

Confessions of a Mom Bag

Faced with shame about her messy contents—from crushed crackers to creepy Certs—an everyday purse opens up about why she yearns for glamour

PHOTOGRAPHY BY JEFFREY CARLSON

I recently submitted my DNA to ancestry.com and discovered that I'm related to Mary Poppins's carpet bag. Granted, the connection is distant (I was born in a factory in the Chinese province of Zhejiang), but I should hardly be surprised: I've long known that I am a Mom Bag. All of my relatives—Carryalls, Totes and Diaper Bags (poor things)—have heard the stories about our magical, bottomless foremother. She spent her life carrying two bathing caps, seven flannel nightgowns, a coat rack and an eiderdown. So, basically, her human was a minimalist compared to mine.

I'm only three, but that's ancient in Mom Bag years. Soon, my zippers won't work and my handles will fray. I know, comparison is the thief of joy. We can't all be born Birkins; with their infuriatingly architectural bone structure, they even age elegantly. And I know I need to check my privilege—I could have been a barf bag. But all my life, I've heard about how "sturdy" and "roomy" I am. My friend Evening Purse (she's so fabulous and *soigné*, but she just seems so empty sometimes) tells me that I should feel lucky that I'm so practical because it means I get to go out every day. Maybe. But how can I be fulfilled when my human treats me as if my secret aspiration was to be a Glad Bag? I had dreams. I used to think I'd grow up to be an Attache Case.

Just this morning, my human took me to a café and frantically groped me while searching for Wallet and Phone as her small human ran around like a lunatic, knocking over chairs. I do wonder what the old bag (sorry, that expression just came out; classic self-loathing, my analyst tells me) could actually get something done if she didn't spend half her life flapping around in my tummy and unflattering side pockets looking for Phone in a feral panic. (I need to accept my imperfections, but why must I have pouches around my mid-section? It does nothing for my silhouette.) Anyway, Wallet—which by the way is never zipped up properly, making Change Pouch permanently incontinent, forever trickling coins, poor lamb—was lodged in my bowels, beached on a sandbox-worth of cookie crumbs. So instead of Wallet, my human fished out a reminder card for a therapist appointment she hadn't remembered to attend. I've also been hauling around a breast pump valve despite the fact that she hasn't nursed in two years, a boarding pass from a trip we took in 2016 (the amount of time I had to spend on the bathroom floor at Schiphol during that “vacation” still makes my snaps shiver), some dried-out baby wipes, pulverized crackers housed in a compromised Ziploc, a loose Ativan and what I think might have been a Cert.

I do worry about my human sometimes; she's always



so tired—the bags under her eyes are presently verging on the valise. So I try to take comfort in knowing I can be of service if she might need, say, a small snack or a brief coma. (She does seem to enjoy both a great deal.)

On good days, I know my worth. I am hard-working and more of an emotional-support animal than an accessory. "I am not a useless envelope clutch!" I tell myself in the mirror sometimes. But on bad days, to indulge my feelings of inferiority, I hate-read those purse-shaming What's In Your Bag columns in human celebrity magazines about buttery Bucket Bags, tassled Beach Bags (God, to be a Beach Bag—nice life) and leopard-print Fanny Packs (how I would love to be one of those, they're so petite and urbane) adopted from European flea markets and Silver Lake pop-ups. Their humans are movie stars and fashion designers and social-media influencers. (I wish my human was an influencer. She couldn't even influence her kid to put his shoes on this morning.) Those bags get to go to bistros in Le Marais and beaches in the Cyclades. (My human is constantly taking me to the drugstore. She took me to a place called "the gym" once but we never went back.) Those chic bags only seem to carry lipsticks

in the shade of Parisian window-box geraniums, international battery chargers, expensive aspartame-free mints, first-edition Russian novels and Scandinavian non-toxic wooden figurines (they're such engaged, playful mommies to their human offspring, too!). As far as I can tell, for my human, parenthood has mainly meant being eternally proximal to a cracker and a quick cry.

Those celebrity bags aren't in the business of shouldering geriatric Certs, resignation and guilt. *Entre nous*, my human might need to adopt a larger bag for her guilt. Thankfully for her, despair must be trending right now because I hear that giant bags, enormous enough to make a body bag look discreet, are currently being delivered at European fashion houses like Victoria Beckham and Jacquemus. They might be sized appropriately if, say, the Statue of Liberty were in the market for a new hobo.

Now the holidays are coming up, which always makes me more reflective. I'm trying to learn from my human: She can be so hard on herself, so I'm striving for more self-acceptance. Lord knows, we all have our baggage. —*as told to Olivia Stren*

THE HOLIDAY MAKEUP MUST-HAVES THAT EDITORS CAN'T GET ENOUGH OF

Here's how the *Kit* team likes to get party-ready



"Few things in life bring me greater joy than lipstick: my son, croissants and Richard Madden's T-shirts in *Ibiza* come to mind. When I find a lipstick that threatens to eclipse my Netflix crush's pecs, I pay attention. To me, this reddish raspberry Dior bullet is lipstick perfected: It offers instant transformative brightness courtesy of its ultra-pigmented formula, and it glides on like a dream. It's also so long-lasting (12 hours!) that I'll basically be wearing it from now until the champagne corks pop on New Year's Eve." —*Laura deCarufel, editor-in-chief*

DIOR ROUGE DIOR ULTRA ROUGE IN
ULTRA LOVE, \$43, THEBAY.COM



"Over the holidays, my go-to look is a graphic swipe of black liner, which I like to think is very Catherine Deneuve. It's perennially chic, but also means I don't have to worry about reapplying a lip before reaching for another glass of Prosecco, which, some nights, is my main concern. This one is truly black (no unwanted navy undertones here!) and easily applied with the ultra-precise felt tip. Best of all? The super matte waterproof pigment will outlast your hangover with no smudging." —*Kathryn Hudson, executive editor*

KAT VON D INK WELL LONG-WEAR MATTE EYELINER, \$25, SEPHORA.CA



"My minimalist makeup bag may not have many items in it, but every product is hard-working and does double-duty—which is exactly the reason this multi-purpose, holographic highlighting stick is a real winner in my books. Going from day to night is as easy as adding a single dot on my cupid's bow, a couple swipes under my brow and a bit blended on the tops of my cheeks. And did I mention it glides onto skin like butter?"
—Jillian Vieira, fashion director

SEPHORA COLLECTION HOLOGRAPHIC EFFECT STICK IN 02 THE MAGICAL GLOW. \$13. SEPHORA.CA



"Ninety percent of the time, the whole premise of 'day-to-night makeup' is far from my reality—but the holidays mark a special exception. I love this palette's soft rosy-taupe shades for defining my crease before heading to the office, then the bolder shimmery finishes and plum hues for building up a party-ready look. It's one of those palettes where I can definitely see myself using every colour until I hit the metal bottom." —*Caitlin Kenny, digital director*

CHARLOTTE TILBURY STARS IN YOUR EYES PALETTE, \$95, CHARLOTTETILBURY.CA



"As a bona fide lip gloss addict, I'm always looking for my next slick fix. This gilded tube of glitzy magic is the perfect holiday addition to my vast assortment of clear or slightly pink-tinted glosses. The gold looks more opaque in the tube than it does on the pout and gives that extra bit of sparkle that I absolutely crave at Christmastime. This baby earned itself a permanent spot in my glittery go-to holiday clutch."

MARC JACOBS BEAUTY ENAMORED
HI-SHINE LIP LACQUER LIPGLOSS IN
SHINE A LIGHT, \$35, SEPHORA.CA



"Okay, so I'm slightly obsessed with Fenty Beauty and everything Rihanna does in general, but I assure you this review is totally unbiased. With its seven sparkling new shades (everything from warm toasty tones to frosty cool ones), RiRi's holiday highlighter palette redefines the meaning of glow-y. Designed to suit all skin tones, the formula offers exceptional payoff and can be dusted all over, from cheeks and temples, to lids and noses." —*Poonam Chauhan, assistant art director*

FENTY BEAUTY BY RIHANNA KILLAWATT FOIL FREESTYLE HIGHLIGHTER PALETTE, \$67, SEPHORA.CA



"When it comes to makeup, I'm all about eyes, which makes me a bit of a connoisseur when it comes to mascara, a.k.a. the cornerstone of any good eye look. This one checks all my boxes: It's super pigmented, and the brush makes it so easy to apply without any racoon-eye incidents. The formula lengthens like crazy and really adds that extra oomph. Bonus: The packaging is so festive so I'm happy to keep it in my purse for pre-party touch-ups." —*Ona Kazan, associate art director*

LISE WATIER NEIGES DRAMATIQUE
INTENSE SO LUX VOLUME MASCARA,
\$27. LISEWATIER.COM



"This metallic gold is everything: It's super festive (obviously) but it's also surprisingly neutral, so I can wear it with every holiday outfit. It's one of those polishes you can't stop looking at—the iridescent undertones of pink and green combine to make the gold verge toward a classier, moodier bronze. The bonus is that when this medium shade starts to fade, it's not an emergency situation like it is with typical holiday red." —*Eden Boileau, managing editor*

ESSIE NAIL POLISH IN MILLION MILE
HUES. \$10. ESSIE.CA



"Armed with these glittering eye shadows, I can make the backseat of any cab into my very own Superman phone booth. Headed out for a festive drink after work? I just slick on the shimmer, quickly blend it with my finger (it plays well with any shadow you might already be wearing) and I'm suddenly ready for cocktails. My favourite part is how the golden, metallic flecks catch the light so beautifully." —*Celia Di Minno, art director*

QUO METALLIC EYE SHADOW SET, \$20. SHOPPERSDRUGMART.CA



"How I relish pre-party primping, let me count the ways. With a festive playlist setting the mood, I sip on some bubbly and spend hours playing with pretty palettes and sparkly somethings. Needless to say, I like my handiwork to last. Enter this savvy set. Consisting of a priming moisturizer, blurring base and setting spray, it keeps my makeup glowing (never greasy) no matter how hard I hit the dance floor." —*Katherine Lalancette, beauty director*

SMASHBOX HOLIDAZE: PHOTO FINISH TRAVEL PRIMER TRIO, \$28, SMASHBOX.CA