

## **Complaints**

by Harry Dunn

Received 26/5/2014

**I sat down beside this lady, to drink my cup of tea,  
She was also having one, while she sat next to me.  
The lady said, "I'm pleased to meet,  
But right now I'm having trouble with my aching, flaking feet;  
Just take a look at these here bunions,  
And me corns, as big as pickled onions,  
And can you see the way me arches dropped, when I used to  
walk the street.**

**"And you should see the state me legs are in,  
Especially the knees;"  
She rolled up her long white bowling shorts and said -  
"Just take a look at these."  
So I took a sidelong glance, and that was quite enough  
And asked, "What's wrong with them?"  
She answered, "Nothing much, but aren't they rather rough."**

**Before I'd time to answer, she rattled on in rapid style,  
Saying how she suffered - with a painful bleeding pile;  
I was about to say, "I'm sorry", but didn't get the chance,  
Before she asked me if I knew about her chronic flatu - lence,  
I responded "Madam, for sound effects I have been wired  
But a demonstration of your problem *will not be* required."**

**I tried to get a word in, I thought a word or two'd be nice,  
To mention my own ailments, or give some good advice,  
But there was no way of interrupting, this lady at the table;  
She said her palpitations were driving her insane,  
Since she gave up heavy smoking and started taking drugs,  
"just to ease the pain."**

**"And would you believe," she cried with rising passion,  
"I've developed halitosis, which has never been in fashion;"  
I sympathised with her, but maintained a handy distance  
For that is one of nature's tricks  
To which I have a strong resistance.**

**I was about to say that Listerine might help  
Her terminal bad breath,  
But my new-found friend had moved right on, and said  
She was resigned and well prepared  
For an early, painful death,**

**From aneurism, stroke, or perhaps a heart attack,  
None of which was diagnosed, but she herself suspected  
Since she gave her doc. the sack.  
"And wait," she said, waving interruptions to one side,  
"Have I told you how my spondylitis has been playing up  
Despite all the patent medicines which I have bought and tried."**

**By this time, I'd had enough, and shouted long and loud;  
"Now listen here, you mad old bitch,  
You talk of nothing but yourself, and I think that's pretty rich;  
You haven't let me say a word  
About my own encyclopaedia of ills,  
Including some you've never even heard,  
Resistant as they are, to all known and proven pills.**

**"So please shut up and listen,  
To what this poor man puts up with - just to stay alive,  
On this heartless earthly prison:  
I've had every mortal illness, I've had the flaming lot,  
Every bloody illness, every jumpiness and stillness,  
Including some they've never heard of,  
And some they have no word of,  
And some which modern science is still waiting to discover,  
And many, many others, certain to be terminal,  
Unless, of course, I happen to recover!**

**"I've had Herpes, Aids, and both in spades,  
Not to mention Meningitis and that dreaded Asbestosis,  
I've had Tonsillitis, Gingivitis, Tracheitis, and Atrial Stenosis,  
Constipation, Salivation, Anal Fistulas and Fissures,  
Anxiety, Neurosis, Haemacromatosis  
Aneurism, Cretinism, Anaemia, Diphtheria and Bulimia Nervosa;  
I've had Dermatitis, Diarrhoea, Diverticulitis, Waxy Ear,  
Vasomotor Rhinitis, chronic Tendonitis, and Cirrhosis of the liver.**

**"Currently, I'm suffering Bursitis and Phlebitis, painful Fibrositis,  
Cellulitis and Bronchitis, Tonsillitis and Nephritis,  
Gastroenteritis, Folliculitis and occasional Collitis,  
Appendicitis, Cryptosporidiosis and annoying Anal Itch,  
Not to mention my Dementia, and incipient Glaucoma,  
That troublesome old Stoma and there are times  
When I can't tell which is which.**

**"I have Fungal Nail Infection, Cerebral Thrombosis  
And all manner of secretions,  
Thiamine Deficiency, reducing my efficiency;**

**They call it Hashimoto's Thyroidosis;  
I have Iron Insufficiency, Multiple Sclerosis  
Motion Sickness when I travel  
And acute Deep Vein Thrombosis."**

**I looked up at that poor woman to see how she was coping  
And she pleaded my indulgence, saying she was hoping  
That my litany of ailments was nearing its completion.  
"Au contraire," I said, "for I am only warming up  
And will now move on to my more serious accretions,  
And perhaps I should now mention  
That this process will require about an hour  
Of your undivided full attention."**

**"Mercy me," she cried  
"It's a wonder you ain't died,  
And all things now considered, I'm starting to feel better,  
In body and in soul,  
So why don't you and me forget our failing health  
And get out there on them greens, to have a little bowl,  
And we can talk about our wealth."**