

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 was 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 of 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 little round 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 sprung 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,  
as he drove out of sight:  
"Merry Christmas to all,  
and to all a good night!"

