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'Twas the Night Before Christmas, Moscow 2020

The Word's Worth

Michele A. Berdy's The Word's Worth

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Pixabay

A Visit From St. Nicholas to Moscow 2020

'Twas the night before Christmas, when all through the house
Not a creature was stirring, except for one louse;
Who smoked like a chimney, not giving a care,
That лестничная площадка was meant to be shared.

But дети напротив затихли и спят
Внизу мои соседи крикливо храпят
Everyone dreaming of what they want most:
Freedom from Covid, first and foremost.

When out in the двор there arose such a clatter,
I sprang from my bed to see what was the matter.
Kids and петарды пугают собак?
I'm going to give them a real lot of flak!

But the streetlight was dim on the new-fallen snow,
My двор lay peaceful and quiet below.
When what to my wondering eyes did appear,
But a miniature sleigh and eight tiny reindeer,

The driver jumped down by a big грузовик
But I knew right away that he must be St. Nick!
He calmed down his reindeer and patted their heads,
Then, wiping his brow, he coughed once and said:

"The traffic is awful — столько кошмаров!
And the air is disgusting, как дым от пожара!
How are we going to get up to the roof?
Тарелки lay traps for my poor reindeers' hoofs!

"Now, Dasher! now, Dancer! now Prancer and Vixen!
On, Comet! on, Cupid! on, Donner and Blitzen!
Don't touch the wires or satellite dishes,
We've got to deliver our bag full of wishes!"

He jumped in his sleigh and gave quiet commands,
And then on the roof I heard sounds — барабан
Thirty-two hoofs danced across our tin roof
Like raindrops, the sound of those delicate hoofs!

And then with a whoosh he slid down the vent
And stood in my room, sacks filled with presents.
But no toys and no books and no brown teddy bears.
This year, he said, he'd come to answer our prayers.

Out from his bag came some boxes of pills.
"These," he said twinkling, "will cure all your ills.
Корона исчезнет раз навсегда!
И точно не вернётся сюда никогда!"

But that wasn't all that came out of his sack.
With a tweak of his nose all corruption was banished!
Взятки, откаты, конвертики — all vanished!
But then he collapsed, his energy totally sapped.

«Много проблем» – и слёзы в глазах.
«Не зависит ни от меня, ни даже от вас!
Хотя живу долго и видел на свете
Больше, чем можно увидеть во сне на рассвете!»

He looked out the window and quietly said:
«И это пройдёт, всё плохое умрёт
And good things, I promise, will come in its stead.
«Но мне всё! Пока! Весь мир меня ждёт!»

And laying his finger on the side of his nose,
And giving a nod, up the house vent he rose;
He sprang to his sleigh, to his team gave a whistle,
And away they all flew like the down of a thistle.

I know what you're thinking — I was dreaming or drinking!
Or maybe it's only my own wishful thinking.
But I saw him, I did! With his hands on the reins
Of a sleigh led by reindeer, flying faster than planes.

And I heard him exclaim, ere he drove out of sight—
"Happy Christmas to all, and to all a good night!"

Apologies to Clement Clarke Moore.

Glossary

лестничная площадка (stairwell landing)
дети напротив затихли и спят (the children across the hall fell quiet and sleep)
внизу мои соседи крикливо храпят (the neighbors below me are snoring noisily)
двор (courtyard)
петарды пугают собак (fireworks scaring dogs)
грузовик (truck)
столько кошмаров! (so many nightmares)
как дым от пожара! (like smoke from a fire)
тарелки (dishes [including satellite dishes])
барабан (drum)
Корона исчезнет раз навсегда! (coronavirus will disappear forever)
И точно не вернётся сюда никогда! (and it will never ever come back)
Взятки, откаты, конвертики (bribes, kickbacks and envelopes [of cash])
Много проблем – и слёзы в глазах (So many problems – and tears in his eyes)
Не зависит ни от меня, ни даже от вас! (Don't depend on me or even on you)
Хотя живу долго и видел на свете (But I've lived so long on this earth)
Больше, чем можно увидеть во сне на рассвете! (I've seen more that you could dream at dawn)
И это пройдёт, всё плохое умрёт (This too shall pass, all the bad will die away)
Но мне всё! Пока! Весь мир меня ждёт! (That's all from me! Bye! The whole world's waiting for me)

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