

## COMFORT FOODS

A cautionary Tale by Harry Dunn

Summer's gone and winter has arrived,  
So it's goodbye to those salads,  
On which we have survived.  
Now it's time for "comfort foods"  
Or so we're told on printer  
So hearty soups and chunky stews  
Are all the, go down here in Invy winter.

But all these comfort foods, so lumpy, rich and thicker  
Could pose a risk to an old man's health  
Unless flushed down by suitable liquor.  
A man could suffer blockages  
In his gullet, gut or ticker,  
Or in his sewage system  
And that man, already sick,  
Could get a whole lot sicker.

Now, I know the perfect flusher from research and trial extended  
It's the healthy, stealthy nectar of that wonder food, the grape  
Good in any form, but at its' best fermented.  
You can buy the juice of grape, in every size and shape  
Packed in cardboard boxes and bottles, glass or plastic  
In single vintage, fine and aged,  
Or non-vintage, cheap and blended.

The wealthy cits. of Inverloch drink Chateau Latife and Grange  
Which I, poor peasant, can't afford -  
They're way outside my range,  
And accustomed as I am, to far less fancy brews,  
Of the type which comes in cardboard casks,  
The vintner's favourite package for his humble peasant booze.

So down I went to Foodland, my poison there to name,  
From the bottom shelves of rot-gut red and fire-water yellow.  
The choice is wide and wicked, and I'm no stranger to this game  
And I am convinced that peasant's plonk, matured in cardboard cask  
For about a week - will be fully aged and mellow;  
So I look forward to the task  
As I approach the check-out fellow.

**Addressing Dom's young check-out chap  
I'm here I say, to purchase - a libation for my health;  
I don't have stacks of coin to spend -  
Unlike those men of wealth,  
But to purge these heavy comfort foods, it's quaffing wine I need  
A beverage to accompany  
The heavy winter feed.**

**He says - in his opinion, cask wine is under-rated  
And its' purgative efficacy cannot be over-stated  
And I must say that I endorse  
This approach to healthy living.  
And I agree with the sound advice,  
This young man is freely giving.**

**After due consideration, we make a joint selection  
Of wines ideal for winter- meal  
Gut purging and deep cleansing,  
And for keeping out infection.  
And although, somewhat below, the pinnacle of perfection  
Should at least be fit for purpose,  
And pass my sniff and taste inspection.**

**So I depart the local food and liquor shed  
Equipped to deal with comfort food  
In the chilly months ahead,  
And to keep me in a festive mood  
Whilst being prop'ly fed -  
A cask of Brown's White Light'ning , And a bottle of Dago Red.**

**So, what happened next, I hear you say,  
Is that the end of story?  
Well, no - not quite - for that very night,  
I was almost - as the Salvo's say, promoted up to glory.  
I began my sniff and taste charade  
In the best wine - buff tradition,  
What followed next left me perplexed,  
And heading for perdition.**

I sniffed a drop from that Light'ning cask  
But found it somewhat un-enticing  
So I took a few sips, tho' it damaged my lips:  
I was now into mainbrace splicing.  
These quaffing wines, so fresh from the vines  
Made up in strength what they lacked in length,  
Aroma, palate and finish,  
They kicked like a horse,  
And those kicks, of course, were aimed at my head,  
That cask of Brown's white Light'ning  
And that bottle of Dago Red.

And so it progressed - that sniff and taste test  
Though these wines were in quality lacking  
And the pace that was set, I'd now rather forget  
For the tasting then turned into quaffing  
And done at a pace that was cracking.  
I assured myself that while far from top-shelf  
These wines had made many a fan,  
For what they lack in finesse they exceed in largesse  
Wines to gladden the heart of man!

But that shy little white, so retiring, amusing and mystic  
Then turned aggressive and nasty and feral  
It made me rambunctious and fistic.  
It went straight to my head, that wine from the shed,  
And the effect, it was truly frightening -  
That dear little bottle of Dago Red  
And the cask of Brown's White Light'ning.

Well, around about ten, the Love of My Life,  
Arrived home from her Thursday night Bingo;  
She looked at me hard - and with little regard  
For my delicate, unstable condition  
Cried out - no doubt without thinking,  
You look like a man completely possessed -  
What the hell *have* you been drinking?

Stand back, I said, there's a bomb in my head,  
And I've burned all your clothes, to the very last thread,  
And I've pee'd in your hat, and I've strangled the cat  
And a baby has just taken our dingo,  
I've pulled out the phone, and I've busted the throne -  
The throne in our throne-room, the dunney  
Why, you ask - well, at the time, I just thought it was funny!  
And all this has occurred, I give you my word,  
In the three hours you've been out playing bingo.

And that Salvation lass who knocked at our door  
Was, without doubt, out on her rounds collecting  
But whatever I said, she most certainly fled ,  
In a state of high indignation,  
She opted for flight, rather than fight,  
And at a pace quite impressive and frightening;  
And to think that I only asked if she fancied -  
A slug from my bottle of raspberry red  
Or a pint of the Brown Brothers Light'ning.

Desist, said my Dearest, through teeth that were clenched  
I don't wish to hear one more word  
Of this outrageous, inebriate, cock and bull story,  
Or your excuses, so feeble and slurred,  
And the more that you say of your adventures today  
Only makes your behaviour seem worse,

And those lips that touch'd wine, they shall never touch mine  
And cheap rotgut wine, a disgrace to the vine,  
Should be banned, for it's worse than a curse!

Hold on, said I - a few words in my own defense:  
My reason for drinking that poisonous stuff  
Was medicinal, pure and simple;  
It was needed to wash down your comfort food  
To prevent the risk of a dimple,  
In my innards, and you know that they're rather unstable:  
You lie in your teeth, said the Love of My Life,  
For your dinner sits untouched on the table!

Go straight to your bed, the Good Woman said,  
And, no, you cannot take that cask with you,  
You've had more than enough of that treacherous stuff  
And I don't want to see you till morning:  
So I retired to the bed, still entirely unfed  
But afraid to ignore Madam's warning -  
'Tho it must be said, without that bottle of Red  
Or my cask of Brown's White Light'ning.