A CHILD’S CHRISTMAS CAROL

Then… it was a time of true magic,

When the world was small and soft.

It had to be magic, my mind of five

Told me: how else could my brothers

And I go to sleep on an ordinary,

Dull and quiet night, to awaken in

Sheer joy the next morn as though

We had been zapped by a warm

Bolt of harmless lightning, setting

Our now restless bodies tingling….

Like racehorses at the gate of magic,

We stood at the top of the stairs,

Pulling at whatever patience we

Could muster under the admonitions

Of Mom and Dad to wait! wait! the

Camera must be loaded—but how

Painful to be still when we knew

Children’s paradise was only a

Stairway away—and what a

Paradise we saw unfolded in

Our now unfamiliar living room!

The tree drew our eyes first—

It was big and fat, with its

Branches sagging under all

Its myriad ornaments: glass

Balls, plastic candy canes,

Tinsel drooping as though

It hung on a weeping willow

And not a proud Blue Spruce.

And hundreds and millions of

Colored lights, some blinking,

Some staid, made our tree

Sparkle like the royal crown

Of a giant king—perhaps

The King of Toys, for they

Were seen in abundance

Wherever we looked: trucks

And bikes, and bats and games.

Each brother had his own pile

 (we marveled how thoughtful

Santa must be) and we knew

In each stack there were boxes

Beautifully wrapped but sans

Treasure , hiding only socks

Or shirts, perhaps a sweater—

Well, even the jolly fat man

Could not be perfect—still,

He brought magic to our dull

House every year, overnight

Transforming prosaic lives

By wonder, by magic, by love,

And when he went away,

When I was an ancient six,

The world grew much bigger

But colder, dull and empty

Of that special joy that

Can only come to those

Children who believe….

c. 2016 len carber