

THE QUEEN'S PURSE

It sounds awful put like that (awfully anatomical) but I'm referring to the pocketbook hanging from the crook of the bent arm of the Queen of England, an accessory which strikes me over and over with its incongruity. She is a woman with all the resources of the world at her disposal: slaves and jewelry and money and houses and pets and attention, and through it all she grips her purse as if she might get caught in a rainstorm and need a little cash to take a cab home. As if she could piss off on her own if she felt like it and is not actually completely dependent on those bustling around her to feed her and drive her home.



She never seems to travel without it. She stolidly grips her dowdy (but slightly more dressed-up) pocketbook as she opens Parliament, the obscene clusters of diamonds littering her bosom clashing mightily with the ordinariness of her purse and spectacles. You might argue that the purse lends a sense of familiarity to the slightly science-fiction-like cast of a person wearing a crown and ermine, like putting a picket fence around a skyscraper. Or you might feel that the nerdy accessories make her look sort of ridiculous, a kind of Mrs. PotatoHead-Queen, with sensible stick-on shoes and hat and purse and gloves.

Either way, the purse detracts from the image of her as an unearthly figurehead with concerns completely separate from those of an everyday citizen, and makes you wonder...

That is to say, what do you suppose is in the Queen's purse? Used Kleenex, a cute pearl-handled gun, Advil, a compact? Phone numbers written on envelopes, stamps, a brush tangled with hair, keys (to her cars? her palace?), a 007-like radio transmitter, unpaid bills, a lipstick? My theory is that the

Queen carries her purse in order to keep a part of herself private at all times. (Well, who doesn't?) When her whole physical person is public property, she can rest her peace of mind in a cache of trivial items which is off-limits by even conventional social mores. I picture her clinging to it like a life preserver as she walks through ribbon-cuttings and ship-christenings; an outward and visible sign of her own person, its contents private and sacred. As trapped and powerless as she seems in her public persona, I'd be tempted (if I were she) to carry things like dead hamsters or the Magna Carta or contraceptives or cyanide pills in it. After all, to outsiders the purse adds a stubborn, discordant note of independence to her image, but its secret contents might also provide a perverse powerful thrill.

BAD LARKIN (NOT EVEN)  
or  
OFFICE LIFE

Oh we shriek you're one of us now  
Your life is shit now  
We're happy it's hard now  
You hate your life now  
That makes us happy now



Four nice French words to describe fat:



I live in a castle!



BUTTER

foot propped  
rocking my weight in my chair  
inside my barrel stomach  
soupy foods slosh  
I can actually hear *chug!*  
*splash, chug! splash*

*big wooden barrel churn*

keep churning  
*splashes of cream*  
show plain around my mouth  
*tiny grains of butter*  
dot the cream

finally, down in the barrel,  
a whole *golden lump*,  
*drowning in buttermilk*  
swimming in my stomach

smacking its insides, back and forth  
tossed in wet waves a beat behind  
fist socked pleasing fit into leather palm

pearl housed within  
agitated into existence

how you'll get it out of me  
I don't know

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