

TWAS THE NIGHT BEFORE YULETIDE

Twass the night before Yuletide and all through
the glen

Not a creature was stirring, not a fox, not a
hen.

A mantle of snow shone brightly that night
As it lay on the ground, reflecting moonlight.

The faeries were nestled all snug in their
trees,

Unmindful of flurries and a chilly north
breeze.

The elves and the gnomes were down in their
burrows,

Sleeping like babes in their soft earthen
furrows.

When low! The earth moved with a thunderous
quake,

Causing chairs to fall over and dishes to
break.

The Little Folk scrambled to get on their feet
Then raced to the river where they usually
meet.

"What happened?" they wondered, they
questioned, they probed,

As they shivered in night clothes, some
bare-armed, some robed.

"What caused the earth's shudder? What caused
her to shiver?"

They all spoke at once as they stood by the
river.

Then what to their wondering eyes should appear

But a shining gold light in the shape of a
sphere.

It blinked and it twinkled, it winked like an
eye,

Then it flew straight up and was lost in the
sky.

Before they could murmur, before they could
bustle,

There emerged from the crowd, with a swish and
a rustle,

A stately old crone with her hand on a cane,
Resplendent in green with a flowing white mane.

As she passed by them the old crone's perfume,
Smelling of meadows and flowers abloom,

Made each of the fey folk think of the spring

When the earth wakes from slumber and the birds
start to sing.

"My name is Gaia," the old crone proclaimed
in a voice that at once was both wild and
tamed,

"I've come to remind you, for you seem to
forget,

that Yule is the time of re-birth, and yet..."

"I see no hearth fires, hear no music, no
bells,

The air isn't filled with rich fragrant smells
Of baking and roasting, and simmering stews,
Of cider that's mulled or other hot brews."

"There aren't any children at play in the snow,
Or houses lit up by candles' glow.

Have you forgotten, my children, the fun
Of celebrating the rebirth of the sun?"

She looked at the fey folk, her eyes going
round,

As they shuffled their feet and stared at the
ground.

Then she smiled the smile that brings light to
the day,

"Come, my children," she said, "Let's play."

They gathered the mistletoe, gathered the
holly,

Threw off the drab and drew on the jolly.

They lit a big bonfire, and they danced and
they sang.

They brought out the bells and clapped when
they rang.

They strung lights on the trees, and bows, oh
so merry,

In colors of cranberry, bayberry, cherry.

They built giant snowmen and adorned them with
hats,

Then surrounded them with snow birds, and snow
cats and bats.

Then just before dawn, at the end of their
fest,

Before they went homeward to seek out their
rest,

The fey folk they gathered 'round their
favorite oak tree

And welcomed the sun 'neath the tree's finery.

They were just reaching home when it suddenly
came,

The gold light returned like an arrow-shot
flame.

It lit on the tree top where they could see
from afar

The golden-like sphere turned into a star.

The old crone just smiled at the beautiful
sight,

"Happy Yuletide, my children," she whispered.
"Good night."

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