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**A Caregivers Christmas** • December 22, 2017

## ***A Caregivers Christmas***

by Gary Barg

'Twas the night before Christmas,  
When all through the house  
A caregiver was scurrying,  
Caring for her dear spouse

His stockings were placed  
Upon his feet with great care  
In hopes he felt well enough to step  
out for some fresh air

Their children were scattered,  
All snug in their beds  
Around this great country,  
Not a care in their heads

And the caregiver who worked nights,  
'Cause the funds they did tap  
Had just settled down for a five minute nap

When in the next room, there arose such a clatter,  
She sprang from her bed to see what did splatter.  
Away past the bed sheets she had thrown in the trash,

Tore open a new set and hoped these would last

The weight on her breast was of one who did know  
That, by the luster of daybreak  
Her sorrow would grow  
When, what in any other year  
Would be a thing quite so dear  
That time when her family would visit  
From far and from near

With no one to hold her, since her loved one took sick  
She felt that the holidays were just a mean trick  
More rapid than eagles her friends they did flee  
When they could no longer travel or even take tea

No Cohens!, no Schwartzes!, no Millers!, no Dicksons  
No, Olivets, no Lutids, no Donners and Micksons  
For a while they gave support, for a while did they call  
Now dash away! Dash away! Dash away to the mall!

As new restaurants that before were easy to try,  
When her loved one was too sick, away did they fly  
So now with the holidays, the family will do  
with the sleigh full of presents, and bad advice too

And then, in a twinkling eye, I heard in the drive  
Aunt Nancy and Chloe and all my in-laws arrive.  
As I had in my hand, a bedpan disposal bound  
I turned very quickly and tripped over the hound

My man was a mess from his head to his toes  
And his clothes were soiled and not easy on the nose  
A bundle of nerves, I shout out very loud  
Words, which to this day, do not make me feel proud

He lay there so quiet, not saying a thing  
When suddenly his laughter filled our home  
Like a fresh breath of spring

He doubled over with glee making such a roil  
That he slapped a bad knee through  
the all too grim soil  
As his eyes twinkled through all the great mess,  
For a moment this old dear  
Forgot the pain of this past year

On a normal night, the pain of his stump  
Would make him tighten his teeth,  
But tonight, for a moment, his laughter  
Caused such uncommon relief  
That the joy of it encircled his head like a wreath;  
As he lay on the bed he shook his round belly,  
For all the world, not unlike a big bowl of jelly

He was lying there laughing, like a jolly old elf,  
And I laughed when I saw him, in spite of myself;  
When, all of a sudden, the door burst opened  
wide as can be

And what did I see, the Cohens, the Schwartzes  
and Aunt Nancy all looking at me  
With nary a word as they made up the bed  
Then they all straightened up and got us both fed

They all had not known the support that I needed  
But once they saw they could help,  
They learned and succeeded  
In sharing the heart, the soul and the care  
That I always was sure was really right there

I hadn't spoken a word of the great strain  
and the work  
So I thought they had all turned into one major jerk  
After knowing what help each could give if I did ask  
I never again had to shoulder the entire task

We had time to play and to sing and to wet a whistle  
Until away they all flew like the down of a thistle  
But I heard my loved ones, as they drove out of sight  
"Happy Christmas to all, and to all a good-night!  
And, we're coming back, next Friday eve  
To take you out for a bite."

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