

“IT JUST WON’T COME OFF”

by Edna Means

My mother says that as a babe I was a chubby sprite:
A sort of roly butterball ... my poundage wasn't light;
And as fond friends would lift me up, they'd look surprised and say,
“The little dickens! Goodness me! And how much does she weigh?”

As a child I ran and played and capered with great joy;
In fact, I was what's sometimes called: a regular tomboy;
My muscles grew so hard and firm and I was proud of them;
And if I tipped the scales on high ... I didn't give a hang!

So then I cut the sugar and the starch out of my diet;
My eyes grew hollow, cheeks so wan ... I really was a sight;
But here and there about my frame there still were certain places
Which yielded not to diet, nor to tightly pull-ed laces!

I bent and twisted, turned and pulled, I trotted and I leapt
But just plain stocky I remained ... most bitterly I wept.
Although I was so sore and lame that I could scarcely breathe,
My avoirdupois remained the same ... all I could do was grieve.

I tried Reducing Systems: streamline by radio;
I pounded and I pommelled ... but it simply would not go ...
That cruel extra poundage which makes the scales to scoff
As if to say, “Aw, what's the use ... it just will not come off!”

Have tomato juice and hard-boiled eggs intrigued your appetite
From A.M. until P.M. ... from midnight 'till daylight?
If so, you know your soul rebels from either eggs or juice,
So that you say, “It won't come off! Oh, crickets! What's the use?”

And have you tried the capsule foods done up in covers small
With vitamins from A to Z to make you grow up tall
And slim and strong, but never fat? I lived on them alone
For weary days, but still I failed to melt to skin and bone.

And next massage and Turkish baths I tried with hopeful mien;
They picked me up and laid me down, but I remained the same;
They boiled me and they stewed me, they pommelled and they patted;
Though black and blue and limping, too .. my curves they were not flatted.

And then I tried the sleepless game ... to sleep just four hours daily
But all I got was circled eyes and cheeks which sank in palely.
I yawned by day, I yawned by night, I yawned both morn and noon.
“I won’t come off! I won’t come off!” my poundage seemed to croon.

I got so weak, I got so cross, I really was a sight;
If anybody spoke to me, I’d turn and almost bite
Their heads off ... till my family said I had become a shrew;
That I should eat and I should sleep as other people do.

Then on the air I heard it said, if gelatine you’d drink
Dissolved in water twice a day, ‘twould make you simply blink
With vim and vigor, pep and zip, just like a youthful sprite ...
So gel I took in the morning and gel I took at night.

Oh, gelatine, oh, gelatine, ... oh, shades of quivering gel!
Oh, Mr. Knox, I took your stuff till I could almost yell!
I quivered here, I quivered there, outside... inside ... around...
But as for pep and happy days ... Oh, these I never found!

“Drink water and more water ... drink water all the time,”
One dietician told me, “’twill change your whole outline.”
And so I guzzled water till I was a lake inside;
Until the sight of water I just could not abide!

“Why don’t you try some epsom salts dissolved in your bath water?
I took off thirty pounds that way,” said my friend, June Defaulter.
I soaked in salts, I swallowed salts, I was a salty salt-mine ...
Pacific and Atlantic had nothing on my own brime!

And then my husband said one day, “Say, what’s the big idea?
Why are you always looking for some thinning panacea?
I picked you out because I like a woman nice and plump
And not a hungry-looking one: a frail and fainting lump.

As you can see, my dearest frau ... my own Adonis figger
Has changed somewhat with passing years and I have grown some bigger...
With here a pouch and there a pad ... but I don’t raise a plaint
A-tryin’ to make of myself some outline that I ain’t!

Since my beloved spoke these words, I have made up my mind
To sit right back, relax and eat, and in this life to find
All the fun and all the taste of all good things in life:
Candy, butter, ice cream, ... and imbibe them without strife.

Those crispy pies, hot biscuits and thickly frosted cakes,
Delicious French fried taters, and juicy, sizzling steaks
Shall be my daily portion ... with many a luscious bon-bon ...
For if it JUST WILL NOT COME OFF ... THEN IT CAN JUST STAY ON-ON!