmas Carols and Midsummer Songs

CHRISTMAS CAROLS

Wake from your sleep, sweet Christians, now, and listen.

A little song

We have, so sweet it like a star doth glisten,
And dance along.

Now wake and hark: all brightly it is glowing
With yule flames merry,
And o'er it many a holly sprig is growing;
And scarlet berry.

A bough of evergreen, with wax-lights gleaming,
It bravely graces;
And o'er its lines the star that's eastward beaming
Leaves golden traces.

Also, our little song; it sweetly praiseth,
Like birds in flocks

When morning from her bed of roses raiseth
Her golden locks.

But this it is that makes most sweet our story,
When all is said:

It holds a little Child with rays of glory
Around His head.

– *M. E. W.*

CHRISTMAS CAROLS AND MIDSUMMER SONGS

Out of the Northland bleak and bare,
O wind with a royal roar,
Fly, fly,
Through the broad arched sky,
Flutter the snow, and rattle and cry
At every silent door —
Loud, loud, till the children hear,
And meet the day with a ringing cheer:
"Hail to the Christmas-tide!"

INTO the silent waiting East
T here cometh a shining light —
Far, far,
Through a dull gray bar
Closing over a dying star
That watched away the night —
Rise, rise, shine and glow,
Over a wide white world of snow,
Sun of the Christmas-tide!

Out of the four great gates of day
A tremulous music swells;
Hear, hear,

Now sweet and clear,
Over and under and far and near,
A thousand happy bells:
Joy, joy, and jubilee!
Good-will to men from sea to sea,
This merry Christmas-tide!

Lo! in the homes of every land
The children reign to-day;
They alone,
With our hearts their throne,
And never a sceptre but their own
Small hands to rule and sway!
Peace, peace – the Christ-child's love —
Flies over the world, a white, white dove,
This happy Christmas-tide!

THE SILENT CHILDREN

By Elizabeth Stuart Phelps

THE light was low in the school-room;
The day before Christmas day
Had ended. It was darkening in the garden
Where the Silent Children play.

Throughout that House of Pity,
The soundless lessons said,
The noiseless sport suspended,
The voiceless tasks all read,

The little deaf-mute children,
As still as still could be,
Gathered about the master,
Sensitive, swift to see,

With their fine attentive fingers
And their wonderful, watchful eyes —
What dumb joy he would bring them
For the Christmas eve's surprise!

The lights blazed out in the school-room

The play-ground went dark as death;
The master moved in a halo;
The children held their breath:

"I show you now a wonder —
The audiphone," he said.
He spoke in their silent language,
Like the language of the dead.

And answering spake the children,
As the dead might answer too:
"But what for us, O master?
This may be good for you;

"But how is our Christmas coming
Out of a wise machine?
For not like other children's
Have our happy hours been;

"And not like other children's
Can they now or ever be!"
But the master smiled through the halo:
"Just trust a mystery,
Then to the waiting marvel
The listening children leant:
Like listeners, the shadows
Across the school-room bent,
O my children, for a little,
As those who suffer must!

Great 'tis to bear denial,
But grand it is to trust."

While Science, from her silence
Of twice three thousand years,
Gave her late salutation
To sealed human ears.

Quick signalled then the master:
Sweet sang the hidden choir —
Their voices, wild and piercing,
Broke like a long desire

That to content has strengthened.
Glad the clear strains outrang:
"Nearer to Thee, oh, nearer!"
The pitying singers sang,

Happy that Christmas evening:
Wise was the master's choice,
Who gave the deaf-mute children
The blessed human voice.

Wise was that other Master,
Tender His purpose dim,
Who gave His Son on Christmas,
To draw us "nearer Him."

"Nearer to Thee, oh, nearer,

Nearer, my God' to Thee! "
Awestruck, the silent children
Hear the great harmony.

We are all but silent children,
Denied and deaf and dumb
Before His unknown science —
Lord, if Thou wilt, we come!

A DAY IN WINTER

By Mrs. L. C. Whiton

THROUGH the crimson fires of morning
Streaming upward in the East,
Leaps the sun, with sudden dawning,
Like a captive king released;
And December skies reflected
In the azure hue below
Seem like summer recollected
In the dreaming of the snow. —
It is winter, little children, let the summer,
singing, go!

There are crisp winds gaily blowing
From the North and from the West;
'Bove the river strongly flowing
Lies the river's frozen breast:
O'er its shining silence crashing
Skim the skaters to and fro;
And the noonday splendors flashing
In the rainbow colors show. —
It is winter, little children, let the summer,
singing, go!

When the gorgeous day is dying,
There is swept a cloud of rose
O'er the hill-tops softly lying
In the flush of sweet repose;
And the nests, all white with snowing,
In the twilight breezes blow;
And the untired moon is showing
Her bare heart to the snow. —
It is winter, little children, let the summer,
singing, go!

"TWELVE O'CLOCK, AND ALL'S WELL!"

(A Christmas Rhyme of Might-Have-Been.)

By M. S. E. P

I KNOW of an Owl,
A story-book Owl,
And he dwells in a Cloudland tree,
So way-high-up you never see
A glimpse of the great white fowl.

And this ancient fowl,
This story-book Owl,
Sometimes to himself he speaks —
Once in a thousand years or so —
In a voice that crackles and creaks
And never is heard by the children below:
"Tu-whit! tu-whoo!
I sleep by day,
Of course I do —

It's the sensible way."

For when little children lie fast asleep,
And darkness enshrouds the world so deep,
And weary eyes close to gaze only in dreams,
This story-book bird
With the big round eyes,
Whom nothing escapes,
So knowing and wise,
Watches and peers, with never a wink,
Into crannies and nooks where one might think
No danger would come, so peaceful it seems.

And prying about, this story-book bird
In the snowy thick
Of a Christmas eve —
If you will believe —
Just in the nick
Found the strangest thing that ever you heard:
Santa Klaus asleep,
All down in a heap,
On the floor of his sleigh
Ready packed for the way!

And think of the stockings swaying
At 'leven o' the night,
With the silent firelight
All over them fitfully playing —
A dangling host

From the chimney nails
As warm as toast —
But empty, pitiful,
They promise a million wails
From just one city-full!

"Tu-whit! to-whooh!
Here's a to-do!"
Said the sleepless bird,
The wise old owl,
The watchful fowl.
He flew and he whirred,
Soft Cloudland exploring,
Led up like an arrow
By the wildest of snoring,
Till he stopped,
Then dropped
On the edge of a cloud —
Oh, the snoring was loud! —
Then stalked to that sleigh.
Ah, what a fine dose! —
He flashed out one claw, and
Tweaked Santa Klaus' nose.

Santa woke with a jump,
Sat up in his sleigh,
Rubbed his nose —
And I don't suppose
Understands to this day —

And gazing around he took in the plight,
He seized his reins in the funniest fright,
And down he came in the snowy midnight
All rosy and bright —
The great, merry elf,
Just like himself,
Bluster and noise, nonsense and fun,
With gifts for the children, everyone;
While, soft and far, every bell
Chimed "Twelve o' the clock and all's well!"
And the slumbering world might have heard
The great white wide-winged story-book bird
A-calling "Merry Christmas!" forth in glee
As he flew up to his Cloudland tree.

And the Owl never told – I alone knew —
So don't you tell, whatever you do.
How near the world came to a disaster most shocking,
Waking Christmas morning without a filled stocking!

HOLLY TREE

By Paul H. Hayne

("Hie on the holly tree!" – Old Ballad.)

THE firelight danced and wavered
In elvish, twinkling glee
On the leaves and crimson berries
Of the great green Christmas-Tree;

And the children who gathered round it
Beheld, with marvelling eyes,
Pendant from trunk and branches
How many a precious prize,

From the shimmer of gold and silver
Through a purse's cunning net,
To the coils of a rippling necklace
That quivered with beads of jet!

But chiefly they gazed in wonder
Where flickered strangely through

The topmost leaves of the holly,
The sheen of a silken shoe!

And the eldest spake to her father:
"I have seen – yes, year by year,
On the crown of our Christmas hollies,
That small shoe glittering clear;

"But you never have told who owned it,
Nor why, so loftily set,
It shines though the fadeless verdure —
You never have told us yet!"

'Twas then that the museful father
In slow sad accents said,
While the firelight hovered eerily
About his downcast head:

"My children... you had a sister;
(It was long, long, long ago,)
She came like an Eden rosebud
'Mid the dreariest winter snow,

"And for four sweet seasons blossomed
To cheer our hearts and hearth,
When the song of the Bethlehem angels
Lured her away from earth —

"A little before she left us,

We had deftly raised to view,
On the topmost branch of the holly,
Yon glimmering, tiny shoe;

"For again 'twas the time of Christmas,
As she lay with laboring breath;
But... our minds were blinded strangely,
And we did not dream of death.

"We knew that no toy would please her
Like a shoe, so fair and neat,
To fold, with its soft caressing,
Her delicate, sylph-like feet!

"Truly, a smile like a sunbeam
Brightened her eyes of blue,
And once.. twice.. thrice.. she tested
The charm of her fairy shoe!

"Ah! then the bright smile flickered,
Faded, and drooped away,
As faintly, in tones that faltered,
I heard our darling say:

"I My shoe! papa, please hang it
Once more on the holly bough,
Just where I am sure to see it,
When I wake... an hour from now!

"But alas! she never wakened!
Close-shut were the eyes of blue
Whose last faint gleam had fondled
The curves of that dainty shoe!

"Ah, children, you understand me —
Your eyes are brimmed with dew,
As they watch on the Christmas holly
The sheen of a silken shoe!"

A TALE OF A COMET

By J. T. Trowbridge

WE had seen the streaming meteors' light,
With their trails of fire, the autumn
night,
And talked of falling sky-rocks hurled
From some long-since exploded world;
Of comets frisking among the stars.
With tails like fiery trains of cars,
And asked, "Should the reckless engineer
Of some rakish comet steer
Crashing into our atmosphere,
How would the planet's shell resist him?"
Then we conversed of the solar system,
And lunar men;
And Doctor Ben
Brought out his globe, at half-past ten,
And lectured, giving conclusive reasons
For tides, eclipses, climes and seasons;
Till, weary at last, I went to bed,
With a jumble of wonderful things in my
head —
Moons and comets and meteorites,

Globes and circles and polar nights;
And there I lay thinking,
And drowsily winking
At something – a ray – thro' my bed-curtains
blinking;

Too bright for a star, and growing still brighter,
Making the moon-lighted chamber yet lighter,
Which very much astonished the writer!

I gazed from the casement,
And wondered, with ever-increasing amazement,
What the look of alarm on the Moon's frowning
face meant.

His nose peering out from a very close cap,
His fingers in mittens, his chin in a wrap,
Like a tourist prepared for a very cold snap!

On, on he sped, through the regions of space,
With very short legs at a very long pace,
His well-filled knapsack lashed to his back,
Extra shoes and canteen strapped under his pack,
His coat-tails flying away on his track —
Entangled far off in the Pleiades,
On the horns of the Bull and Orion's knees.
For there was the Moon, and, strange to say,
There too was the Earth, just over the way,
Like the Doctor's globe, or a huge balloon,

Forty times larger, perhaps, than the Moon,
All covered with circles, and looming in space:
There were groups upon it, and every face
Was turned one way; and very long-jointed
Telescopes at the sky were pointed; —
And there, with a terrible rushing and humming
And hissing of breath, was a Comet a-coming!

So long and so queer, and as it came nearer
It grew every moment longer and queerer!
Until I made out such a comical chap,
In a red-flannel coat with a very long flap,
On, on he came,
With nose like a flame,
So red I was sure the fellow'd been drinking
(His canteen was empty, I knew by the clinking)

"And what can a sober Comet be thinking,"
I cried "not to see there, plain as the day,
The Earth, like a target, hung right in his way?"

The groups were beginning to hurry about,
And hustle and bustle and signal and shout,
And the Moon looked scared, while I shrieked out,

"Dear sir, I beg pardon, I don't know your name —
I pray you'll consider, and if it's the same
To you, here's a planet! I don't think you knew it;
But, sir, it will be

A great favor to me
And a very large circle of friends, as you see,
If you will drive round it instead of right thro' it!"

He put up his head with a stupefied stare,
And says he, "I declare!
No, I wasn't aware!
And I'm going at such a deuce of a rate —
I'd stop if I could, but I fear it's too late!
Bless my stars! here I am!" He had just time
to stoop,
When through it, head-foremost, he went at a
swoop,
As a circus rider dives through a hoop!
With a crash,
And a smash,
And a roar as of thunder,
It quivered,
And shivered,
And flew asunder:
The Moon, looking down, shed tragical tears;
While, winking hard and holding his ears,
The Comet came out on the other side,
Wheeled round, swore loud, and ruefully eyed
The ruin; sneezed two or three times; then drew
His long tail after him down the blue.

Heavens and earth! what have I done!
This does beat everything under the sun!

I don't care the wink of a star," said he,
"For all the damage done to me – "

(Feeling his nose, and then with a flirt
Carefully brushing away the dirt
From his coat and its stained and draggled skirt) —
"But look at this dear little, queer little planet!
I've done the business for her, and I van, it
Is quite too bad! The fairest of creatures —

How well I remember her pleasant features,
The smile on her face and the light in her eye,
When I've touched my hat to her, hurrying by,
Many a time, on my way through the sky!
I'd mend the poor thing if I could – and I'll try!"

How he got it, or where,
I cannot declare;
But thereupon he drew up a chair.
Hung his long coat-tail over the back,
Sat down by the pieces and opened his pack,
Brought forth from its depths a stout needle and
thread,
And there he sat squinting and scratching his head,
As if rather doubtfully questioning whether
'Twas possible ever to patch her together!
Meanwhile – but how can I hope to tell
Half that to my friends befell
On the shattered and scattered shell?

How depict the huge surprise
Of some, at the very astonishing rise
Of their real estate, shot off in the skies?
How describe the flying blocks,
The fall of steeples and railroad stocks,
The breaking of banks, and the stopping of clocks;
And all the various knocks and shocks; —
Frantic reporters rushing about,
And correspondents setting out
In a big balloon, intending from it
To interview our friend, the Comet!

Конец ознакомительного фрагмента.

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