

Creative Task 2 – The Kebab Strikes Back

My stomach began to toss and turn, the kebab I'd ingested earlier in the evening was taking its toll. They'd never agreed with me in the past. Either too spicy or too greasy or worse, both. But tonight I took a chance. A new chip shop called "Ahmed's Proper British" had opened down the road. It couldn't hurt, right? Turns out I was mistaken. I burped, regurgitating the taste of spicy lamb and sweat from an overweight Turkish man's hands. I could've gone to the toilet, but I was already cosy in bed, and I didn't want to risk staying up any later than necessary. I thought maybe, just maybe, if I could force myself to sleep I'd somehow survive. Unfortunately for me, the foreign noises my stomach was making weren't the only thing keeping me awake.

The problem with living in a semi-detached council house, other than the leaky taps and the draft from badly installed windows, was that the walls were paper thin. So thin, in fact, that I could hear the springs from my neighbour's mattress violently creaking. Tony, my neighbour, and his wife, named Toni had an interesting nightly ritual where they would ascend to the bedroom and watch the latest big Hollywood blockbuster, but they'd never finish the film, because about an hour in I'd hear the springs go and the sounds of Tony and Toni's love making. Apparently underwritten action flicks were an aphrodisiac in their household. Tonight, it was the latest *Star Trek*, unfortunately J.J. Abrams's latest action flick was drowned out by the sounds of a deep, disgusting groan. I shivered thinking about which Tony/Toni it came from.

Another few minutes passed and as I started to drift in and out of consciousness my mind began to wander as I continued to search for solutions to solve my intestinal discomfort. They started off quite simple; under the sink downstairs there was an old hot water bottles shaped like a duck my Aunt Joan had gifted me one very sad birthday many years ago. If I were quick, I could have it filled, ready and I'd be back in bed in no time. But that risked rousing me too much from my slumber, and as the Tony's began to get more aggressive I dreaded having to put up with more of their rampant love making. Still pondering the cupboard under the sink, I remember the stock of paracetamol my Mum had gifted me when I first moved in. "You never know when you're going to need it," she said, shoving a basket full of Boots' own pharmaceutical products into my hands. Damn it, she was right.

That was it! Pharmaceutical products. I was *sure* that in that basket there was a packet of Boots Premium Chocolate Laxatives. There *had* to be.

It was at this I was spurred awake as the discomfort became too unbearable. I had to attempt to relieve the pressure somehow. I begrudgingly pulled myself out of bed and shuffled to the small bathroom next door. While not quite as adjacent to the Tony's as my bedroom, I could still here the aggressive rapping of their bedposts against the fragile council wall. I dropped my underwear and slumped down on the cold porcelain throne, right next to an annoying leaky tap.

I sat there for a moment-

DRIP

-attempting to maybe-

DRIP

-force something out-

DRIP

-without causing any-

DRIP

-harm to myself-

DRIP

I snapped. I'd had enough of that leaky tap. I shot up from the toilet and angrily gripped the tap and, using all my strength, attempted to tighten it *just a little more* in order to stop that damn leak! But it was all for nought. I turned, there was a squeak, a creak of cheap metal and joints attempting to turn, then a snap! A crack, and the tap was shot into the air followed by a plume of violent water spraying up into the air. Startled, I jumped backwards, and realised I'd never pulled my underwear back up. My feet were caught in the cheap Primark pants and there was a rip and I tumbled, flailing attempting to grip onto anything for support. I grabbed my shower curtain and there was a crash. I'd pulled the rail down and managed to fall face first into the bath, as more water sprayed from the now shattered tap. For a moment, there was quiet, as the Tony's next door had stopped their escapades for a brief moment.

"Oh god," I heard one groan to the other, "What were that?"

"Does it matter?!" The other shouted, "Carry on you big oaf."

And creaking of their bed resumed.

After a few moments of lying there in confusion, fear and shame, I pulled myself out of my bath, placing my feet on the soggy vinyl floor. I looked up, first at the hole where the rail for the curtain had pulled the plaster from the hole, back down to the soaking wet floor, when I noticed a small pile of soggy plaster in the middle of the floor. The wall, maybe? No. I looked up, and noticed that when the tap had burst I'd thrown the tap into the air and it had gotten itself lodged in the ceiling. Just great. I looked down, and noticed that the pants I'd been wearing earlier were now a shredded mess of material bundled around my ankles. I reached down and took them off, and threw them towards the washing basket in the corner of the room. I looked up and plucked the tap from the ceiling and crudely slotted it back into the sink. It almost fit. A small amount of water sprayed out from the tap, right towards the toilet, but it didn't matter. I was tired. I gave a sigh, and rubbed my still aching stomach.

Then it hit me. My idea from earlier. *The laxatives*. My last resort.

I stumbled out of the flooded bathroom, my body aching. I must've pulled something, several somethings, during the whole business with the tap. I ran down the stairs, flicked the kitchen light on and began rummaging under the cupboard. I threw that saft hot water Aunt Joan had bought me to one side. Stupid thing. I found the box of the various Boots products, and began rummaging. One after another, I threw the different boxes of tablets and such to one side; paracetamol, ibuprofen, plasters, cold and flu tablets, Horlicks cough medicine (That one was a bottle that I *almost* threw across the room, but I didn't. I'm not *that* tired), and so on.

No laxatives. I curled up on the cold tiled floor. My stomach began to rumble again, sending a sharp stabbing pain through my gut. As I began to accept my fate, my mind began to wander once more, to the deepest depths in order to think of *something* that could help.

Then everything became clear. It took me back, two, no three, three years to my cousin Sonja's wedding. And the cheesecake. The buffet was completely full of various different meats and finger foods, but it was that gorgeous trip chocolate cheesecake which caught my eye. Three tiers, at the very end of the table. I wandered past the other food. Scoffed at it. Who needs chicken drumsticks, cocktail sausages and disgusting cheese and tuna sandwiches when *this* beauty exists. Oh but that beauty betrayed me. How was I to know they actually put *cheese* in a *cake*. I thought it was an

expression. Black forest gâteau doesn't really have twigs and leaves in it, so why would a cheese cake have cheese in it?

45 minutes I sat on the toilet as my intolerance for all things dairy set off a fire alarm in my insides, causing everything in there to evacuate through the backdoor. My mind returned to my present position: half naked in the foetal position on my kitchen floor surrounded by medication. Not a pretty site.

I rose to my feet and made my way to the fridge. I opened the door and there they were, two 2L bottles of Cravendale, semi-skimmed for your pleasure. I cracked the seals on the bottles and began chugging them as fast as possible, the cool white liquid barely making it to my mouth. I'd argue out of the 4L's I consumed more of it went on the floor, but that didn't matter. It *worked*. I bolted out the kitchen, up the stairs, barely making it back to the toilet in time. There, in euphoric bliss, I erupted. There was a moan, my moan, loud and gracious, the aggressive splash of my evacuation echoed in the bathroom. I hardly noticed the tap spraying water directly into my face I was in so much bliss. My stomach began to settle, and finally, I could sleep.

"Whoa, was that you?" One of the Tony's said.

"Course not," the other replied, "It were that weirdo next door who has trouble shitting."

Word Count: 1,502