

Mrs Miller - Are You Growing Older?

by Harry Dunn

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This bit of doggerel was originally sent to the charming Mrs (Elaine) Miller when she turned 80, a few months ago. She and the much-maligned Jack have generously allowed us to post it on the website. The ageing sentiments apply to all of us - none of whom, as far as I know, is getting any younger.

Dear Mrs Miller:

**You're about to complete an even four-score,
Although you don't look a day over fifty,
Fifty, I say, not one minute more,
But there must come a time, dear Elaine, when you'll ask,
"Could this just be pride before fall,
And how long can I wear this elegant mask
Never revealing my true age at all?"**

**Well, I would like to remind you, Mrs. Miller,
One day - and may it be later, not sooner
Your age-centred genes will grow stronger and bolder,
And you'll find yourself asking young Jack,
"Now tell me the truth, Mister Miller,
Do *you* think that I look any older?"**

**To this question, the afore-mentioned Jack might reply,
"My dearest and darlingest spouse -
Is that a small wrinkle I spy,
Or is it just the bright summer lighting,
In this elegant Inverloch house,
This Taj Mahal up on Sandy - mount,
This monument to love that I built
In *your* honour, my dear Mrs Miller - entirely on your account,
And you'll note that I built it while you're still living,
Unlike Shah Jahan, after Mrs. Jahan passed on,
So *his* Taj Mahal was, perhaps, a form of thanksgiving
While yours was a gift of true love,
From your dutiful husband, Saint John."**

**And remember, Elaine, that your bride-groom, young Jack
Accords you the privilege and honour,
Of working alone and bending your back**

To keep that great palace pristine,
While he himself is at play,
On some faraway bowling green.

One day, dear Elaine, when not fully employed,
Waiting hand, foot and mouth on that noble and princely man,
Take a close look at your Jack while he's lying at rest,
Supine, passive and void,
After ingesting a sumptuous meal, and liquid from many a can,
Sound asleep in his favourite chair,
Take a sidelong glance at the gut in his pants
And the head where he once had hair,
And tell *him*, this man who sees wrinkles,
This beady-eyed wrinkle-beholder -
"It might look like a wrinkle to you, my dear,
But you've over-indulged, and drunk lots of beer,
So, maybe it's *you and not me*, getting older,
Your vision is far from clear.

Now, the signs of old-ageing are out there, for *all* over-fifties to see,
And old Father Time's hard at work,
Although I'm determined, of course, that he won't get to work on me;
There's no way I'll submit to that wily old jerk.
Nonetheless, we Seniors should all be aware,
That's aware, not alarmed, as the PM once said,
When the Evil One's lurking out there
Watch out for *the signs of old age* - head 'em off,
Before they can get to the pass:
So I'll tell you right now about some of those signs,
So you'll be aware - not alarmed,
Avoid getting beached or becalmed
And try to cover your arse,

The Signs.....

When you're driving to Town and admiring the view
And everyone's driving much faster than you,
When most people ignore your advice
And complain that you've advised them before,

Not once, but several times more than twice.

**When you're discussing the game, but forgotten the name -
Of all the others who bowled in your team,
It's not that they don't belong to your fold,
Or behaved any worse than they seem;
You're not trying to leave them out in the cold
By forgetting their names,
But it could be a sign that - you *are* growing old.**

**When for reading you've lost your old appetite,
Because writers can't write like they used to write,
When modern art leaves you quite un-beguiled,
And you pronounce it the work of a monkey,
Or perhaps of an innocent child.
When all modern music leaves you boreder and colder,
I tell you, Elaine,
It could be a sign that - you're growing older.**

**When you toss and you turn from midnight to morn,
Trying to recall when your grandson was born,
When the people around you all mumble,
And don't know how to speak up,
When teenagers look younger, more brazen and bolder,
I tell you, Elaine, it's another sure sign that -
You *are* growing older.**

**When you scoff at new fashions and trends,
And mistake total strangers for rellies and friends,
When you forget your neighbour's first names,
But still clearly remember your child-hood games,
If you only drop into the club when you're told,
I tell you, Elaine, it's a warning,
Another clear sign that - *you're* growing old.**

**When Jack rages and rants about income tax,
And wishes to hell all political hacks,
And senses a fishy malodorous smell,
He believes all such smells are political,**

**Of all pollies he's highly suspicious
And inclined to be somewhat critical.**

**And when he asserts the world's heading for Hell,
Please try to excuse him, Elaine,
It's because of his *age* -
*Can't you tell.***