

## **Burgie's Rink**

by Harry Dunn

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First time I ever bowled, or should I say, attempted,  
Under coaching and instruction from a patient Brian H,  
I placed a couple on the kitty - beginner's luck, I think,  
But Brian said, "If you bowl like that, and practise hard for years,  
One day you could be bowling  
Up there on Burgie's rink".

Well, the years rolled by, and I practised - quite a bit at first  
But my bowling skills were limited, so there wasn't much improvement,  
Like a car stuck in a bog  
I stayed in first and spun the wheels, but there was little forward movement,  
So I let my bowling lapse, and took to lies and drink,  
Gave up my childish dreams, and the hope of ever bowling  
Out there on Burgie's rink.

Until one day, and I won't say when - I'll explain a little later -  
Division One was playing, an important game away,  
I just happened to be present, when they lost their Number Three,  
And had no-one else to play;  
So I offered to fill in, and heard a feller say  
It might be better to concede right now,  
But Burgie said, "We'll play - rather swim than sink"  
And that's how I made my big debut  
Out there on Burgie's Rink.

You might think that we are heading  
For another fairy-tale,  
In which the humble stand-in does some magic bowling trick  
Just when they all expected him to fail,  
But I was happy just to be there, and a nod's as good as a wink,  
For I had achieved my life's ambition  
Out there bowling, on Ronald Burge's rink.

The match; it then proceeded in the spirit of the sport,  
And I concentrated hard, just keeping out of trouble,  
But although we had four players out there bowling on that rink  
Our team was really bowling one man short,  
For my bowls were long and wide, often ending in the drink,  
But the others bowled well enough to cover me,  
Out there on Burgie's rink.

And now we're down to the last and final end  
With the scores exactly even,  
Then suddenly, we're holding three, and wouldn't you just know it,  
This vital game's as good as won,  
Just as long as *I* don't blow it.  
Skipper Burge comes up to me, right from the other end,  
And says, through gritted teeth,

**"Bowl short and wide - stay well outside,  
For if you get into that lovely head, I promise you,  
We'll be collecting for a wreath".**

**I take slow and careful aim, on a line a long way out,  
Intent on keeping well away from Burgie's lovely head,  
But his face is still contorted in alarm.  
My eye is somehow not in concert  
With my wilfull, woeful, wicked bowling arm,  
And out it goes - not straight, but rather badly bent;  
And my bowl is heading straight for that lovely three-up head,  
In a narrow graceful arc,  
But its pace is sadly not abating;  
It picks up the jack, and takes it back  
To where the Bad Guys have three catchers - waiting.  
Skipper Burge is down that green before I've time to blink,  
Yelling, "Murder, Bloody Murder, but it's far too good for you"  
And pandemonium breaks out,  
Down there on Burgie's rink.**

**They produce a sack of feathers,  
And a pot of tar, now heating.  
"So make it really hot", our Lead to Second mutters,  
And I don't like the way that big bloke keeps looking hard at me  
And loosens up a pair of rusty old bolt-cutters.  
I'm beginning now to sweat, I'm cold and soaking wet  
I'm shaking and I'm clammy:  
Just then I get a violent jab, in the region of my ribs,  
Delivered by a powerful female fist,  
Belonging to the Lawful Wedded Wife:  
"Wake up; wake up, you're dreaming", madam says,  
And I can see that she is wondering  
What it is she's missed.**

**"Thank God you woke me when you did",  
I cry out in relief,  
They were about to tar and feather me,  
As they would a common thief.  
They even had bolt - cutters, and God - only knows what else,  
In that dirty old wheel - barrow,  
Just because I bowled a fraction long,  
And perhaps a trifle narrow".**

**Now there's one thing I will tell you,  
And I don't care what you think,  
That's the first and only time  
They'll ever see me bowling,  
On Burgie's bloody rink!**