

Mixed Blessings

(an 8-part drabble series)

by Angie

1)

Mary pulled out a ball of yarn from the latest donation box from Helpers and stared at it in amazement. She pulled out another, just as lovely.

Why hadn't she thought of this?

Tunnel knitters and crocheters always wanted bulky yarn, because it worked up quickly in simple patterns. She had even combined worsted yarns to meet the demand and it disappeared quickly too. This was so much more elegant.

She gazed at the box of unloved yarn overflowing a bulging laundry hamper on the other side of the room - and smiled.

Soon there would be plenty for everyone!

2)

Mary began to really enjoy making up the new balls of yarn. There were endless possibilities from her large stash and she decided on four strands at a time, putting the finished balls into a large basket. She wound until one colour ran out, and then looked to see if she find another fourth.

She picked yarns for their colours, texture or sheen. The pile grew in the basket at her side. Boucle, slub, flub, twist, satin, mohair, cotton, sock and ribbon yarn, all disappeared from the hamper.

That was fun! Now all she needed was someone to use them.



3)

Catherine came in first and stopped in amazement at the big pile of yarn balls beside Mary. "Wow, you've been busy," she remarked, after greeting her. She picked up one and her jaw dropped.

"Wow," she said again, turning it over in her hands. She could recognize boucle, satin and mohair yarns. A big change from the old Cathy, she thought wryly.

"What are they for?" she asked, hoping they weren't spoken for.

"Anything that needs bulky yarn," Mary replied.

"Can I help, in exchange for a few?" Catherine asked.

"Of course. Pull up a chair," Mary invited her, happily.

4)

The two women sat for hours, silently winding beautiful, unique balls.

"What pattern would work with these?" Catherine asked, curious now.

Mary added another ball carefully to the three overflowing baskets of them, and went to her bookcase, returning with a flat box.

"These are all simple patterns for bulky yarn, Catherine. Help yourself."

Catherine put the box on her lap and carefully leafed through the patterns. Some were handwritten, some printed from a computer, some were photocopied. There were even some booklets. She found one at last that made her smile. His and hers. His was first, she decided.

5)

"This pattern should be fine," Catherine told Mary. "How much yarn would I need?"

Mary looked at the pattern. "I'd suggest the largest basket, but if you need more, we can still make many more. You'll get a better idea when you start the pattern."

Catherine promised to return with a large shopping bag. Mary put the basket aside for her under a blanket.

Word hit the tunnel grapevine, and soon only two yarn balls remained in the basket - then Samantha took those.

Catherine came back and looked around, horrified.

"I saved yours," Mary chuckled.

"Thank-you", Catherine sighed, relieved.

6)

Catherine began to crochet from the pattern and indeed, the work did go quickly, but it soon became obvious she would need more yarn. She returned to Mary several times, first helping her wind up more balls, then taking a few back with her.

She had to keep her project secret from Vincent, because it was a surprise for Christmas, so she hid it and the yarn in the brownstone's office, working on it when she could make time.

The result was quite beautiful. She tried it on, grimaced, then stood on a stool. It was still too long. Perfect!

7)

There was still some time before Christmas, and Catherine considered whether she could make something for herself out of the new yarn balls. She looked at what was left and grimaced. Only if it was a bikini, she thought wryly. Vincent would like that, but it was completely impractical in the tunnels.

Perhaps for their anniversary, she thought, smiling. Yes, something for just the two of them, something to liven up their evening. Perhaps a g-string for him.

What an idea! Catherine laughed.

It needed more thought, though, so she put it aside for the time being, with the yarn.

8)

Christmas finally came and Catherine managed to find a large enough box for her gift to Vincent. She watched avidly as he carefully opened it, then gazed into the box, his brow creased in puzzlement.

Then he took it out, realized what it was, and held it against his front. It was definitely long enough, and it was heavy and would probably be warm too. He could see it had taken a lot of work - and the yarn was ... astonishing.

"Catherine, this is amazing!" He put it on and hugged her.

That was the best thanks of all!

