

## The Night After Christmas

'Twas the night after Christmas, and all through the house  
Not a creature was stirring—except for a mouse.  
The stockings were flung in haste over the chair,  
For hopes of St. Nicholas were no longer there.

The children were restlessly tossing in bed,  
For the cream and the chocolate were heavy as lead;  
And mamma in her 'kerchief, and I in my gown,  
Had just decided we could not lie down,

When out on the lawn there arose such a clatter,  
I sprang from my chair to see what was the matter.  
Away to the window I went with a dash,  
Flung open the shutter, and threw up the sash.

The moon on the breast of the new-fallen snow,  
Gave the lustre of noon-day to objects below.  
When what to my long anxious eyes should appear  
Not a sleek black Mercedes, but a bright yellow Kia!

With a hulking great driver, so solemn and slow,  
I knew at a glance it was Dr Perot.  
I drew in my head, and was turning around,  
When upstairs came the Doctor, with scarcely a sound,

He wore a thick overcoat, made long ago,  
And the beard on his chin was white with the snow.  
His fur cap was shabby, but tailored and neat,  
And clean boots were shining on his gigantic feet.

A stethoscope dangled from his cauliflower ears  
For rugby can maim you for life, it appears!  
He spoke a few words, and went straight to his work;  
He felt all the pulses,—then turned with a jerk.

Disapproval is clear as he furrows his brow  
As he fixes his gaze on both of us now;  
He peers down the spectacles on his sharp nose,  
Then shaking his head, quite sternly he goes:—

"A spoon of bicarbonate, ma'am, if it's handy;  
No chocolate or cake, no pies and no candy.  
These tender young stomachs cannot well digest  
All the sweets that they get; toys and books are the best.

But I know my advice will not find many friends,  
For the custom of Christmas the other way tends.  
The fathers and mothers, and Santa Claus, too,  
Are exceedingly blind. Well, a good-night to you!"

He thundered downstairs and shut the front door  
Leaving great icy footprints on the living room floor  
And I heard him exclaim, as he drove out of sight:  
"If they don't get much sleep it'll serve them all right!"