

The Night Before Solstice

December 16, 1998

'Twas the night before Solstice, and all through the house,
Not a creature was selling, not even Doug Krause.
Releases were hung by the chimney with care,
In hopes that St. Kawczynski soon would be there.

The users were nestled all snug in their beds,
While visions of Version 8 danced in their heads,
And Schmitz on his cell phone with Bruce in Hong Kong,
Had just settled down to discuss Rudy Long.

When in the next room there arose such a clatter,
I sprang from my cube to see what was the matter.
(Just then under Windows I heard my disk crash,
Blow away my FAT table and empty my cache...)

The polymorphed O.O.P. moon on the snow,
Gave inherited lustre to objects below,
When, what to my wondering eyes should appear,
But an azure Porche Boxster, towed by reindeer,
With a leather-dressed driver cornering hard,
I knew in a moment it must be ... *Bernard*.

More rapid than eagles his coursers they came,
And he whistled and shouted and called them by name:
"Now Gucci! Now Prada, now Saatchi and Saatchi!
On, Lagerfeld! Coco Chanel and Versace!
From the top of the Wall Street to the top of Nob Hill!
Put cash away! Dash away! Send them a bill!"

As salesmen that before middle management try,
When they meet with an obstacle, escalate high,
So up to the tenth floor the coursers they fell,
With trunk full of media Bernard could sell.
I knew in a twinkling he'd make up some deals,
When I heard the click of his boots with tap heels.
As I drew in my head, and was turning around,
Down the chimney the consultant came with a bound.

He was dressed all in latex, from his head to his toes,
And his clothes were all shiny, (if you could call them "clothes"),
From a small leather back-pack he withdrew a book,
And he looked like a — well, never mind how he looked.

His eyes — how they glittered, his dimples ... he had none,
Wearing trousers like those isn't typically done.
His ears sported big diamond studs just for show,
And the beard of his face was as black as — you know.

He lit saffron incense from an Indian sect,
And smoke circled his head like a halo effect.
He had a thin face (but no belly at all),
And his sunless white skin wore a translucent pall.
Not chubby, not plump, but Kate-Moss-thin, so he
Looked nothing like Santa — more like David Bowie.
A wink and an ironic twist of his head,
Soon gave me to know I had *plenty* to dread.

He spoke not a word, but went straight to his work,
Filling all of these wish lists while wearing a smirk:

“The Century guys — they can have some square miles,
To the North — not too far, that'll give 'em some smiles,
On Raffo's TeamConsoles we'll deliver the goods,
And ten tickets to Maui for the great Terry Woods.
For the Fullers, two more new Lowe's (and one Tammy),
And Dave Thomas can collect his no-charge “Double-Whammy.”
For Mazzeo, Victory@Victory, and I don't mean dot-com,
And for Higgens, smooth sailing with Viar now gone.

“For Marty in Dallas, some shiny new toys,
In hopes this is finally the year for Malloys,
And one like the last one for that Good Ol' South boy
Bryan Davis (I promise, he's no hoi polloi).
For Bill in Grand Rapids, some Scheer energy,
And a sassy proposal for PP in KC.
While Randy the Man makes the TP4 run,
And big Jimmy Gerlt makes wholesalers “fun”,
Pat Huston will unload all those I-4-I mugs,
While Haines gets a double-wide windshield (no bugs).

“At Sunrise, great business will leave Bill Gaar floored,
Like Gilbertson's overworked FAX machine, bored,
And Tri-State could use a wholesaler accord,
While Mike P. gets the Haggens' transaction restored.
Podrazza will find two more chains just like Buehlers,
While AWG finally embraces the Dealers.
Rick Pringle, Great Lakes, Great Sales, 50 stores!
Which reminds me — who was it who needs double drawers?

“And here's to an excellent year for Stu Chait,
And the same up to Dumac (not heard from of late...)
For Tilson, that North-to-South Golden State trecker,
Right here in my bag — Voila! Double-Decker!
(And Bill, we're not talking some Burger King Whopper.)
For Howie and Tim — PoS disaster at Chopper,
Should do you some good. Though you'd not wish it so,
All dealers being so kind and big-hearted, though
Carroll's sales will reduce all the bad guys to beggars,
And, I guess, likewise luck to AZ Kevin Eggars.

“An eighteen-lane super would sure bring some fame,
For Dutch Duchouquette (but don’t mess with that name.)
Gleissner will Save a Lot — paid all his dues,
More fresh SuperV dough for McCollow and Hughes.
And for Memphis and Nashville? I’ll check in my sack: well!
Look — a great ’99 for Sirs Yeargen and Blackwell!
For Andy at CCR, it’s not ‘If’ — it’s ‘When’,
While in Dallas Tom Neimas keeps winning again.
For Schneider/O’Brien, Frequent Shopper to sell,
(But what ever happened to Rohit Patel?)

“Then there’s Tester/Bermuda and Caymen/Geoff Cuff,
For them and for Torrez, the beach is enough —
(For Rusty in Portland ¹ and Sharl in B.C.
And Ray in Chicago it’s -12° ... C
And speaking of cold, don’t forget Foster (Bob),
In the woods of north Michigan working his job,
And surrounded by Hoosiers, our man Bartholome,
They call it Midwest, but it feels more like Nome.)
But it could be tougher — like Roberto Engel,
His amazing success in America (Central).

“The first **V8** store for Joe B. and Bob Newton,
And (a different) one nearby — with SIL — for Tim Martin.
But despite his success, there’s no way I would bet he
Can crank out more stores than Ziletti/Ziletti.
For Eblen of Mid-South—oops—Kyrus, a lift
From your an Ace in the hole (if you’re getting my drift...)
And a big year for Bockman, that Midwestern gent,
And of course George negotiates two more percent.”

Bernard’s sack was now empty; he gave me his views,
On organic sushi and odd microbrews.
He offered a strange Belgian beer he called Geuze,
While he sipped on a rather large glass of Chartreuse,
And shook his head sadly — “Why do I mess,
With of all things in IT, this damned PoS?”
And waxed with rather imperial afflatus,
Using terms like “obdurate celestial apparatus.”

“Well, gotta run, Boyfriend,” said Bernard looking dour,
“Besides, my rate’s up to four hundred an hour.
For this butter creature the time’s getting late,
And I’m meeting the Snow Queen downtown about eight.”
And laying his finger aside of his nose,
And with a quick sniff, up the chimney he rose.
He sprang to his Porche, to his teams gave a yell,
And out they all flew like the cash drawer from hell.

But I heard him exclaim with a voice like a giant,
“Mellow Solstice to all — get your users compliant!”

¹ Oh by the way — they’re so scrambled at NRC,
That this is the year we win up at UG...

The very best of Holidays to you and your families, with sincere thanks from all of us for this exciting and hugely successful year.

To your success, and looking forward to 1999,

Tony

Tony van Seventer
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