

Twenty Cents

By Jules Perrin

Guys work with me on this one. We all have our favourite working gear. That old shirt and pants/shorts that we like to wear when we are working round the house. They are a historical garment of our past efforts. A bit of paint here, some glue there, stain from strong fertilizer or a hole from that near miss with a nail. Each of these adornments on the garments are badges to remind us of our little achievements. The down side is that our work clothes are usually despised by our partners.

"You're not wearing that today! ", are usually the greeting words at breakfast.

"Yes! I have work to do. Bridges to build, rockets to launch and lawns to mow.", I reply.

"Well don't wear them out of the yard", she replies as if it's a mortal sin to be seen in working clothes.

"Yes dear", I dutifully reply.

"Don't you *YES DEAR ME*, now what do you want for breakfast?" she demands.

Don't you understand! I need sustenance, to prepare me to tackle the extremely perilous conditions that can eventuate while undertaking a day's hard work around the house.

"Toast and coffee will do." I submissively reply.

"Well you know where the kettle and toaster are.", she off handily replies.

After breakfast I arm myself with the necessary implements of destruction to undertake mortal combat with that long grass and that rogue loose screw in the cupboard door.

Now when I says a day's work I really mean a few hours as we need our SCAN (Senior Citizens Afternoon Nap). Sounds much better for blokes than a 'nanna nap'.

Well this one day my wife and mother wanted to go to the local Op Shop and I volunteered to drive them. Great as neither of them realised I was still wearing my working clothes. Feeling smug that I didn't have to change, we set off.

In the Op Shop, my wife and mother are rummaging through stuff on the shelves while I was poking through books. I noticed a twenty-cent piece on the floor. Being an upstanding citizen, well I think I am, I pick it up and approach the lady at the counter. As I pass the twenty cents to her and say, "I found this on the floor".

Without a lie, she quickly replied as she eyed me up and down, "No dear you keep it. It looks like you need it more than we do."

When I was talking to the lady, my mother and wife stopped rummaging and were listening to the conversation.

After the lady handed back the twenty cents you could hear anything except my mother and wife killing themselves laughing.

Between laughs and giggles they explained that I shouldn't be out in my work clothes and then she also saw the funny side of the situation.

Now if we are leaving the house I am expected to parade for inspection and chastised if I am wearing anything resembling my beloved working clothes. But I still firmly believe shopping is work and I should be allowed to wear my working clothes.

PS I kept the twenty-cents.