

Heiss Holiday Humbug

We're saying farewell to two-thousand fourteen,
To the moments tempestuous, the moments serene.
For like auld lang syne and each year hereafter
This year encompassed both sorrow and laughter.

Remember that time **Rachel busted her lip?**
Ben did **the same thing**—down the stairs he did slip.
Self-inflicted frenectomy numero dos!
I think we should stop there 'cuz, frankly, it's gross
To have blood pouring out of your toddler's mouth.

So instead I will tell about heading down south
To pick up **my mom** from a conference in **Georgia**
And **bring her back** here for three days of euphoria.
Playing with grandkids and reading them stories
Is not something grandparents find very boring.
Least, that's what I gather from my observations.
Two visits from Andrew's **parental relations**
Prove my assumptions, I'm happy to say.

Though happy was not how we felt this past May
When we **camped in the woods** without matches for fire.
We pleaded to strangers that we might acquire
That power. Not all camping trips had mistakes that abhor.
We had some successes as well, you see, for...

This summer we travelled to upstate New York—
Palmyra—(and thriftily lodged on the sward
Of the fairgrounds in town, **a makeshift encampment**)
Did a **church history tour** and, of course, **watched the pageant**.
Another highlight of our trip was a visit
To **Niagara Falls**—the view was exquisite.

Other than that we spent tons of time **swimming**
At the neighbourhood pool where I set about **training**
My very own children—and six or so also—
To paddle around in deep waters and shallow.

In other sports news **Rachel's now playing soccer**.
Her coach was Andrew; that might come as a shocker
Since he's never played on a team of his own.
But he did a good job, great skills those girls honed.
Rachel's in grade two. She eats, sleeps, and **reads**.
She's hard to keep clothed 'cuz she grows like a weed.

Miriam, meanwhile, just wears hand-me-downs.
She's in **preschool** this year and loves her newfound
Outlet (and inlet) for all things scholastic;
About books and reading she's enthusiastic.
She **started cheerleading** and finds it quite thrilling.
She'll dance for all audiences—captive and willing.





In the **terrible twos** Benji's firmly deep-seated
But I'm pleased to announce **potty training's completed...**
Well, almost. Whatever. He's just close enough
That I packed the cloth diapers and all of that fluff
And tucked them away in the attic for later.
Other good news: We don't need a translator
To understand what that boy says anymore.
Benjamin's talking—nouns, verbs, words galore!

Comprehensive exams plagued our dad in September;
Thank goodness all pertinent facts he remembered.
His committee assessed him to be au courant
Even though he **forgot to quote Timur Kuran**.

To celebrate passing his test, with great glee,
Our **family vacationed in Washington, DC**.
We saw many old friends, and **the Capitol**, too,
Even made a quick stop at the **National Zoo**.
Andrew'd visited DC a few months before
For a conference (APSA) and made sure to store
Up ideas for our itinerary. He made many great plans
For the things we should see. Grabbing our hands,
From one sight to another, he pushed us all pronto.

Did I mention he also went up to **Toronto**
For an ISA conference? **On Timbits** he dined.

Next year he already has conferences lined
Up. He is smart and prolific in more than one sense—
His papers? Ingenious. My belly? Immense.

What's that you ask? Why, it's certainly true—
June second, next year, **our fourth child is due**.
Aunt Sarah's expecting, Aunt Em is as well
For a trio of cousins. Isn't that swell?

Nearly five years ago I made a submission
To *The Friend Magazine*. Do you have a subscription?
Because this November **my story was published**.
It's my first time in print (I feel rather accomplished).

We're excited to spend Christmas break out in Utah,
Reclaiming our place in all family hoopla.
We've missed our fair share the past couple of years
While they've all lived out there and we've lived out here.

To loved ones in locales near, far and between,
Merry Christmas and happy two-thousand fifteen.

Love from,

Andrew, Nancy, Rachel,
Miriam & Benjamin