

## Queen Elizabeth I's Christmas List

Greetings, Lord Santa: Her Majesty's  
Principal Secretary of State  
begs leave to inform thee exactly  
what Her Majesty hath of late  
decided that thou shalt give her  
and lay on the foot of her bed  
on Christmas Eve, in her stocking –  
if thou value thy beard and head.

She seeth that one of her godsons –  
a man called Sir John Harrington –  
hath invented a cunning appliance  
for the carriage away of his dung.  
It smuggleth smells under water  
so, please, if thou know of these loos  
she would like another, but bigger –  
for six hundred courtiers to use.

She would like the king of Spain's beard  
chopped up, singed, roasted or fried;  
she would like a ship called *Ark Royal*  
and the heads of all Jesuit spies;  
a palace or two would be welcome;  
likewise, some high-heeled shoes;  
but nothing can rival her longing  
for one of Sir John's flushing loos.

She would like a newly found country –  
not *too* small – named after her;  
a map of the North West Passage  
and a gown trimmed with buffalo fur.  
Please give her a handful of diamonds –  
each one too enormous to lose –  
but, more than anything else, she wants  
one of Sir John's flushing loos.

She'd be happy with six new crowns  
big gold ones – thou knowest the type –  
and a fragrant, exotic vegetable  
which she can smoke in a pipe.  
She would like a fashionable portrait  
(she's considering posing for nudes);  
but her majesty's heart is most set upon  
one of Sir John's flushing loos.

She would like a new play by Shakespeare  
called *Elizabeth the First, Part One*.  
She says it could be a deposit

till Parts Two and Three are both done.  
She would like a poem by Marlowe –  
I am sure that he won't refuse –  
but most of all she's quite desperate  
for one of Sir John's flushing loos.

She says she would quite like a husband,  
a prince – of the Protestant sort –  
tall, dark and handsome, well-spoken,  
who knows not to fart when at court.  
She's hoping that he's well-endowed  
for she says she's got something to lose;  
but she'll settle for five and half inches  
and one of Sir John's flushing loos.

*Happy Christmas 2013*  
Ian Mortimer