

# An Invertebrate's Night Before Christmas

(with apologies to Clement Moore)

Twas the night before Christmas,  
and all through the sea  
Not a creature was stirring  
not even an anemone.  
The stockings were hung from the  
mantle of the sea hare  
In hopes that St. Cephalopod  
soon would be there.  
The barnacles were nestled  
all glued at their heads  
While thousands of *Acanthina's*  
danced near their beds.  
Ma in her operculum  
I in my test  
Had just settled down  
for a long winter's rest  
When out on the sand  
there arose such a clatter  
I flexed all my tube feet  
to see what was the matter.  
Then what to their wondering  
eyes should appear,  
A bivalve for a sleigh,  
an Octopus to steer.  
"On Chilopods, on Diplopods,  
untangle those legs!  
On *Peripatus*, on *Nereis*,  
pulling a sleigh is serious!  
Up Hoplocarida, Pericarida, Eucarida, you shrimps  
we'll get nowhere if you continue to blunder like blimps!  
Oh Holothuroids, PLEASE you're making us late  
don't you see, you haven't time to eviscerate!  
To the estuary we go, before the high tide  
come on, you invertebrates, quicken your stride."  
But first they all turned  
before they took flight...  
Waved chilipeds, tentacles, cirri and shouted  
"Merry Christmas to all and to all a good night!"

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