

THE BOWLING BAG

by Harry Dunn

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My old blue bowling bag was looking kinda scruffy
As Madam Lash remarked on more than one occasion
That it needed to be cleaned and polished and a bit of renovation.
'Ah, there's no hurry, dear,' was my usual evasion
'I'll wait 'til Pennant's finished'
Or similar obfuscation.

But recently, returning from a day out on the green
Followed by a chardonnay or two, certainly no more,
In accordance with medical advice, as my doctor recommended,
For a pleasant disposition and internal health hygiene,
One or two libations after bowling, not before,
But he didn't mention size of glass or generosity of pour.

On my return to house and home, I was greeted at the door
By Mrs Dunn. the Madam Lash above forementioned.
She was in *spring-cleaning frenzy*, with that febrile look I've seen before
She had the cleaning-bug, she was transfixed in a different dimension;
She demanded the location of my scruffy bowling bag,
'It's in the boot, my love,' said I, with a touch of apprehension
And handed her the keys; to argue would be futile,
No chance here of human intervention.

Thinking that discretion might be the better part of valour,
I announced my desire and my intention
To spend an hour or so with Dave,
My friend and neighbour, to restore my healthy pallor,
And complete my health routine - around at *his* man-cave.

I returned to find the Memsahib in a state of high alarm and apprehension :
A bowling bag lay on the table, no longer in a mess,
It was cleaner and in better shape than it had been for years,
With polished straps and handles, and all things in their place,
So I enquired the reason for my child-bride's evident distress;
She cried 'Have you gone mad, or *are you in transition*,
Oh, my God,' she moaned, 'Our married life is now in such a mess. '

Just take a look at that stuff down there on the floor,
I found it in your bowling bag - where else ?
You're in the most awfully embarrassing position -
- Or words to that effect -
I stared in disbelief as I beheld there near the door
A pile of *women's stuff*, the cause of her ignition ;
There was eyebrow pencil, powder-puffs, and lippie,
Nail -polish and remover, the latest New Idea, a book on how to knit
A pair of frilly under-garments, a perfume labelled "Yippie"
And a hairy-looking depilation mitt.

And then the penny dropped, as pennies always do,
I shouted, with the self-righteousness of the innocent accused
'Control yourself, Madame, the explanation's clear for all to see ,
I'm not the closeted cross-dresser you thought I have been hiding,
Oh, ye of little faith, how could *you* think that of *me*?
Can you not see what's happened - the simplest of mistakes -
Some bowlers do it all the time
I've brought home someone else's bag,
And like as not – she's gone home with mine.

If there's a lady bowler out there, as yet unaware that you have my bowler's bag
I hope your partner doesn't open it, like when *my* clanger was discovered
There are things in there that might cause a spouse concern
If he mistakenly believed they belonged to his beloved,
And such mistaken things can take a nasty turn,
As they did with us, before the explanation was uncovered.
And, if that lady-bowler, until now still unaware
Finds she has my old blue Henselite three-zipper, a bit unclean and tatty,
Please call me on the land-line - don't call the Bowling Club -
They have some cruel old men down there
Who might make merry at our expense, and in matters such as this
Some *ladies* can also be a trifle caustic, even catty
So, *caveat emptor* still applies - let the bowler be aware.

We could exchange our little beauties, away from prying eyes
Your bag, now pristine, mine a wee bit ratty ,
And my better half, now past her cleaning frenzy, back to calm and wise
Has settled down because she knows I haven't joined the Trannies Club,
And I'm not likely to step out one night in fancy ladies' frillies,
When I'm off the leash, to visit RSL, the local pub.
Or some other wicked place - in search of tiger-lillies