

A Christmas Tradition

This is the Month, and this the happy morn,
Wherein the Son of Heav'n's eternal king,
Of wedded Maid, and Virgin Mother born,
Our great redemption from above did bring;
For so the holy sages once did sing,
That he our deadly forfeit should release,
And with his father work us a perpetual peace.

That glorious Form, that Light unsufferable,
And that far-beaming blaze of Majesty,
Wherewith he wont at Heav'n's high Council-Table,
To sit the midst of Trinal Unity,
He laid aside; and here with us to be,
Forsook the courts of everlasting Day,
And chose with us a darksome House of mortal Clay.

No War, or Battle's sound
Was heard the World around:
The idle spear and shield were high up hung;
The hooked Chariot stood
Unstained with hostile blood,
The Trumpet spake not to the armed throng,
And Kings sat still with awful eye,
As if they surely knew their sovran Lord was by.

But peaceful was the night
Wherein the Prince of light
His reign of peace upon the earth began:
The Winds, with wonder whist,
Smoothly the waters kiss't,
Whispering new joys to the mild Ocean,
Who now hath quite forgot to rave,
While Birds of Calm sit brooding on the charmed wave.

*Christ climbed down
from His bare Tree
this year
and ran away to where
there were no rootless Christmas trees
hung with candycanes and breakable stars*

*Christ climbed down
from His bare Tree
this year
and ran away to where
no fat handshaking stranger
in a red flannel suit
and a fake white beard
went around passing himself off
as some sort of North Pole saint
crossing the desert to Bethlehem
Pennsylvania
in a Volkswagon sled
drawn by rollicking Adirondack reindeer
with German names
and bearing sacks of Humble Gifts
from Saks Fifth Avenue
for everybody's imagined Christ child.*

*Christ climbed down
from His bare Tree
this year
and ran away to where
no Bing Crosby carollers
grouned of a tight Christmas
and where no Radio City angels
iceskated wingless
through a winter wonderland
into a jinglebell heaven
daily at 8:30
with Midnight Mass matinees*

*Christ climbed down
from His bare Tree
this year
and softly stole away into
some anonymous Mary's womb again
where in the darkest night
of everybody's anonymous soul
He awaits again
an unimaginable
and impossibly
Immaculate Reconciliation
the very craziest
of Second Comings*