

A Boston Terrier Christmas



by the Rothacker family and Google Gemini

DECEMBER

25



A Handsome Pup

With artificial intelligence (AI) so much in the news, we thought it timely to collaborate with Google Gemini to bring our own four-year-old Boston Terrier, Minnie, into the forefront of technology for the holidays.

Since Minnie has many moods, we've created an advent-style calendar that focuses on the multiple personalities of the breed. The commemoration begins on December 1st and ends on Christmas Eve, December 24th, with the finale a tribute to the anthropologist, Jane Goodall.

Overall, the book contains 24 episodes devoted to Bostons, celebrating great achievements and honoring humans in the arts and sciences with poems, short stories, and images in keeping with the holiday season.

If you're a dog lover, or know someone who has a pooch of any breed, please feel free to pass Minnie's tribute along to them via the website: <https://www.bostonterrierchristmas.com>

– Barbara and George Rothacker, 2025



Santa's Administrative Hell

You know, people always ask, “Santa, how do you do it?” And I tell them, “It’s the logistics.”

Specifically, the elf logistics. My entire workforce is composed of **Boston Terriers**. And let me say, they are obstinate. They are also, objectively, the cutest workers I have ever employed, which is a problem because if they flatten a thousand rubber ducks, I just have to ruffle their little ears and write off the inventory.

Take Throckmorton, for instance. Throckmorton’s specialization is **quality control** on wooden trains, but his personal working style involves inspecting each locomotive by lying directly on top of it, which technically tests the structural integrity, but really just slows down the production line by ninety-four percent. And when I try to talk to him, he just stares at me with those giant, wet, black eyes—the universal Boston sign for *I understand nothing but still deserve a biscuit*.

Then there’s Esmeralda, our Head of Wrapping. She’s technically very fast. Too fast. She doesn’t wrap gifts; she *attacks* them. It’s a flurry of paper and teeth, and when she’s done, the package is beautiful, but it looks like it just lost a knife fight. And she does this little back-snort of satisfaction. I have to stand there and pretend I’m not worried about the safety standards. If we miss the December 24th deadline, it won’t be because the naughty/nice list was wrong; it’ll be because Percival tried to eat the conveyor belt. It’s an administrative hellscape, but they do look sharp in those little green and red hats.

Written in the style of the comedian, banjo player, and writer, Steve Martin.

An audio version of this story an image, is available online at:

BostonTerrierChristmas.com



The Chimney Caper

The midnight soot, a smudge of velvet night,
held the Grinch-dog, all snarl and green-felt spite, as
he drove the desperate evergreen down the chimney's
black, cold throat. The roof was a moon-slick slate for
his wicked labour, done in the quiet of the slumbering
street. But oh, the pup, a small white-chested shadow,
merely watched the frost-bright world, turning the
simple, red-glass orb of innocent Joy in the slow, fire-
shadowed dark, utterly deaf to the rumble of his father's
rebellious deed.

Written in the style of the poet, Dylan Thomas
An audio version of each story with an image, is available online at:
BostonTerrierChristmas.com



The Sled Dog Promise

The woods are deep and coming on to dark,
But miles to go before he gets his rest.
He hauled the sleigh, a single, hopeful spark,
Across the drifts that settled on his chest.

The snow was fine and came without a sound,
Filling the tracks where lesser hearts would yield.
No sign of houses on the frosty ground,
Just duty done across the frozen field

He knew the hearths where gifts were yet to fall,
And that the light would wait upon his pace.
A simple promise mattered most of all,
To finish where the cold had set its trace.

Written in the style of the poet, Robert Frost.

*An audio version of each story with an image, is available online at:
BostonTerrierChristmas.com*



The Delivery, Final and Absolute

The paneled door, a latch I had to force,
Let me into the house of plush and stain.

The engine: Red. A terrible, blunt force
Of plastic promise, set against the grain.
He is supposed to be here, the small boy,

The blueprint said,

I am the vector. I am the deploy.

Now the green paper is the closed-off door.
My sack is collapsed, a wrinkled, tired skin.
I stand here, fully done, and perfectly numb.

My work a seal where no life enters in.

I wait for the sound that will not be made.
A small, white breath against the frosted air.

Is the map finished, the final price paid?
Am I required, or merely standing there?

A poem as if written by the pen of Sylvia Plath.

*An audio version of each story with an image, is available online at:
BostonTerrierChristmas.com*



The Cold Blind

It was Christmas morning. The cold cut. Snow began to fall, fine and hard, driven by the wind off the marsh. The clouds hung heavy, gray as a winter duck's wing. He knelt in the blind, the wet reeds sharp against his face. The shotgun was cold in his gloved hands. Beside him, Jack, the Boston, was still. A good dog. Knew his business. He watched the sky, his eyes sharp, his short coat frosted. They waited. The silence was big, broken only by the wind and the soft landing of snow on the ice-skinned water. Then, a flicker. Low on the horizon. He brought the gun up, slow. Jack tensed, a ripple of muscle. The duck came fast, dark against the heavy sky. He breathed out. Held it. Squeezed. The shot broke the morning. The duck folded. Jack was out of the blind before the bird hit the water. He was a good dog.

*As written in the style of the novelist, Ernest Hemingway.
An audio version of each story with an image, is available online at:
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The Hallow-Christmas Pup's Song

I'm bouncing on the high Moon's curve, While Father
stalks the tombs! He looks so fine and full of nerve,
Dispelling graveyard glooms!

I see the bells, the bright red gleam, The snow and
spiders twist! It's just the perfect, chilling dream! A
world in silver mist!

Let's tear the normal rules away, The Holly wears a
shroud! It's Halloween, it's Christmas Day! Above the
restless crowd!

*As written in the style of composer and lyricist, Danny Elfman.
An audio version of each story with an image, is available online at:
BostonTerrierChristmas.com*



Kites in a Southern Sky

The Georgia Christmas air was crisp but gentle, carrying the soft scent of pine and familiarity. Miss Lilian, her eyes still holding a childlike wonder, smoothed the silk of her new kite. Beside her, little Pip, a Boston Terrier with ears like polished leather, trembled with an urgent, devoted energy. The kite was a gift she hadn't needed, but Pip understood the possibility of flight. With a soft murmur, she tied the twine of his kite to his collar, a ridiculous, lovely connection. In the damp yard, she tossed the scarlet diamond. His didn't fly high, but it bobbed and swayed, a splash of color pulled by Pip's joyous, snorting engine of Christmas spirit—a perfect exchange of a piece of the sky for a piece of her heart.

*As written in the style of the author, Truman Capote.
An audio version of each story with an image, is available online at:
BostonTerrierChristmas.com*



The Holy Pup's Nativity

A Manger made of simple straw,
Where Meekness dwelleth, free from flaw.
Sweet Boston Mary, soft and deep,
With Joseph's watchful, holy sleep.
And lo! A Pup of Golden Hue,
A little Lamb, both soft and New.
From distant lands, three Kings now pace,
To gaze upon His gentle Face.
The Star of Bethlehem, burning bright,
Reveals the wonder of the Night.
For in this Fur, a Love is born,
To bless all creatures on this Morn.

*Written in the style of the 18th century painter, poet and printmaker, William Blake.
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The Green Light's Promise

He stood upon the frosted lawn, the snow a fine, crystalline powder beneath his polished shoes, and watched the green light across the bay. It was December, and the great house behind him, strung with a thousand tiny, electric gleams, hummed with a hollow warmth that was all his own making. But his gaze was not on the glittering testament to his achieved present; it was cast backward, into the bleak, unadorned Christmases of his pup-hood.

He remembered the meager litter, the damp straw, the biting wind that found every crack in the rickety barn. No tinsel then, only the hard glint of ice on a freezing bucket, the sharp, hungry scent of snow-laden air. Those mornings, devoid of gilded packages and festive cheer, had etched a resolve into his very bones. They had promised him nothing, and in that void, he had forged his own extravagant promises. He would build a fortress of comfort, a dazzling illusion of unending summer, where no cold wind could ever touch him again. The green light was still there, of course, forever distant, but the snow on his collar felt less a chill of the present and more a forgotten echo of the past, the engine of his impossible climb.

*As written in the style of the novelist, F. Scott Fitzgerald.
An audio version of each story with an image, is available online at:
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The Nutcracker's Transformation

The great party had ended at the Silberhaus' home. Clara lay huddled close to her mended Nutcracker, as she fell asleep on an overstuffed chair in the living room. She was clueless that the Bostonian King had filled the house with his army of disorganized terriers which tore through carpet and furnishings, and had shaken the children's toys to pieces.

The King fiercely brandished his sword and then watched as the small bush in the corner grew magically into a giant spruce trimmed and lighted by Drosselmeier, Clara's favorite uncle. He'd returned to the room emptied of guests to pick up his cloak and witnessed the damage caused by the militia of black and white Terriers. They began to bark, twirl and leap at each other aimlessly, and rolled on their backs amidst the chaos they'd created.

In a blink of an eye, Clara's Nutcracker, after growing 10 times its size by Drosselmeier, had marched over the broken debris with his army of hand-painted tin soldiers armed with swords and dressed for battle. The Nutcracker Prince fearlessly battled off the Bostonians who thought they were there only to play, and never to fight. Whimpering, they ran this way and that, zooming through windows and doors to escape the professional militia, thus abandoning their King who lay lifeless on the floor.

Written by George H. Rothacker, based on a story by E. T. A. Hoffman
An audio version of each story with an image, is available online at:
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The Five Small Tyrants of the Mantle

I did not buy them. They arrived courtesy of Hugh, who thought our fireplace required a small, silent, highly judgmental brigade of wooden Boston Terriers. A complete, themed set, he insisted. An absolute tyranny of unsolicited cheer.

On the far left, the **Soldier**, jaw glued shut, unable to crack a single nut, judged the world with cold menace. Beside him, the **King**, perpetually astonished in his ermine cape, demanded space and reverence he hadn't earned. Next, the **Drummer**—too happy, too ready to produce the silent, maddening rat-a-tat of Christmas obligation. The **Guard** stood stiffly, with his gun propped on his shoulder, silently informing me that I had failed to arrange the surrounding décor correctly.

But the final figure, the **Baker**, clutching his pathetic rolling pin, was the most tragic: a small, wooden symbol of every rock-hard holiday treat I've ever been forced to consume. Five little sentinels of domestic defeat, cracking the veneer of my sanity one long December night at a time. I prefer the garage.

As written in the style of humorist, David Sedaris.

*An audio version of each story with an image is available online at:
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The Chronology of Titan

The Boston Terriers lived in a dome on Titan. They were the only ones there. The father's name was Biff. He was the First Settler. His wife was Mildred. The air outside was mostly methane and nitrogen. They had a small garden of irradiated carrots. They ate the carrots. They had no one to complain to. And so it goes.

Christmas was to be December 25th, same as Earth. They had no chimney. They left the carrots out by the airlock, just in case. It was very damp inside the dome. Mildred finished her novel about the time-traveling dachshund. She knew nobody would ever read it, because nobody existed.

Biff often stood by the thick poly-glass. He looked at the orange land, such as it was, the smeared shadow of Saturn, and missed green grass. He missed fire hydrants. They were Bostons. They had been assigned the moon. They just kept going. Merry Christmas.

*As written in the style of the author, Kurt Vonnegut.
An audio version of each story with an image, is available online at:
BostonTerrierChristmas.com*



The Vicious Circle (Holiday Edition)

The tinsel gleamed, the log fire roared, A festive, rather tiresome sight. Another cocktail, swiftly poured, To dull the edge of holiday light.

My friends, they prattled, sharp and bright, Of futures, pasts, and what they'd penned. "The Christmas spirit?" (What a blight!) "One hopes, old chap, it soon will end."

A bone lay chewed, a trifle grim, Beneath the tree, so bravely decked. This Yuletide cheer, a shallow whim, A sentiment to be dissected.

The mistletoe, a silent threat, Above the gin and cutting phrase. One wonders what one truly gets From all these tedious, festive days. Except, perhaps, a moment's grace, Before the next, dull, forced embrace.

*As written in the style of the humorist and social commentator, Dorothy Parker.
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The Uncompromised Form

He regarded the stark, geometric structure he had forged from cold, unyielding iron. It was a flawless projection of his own rational mind, a monument to the unassisted effort of a single, competent spirit. He built it because it was superior, not for the pathetic, fluttering approval of the mob who preferred sentimental, mass-produced tinsel.

She approached, her eyes—sharp, intelligent, and recognizing value only in its pure, objective form—surveying the creation. She offered no praise, for praise was the currency of the mediocre. “It is uncompromised,” she stated, her voice a low, hard endorsement of his ego.

This was the only exchange of worth: the value created and the mind capable of perceiving it, unburdened by tradition, sentiment, or the parasitic demands of the holiday collective. Let them cling to their rituals of forced charity and ancient myths. Here, in the face of this achieved fact, only the truth of the Individual mattered.

As written in the style of the novelist and philosopher, Ayn Rand.

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The Equation of Being

The fifth candle was lit, and its steady light threw long shadows that danced across the study floor—a minor problem in optics, easily solved. Albert sat next to the light from the Menorah, his large, dark eyes absorbing the small, self-sustaining flame. He had spent his human years in the pursuit of relativity, trying to reconcile the great, unknowable cosmos with the finite, flawed instruments of the mind.

But here, as a Boston Terrier, the ultimate equation remained.

The human struggles for truth, forever chasing the light faster than it travels. A constant state of incomplete derivation. The dog, however, is a perfect, solved state. There is no relativity in his joy; it is absolute. His purpose is simply to exist: to feel the warmth, to receive affection, to be a source of unconditional presence.

The universe, he realized, required only simplicity. And in that moment, watching the wick glow with the eternal light of dedication, he knew the greatest theory of all was not $E=mc^2$, but the uncalculated, boundless, and immediate light of being a dog.

*As written in the spirit of Einsteinian contemplation
An audio version of each story with an image, is available online at:
BostonTerrierChristmas.com*



The Satchmo Snuffle

Ol' Satchmo—that's me, just like my band of Bostons, but with a better nose for biscuits—I was posted up, right, just watching all the humans fret over the glitter. Man, that's their way. But me? I got my pack right here, see?

Little Bostons, every one of 'em. And when they all flop down for a good, righteous snore, that low, rumbling sound? That's my bass line, right there. It ain't about the high notes, folks, it's about the groove. And the groove is simple: a warm spot by the radiator, a quick sniff of the cold air, and that big, beautiful feeling that everything's going to be alright.

When you're "goin' to the dogs," or rather with the dogs, you've found the best gig in the world, Pops always says. What else you need?

Nothin', that's what. *Mmm-hmm.*

*As written in the style of the trumpet player and overall musician, Louis Armstrong.
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The Singular Observer

The Boston Terrier, though a small system, provides a crucial challenge to the Standard Model of **spacetime continuity**. While the human mind struggles with the initial singularity of the Big Bang, the dog routinely operates from a point of absolute zero-memory regarding the origin of the last meal. This suggests a localized **event horizon** existing roughly one second behind its skull. Its orbit, governed entirely by the localized gravity of the refrigerator and the presence of high-density chew toys, is predictable to a high degree of certainty. When it performs a sudden, inexplicable **zoomie** across the floor, this can be mathematically modeled as a spontaneous warp in the fabric of the living room, a temporary, low-energy wormhole allowing instantaneous travel between the sofa and the front door. We observe the event; we document the velocity. We are left, however, with the same unyielding cosmological query: Why? The answer, presumably, is reducible to pure, unquantifiable **excitement**.

*As written in the spirit of the astrophysicist Stephen Hawking.
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BostonTerrierChristmas.com*



The Conspiracy of the Unwarm Tea

The Mad Hatter, a Boston Terrier in a ridiculously oversized hat, poured what looked suspiciously like melted icicles into a cup. “The great secret, dear Alice,” he whispered, though the Queen was only three feet away, “is that if the tea is warm, one might actually feel something. And feeling is entirely unsuited for the third Tuesday of December!”

The Queen of Hearts, a majestic **Boston Terrier** wearing a tiny, holy crown, slammed her paw on the linen cloth. “Silence! The temperature of the Observance must be precisely **Un-Christmas-like!** Anything warmer than a very large, wet snowflake is **TREASON!** Off with their heads!”

Alice shivered. “But surely, tea is supposed to be warm in the cold? It’s the proper, logical way.”

The Hatter began frantically digging at the ground with his front paws, convinced the entire tea set was meant to be buried for safekeeping. “The crumpets are safe now!” he snorted, covering the sugar bowl with dirt. “The conspiracy, you see, is not what we are saying, but what we are not saying. Which is: we haven’t enough clean spoons to share!”

The Queen, utterly exasperated by the chaos, made a low, frustrated growl of despair. “Off with its... oh, never mind. It’s too cold to argue with a Hatter.”

*As written in the style of the author, Lewis Carroll.
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The Grace of Bedford Falls

The miracle of life, you see, is often a matter of **accident**—a little shove from the great Director upstairs. That pivotal moment on the ice, when Harry broke through? If George himself hadn't plunged in, but instead, a little Boston Terrier, all leash and panic, had managed to pull Harry free... well, the heroism is gone, but the **consequence** remains.

The dog doesn't save Harry to be a hero; he pulls because he's leashed and scared. But the sheer, chaotic tug in the freezing air, the sudden fall, the shock of the cold—that is what gives George his permanent injury, the **plausible misfortune** that keeps him grounded. He loses his hearing, he loses his ticket out of Bedford Falls, but he gains his life.

The dog's pure, instinctual act is the real fate of the picture. George's great, selfless life isn't built on a grand, planned rescue, but on the small, messy sacrifice forced upon him by a lovable animal's sheer will to survive. And that, my friends, makes the whole story much more beautifully, plausibly human.

*As written in the spirit of the great filmmaker, Frank Capra.
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The Rules of Impeccable Holiday Logic

It is a good thing to gather the family, canine and human alike, for the ceremonial dressing of the tree. This is a meticulous, joyous operation that speaks volumes about the quality of the home. Here are the absolute rules for an impeccable presentation:

The Essential “Always Do’s” (*The Rights*)

1. Always layer your lighting. Use clear, warm white lights woven deeply into the tree to create inner luminescence.
2. Always incorporate fresh, natural elements like clipped cedar or boxwood. The organic fragrance is infinitely superior to any artificial scent.
3. Always secure low-hanging ornaments with fine gauge floral wire. A well-placed heirloom should never become a “chewing incident” for the Boston Terrier helpers.

The Absolute “Never Do’s” (*The Wrongs*)

1. Never use multicolored flashing lights. The display must be one of serene, sustained elegance, not an airport runway at midnight.
2. Never use tinsel or cheap plastic hooks. Use thin floral wire and apply fine glitter to natural pinecones if sparkle is required.
3. Never allow the tree skirt to bunch or wrinkle. It must be flawlessly steamed and centered; the whole process is about structure.

As written in the style of Martha Stewart.

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The North Star's Promise

“Come on now, Mammy. Hush, little ones. We done made it to the river of safety. The Master call you property, and think of us as less than women—say we dogs to be whipped and sold, just like these here good pups could sell for coins. But I tell you, honey, no Master’s whip got the power to reach you now. He strip you of your kin and strip you of your name, but he can’t strip the hope outta your soul.

“These good Quaker people will give us rest and bread. And look at your pups—small and brave, just like you. We got news from your husband, your Daddy. He’s up in the Northern Star, waiting for his family, waiting on Freedom’s shore. We ain’t done yet, but the hardest part is behind us. Keep your eyes on that North Star, Mammy. When we get to the Promised Land, we gon’ sing a song of reunion that the whole world gon’ hear. Move fast, now. Dawn is restless.”

*As written from the viewpoint of Harriett Tubman who led slaves to freedom.
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The Celluloid Affair (*Holiday Romance*)

(Verse)

The orchestra swells, the camera begins to purr, And suddenly, two separate lives are just a blur. We hold the perfect pose that only magic knows; Then you return to Brentwood, And I to my unresponsive spouse, Who doesn't dance, but owns our very large and overvalued house.

You and I are neat, correct, impeccably polite, But only here, beneath this false, electric light, Do our two lonely planets meet. It's just so dreadfully discreet...

(Refrain)

We have a Holiday Romance,
One designed only for the picture show
An on-stage unforbidden chance,
To let our complicated feelings free to grow.
We know the contract, what the lawyers mean,
We only fall in love on the silver screen.
It's just our tragic, celluloid affair.
The public pays to watch us pair.
Then when we cut, and simply turn and nod —
We're only lovers, dear, by the grace of God.
Stuck within our only celluloid affair.

*Lyrics in the style of Lorenze Hart partnered with the composer Richard Rodgers.
An audio version of each story with an image is available online at:
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The Happy Little Cabin

Now, we're just going to take a little **Titanium White** and put a happy little patch of snow right here on the schnozzle. See? Doesn't take much. We don't make mistakes; we just have **happy little accidents**. Maybe the smoke blends too much with the clouds, but that's what makes it special. That's our little secret. Now we'll take our **Phthalo Green**—just tap a tiny bit—and look at the wonderful little evergreen that lives right next to the cabin. We don't have to push hard; just let the brush float. Now I'm going to drop two dollops of **Van Dyke Brown** at the door. It's not a blob, it's a **transformation**. With two more dollops the cabin's now ready for inhabitants and a beautiful place where two brown Bostons can live side-by-side. With a couple of quick strokes, I could make each pooch blur into an unexpected zoomie as if they'd run across the yard, perhaps running back and forth outside the cabin. Don't worry about it. Just stand back and admire the work. Because this is your world, and while you're here, everything is happy. Even the barks of the dogs.

Especially the barks.

*Written in the fashion of public television's beloved art teacher, Bob Ross.
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A Christmas Eve Reflection on the Natural World

On this quiet Christmas Eve, my heart turns to the profound interconnectedness of all life. From the moment I first looked into a chimpanzee's eyes in Gombe, I understood a fundamental truth: we are part of nature, not separate from it.

My life has been dedicated to these magnificent beings, our closest relatives, who taught me humility and the extraordinary richness of family. My beloved dogs, those loyal companions, have consistently reminded me of the simple, unconditional love that bridges species.

As I reflect on the strength of gorillas, the spirit of chimpanzees, and the gentle presence of my beloved canines, I see a beautiful tapestry of life. Their very existence is a precious gift, a testament to the wild, intricate world that sustains us all.

My work, truly, was always for us—for humanity. For if we cannot protect the creatures with whom we share this miraculous Earth, then what hope do we have for our own future? The diminishing of their world diminishes us all.

This Christmas Eve, let us carry a fresh resolve. Let us choose hope over apathy, and action over despair. Each of us makes a difference. May this season remind us that peace on Earth truly begins with peace with Earth. Let us live in harmony with our shared, wondrous home, for in doing so, we rediscover the very best of ourselves, unlocking humanity's greatest possibilities.

Jane Goodall passed away recently, and the words written are a message to all of us.

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A note on the creation of this book:

Artificial intelligence has become a valuable tool for artists, writers, musicians, engineers and anyone with a creative voice. Its skills are remarkable, in that it can organize and clarify human thoughts to produce images, music, lyrics, poetry and industrial forms from just the spoken or written word.

Many are fearful that AI will replace tasks currently performed by humans. That may be true, but this book is testimony to AI's ability to collaborate with humans to produce products that transcend the skills of either.

This book has been a test in narrowing the gap between technology and the human spirit. Some may find it cold and artificial, while others will find it fun, learned and fanciful. My aim was simply to create a calendar of 24 days filled with Boston Terriers, Christmas cheer, and a way to honor celebrated humans who have inspired me throughout my life.

– *George Rothacker, 2025*



Notable individuals who inspired the writings
contained within this 2025 Holiday booklet

Dec. 1 - Steve Martin
Dec. 2 - Dylan Thomas
Dec. 3 - Robert Frost
Dec. 4 - Sylvia Plath
Dec. 5 - Ernest Hemingway
Dec. 6 - Danny Elfman
Dec. 7 - Truman Capote
Dec. 8 - William Blake
Dec. 9 - F. Scott Fitzgerald
Dec. 10 - E. T. A. Hoffmann
Dec. 11 - David Sedaris
Dec. 12 - Kurt Vonnegut

Dec. 13 - Dorothy Parker
Dec. 14 - Ayn Rand
Dec. 15 - Albert Einstein
Dec. 16 - Louis Armstrong
Dec. 17 - Stephen Hawking
Dec. 18 - Louis Carrol
Dec. 19 - Frank Capra
Dec. 20 - Martha Stewart
Dec. 21 - Harriot Tubman
Dec. 22 - Lorenz Hart
Dec. 23 - Bob Ross
Dec. 24 - Jane Goodall

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