

## 12-Step Visit From St. Nicholas

T'was the night before Christmas When I went on a bender,  
Not a creature was stirring, not even a bartender.  
The empties were stacked by the chimney just fine,  
In hopes that St. Nick would fill them with wine.  
With Mama in her kerchief and I with my booze,  
We'd just settled down for a long winter's snooze.  
When out on the lawn there arose such a clatter,  
I put down my drink to see what was the matter.

Away to the window I crawled and then stumbled  
To open the shutters where I stood and just mumbled.  
Then what to my bloodshot eyes should there appear  
But a miniature sleigh and eight tiny reindeer.

I thought it was DT's and needed help quick!  
I didn't know it was only St. Nick.  
I poured myself another as the reindeer came  
While he shouted and called them by name:

"Now Barfly! Now Wino! Now Boozer and Rummy!  
On Drunkard! On Alky! On Dipso and Dummy!"  
So up to the housetop St. Nicholas flew  
While I pulled the pop-top on another brew.

I trembled with fear when I heard a new sound--  
Down the chimney came St. Nick with a bound.  
His cheeks were like roses, he grinned like a possum,  
His eyes, how they twinkled, his nose had rum-blossoms!

I offered him a drink, step up to the bar,  
"Not today," he said, "I am now so-ber."  
He had a clear face and a little beer belly,  
That shook when he laughed like a bowl  
full of jelly.

This was too much, it increased my thirst.  
"Hold it!" said St. Nick, "First things first.  
You don't have to drink, easy does it,  
Now that wasn't too hard, was it?"

He reached in his sack and with a great fuss  
He gave me the book "Alcoholics Anonymous."

"Read this 'Big Book' for a life sublime,  
Follow the principles one day at a time.

"This is the best present I can give,  
Twelve steps -- a new way to live.  
The AA program keeps me sober, it's true."  
Then giving a nod, up the chimney he flew.

Then I heard him exclaim as he drove out of sight,  
"You now have a choice, starting tonight.  
So Merry Christmas to all and to all Season's Greetings,  
Don't pick up that first drink, and go to AA meetings!"