

The Burning Babe

Sting

As I in hoary winter's night
Stood shivering in the snow,
Surprised I was with sudden heat
Which made my heart to glow;
And lifting up a fearful eye
To view what fire was near,
A pretty babe all burning bright
Did in the air appear;
Who, scorched with excessive heat,
Such floods of tears did shed,
As though His floods should quench His flames,
Which with His tears were bred:
'Alas!' quoth He, 'but newly born
In fiery heats I fry,
Yet none approach to warm their hearts
Or feel my fire but I!

'My faultless breast the furnace is;
The fuel, wounding thorns;
Love is the fire, and sighs the smoke;
The ashes, shames and scorns;
The fuel Justice layeth on,
And Mercy blows the coals,
The metal in this furnace wrought
Are men's defiled souls:
For which, as now on fire I am
To work them to their good,
So will I melt into a bath,
To wash them in my blood.'
With this He vanish'd out of sight
And swiftly shrunk away,
And straight I called unto mind
That it was Christmas Day.

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