

## 'Twas the Night Before Christmas - for Gardeners by the Sea

'Twas the night before Christmas, when all through the yard,  
Not a creature was stirring—except deer standing guard.  
The tools were all hung in the shed with great care,  
In hopes that springtime soon would be there.

Gardeners by the Sea were nestled all snug in their beds,  
While visions of seed packets danced in their heads.  
And I with my seed catalogue—dog-eared and bright—  
Had just settled down for a long winter's night.

When out in the garden there arose such a clatter,  
I sprang from my chair to see what was the matter.  
Away to the window I flew with great fear,  
Worried my prized hosta was now eaten by the deer.

The moon on the compost, so rich and so deep  
Gave a shimmer of silver to my garden, I love to keep.  
When what to my wondering eyes should appear  
But a bright red cart, filled with gardening gear!

With trowels, stakes, and twine piled high in that cart  
I knew in a moment Ms. Gardening Claus was about to embark.  
More rapid than rainstorms her helper Elves came,  
And she whistled and shouted and called them by name:

“Now Peony! Now Petunia! Now Basil and Thyme!  
On Daisy! On Dahlia! It's gardening time!  
To the beds by the fence! To the borders so tall!  
Now dig away! Plant away! Mulch one and all!”

As dry leaves that before the wild leaf blower fly,  
When they meet with an obstacle, mount to the sky,  
So across to the garden the Elves flew  
With their arms full of plants – and fertilizer too.

And then, in a twinkling, I heard at the gate  
The rustle and shuffle of mulch-filled crates.  
As I stepped out the door and was turning around,  
Over the compost Ms. Gardening Claus came with a bound.

She was dressed all in denim, from hat down to boot,  
And her gloves were well-loved and still sprinkled with soot.  
A bundle of seedlings she had flung on her back,  
And she looked like a vendor just opening her pack.

Her eyes—how they twinkled! Her smile oh so cheery!  
Her cheeks were like roses—though gardening-weary.  
Her trowel was ready and her pruners kept near,  
And she chuckled while shooing away that one bold deer.

She spoke not a word but went straight to her work,  
Filled the beds to the brim, then turned with a smirk.  
And placing her soil-smudged gloves safe in her tote,  
She gave me a wink as she fastened her coat.

She sprang to her cart, to her team gave a call,  
And away they all glided past trellis and over the wall.  
But I heard her exclaim as she vanished from sight—  
“Happy Planting next spring, and to all a good night!”

With apologies to Clement Clarke Moore – who wrote the beloved poem, published in  
1823 –  
And credit to ChapGPT for getting me started.

Alva Hutchison  
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