

## THE PLIGHT BEFORE CHRISTMAS

'Tis the month before Christmas and all through the house,  
Our two teens leave gift lists for me and my spouse.  
They scribble and write, compose and compare,  
In hopes that St. Nick has some big bucks to spare!

But Dad with his wallet and I with my purse,  
Realize things have taken a turn for the worse.  
Their lists once contained things that we could afford  
But as they have grown, so the prices have soared!

Tinker toys and legos have all been replaced,  
And items like play doh are simply erased.  
Where once there was Elmo, and Big Bird and Pooh,  
There's now a cell phone, and an ipod too.

Gone are the days of toy cars and doll beds,  
When visions of sugarplums danced in their heads.  
Now they dream of two laptops (one's hers; one's his)  
And something called a jump drive-- who knows what that is?!

It's CDs, and sweaters, and watches and rings,  
Computer and Play Station Games of all things.  
A DVD burner will do just the trick,  
Do they think money grows on trees for St. Nick??

More rapid than reindeer the items ring up,  
We'll have to get second and third jobs to keep up!  
The deadlines draw nearer, the panic sets in,  
I won't get it all done! Where do I begin?!

Away to the bank I will fly like a flash,  
To get an infusion of much-needed cash.  
And what to my wondering eyes should appear,  
But a bottom line that's already too bottom-near.

There's a twitch in my eye and an ache in my head,  
Will my checkbook emerge alive or dead?  
Which things do I get, for whom and how many?  
Excess cash? I sure don't have any!

So I think for a minute, and then start to smile--  
The answer's been with me, there all the while.  
I take a deep breath and I slow myself down;  
I cancel more plans to go into town.

Then I gather my children and with hugs and a kiss,  
I remind them it's not about presents and lists.  
It's about friends and family, and laughter and love,  
And the blessings we're given from God up above.

No matter what's wished for or what gifts are sought,  
Christmas is not about things that we've bought.  
In the midst of the frenzy and the lure of the mall,  
We shouldn't forget...*the greatest Gift of all.*

So our presents get pared down to just two or three,  
We'll wrap them with love and place them under the tree.  
And then I'll exclaim 'ere I turn in for the night,  
"Happy Christmas to all, and..... may we all get it right!"

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