

Motion

The Car Park Attendant

THE man who parks cars at the annual show
Of the county delphinium society
Has simply no thought for the hate he can sow
In drivers who park with propriety.

This tsar of the car park, this arrogant ass,
This flat-hatted petty dictator,
Provokes in car-parkers consternation *en masse*,
Which fills the marquee hours later.

He's so damned officious, this power-crazed loon,
So prone to gesticulate wildly,
So clearly convinced that he comes as a boon
To drivers who seethe but park mildly.

He's shouting, "*Come on!*" and "*Come on!*" while he waves
And gestures and urges and harries –
Convinced of the chaos he's certain he saves
By dint of the armband he carries.

He's pointing implacably: that is the spot
He has chosen from wide open spaces –
And that's where you're going to, like it or not,
While he struts around, pulling faces.

He gets right in front of you; ushers you in,
As if you are some total cretin
Who needs this performance before you begin
To be sure that you've room and can get in.

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Oh, the temptation! Delirious urge!
No prizes for guessing what that is:
To carry on driving in one sudden surge
And make him as flat as his hat is.

“Come on!” and *“Come on!”* and you meekly obey.
You know there’s no way to defeat a
Shiny-macked moron who’s pointing the way
To his choice as your final half-metre.

You inch to your spot, just the way he decrees,
Until the man rules you are on it.
It’s then, having parked you by frantic degrees,
He stops you by thumping your bonnet.

The man is an ogre, an arm-waving king,
The pain of the wide open spaces.
In ones, we are windmilled, the better to bring
Our cars to their pre-ordained places.

Each year at the show, the talk at the bar,
Though barely of blooms we’ve been showing,
Makes much of our anguish in parking the car,
And guesses at how things are going.

We fall to surmising on what it can be
That triggers our tyrant’s persistence.
Is there life after car parks for men such as he?
Does he know any other existence?

What sort of a man is this martinet gnome?
Is he a man. . . or a ninny?
If he does wear the trousers, the days he’s at home,
The odds are, they’re matching his pinny.

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* If there *IS* such a thing as a county delphinium society and it *DOES* happen to have an idiosyncratic car-parking attendant, then my faith in the unpredictability of fate is justified – because this one is entirely a terrible figment of the imagination.