



Toothpaste Etiquette

By Lucy Wall

I've heard it said that when a man and a woman get married it can be like two rough stones being brought together and the more time they spend dwelling side by side the smoother they become. Having been married since 2009 which is a relatively short time in the grand scale of marriage, I have to say I can see the truth in this analogy. After all, marriage brings two flawed people together who then have to learn how to dwell peaceably with one another!

Some couples may find this easier than others but it's pretty much a guarantee that a difference in opinion or a conflict in method will arise over something at some point. This brings with it the decision to either continue in conflict or find a compromise. I've found that learning how to adapt seems to be vital for a good marriage and the more both parties are prepared to put the needs of the other first, the smoother things seem to go!

Of course the whole institute of marriage was created by God to reflect His relationship with His bride and ultimately it calls us to become less selfish, less absorbed in our own desires and more interested in our spouse's needs. Basically it calls us to become more like Christ and marriage is another tool which the Lord can use to transform us into the image of His Son. This undoubtedly can be very challenging at times but there are also many joyous moments and spiritual benefits to be found in this life-long lesson.

When I was living as an unmarried woman I wouldn't have said I was hugely particular about how things were done or that I had any major routines that I had to stick to. Of course there was no one else there to challenge my ways so how would I have known if I was particular when everything was done how I liked? It was very interesting for me to discover then that I can be somewhat scrupulous about certain things and ridiculously, the use of toothpaste is one of them!

Now I won't go into the details here as I'll leave that for the poem to say but the purpose of this poem is not to criticise marriage or my husband for that matter! If anything I think he comes out looking much better than I do! I've written these words in a very light-hearted tone and it's basically intended to be a humorous retelling of an event that happened over the course of about three months in my marriage. My hope is that it can provide a comical insight into the realities of marriage and hopefully others might find it as amusing as my husband and I did!

A funny observation, it's the little things in life
That often are the catalyst for marriage woes and strife.
It's frequently the petty things that really drive you mental.
To give you an example, with myself it's all things dental!

I have a simple system that I've found to work you see,
With easy steps to follow then things run efficiently!
This system went unchallenged when I lived a single life
But soon discovered this would change when I became a wife!

I'll ask if you can close your eyes whilst picturing the scene;
I'm entering the bathroom now to give my teeth a clean.
The day before this I'd observed the toothpaste running low
And so had brought a new tube in but not to use. No, no!

To place in *preparation* as the old was getting thin
But dearest husband clearly thought I'd put it there for him!
Deciding he'd ignore the old which still had use you see,
He ploughed into the new and left the old one there for me!



So now to finish off the old *I* have to *squeeze* and *squeeze*
While *he* just gives a gentle push and paste comes out with ease!
"Why bother with the old?" I hear. "Just use the new toothpaste."
But discarding it before it's done would be an utter waste!

No! The old must first be *finished!* That's the proper thing to do
And *then* we can enjoy a swift transition to the new!
The new must NOT be used before the old one is deflated
So if I find it opened then it *will* be confiscated!

And this includes the mouth wash just to clear up any query.
"Exhaust the old *then* start the new" explains my bathroom theory!
I also had a small request that's pretty fair I think;
Used floss goes IN the bin instead of draped across the sink!

Such breach of bathroom protocol upsetting my routine!
This chaos had to stop for me to keep my teeth pristine.
Deciding I would help him with this simple observation
For the sight of new toothpaste was clearly far too much temptation.

Now it wasn't like the atmosphere would bring on hypothermia
But this lack of toothpaste etiquette was giving me a hernia!
And so without a word I simply took the new away
But later with confusion, "Where's it gone?" I heard him say.

I mentioned "confiscation," well that left my husband gasping.
To find I got *this* bothered and he nearly died from laughing!
But then he showed great wisdom and decided he would listen
And thankfully he changed his ways, conceding to the system!

Such gracious compromise so now the system's not ignored,
Tranquility has been returned and order is restored.
A loving heart and listening ear would seem to be the key.
My husband demonstrated well for dwelling peaceably.

For *I* will have some habits that must drive *him* up the wall.
Of course we've yet to find one to identify at all!
Please know I'm only joking here! I'll add *that* in with haste.
I'd guess it's my obsession with the dental floss and paste!

It seems a tad eccentric to obsess like this I know
But who in their right mind would have two toothpastes on the go?
A humorous affair within our marital adventures
And soon will come the day when we debate about our dentures!

I know in life there are much more important things than this
But every little effort helps the plight for wedded bliss.
So if like me you have a spouse then please do not forget,
When sharing all things dental, *please* use toothpaste etiquette!



Ephesians 5:18-21

"...be filled with the Spirit, speaking to one another in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing and making melody in your heart to the Lord, giving thanks always for all things to God the Father in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, submitting to one another in the fear of God."

Psalm 133:1

"Behold, how good and how pleasant it is for brethren to dwell together in unity!"

Hebrews 12:14

"Make every effort to live in peace with everyone and to be holy; without holiness no one will see the Lord."

Romans 12:18

"If it is possible, as far as it depends on you, live at peace with everyone."