

Motherhood

Two Views

The Dark Side:

It's such a waste of time to cook-
I'm just a walking cookery book.
I make and bake the morning through
The favourite pies and pudding too.
And then, in half an hour or less,
My toil has gone to nothingness.
It's waste of time to dust the stairs,
To clean the brass and polish chairs,
To sweep and pick up bits of fluff,
For nothing's ever clean enough.
Five minutes after I have done,
Someone is sure to romp and run,
Kick out the stair rods, flick the mats
And slam the doors and scare the cats.
Some sticky hand is sure to press
The brasses from their sprightliness.
I tidy up and do the dusting,
But all the while my wings are rusting.
Then, washing day, it seems to me,
Is just a waste of energy.
What use to stand before a tub
And soak and rinse and blue and rub?
Next week the selfsame garment's stain
Will come into my hand again.
It's such a waste of time to mend:
One has no sooner reached the end
Of last week's pile, than-need you ask it?
This week's fills up the mending basket.
The stockings which were hale and hardy
Return from each picnicking party
Weak and worn and wanly show
Great gaping holes in heel and toe;
While buttons have a cantankerous way
Of disappearing every day.
Sponging off the spots and ironing creases,
Between it all I'm worn to pieces.
Woman, from cradle to grave,
Is nothing but a galley slave.

The Bright Side:

I've done an angel's work today!
Yes, such an honour came my way.
Real angel's work! And, lest you doubt it,
I'm going to tell you all about it.
Well, first, I cooked. It was so nice
To plan the pies, stewed fruit and rice.
God sent His angel once to make
Cakes for a poor wayfarer's sake.
But just today He honoured me
And sent the task my way, you see.
Then, while I tidied up the place,
Gave every knob a radiant face,
Back of my mind this thought would lurk,
That I was still at angel's work-
Putting away coats and dresses
And moving small unsightliness.
For, oh! 'tis such a lovesome thing,
Just straightening out and freshening.
And after that I washed a few
Small woolly garments, old, not new,
Things I had rubbed and rinsed before
Quite forty times, or even more.
And as I hung them on the line
I thought what Godlike work was mine!
To cleanse-ah, me!-to wash out stains
Till not a single speck remains.
So, later in the day 'twas sweet
To sit and rest my tired feet,
Mending the clothes, and planning out too
How to make old things into new.
For surely 'tis an angel's way
To put things right from day to day,
To find thin places and repair
The glad rags and the sturdy wear.
Since wear and tear must surely be
On this side of Eternity.
I'm feeling very proud to say
I've done an angel's work today!

-Author Unknown

