

VARIOUS

DEAR SANTA
CLAUS

Various

Dear Santa Claus

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Various

Dear Santa Claus

The Night Before Christmas

'Twas 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 hope that St. Nicholas soon would be there.
The children were nestled all snug in their beds,
While visions of sugar-plums danced in 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 the 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 the 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, Dunder and Blixen!
To the top of the porch, to the top of the wall!
Now, dash away! Dash away! Dash away! All!"
As dry leaves before the wild hurricane fly,
When they meet with an obstacle, mount to the sky,
So up to the house-top 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 tiny 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 in a bow,
And the beard on his chin was as white as the snow.
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,"
Merry Christmas to all, and to all a good-night!"

The Night After Christmas

'T WAS the night after Christmas, and all through the house
Not a creature was stirring—excepting a mouse.
The stockings were flung in haste over the chair,
For hopes of St. Nicholas were no longer there.
The children were restlessly tossing in bed,
For the pie and the candy were heavy as lead;
While mamma in her kerchief, and I in my gown,
Had just made up our minds that we would not lie down,
When out on the lawn there arose such a clatter,
I sprang from my chair to see what was the matter.
Away to the window I went with a dash,
Flung open the shutter, and threw up the sash.
The moon on the breast of the new-fallen snow,
Gave the lustre of noon-day to objects below,
When what to my long anxious eyes should appear
But a horse and a sleigh, both old-fashioned and queer;
With a little old driver, so solemn and slow,
I knew at a glance it must be Dr. Brough.
I drew in my head, and was turning around,
When upstairs came the Doctor, with scarcely a sound.
He wore a thick overcoat, made long ago,
And the beard on his chin was white with the snow.
He spoke a few words, and went straight to his work;
He felt all the pulses,—then turned with a jerk,
And laying his finger aside of his nose,
With a nod of his head to the chimney he goes:—
"A spoonful of oil, ma'am, if you have it handy;
No nuts and no raisins, no pies and no candy.
These tender young stomachs cannot well digest
All the sweets that they get; toys and books are the best.
But I know my advice will not find many friends,
For the custom of Christmas the other way tends.
The fathers and mothers, and Santa Claus, too,
Are exceedingly blind. Well, a good-night to you!"
And I heard him exclaim, as he drove out of sight:
"These feasting and candies make Doctors' bills right!"

NELLY'S VISIT

ONE summer, Nelly's auntie, who lived in the country, asked her to come and make a good, long visit, and you may be sure Nelly was very glad to go.

She had always lived in the city, and she thought it great fun to feed the hens and chickens and calves, and to watch all the animals and talk to them.

Cousin Fred was about her own age, so it was very pleasant for them to play together. Fred took her around the farm and told her about all the pets, and they soon knew her as well as though she had always lived there.

Конец ознакомительного фрагмента.

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