



*I needed some help with the workload.  
I was traveling and working too much,  
I had little time for the housework,  
Domestic things weren't getting done.*

*I told my husband I needed  
His help: "You need to do more."  
But husbands pretend that they don't know  
How to do things inside of the home.*

*"That's women's work" - the first comeback;  
"I can't" follows closely behind.  
It's always the same - it's part of the game  
That lets them do nothing at all.*

*"You need to do more, hon, I mean it."  
He meant well - he always does.  
"Tell me what you want and I'll do it."  
My response: "Can't you see it yourself?"*

*It isn't my way to nag him;  
It isn't my way to sulk;  
It isn't my way to grumble;  
My way is to do it myself.*

*But after awhile I was finished  
With doing the housework alone.  
After all, I was working and helping  
With his side of our marriage vows.*

*So I thought that I'd show him directly  
About cleaning and washing and chores.  
I decided to stop doing laundry  
No matter how dirty things got.*

*There were mounds of clothes in the laundry,  
The underwear soon was all worn;  
No clean clothes were ever forthcoming  
Except mine - I did those myself.*

*I never said one word about it,  
I never told him my plan.  
I was cheerful and loving and not once did ask  
Why his clothes were in piles on the floor.*

*After he did his own laundry  
Without asking how it all works  
We talked about what had transpired  
And my transparent, life-changing trick.*

*We talked about how it's not easy  
To do all the jobs we should do;  
We talked about how it's not just for the wife  
To be sole caretaker at home.*

*But I also learned a big lesson.  
I'd thought that I shouldn't care  
About fixing the car or the roof or the shed  
Or the eaves or the screens or lawn chair.*

*If snow needed shoveling, he'd do it,  
If grass needed mowing - the same;  
Mechanical things made me shudder to think  
Of the knowledge I lacked about them.*

*I learned we have different perspectives  
That can gnaw and lead to conflicts.  
But if we sit down and talk it all through  
We need not resort to the tricks.*

## Credits:

From *Marriage Is a Balance Beam*, a book of poetry by Carole Bos.

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