

"Now, Nick! Now Nicholas! Now Nicky, and Nick!  
 On, Niki! On Nik-nok! On, Nicolas and Nick!  
 To the top of the pyramid, to the top of the tomb!  
 Now dash away, dash away, dash up past the moon!"  
 As sand, dust, and leaves before the desert wind fly  
 When they meet with an obstacle, mount to the sky,  
 So up past the mastaba the courtiers they flew,  
 With the sarcophagus, and Osiris too.  
 And then in a twinkling the pharaoh he heard  
 the great rush of wind from the wings of that bird  
 Horus' hawk eye took in all with no pause  
 And then lent Osiris the strength of his claws  
 Each year the sown mummy springs up from his box  
 garments and flesh stitched bloody with ashes and rocks;  
 his emerald skin wound in scarlets and creams  
 sprouts split the silt by the river's blue stream.  
 His eyes - how they burned! His brow darkly beetling!  
 His cheeks were like mosses, his nose like a seedling!  
 His lips were drawn back in a rictus of death  
 But such vigor and motion - he surely drew breath!

Black was the night before the Feast of Osiris  
 not a hippo did stir, not even an ibis.  
 The stockings were hung in the temple with care  
 in certainty Osiris' star soon would shine there.  
 The children and slaves were all locked up for the night  
 while night-fleets of bats and scarabs took flight  
 The pharaoh and queen in headdress and cap  
 had just settled down for a long winter's nap.  
 When out in the courtyard arose such a clatter  
 Pharaoh and guards sprang to see what was the matter.  
 A way to the gates and the walls they all dashed  
 as braziers were kindled and bronze weapons flashed.  
 The moon on the sand at the banks of the Nile  
 Gave the white sheen of snowfall to palm trees and tile -  
 When what to those wondering eyes did appear  
 but a floating sarcophagus and green mummy so queer.  
 That wizened corpse stood, neither living nor virus  
 All knew in a moment it must be Osiris  
 Returned as each year to bridge the dead and the quick  
 Then he whistled, and shouted, and called them all Nick.

**THE EVE OF THE FEAST OF OSIRIS**

Red and white wound 'bout the staff of his flail  
 A similar spiraling hook kept the herd in the vale  
 while his limbs were quite thin we saw bright as day  
 as spring lightning crashed clearing his way

Desiccated and thin, a cadaverous mummy  
 His green skin and scars looked rotten and plummy  
 His unblinking eye and twisted gnarled hand  
 raised high and showed all who was lord in this land;

He spoke not a word, but went straight to his work.  
 He filled all the stockings; then turned with a jerk,  
 Bony hand at arm's length to the Pharaoh he strode  
 then clutching the king to his bosom he rose

He sprang to his coffin, stilling the screams of the king  
 And away they all flew like the bird on the wing.  
 he was heard to exclaim, ere he hove out of sight,  
 "A fecund Nile flood to all, and to all a good night"

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Was Clement Clarke Moore among the occult  
 initiates of the *Osiran League*, devoted to  
 resurrecting the ancient secrets of Old Kingdom  
 Egypt? You in your hands the very manuscript  
 that may prove the *Secret of Santa Claus himself!*

