

M E R R Y \* C H R I S T M A S

'Twas the night before Christmas,  
When all through the house  
Not a creature was stirring,  
and I felt like a louse!

The stockings were hung by  
the chimney, all right,  
But to finish my chores  
would take me all night!

I sat there, quite numbly,  
with a sad, vacant stare,  
And told myself, crossly,  
"It just isn't fair!"

"For since early dawn, now,  
I've been fast on the run,  
And though I keep *trying*,  
I can't get it all done!

"Everyone else is  
all settled in bed,  
And I haven't finished  
that shirt meant for Fred!

"Some gifts still need wrapping,  
I must bake a cake—  
But my poor head is throbbing,  
I'm *blind* from the ache!

"The floors need a waxing,  
the furniture, too.  
Does *anyone*, anywhere  
have so much to do?"

I recalled things unfinished  
and felt like a sap—  
I wished, most of all,  
I could just take a nap!

But now I rose, slowly  
(I just *couldn't* shirk),  
And forced my tired muscles  
to go back to work.

The gifts I got wrapped  
(though the bows went askew),  
No time to change them—  
they'd just have to do.

The cake that I baked  
all fell to one side.  
I looked at the mess  
and just about cried.

Next I tackled the shirt  
I'd been making for Fred.  
But, as luck would have it,  
I ran out of thread!

"Oh, *next year*," I vowed,  
"I'll start in the fall!"  
(But, *next year* is *next year*,  
not *this*, after all!)

As I struggled with candles  
to get them to stand,  
A cute waxen Santa  
broke in my hand.

When a bell I was hanging  
crashed down to the floor,  
My cheeks felt hot teardrops—  
I couldn't take anymore!



# Christmas Eve of a Harried Housewife



Again, I sat tiredly,  
and with petulant pout,  
I cried to the heavens—  
"What's this all about?!"

I fell to sleep quickly  
as I sat in my chair,  
And then, in a vision,  
an angel was there!

The angel spoke softly,  
"Christmas, my dear—  
Have you forgotten?—  
Means Christ is here.

"This is Christ's birthday.  
So you shouldn't fret.  
(Yet, folks get so busy  
they often forget!)

"For young and for old,  
Christmas is caring  
And, more than that,  
Christmas is sharing.

"Christmas is happiness,  
Christmas is love.  
Christmas is gratitude  
for God, up above."

I awoke from my dream  
feeling comfort and peace.  
From tension and worry  
I had now found release.

I thought of the morning  
and what it would bring—  
Floors cluttered quickly  
with wrappings and string.

Air filled with laughter,  
singing and noise,  
House brimming over  
with loved ones and toys.

I'd whisper to Fred,  
midst hugging and kissing,  
"Here is a shirt, dear,  
with the buttonholes missing."

Who'd notice the silver  
and floors were not polished?  
(And the lopsided cake  
would soon be demolished!)

Though I saw by the clock  
the night was half through,  
I knew there was one thing  
I needed to do.

As I took the old creche  
from its box on the shelf,  
I hummed a sweet carol, there,  
quite to myself.

Then I put a small table  
next to the wall—  
A spot which I felt  
would be noticed by all.

On the top went the manger,  
beloved and old,  
In straw, the dear Christ-child,  
protected from cold.

As I lovingly placed  
each figure with care,  
I thought of my blessings  
and offered a prayer.

"Thank you, dear God,  
for all that you do.  
And most of all, Lord,  
I thank you for *You!*"

Then I crawled into bed  
and turned out the light.  
"Happy Birthday, dear Jesus.  
'Twas for me, a good night."