

The Night Before Christmas

'Twas the night before Christmas
Two guests in our house
Were playing some bridge
With me and my spouse.

"Please tell me," she shouted
"Why didn't you double?
'Twas plain from the start
We had them in trouble."

"Tis futile, my dear –
I am taking no stand.
So please stop your nagging
Let's play the next hand."

"Remember next time"
She said with a frown
"To double a contract
That's sure to go down."

♠ —	♠ 9 8 7 6	♠ A K Q J 10		
♥ Q J 10 9	♥ 6 5 4 3 2	♥ A K 8 7		
♦ K Q J 10 9	♦ 8 7 6 5	♦ —		
♣ K Q J 10	♣ —	♣ A 9 8 7		
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W S E				
	♠ 5 4 3 2			
	♥ —			
	♦ A 4 3 2			
	♣ 6 5 4 3 2			
<i>West</i>	<i>North</i>	<i>East</i>		
		1 ♠		
Dbl	2 ♥	Dbl		
Pass	Pass	Dbl		
		<i>South</i>		
		2 ♦		
		2 ♠		
		All pass		

So I picked up my cards
In a downtrodden state.
Then I opened one spade
and awaited my fate.

The guy sitting South
Was like many I've known.
He bid and played
In a world all his own.

"Two diamonds," he countered
With scarcely a care.
The ace in his hand
Gave him courage to spare.

My wife, smiling faintly
And tossing her head,
Leaned over the table,
"Double," she said.

And North for some reason
I cannot determine
Bid two hearts,
like preaching a sermon.

I grinned as I doubled
Enjoying the fun,
And turned round to South
To see where he would run.

But South, undistressed
Not at loss for a word
came forth with "two spades" –
Did I hear what I heard?

The other two passed
And in sheer disbelief
I said "Double, my friend,
That'll bring you to grief."

South passed with a nod
His composure serene.
My wife with a flourish
Led out the heart queen.

I sat there and chuckled
Inside o'er their fix.
But South very calmly
Ran off his eight tricks.

He ruffed the first heart
In his hand right away.
And then trumped a club
On the very next play.

He crossruffed the hand
At a breathtaking pace,
'Til I was left holding
Five spades to the ace.

In anguish my wife cried
"Your mind's growing old.
You should see that six notrump
for us is ice-cold!"

By doubling this time
I'd committed a sin.
It just goes to prove
That you never can win.