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A Christmas Carol (Poem)

Samuel Taylor Coleridge

I.

The Shepherds went their hasty way,
And found the lowly stable-shed
Where the Virgin-Mother lay:
And now they checked their eager tread,
For to the Babe, that at her bosom clung,
A Mother's song the Virgin-Mother sung.

II.

They told her how a glorious light,
Streaming from a heavenly throng,
Around them shone, suspending night!
While sweeter than a Mother's song,
Blest Angels heralded the Saviour's birth,
Glory to God on high! and Peace on Earth.

III.

She listened to the tale divine,
And closer still the Babe she pressed;
And while she cried, the Babe is mine!
The milk rushed faster to her breast:
Joy rose within her, like a summer's morn;
Peace, Peace on Earth! the Prince of Peace is born.

IV.

Thou Mother of the Prince of Peace,
Poor, simple, and of low estate!
That Strife should vanish, Battle cease,
O why should this thy soul elate?
Sweet Music's loudest note, the Poet's story,—
Did'st thou ne'er love to hear of Fame and Glory?

V.

And is not War a youthful King,



A stately Hero clad in Mail?
Beneath his footsteps laurels spring;
Him Earth's majestic monarchs hail
Their Friend, their Playmate! and his bold bright eye
Compels the maiden's love-confessing sigh.

VI.

"Tell this in some more courtly scene,
"To maids and youths in robes of state!
"I am a woman poor and mean,
"And therefore is my Soul elate.
"War is a ruffian, all with guilt defiled,
"That from the aged Father tears his Child!

VII.

"A murderous fiend, by fiends adored,
"He kills the Sire and starves the Son;
"The Husband kills, and from her board
"Steals all his Widow's toil had won;
"Plunders God's world of beauty; rends away
"All safety from the Night, all comfort from the Day.

VIII.

"Then wisely is my soul elate,
"That Strife should vanish, Battle cease:
"I'm poor and of a low estate,
"The Mother of the Prince of Peace.
"Joy rises in me, like a summer's morn:
"Peace, Peace on Earth, the Prince of Peace is born."

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