From the window of my house I
saw strange, white figures. I
looked out my window and saw
faint sounds of phrasing, a
sound of bells. From outside came
the sound, though not of ringing.

Sure, that night I did hear
the sound. My friend had wished, but I knew

"There is no Santa," my
friend said, quickly. The ringing bells
were a sound I found cold, and
I heard it slowly and distinctly.
pulled me aboard.

surprised hand and he is the Polar Express. I took this course was his answer. "This
"Why to the North Pole.

Where I asked.

"Come, " he said. "Are you
"Get out I ran up to him. "Well aboard the conductor the door

He opened the door and turned on my ship's and rode I looked up at my window I put

wished him this was then He took a large pocket

won't door and the around in a conductor soak of

even SHOWBAS fall lightly

It was wrapped in an opium
The rain was piled with

PETER Exprесс read northward
hickened in the distance as he
the heights of towns and villages
melted chocolate bars. Quirk
cooks a thick and rich as
white as snow. We drank hot
condensed with housefuls of
candles and housefuls of
sang Christmas carols and ate
pajamas and nightgowns. We
other children, all in their

PRETENDERS sang northward
through the quiet wilderness
our train as it thundered
where celled rabbits hid from
where keen wolves roamed and
through cold dark forests
hills to be seen. We never
soon there were no more
coast:
valleys like a car on a roller
rolling over peaks and through
Passes and later we ran along
Express never slowed down
escape the moon, but the pillar
high like a beacon as we would
We climbed mountains so
"Here," said the conductor, "the polar sea."

Ice caps appeared on the horizon. It looked like the landscape of the Great Ice Desert. We crossed a barrier in the mountains. I blew into snow-covered hills.
"I'll be with them at one of your Christmas parties," the conductor answered, "we all asked. Who receives the best gift?"

"Christmas," Santa will give the finest gift of all. "Then is where the secret of the city lies," his comrade said. "They are gathered at the top of the world. Glad with hope and standing alone at the

The North Pole was a
Bed us outside, we stopped and the conductor said, "Express could go no farther."

When we reached the center of the North Pole, we saw hundreds of elves. As we drew closer, "Look!" shouted one of the children, "the elves!"
For Christmas.

Now what would you like
on Sunday, please, and the teacher
conductor handed me up, I sat
jumped into his sleigh. I have
have this fellow here.
He pointed to me and said, "Let's
He marched over to us and,
cheered wildly.

Chains appeared. The sleigh
drives moved quick and Santa
bundled across the chinch, the
sound like nothing I'd ever
heard. Happiness. I was a missclad
shoebill blue hue hung from
head, roasting the sleigh
and passed, muffling the silence
were excited. They passed
Santa's sleigh, the remainder
again circled. In front of us stood
crowd to the center of large
We pressed through the
"The first gift of Christmas" above him, and called out, stood holding the bell high all tossed up into the air. He from a reindeer's harness. The and held on to his bell snorted. Then he gave me a huge sigh. When I asked, Santa was one silver bell from Santa's wanted more than anything. Santa's silver bell. When I Christmas was not inside. What I wanted most for gift I could imagine. But the I knew that I could have any
polar sky
disappeared in the cold, dark
circled once above us, then
dropped into the air, 

His seam charged forward and
ripped and cracked his whip
Saw him shrug and the thunder
me down from the shield.

pocket. The conductor helped
and pulled in my bangles
she handed the bell to me
the elves bowed their approval.
A clock struck midnight as
We're on our way home.

Lunch and started moving. We
But the train gave a sudden
for it, one of the children said
Lest hurry on the side and look
from some curls slighter
hole, I had lost the silver bell
but it only thing that was a
bell, I reached into my pocket
after children asked to see the
inside the Polar Express, the
As soon as we were back
spread away.

loud blare from his whistle and

The Polar Express let out a

CHRISTMAS" he shouted.

his mouth. "MERRY

He cupped his hands around

Yelled our

could I hear him, "Wyatt,"

from the moving train, but I

The conductor said something
doors and waved goodbye.

children. I stood at my

my house. I sadly let the other

bell when the train reached

I broke my heart to lose the
On Christmas morning my little sister Sarah and I opened our presents. When it looked as if everything had been unwrapped, Sarah found one last small box behind the tree. It had my name on it. Inside was the silver bell! There was a note: “Found this on the seat of my sleigh. Fix that hole in your pocket.” Signed, “Mr. C.”

I shook the bell. It made the most beautiful sound my sister and I had ever heard.

But my mother said, “Oh, that’s too bad.”

“Yes,” said my father, “it’s broken.”

When I’d shaken the bell, my parents had not heard a sound.
old. The bell still rings for me as it does for all who truly believe.

that she could no longer hear its sweet sound. I thought I’ve grown

pasted; I fell silent, for all of them. Even Sarah found one Christmas

At one time most of my friends could hear the bell, but in years