

LOUIE

An unlikely local hero

by Harry Dunn
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There's this blue-black buzzy blow-fly
Followed me for years,
With eyes as big as saucers
And most efficient ears,
A fine example of the order *diptera*,
Genus *Lucilia cuprina*, so I've learned
I know him just as Louie,
A pet-name that he's earned
Nothing formal, like Louis or Lugosi,
Lulu, Lucinda or Lucella,
In case old Louie is, in fact,
A lovely airborne lady,
Not a hairy-chested feller.

My Louie's not the type of fly found slumming
Around rubbish bins and tips,
But he has a morbid fascination
With my nostrils, eyes and and lips,
And did I think to mention how
He often joins me in the lavvy
God knows why that place has Louie in its grip
But he seems to be at home in there -
Enjoys a little snack,
Often followed by a dip .

Louie lives outside the house,
As all good blow-flies should,
Only comes in when he's hungry
He has a key to open our rear door,
The one that's made of wood,
And if we open up the fly-screen
Just half an inch, no more,
Louie's in like Errol Flynn,
On the look-out for a score,
As any blowie would.

Only yesterday, the Memsah'b - Mrs. Dunn
Was half-way through her midday snack,
Frogs-legs, pheasant, truffles and pistachio
Cried out "That bleeding fly has blown my *oysters naturelle*,
My lovely Escargot;
It's as much as I can do now just to keep them down -
That wretched fly of yours will have to go:
I'll get rid of him tomorrow,
I'll buy ev'ry can of fly-spray
In this single-supermarket town."

I just couldn't let it end like this-
My friendship with poor Louie,
We go back twenty years and more,
I didn't want him dead,
So I warned him in advance, just to even up the score,
And told him that he had a price upon his head
And wanted by the Law.

I begged him not to come
To the table where we sup
Both casual and formal,
I said "Missus D is out to get you
And her blood is fairly up,
So, Louie, you must keep away
Until the fuss dies down
Don't return until things are back to normal,
This is your only hope -
Don't take your guns to town, Lou
Don't take your guns to town.

I could sense the pain in Louie's brain
As I left him on his Todd,
To contemplate his fate
And prepare to meet his god
Not to mention the sad likelihood
Of bloodshed, stress and pain
As he faced the firing squad.

So would Louie have the strength -
And this would take some gumption -
To pass up his gourmet lunch,
-This addict of consumption -
To preserve his blow-fly life,
Or would he throw discretion to the winds
And follow blow-fly instinct
For one more tasty dinner,
To grab it while it's there, come what may,
Lay his life upon line,
Hoping to survive and fight another day -
I wondered which would be the final winner.

Meanwhile, Madam Lash was mobilising forces,
As if for World War Three,
Stocking up on aerosols and Insect sprays
All guaranteed to work and dripping with endorsements
For eliminating ev'ry insect known to man,
And she recruited reinforcements,
Her own well-equipped platoon
To set an ambush for poor Louie,
Like Ned Kelly at Glenrowan
And Gary Cooper, at High Noon.

Came Thursday, October Thirty-First
Feast of Halloween, and the awful trap was set,
To ambush poor old Louie while he was occupied at table
In his little luncheonette -
That table laid with goodies, inviting and uncovered,
The fly-door open half an inch,
Awaiting the arrival of my old friend Louie,
As he pretty soon discovered,
When he entered as expected, with his knife and fork and spoon.

He'd been waited there all morning,
Despite my well-meant warning,
Although cautious, more than normal,
He buzzed around and fuzzed around,
So the possee had to wait,
Then he helicoptered down
Onto the dinner plate.

He started to bog in, as was his eating habit
And the possee opened fire at point-blank range,
Aerogard and Fly-tox, Mortein Plus,
Johnson's aerosol and Atlas
And a think called Pests-R-Us
Then they hit him with the Pea-beau,
Hit 'im with the old Pea-Beau,
Enough to stop a bus.

A double-barrelled shotgun was discharged,
To make sure the job was done,
An ordinary blow-fly would by now
Be well and truly dead
But Louie, like Rasputin, wasn't one -
He arose, a battered Phoenix from the ashes,
Groggy and befuddled
From that bloody battleground, our former kitchen table,
And headed for the safety of the door,
As fast as he was able,
But crashed into a window which was shut,
And fell backwards to the floor.

The vigilantes rushed as one
To administer the coup-de-grace,
But with one almighty effort old Louie rose again,
And headed for the bar.
Alas, poor Louie collided with a chair,
Went down again, this time on his back
Buzzed round and round, his legs up in the air,
An easy two-hand catch -
A hob-nailed boot came down -
It made a squelshy sound
And completed his dispatch.

They cremated Louie's mangled corpse.
With benzine and igniter,
(It might have been a match)
- Vale, Louie, my gallant little fighter.

The posse breathed their great relief,
Standing over Louie's sad remains
Treating my old friend as you would a common thief,
They put away their weapons
Buried his remains and were heading for the door
When we all heard a distant sound
The whirr of fly-wings buzzing,
A sound I've heard a thousand times before,
Growing by the second,
As it homed in on our door.

It reached its destination, healthy and complete,
To view the desolation,
Then settled down to eat
An entree to begin with,
Then a hearty main, followed by a sweet.

Ye gods, I cried, he's back,
He's back as large as life,
Resurrected from the dead
And none the worse for wear;
So – eat your heart out, Arnie Schwartz,
You're not the only Terminator,
Just the biggest in the shed -
There's squillions of them out there
They're on their merry way
And soon they'll all be begging to be fed!