

Jolly Old St. Nicu

'Twas the night before Christmas, and in each isolette
Little creatures were squirming and getting all set;
Machinery sat by their bedsides with care,
In hopes that good breathing skills soon would be there.



Day shifters were home all snug in their beds,
As visions of overtime danced in their heads;
While preemies on ventilators, and some on CPAP,
Had just settled down for a long winter's nap...

When out in the hall there arose such a clatter,
The residents woke up to see what was the matter.
Away from the sink I flew like a jet
To make sure all was well at my baby's isolette.



Some bilirubin lights with their powerful glow
Gave the lustre of mid-day to babies below,
When, there before my wondering eyes, it would seem,
Was an oversized stroller and a medical team.
With a handful of needles with which they could stick you,
I knew in a moment it must be St. Nicu.

More rapid than eagles his specialists came,
And he whistled, and shouted, and called them by name:
"Now, Nurses! Now, Residents! Now, Neonatologists!
On, Social Workers! On, Respiratory and Occupational
Therapists!
From the front of the unit! To the end of the hall!
Now dash away! Dash away! Dash away all!"



Up to each baby's cribside they flew,
With the stroller full of toys, and St. Nicu too.
And then, in a twinkling, they stopped at each bed
And tucked in the babies and got them all fed.

As I looked at my baby, and was turning around,
Down our aisle St. Nicu came with a bound.
He was dressed in red scrubs, and I could instantly tell
That his clothes had an obvious hospital smell;
A bag of stuffed animals was flung on his back,
And he looked like a peddler just opening his pack.

A little red pen he held tight in his teeth,
And a stethoscope encircled his neck like a wreath.

He was chubby and plump, with a few extra pounds,
And I laughed when I saw him there doing his rounds.
A turn of his clipboard and a twist of his head
Soon gave me to know I had nothing to dread;
He spoke few words, but came straight to my side,
And running down his face was a tear he had cried.

And laying his hand on the back of my head,
He gave me a nod, and slowly he said:
"Each night you come here you're aware of the danger,
But your baby is loved by the One in the manger."

Then the medical team gave a thumbs-up and smiled
And St. Nicu placed an animal next to my child.
But I heard him exclaim, as they rolled out of sight,
"Merry Christmas, tiny baby, and have a wonderful night!"

*For Benjamin, Casey & Danielle, from Daddy,
in memory of Emily (11/4/05-11/23/05)*

