

The Week After New Year's by Sandy Metzger

*Tis the week after New Year's
And all through the yard
Very little is growing
Not even the Chard*

*Hydrangeas are mushy
The sedums are brown
The clematis is drooping
The Stachy's a soft mound*

*The bulbs are all nestled
Down six inches deep
But Paperwhites wake
From their short winter sleep*

*Now what do I do
With a yard full of holes
Could it be gophers
Bees, moles or voles?*

*I get out the traps
The gassers, the grain
Peanut butter, mothballs
To protect my domain*

*Then out on the lawn
There arise telltale snaps
I spring out the door
To empty the traps*

*When, what to my wondering
Eyes should appear
But one handsome buck
And eight hungry deer*

*More rapid than eagles
Over fences they're flying
But the roses are barren
Can't blame them for trying*

*Go, Dasher, go, Dancer
Git, Prancer and Vixen
Go Comet, go, Cupid
So Long, Donder and Blitzen!*

*Get over the fence
To the top of the hill
Now dash away, deer
While I still have goodwill*

*I keep filling the feeders
So the birds stick around
But the jays are aggressive
Swipe it all on the ground*

*The birdbaths are frozen
Isn't that a real bummer?
But the nectar stays thawed
For the two little hummers*

*The bones of the garden
Stand there anorectic
They add winter interest
Is that truly aesthetic?*

*The sun tries to smile
Through increasing rain
Gives lustre of midday
To soggy terrain*

*I encourage the Sages
Buddleias and vines
O, Perennials, please
Don't die off this time*

*O, Coreopsis, Verbena
Phygelius, Centranthus
Nepeta, Scabiosa
Caryopteris, Dianthus*

*Epilobium, Tanacetum
Erysimum, Monarda
Yarrow, Zauschneria
Erigeron, Gaillardia*

*Please, dear Asclepias
Ceratostigma, Echinacea
I'll try hard this year
Not to perform euthanasia*

*It's just that in winter
When not much is blooming
I get out the clippers
To begin on the grooming*

*Way too early it is
Though the flowers are dead
Black, brown and grey
With nodding seedheads*

*So I promise you, plants
You just do your own thing
I won't cut you back
Til the first signs of spring*

