

Bankers

by Harry Dunn
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A lawn bowler rocked up to the Gates Of Hell
And the Devil made ready a firey cell;
He welcomed this bowler at the molten gates,
Who just couldn't *wait* to catch up with old mates.

He said 'Open these gates so I can come in,
I'm ready to pay the wages of sin,
My credentials for Hell are beyond dispute,
With a sinful life of transgression and the illest-repute.

A life of depravity, with no shame or remorse,
With four widows now grieving, and not one divorce;
Unaware of each other, so things will get worse
When they meet at the funeral, all hell will break loose,
Like the Hell that's described in this mean little verse.

You ask if I drank strong drink to excess,
Well, of course I drank liquor, I freely confess -
I drank *lots* of strong drink - too much, without doubt,
And at four bucks a snort, my poor kids went without.

And, did I sing wicked songs and depravity push,
Sinful songs - like Venus, the Good Ship so-called
And the Love-child down From The Bush:
Clean-living folks would be shocked and appalled.

And that song about poor old Methusalem,
Also known as The Pride of Jerusalem;
Yes: all of those songs I sang long and loud
To entertain that boozy old bowling crowd.

And what about lying, the Devil enquired,
Did you avoid false witness,
As the Commandment required?
Well, of course I lied often, like that chap Donald Trump,
And dobbed in my mates, when I was under the pump.

And did I covet my neighbour's young wife,
Well yes I did - I was always in strife,
And did I covet my poor neighbour's goods?
Yes, often, and also I pinched what I could;
I still have his lawn-mower, and his Stanley knife,
Nicked when I was in there, to covet his wife.

So you see, Fallen Angel, I've spent my life drinking,
And from the look on your face, I can tell what you're thinking
What with all that singing and swearing and dancin'
And once or twice, I'm ashamed to admit,

I even voted for Pauline Hansen!

The Devil took notes, as the bowler confessed,
Scoring points for each sin and transgression,
To be assured that this man passed the wickedness test
For entry to Hell, with all its pain and oppression.

But Hell hath no place in its hot serried ranks
For people of virtue and worth,
Nor for any poor folks who've done penance enough,
While they were living on earth.

So Satan, with horns on his head and pitch-fork in hand,
Said, I need to know a bit more about you,
And you must answer with truth my every demand:
So I'll have no good reason to doubt you.

You see, some folks sent here just don't get admitted,
No matter how hard they have tried,
Because they've already done their penance on earth,
Before they turned up their toes and died.

So, tell me, my friend, in an honest report
Did *you* suffer much pain, because of your sport,
And did you suffer enough to offset your ill-grace,
Because if you did – you'll have to go up to the *Other Place*.

So, that poor old lawn bowler was forced to relate
The extent of the pain he had suffered to date,
A sad story of the year when he played Pennant Bowls,
Down in the Bankers, with other lost souls.
Sent by selectors, heartless and cruel,
To play with the damned, at the base of the pool.

“A whole *year* in the Bankers,” cried the Devil, in awe,
“But surely that must be because you'd not played bowls before,
Like – doing time in the Bankers, learning the game,
So you'd be ready to move up the selectors' frame.”
“Sadly not,” said the man, “alack and forsooth,
This was my *twenty-first year*, and I'm telling the truth.

“A whole year in the Bankers; My God, how I cringed,
When I saw where they put me, but I never once whinged,
Seeing each week where I was sent to play - don't call it 'selected',
But I always maintained that their views be respected.

“But, Fallen Angel, my dearest old mate, man to man,
I felt the pain of defeat, and there's nothing worse than
The anguish of a top bowler - in his own judgment at least -
Playing Bankers, where all life and all hope have long since ceased.”

Lucifer, Satan, Old Nick – call the man what you will,

Said, "I know how you've suffered, and must be suffering still,
I was a bowler myself, up there in Heaven,
And skipped Premier League to boot,
Until the selectors lost faith,
And replaced *me* with a brand-new recruit.

"So I know what it's like to be dropped,
And now I'm down here, in Bankers, as well,
With society's dead-weights and anchors
In this place that we all call Hell.

"But I'm sorry to say that your slate has been cleaned,
And we won't be offering a berth,
A year playing bowls in the Bankers, without break or relief
Means that you've suffered your Hell back on earth.

"So, up you go to the Pearly Gates,
And tell 'em that Lucifer sent you,
And please forget about all of your dead bowling mates,
Especially the wannabees and wankers.

"They're up to their necks in boiling hot slime
Condemned to play in Hell's Bankers
For *eternity*, my wicked old bowling mate,
Down here - eternity's a bloody long time.
Now stand back and make way
For the next train-load of septic tankers."