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The Slumbering Sleeper

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CHRISTMAS CAROLS.

THE SLUMBERING SLEEPER.

As on my bed with grief oppress
I laid me down to take my rest,
Into a dream most strange I fell,
Which to the world in brief I'll tell.

Methought an angel all in white,
Did come to me when late at night,
And said, "prepare to go with me,
I'll show strange wonders unto thee.

The angel forced me to go,
Indeed whether I would or no,
And in a very little space,
He brought me to a glorious place.

Upon the throne there sat a King,
Many melodiously did sing,
All cloth'd in fine white array,
Which shin'd brighter than the day.

It was so beautiful and fair,
I fain would have continued there,
With that the angel said to me,
"Poor soul this is no place for thee.

A little farther you must go,
For something else I will thee show,"
Then from this place I did depart,
Full sore it grieved me to the heart.

Into a little room we went,
Where was a noisome stinking scent
For want of sweeping many a year,
It like a dunghill did appear.

One came to clear the dirt away,
But it was grown to such decay,
He could by no means cleanse the same,
Which did the King's warmth much inflame.

He said, "it shall no longer stand,
I will destroy it out of hand,
There is no other hope I see,
This little room must burned be."

Another place he brought me to,
Most sad and dreadful to the view,
It grieved my heart to view the same,
All full of sulphur, smoke, and flame.

One look'd at me both fierce and grim,
Which made me tremble every limb,
My soul was fill'd with dread and fear,
Saying how long must I be here.

To me the angel then reply'd,
"Here, ever here, you must abide,
Except this room can cleansed be,
There will be no relief for thee.

The young prince said, "Father be free,
To give this little room to me,
I'll put it in another frame,
My own heart's blood shall cleanse the same."

'Twas granted, all perform'd and done,
The king was willing that his son,
The greatest tortures then should bear,
To put the room in good repair.

His blood was thrown upon the floor,
And water then was sprinkl'd o'er,
The room was suddenly made clean,
And not one spot was to be seen.

The angel came and said to me,
I now am come to set thee free,
O then my joys were more and more,
That I had seen my trouble o'er.

Again he brought me to the room,
Where was a scent of rich perfume,
I was amazed to see the same,
For it was in a better frame.

Then to the angel I did say,
Interpret this to me I pray,
Because it seemeth something strange,
To see so wonderful a change.

The angel said "This is the world,
Which would have been to ashes hurl'd,
Had not Christ shed his blood so free,
To cleanse the world and ransom thee.

Although he dy'd, he lives again,
And with his Father now doth reign,
At his right hand he sits on high,
And lives to all eternity.

He'll come again to judge the world,
The wicked ones they shall be hurl'd
Into the pit of discontent,
Where wicked fiends do souls torment.

The righteous need not fear to die,
For they shall live with Christ on high,
Although afflicted here on earth,
They shall be happy after death.

Then by the hand he did me take,
And said, "Poor drowsy soul, awake,
Being awaked from my sleep,
My heart was full and I did weep.

To think my Christ so patiently,
Did undergo such misery,
To free lost sinners from the grave,
He shed his blood the world to save.

I hope this dream is for my good,
Lord Jesus with thy precious blood,
Wash all my heinous sins away,
And make me fit for the last day.

The Second Part.

ANOTHER mystery behold,
I'll in the second part unfold,
These worthy poems I have penn'd,
That all good christians may attend.

This mystery I do compare,
Unto a gallant Lady fair,
And a black king that reigns below,
Who sought this Lady's overthrow.

The black king having such a spite,
Against this gallant Lady bright,
Therefore he sent forth a decree,
That she to death should murdered be.

According to the black king's laws,
Condemn'd to die this Lady was,
When she her sentence came to know,
Her tears like fountain streams did flow.

Now when the Lady's death was near,
A young Prince came, and said, "Dont fear,
For thou shalt not destroyed be,
I'll die myself to set thee free."

Then straight spoke up the young prince,
"I'm come to stand in her defence,
Upon her be not too severe,
I'll die myself to set her clear."

Then was it the young Prince's doom,
To suffer in this Lady's room,
For by these lines I briefly shew,
That you the mystery may know.

First with the Lady I'll begin,
It is the soul condemn'd for sin,
Had not the Prince resign'd his breath,
To save it from eternal death.

The black king is Satan we know,
Who sought the soul to overthrow,
And the young prince is Christ indeed,
Who on the cross for sin did bleed.