

Heiss Holiday Humbug

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What is there to say about this present time?
It feels like this year lacked both reason and rhyme.
(The latter, you'll find, I have made up for plenty
With this poetic rendering of twenty-twenty.)
Hindsight, they say, is the name of this year,
And so I'll recount our days both droll and drear:

At the turn of the year, Alexander got brave.
When I took him to **nursery** he turned, gave a wave,
And went in by himself, that once-bashful lad.
He went seven times total before things got bad
And in-person functions **came to a stop**.

But before they did we were happy we got
To squeeze in a visit from **my dearest mum**.
We were so glad to see her, so glad she could come—
A final hurrah before isolation.

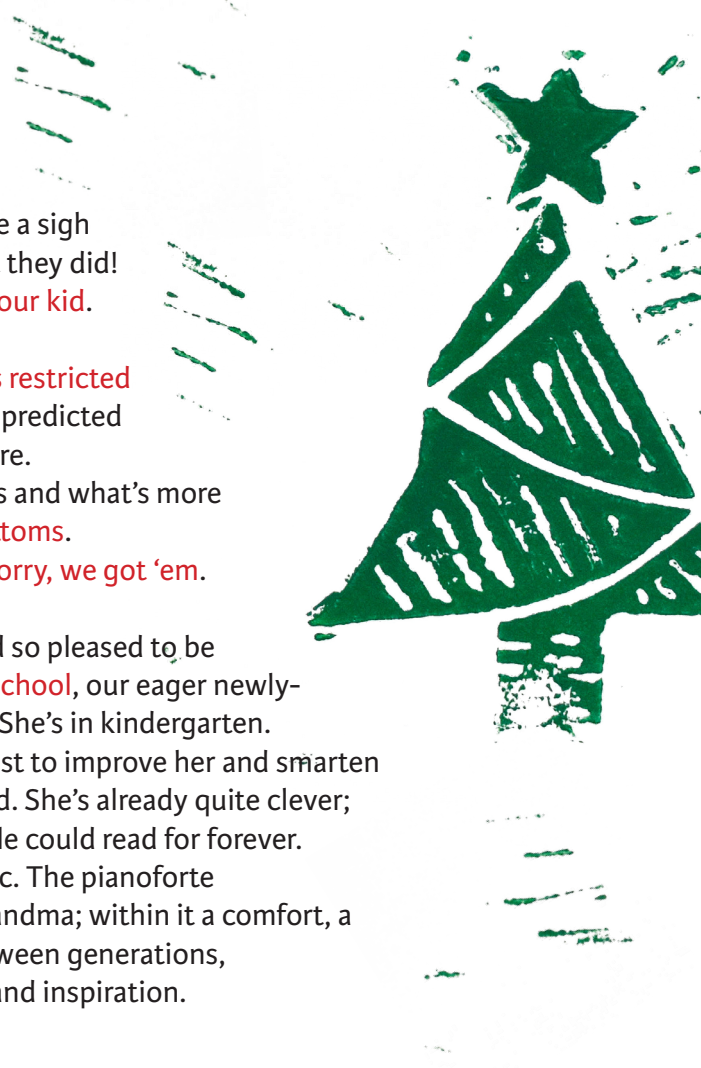
We soon came to count on a daily excursion
Around the block to relieve our ennui.
Once the stroller and sidewalk, quite cruelly,
Teamed up against Alex, who **slingshotted out**,
Landed flat on his face and started to pout.
His front teeth, I realized, with motherly dread,
Had both been **knocked loose**. Oh, his poor little head!
The dentist assured us—and dentists don't lie—

That his teeth would re-root. So I gave a sigh
Of relief and then waited. And re-root they did!
This tale has a moral: **Always buckle your kid**.

With travel verboten and **playgrounds restricted**
We had so much more time than ever predicted
To devote to talents and hobbies galore.
We **practiced our sewing**, made masks and what's more
Stitched up a whole set of **pyjama bottoms**.
You want matching pictures? **Don't worry, we got 'em**.



Zoë is **five** now and so pleased to be
Included in **Heiss School**, our eager newly-
Admitted student. She's in kindergarten.
We're doing our best to improve her and smarten
Her up, but it's hard. She's already quite clever;
Our sweet logophile could read for forever.
She also likes music. The pianoforte
Reminds her of Grandma; within it a comfort, a
Nexus of sorts between generations,
A musical lineage and inspiration.





Benjamin turned **eight**, a momentous year.
When he got **baptized** he grinned ear to ear.
He likes to be outside (and often gets **dirty**).
In school he likes reading, and practicing QWERTY.
He's a real whiz with numbers (he likes **mental math**)
But I know he'd rather be out on a path
In the wild with adventure and danger!
He dreams of becoming a national park ranger.

Rachel—**thirteen**—is our baker of cakes
And, oh, you should taste the **cakes** that she makes!
She bakes them from scratch—each one is a dream—
Then trims them up nicely with fresh buttercream,
Succulent berries or marshmallow fondant.
If she stopped baking we'd all feel despondent.
She's homeschooling this year; she's very self-led
(And in her spare time keeps us very well fed).



In August we finally got to **the pool**
And I had my first day of graduate school.
I finished a book—my writing debut!
Some crude self promotion? Don't mind if I do:
It's coming next month, 'twill be hot off the press!
(I'm excited and nervous, I have to confess.)

Beyond that, this summer I reglazed the windows
With all the kids helping **things turned out akimbo**,
But watertight windows are sure nice to have,
Especially when the weather gets bad.

Our weather in Georgia can be somewhat tame—
It **snowed once this year** (the kids found that lame).
The spring was quite springy, the summer was hot,



So imagine our joy when the A/C broke—not.
We weren't happy about it, not one little bit,
But **fixed it** before all the hurricanes hit.

Tame's not the word for this hurricane season.
"Why?" you dare ask. I can give you three reasons:
A hole in our roof was discovered by **Sally**.
The water from **Delta** filled up the whole valley
(Or sinkhole) we live in and **flooded our basement**.
And **Zeta**? She caused an electric abatement.
Our **power was out** for 'bout **34 hours**.

Andrew's been shut up in his ivory tower.
He's teaching from home in this time of the plague
And loves his new officemate. Not to be vague,
The cat shares his office and her name is Waffelles.
She's **new here**; we think she's a far cry from awful.
Our friend found her hiding inside a car engine.
We saw her and just had to have her, no question!

We had other questions 'bout all sorts of stuff—
How sourdough yeast works; is **woodcarving** tough?
Inquisitive Andrew researched, then procured
The needed supplies. Just one mishap occurred
When Miriam's knife slipped and she cut her hand,
But otherwise things went exactly as planned;
Learning new skills helps us stay in good graces.

Miriam's scoop is that she's **out of braces**.
She'll need them again but for right now she's free
(And's consuming once-taboo foods quite gleefully).



At eleven years old she's still loving the organ
And practices dutifully both *nacht* and *morgen*.
In her free time *sie studiert auch noch Deutsch*
'Cuz she wants to attend the Mozarteum—noice!

We really love sharing, so—if you'll allow us—
Click here to sample our musical prowess.
Our kids fill our home with both music and laughter,
But we'll be so happy to see people after
COVID is gone (or at least well-controlled).

And that's all from us; our story's been told.
The year, like this poem, is finally done—
It's time to admit twenty-twenty one.*

Love from,

The Heiss family

* won

