

Twas the Night Before Gardner
T. Arthur Terlep

Twas the night before Gardner, when all through the Ritz
Every a Gatherer was stirring, for registration blitz.
The name tags were hung o'er every neck with care,
In hopes that the bar bets soon would be there.

The guests then nestled all snug in their beds,
While visions of polyhedra danced in their heads.
With Setteducati in his suit, and Bruce in his cap,
The planners began for a great week's hap.

When up on the stage, there arose such a clatter,
I woke from my seat to see the Mad Hatter!
Counting off days, he went like a flash,
And informed us acutely of a Doomsday bash.

The moon in the sky, so often in tow
I couldn't count time in the basement below.
When, what to the back of my eyes straying nerves,
But a two headed hyper fowl swimming space-filling curves.

Then a bundle of cards, he arrived on the scene,
I knew in a moment, it must be Lennart Green.
More quickly than quarks, his colleagues engaged.
Fooled though I was of the illusions they staged!

"Now Magic! now, Puzzles! now, Science and Math Games!
On, Music! On, Knitting! On, on Sculptures by big Names!
To the top of the stand! In front of us all!
Present away! Dash away! Go eat lunch at the mall!"

To Tom's house we came, very grateful at this,
Wishing him well, this great man we miss.
But up near the house, my Go game near through,
I watched from afar as the geometric structures grew.

When then, for a moment, I heard a Hart sing
While we some sipped sake through bamboo cut ring.
As we tuned to the taps, my meter turned 'round,
And was sad to find out, the last bus was due bound.

The exchange room was filled, from the door to the wall,
While Thane kept quite calm, despite din in the hall.
A bundle of Toys I had flung on my back,
And I refilled my suitcase, just so I could pack!

Then stones-how they twinkled! My Goban so merry!
His groups were like boas, his shapes didn't tarry!
I recall that my loss was drawn up on this Go,
And Berlekamp's count confirmed what I know.

Later Dennis plied pipes and bent pans in his grip,
And phonebooks likes leaves flew out from a rip.
We thought he was fake, before bowling ball belly,
And twisting horseshoes, like Dunkin' Donuts filled with jelly!

Strick said "Let's dine!" At the Sundial we all ate
But I like a rabbit cried "I'm going to be late!"
These friends newly found and this gathering I was at
Inspired me to write this "Twinkle, Twinkle, Little Bat."

As I set down these words, my gift exchange work,
My timeline's askew; my meter's a-jerk.
But illusionists said that your memory's a farce,
So in judging this, well, I hope you're as sparse!

And now, time to go, I ran for my train,
As days' past events brewed coffee bubbled brain.
But I heard Martin say, as I rode out of sight,
"Happy Snark hunting to all, and to all a good flight!"