

## **Twas the Night Before Deadline**

Adaptation by Dana Davis (my apologies to Clement Clarke Moore)

Twas the night before deadline, when all through the house  
Not a creature was stirring, not even my mouse.  
The sticky notes hung by the computer in rows,  
In hopes that my muse soon would make a show.

My characters were nestled all snug in their beds,  
While visions of plotlines danced in my head.  
And computer all booted, and hand on my mouse,  
I'd just settled my brain for a long writer's joust.

When out on the lawn there arose such a clatter,  
I sprang from the desk to see what was the matter.  
Away to the window I flew like a flash,  
Tore open the shutters and threw up the glass.

The moon on the pool and the landscape lights  
Gave the lustre of mid-day to objects in sight.  
When, what to my wondering eyes should appear,  
But a miniature woman in flowing apparel.

The little odd woman, so lively and loose,  
I knew in a moment it must be my muse.  
More rapid than eagles her course she came,  
And she whistled, and shouted, and called out my game!

"Now Dashes! now, Spaces! now, Paragraphs and Verbs!  
On, Comas! On, Clauses! on Headers and Blurbs!  
To the top of the page! To the margin and title!  
Now type away! Type away! Type away, writer!"

As dry leaves that before the wild monsoon fly,  
When she meets with an obstacle, mount to the sky.  
So into the house the course she flew,  
With a bag full of ideas, my lovely muse true.

And then, in a twinkling, I heard in my brain  
The prancing and pawing of each little refrain.  
As I drew in my head, and was turning around,  
Into the office my muse came with a bound.

She was dressed all in letters, from her head to her foot,  
And her clothes were all garnished with phrases and words.  
A bundle of ideas she had flung on her back,

And she looked like a fairy, as she opened her pack.

Her eyes-how they twinkled! her dimples how merry!  
Her cheeks were like roses, her nose like a cherry!  
Her droll little mouth was drawn up like a bow,  
And the skin of her chin was as white as snow.

The stump of a pen she held tight in her teeth,  
And the nouns they encircled her head like a wreath.  
She had a round face and a little loose bun,  
That bobbed when she laughed, like a hummingbird tongue!

She was chubby and plump with ideas for my shelf,  
And I laughed when I saw her, in spite of myself!  
A wink of her eye and a twist of her head,  
Soon gave me to know I had nothing to dread.

She spoke not a word, but went straight to her work,  
And filled all my sticky notes, then turned with a jerk.  
And laying her finger aside of her nose,  
And giving a nod, out the window she rose!

She danced and she laughed, and gave out a whistle,  
And away she then flew like the down of a thistle.  
But I heard her exclaim, 'ere she flew out of sight,  
"Happy writing to all, and to all a good-night!"