

# 'Twas the Night Before Break

TWAS THE NIGHT BEFORE HOLIDAY BREAK, WHEN ALL THROUGH THE DISTRICT STUDENTS DAYDREAMED OF LEISURE AND KNEW THE BREAK WOULD BE PERFECT. AT SCHOOL, THE BUSES LINED THE SIDEWALK WITH CARE, IN HOPES THAT THE FINAL CLASS BELL WOULD SOON BLARE.

THE CHILDREN WERE THRILLED, ALL READY FOR SNOW, THEY LOOKED AT THE CLOCKS, THINKING TIME'S PASSING SLOW. WITH MAMMAS AND PAPPAS WAITING AT HOME, STUDENTS WOULD SOON SETTLE IN FOR THE BUS RIDE HOME.

WHEN FROM THE SCHOOL DOORS THERE AROSE SUCH A CLATTER, I PERKED UP FROM MY SEAT TO SEE THE CHILDREN HAPPILY SCATTER. AWAITING MY GROUP OF CHILDREN WITH A SMILE ON MY FACE, BREAK HAD ARRIVED AND WE STARTED HOME WITH A MERRY PACE.

THE STUDENTS NOW FACED NO HOMEWORK FOR DAYS; IT MADE THEIR EYES GLISTEN LIKE DIAMONDS AND MOUTHS SING PRAISE. WHEN, ALL OF A SUDDEN MY EYES CAUGHT A GLIMPSE, OF A MINIATURE SLEIGH THAT FLEW LIKE A BLIMP.

AS A VETERAN SCHOOL BUS DRIVER, SO LIVELY AND NIMBLE, I KNEW IN A MOMENT WHO IT WAS AND GAVE A CHUCKLE. ST. NICK TESTING HIS SLEIGH, AND I NEEDED TO PROCLAIM; SO I WHISTLED A SIGNAL TO EACH STUDENT BY NAME!

"NOW EMMA! NOW, DIANA! NOW, MARK AND DAMIEN!  
ON, CHRIS! ON, CADY! ON DONNA AND BENJAMIN!  
LOOK TO THE SKY! TO THE TOPS OF THE TREES!  
NOW LOOK, LOOK FOR ST. NICK, BEFORE HE FLEES!"

AS WE LOOKED TO THE TREES AND SAW THE SLEIGH SO HIGH, CHILDREN GASPED WITH AWE AND VOICED A JOYFUL CRY. SO WHAT DID WE SEE, BUT SUDDENLY AT THE CORNER HE STOPPED, WITH A SLEIGH FULL OF TOYS FROM HIS NORTH POLE SHOP.

AND THEN, IN AN INSTANT, I HEARD FROM HIS GRIN,  
THE LAUGHTER AND CHORTLING OF A MAN ABOUT TO BEGIN,  
A WHIRLWIND TRIP TO BRING SMILES TO ALL  
WITH PRESENTS FOR CHILDREN, LIKE TOY CARS AND A DOLL.

HE WAS DRESS ALL IN RED FROM HIS TOP TO HIS FEET,  
AND HIS BEARD WAS ALL WHITE, WITH HIS STATURE PETITE.  
WITH A BUNDLE OF TOYS, HE FLAGGED DOWN MY BUS,  
WHILE HIS ELVES LOOKED OVER THE SLEIGH, AND MADE QUITE A FUSS.

HIS EYES, THEY DID TWINKLE, AS HE TOLD THE KIDS HIS STORY,  
THE SLEIGH HAD LOST POWER DURING A RUN ACROSS COUNTRY.  
NOW THE ELVES WORKED FEVERISHLY, TO FIX UP THE TROUBLE,  
WHILE ST. NICK TALKED WITH US ALL, MOVING DOWN THE BUS AISLE.

HE KNEW EACH CHILD BY NAME, FROM KINDERGARTNERS TO TEENS,  
AND EXCITEMENT FILLED US, AS THOUGH WE WERE MEETING THE QUEEN.  
ST. NICK MADE US LAUGH, AND BEFORE WE COULD QUESTION,  
HIS ELVES GAVE A SHOUT, AND ST. NICK JUMPED TO ACTION.

HE WISHED US WELL, AND GAVE US A SMILE AND WAVE.  
WE COULD BARELY BELIEVE; OUR HOLIDAY SPIRIT HE SAVED!  
WE WATCHED HIM TAKE OFF, WITH THE SLEIGH MOVING SWIFTLY,  
AND WE KNEW IN AN INSTANCE, THAT CHANGED WE'D FOREVER BE.

WITHOUT A WORD, AGAIN I STARTED MY BUS,  
AS AWED SILENCE TOOK OVER, WE KNEW THAT WE MUST  
SPREAD HOLIDAY CHEER, WARMTH, GOOD WILL TO ALL,  
AND GENUINE KINDNESS, NO MATTER HOW SMALL.

THEN AS THE SCHOOL BUS JOURNEY RESUMED, AND OUR MINDS DANCED  
WE HEARD A MESSAGE FROM THE TREETOPS, THAT HAD US ENTRANCED.  
ST. NICK SHOUTED LOUDLY AND THIS GREETING HE DID MAKE,  
"HAPPY HOLIDAYS TO ALL, AND TO ALL A GOOD BREAK!"

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