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Christmas Eve Adventure

ONCE on a time in a queer little town

On the shore of the Zuyder Zee,

When all the good people were fast asleep,

A strange thing happened to me.

Alone the night before Christmas,

I sat by the glowing fire,

Watching the flame as it rose and fell,

While the sparks shot higher and higher.

Suddenly one of the sparks began

To flicker and glimmer and wink

Like a big, bright eye till I hardly knew

What to do or to say or to think.

Quick as a flash it changed to a face,

And what in the world did I see

But dear old Santa Claus nodding his head

And waving his hand to me!

"Oh, follow me, follow me!" soft he cried,

And up through the chimney with him

I mounted, not daring to utter a word

Till we stood on the chimney's rim.

"Now, tell me, I beg you, dear Santa Claus,

Where am I going with you?"

He laughingly answered: "Why, don't you know?"

To travel the wide world through.

"From the crystal palace, far in the north,

I have come since dark, and see these curious things for the little folk

Who live on the Zuyder Zee."

Then, seating himself in his reindeer sledge

And drawing me down by his side,

He whistled, and off on the wings of the wind

We flew for a midnight ride.

But first such comical presents he left

For the little Dutch girls and boys—

Onions and sausages, wooden faced dolls,

Cheese and gingerbread toys,

Soldiers that marched at the word of command,

Necklaces, bracelets and rings,

Tiny gold watches, all studded with gems,

And hundreds of exquisite things.

Straight to America then, where I,

Perched on a chimney high,

Watched him scramble and bustle about

Between the earth and sky.

Many a stocking he filled to the brim,

And numberless Christmas trees

Burst into bloom at his magical touch.

Then all of a sudden a breeze

Caught us and bore away to the south

And afterward blew us out west,

And never till dawn peeped over the hills

Did we stop for a moment's rest.

"Christmas is coming!" he whispered to me.

"You can see his smile in the sky.

I wish merry Christmas to all the world.

My work is over. Goodby!"

Like a flash he was gone, and I was alone,

For all of this happened to me

Once on a time in a queer little town

On the shore of the Zuyder Zee.

"Who Gave Us Christmas Day?"

A happy, happy Christmas

Be yours today!

Oh, not the falling measure

Of fasting earthly pleasures,

But Christmas joy abiding,

While years are swiftly gliding.

Be yours, I pray,

Through him who gave us Christmas Day!

When the good man begins to sweat

The bad man should be on hand to get a few pointers.

In actual practice, too many make it pleasure before work.

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