



Lune Fiction

Issue 2



20th March 2006

Bade mein Hof!

Lune: *noun.* Also loyn(e). LME. [OFr. loigne, variation of longe, shortening of allonge (lengthening); drawing out, f. allonger, f. long] A length of cord etc.; spec. a leash for a hawk (*Encyclopaedia Britannica, 1997*)

Fiction: *noun.* The action of feigning or of inventing imaginary events, etc. (origin spec. for the purpose of deception); imaginative invention as opposed to truth or fact. (*Encyclopaedia Britannica, 1997*)
xford Dictionary, 1993).

Lune Fiction

Issue 2

Editors: JM de Vrind & Leo Davies

Executive Editor: Humble Sam

POYSE: Mollie Baxter & Hendryk Korzeniowski

Design & stuff (i.e. pictures) : John William Montgomery de Bas (from his exhibition 'Angels of Rome')

Published by Humble Texts

Contributions: Mollie Baxter, A. Gordon Morris, Humble Sam, Louisa J. Reynolds, Jane Scargill, JM de Vrind & Herschel Waters

Comments, advice, complaints, contributions, donations and sponsorship deals can be sent via our contact address.

We will choose to burn letters we don't like

Originally published January & June 2002 as hardcopy except where indicated otherwise

God Save The Duke Of Lancaster

ISSN 1754-7172

Next Issue will be out 17th April 2006



This issue was sponsored by
the North West Arts Board



Conditions Of Sale:

Once again, I have to announce that this magazine has been published subject to the condition that it shall not, by way of trade or otherwise, be lent, re-sold, hired out or otherwise circulated without the publisher's prior consent in any form of binding or cover other than that in which it is published and without a similar condition including this edition being imposed on the subsequent purchaser. All stories, articles and letters are copyright of the authors. Actually, now I think about it, the same goes for the pictures and all. Finally, the views that are expressed here are not necessarily the views of the editor and publisher.

And so it is..

Editorial

To whom it may concern,

Flash Fiction, micro prose, mini sagas, ultra short stories or minimalist literature, this form of writing is slowly gaining popularity and recognition.

It is, however, not a homogenous art form and this latest edition of Lune Fiction contains micro prose which is by turns funny, well-crafted, easy reading, experimental and provocative.

That, ultimately, is the purpose of Lune Fiction: to promote mini sagas. It exists to define and redefine minimalist literature. It isn't radical but it is challenging.

You may find this collection of flash fiction stimulating; some readers will find it pleasing and others will decide it is rubbish. I like to think it is anything but boring.

Bon appetit, prost and enjoy this collection of stories from Lancaster's finest writers,

Humble Sam





Contents

Editorial
Letter To The Editor
Letter To Myself
Monday Morning
Lessons In Resignation (No 34)
A Stitch In Time
Watching Whales
Lawrence Benson
Trucker's Progress
Aloe Vera
Yoici's Loom
Tina's Yellow Violin
Millennia Rumours
Death by Spider Plant
Flash Essay: Time Not To Forgive
Beyond The River
Tiny Tot
Family Teens
Flatpacking

Letter To The Editor

Sir,

I write in response to the letter published in the first edition of Lune Fiction. Some years ago, I was able to fulfil a lifelong dream and went backpacking around India. I was lucky enough to spend several months under the tutelage of Yogi Muhapnabindi, one of the country's most venerated Masters of the Ayurvedic practice. His teachings provide an explanation for the previous correspondent's observation.

When the spine is correctly aligned, through posture awareness and breathing exercises, it should be possible to comfortably touch both nipples with an extended tongue (See Muhapnabindi's "Spine of Life", pp 43-57, Pickled Gherkin Press, 1977).

A subject, who cannot reach both nipples, should begin corrective therapy and take care not to force the movement, since it would be inconvenient were the muscles to lock in that position.

I hope this is of help.

Yours truly,

Margery Harking



Letter To Myself

Sir,

I am shocked by my own behaviour. Furthermore, I am worried about my conduct in public and wish to make amends. But I have no regrets.

Sincerely yours,

Humble Sam

PS I do, however, have a number of egrets!

Monday Morning

She had been talking for less than ten minutes when she turned her gaze on him. A cold look and a barely concealed disdain featured on his face. She had anticipated this. It was going to be one of those days.

Dressed in her night gown, she had reason to be happy. They had just spent their first holiday together in months and returned late last night. It had been a delightful weekend of sight seeing, love making and shopping in Brussels.

She felt they were one again.

She ignored her husband's frosty reception and asked for the marmalade next to his plate.

He passed it over and eyed her carefully. He moved his lips and uttered his first word of the day.

"Why?"

Her job demanded tough choices. He meant a lot to her. He was not just her spouse. He was her lover, friend and the father of her four gorgeous children. He was also the editor of her magazine, a journal on the great cities of the world. He was her one and everything.

She loved him and that morning, watching him slumber beside her, she had come to the conclusion that she had to be firm.

When he woke up, she sacked him.

"You're a shit editor."

Lessons In Resignation (no. 34)

"How many days in September?"

"Don't know."

"Well, come on - how does that rhyme go? Thirty days have Sep ... oh."



A Stitch In Time

My love is explaining the nature of the universe. It is 3 am. We are sharing our bed with scientists in elevators, men in glass rooms, revolving spheres and the space-time continuum.

"... And so, black holes are infinitely small ..."

My brain sags in the middle. Just like a half-baked sponge when you open the oven too soon.

"Well, it's no wonder they've not found any, then."

"Yes, but ..." I watch him recall and regroup his thoughts for another launch.

"I've found one." I say and hand him my matchbox. He raises an eyebrow, but slides open the drawer a crack and looks in. He goes pale and hands it back.

"That showed him.", I think smugly and turn off the light.

Watching Whales

In the dark waters, just beneath the ship, the shadow of a humpback whale glides.

I am impressed. Humpies are large graceful creatures.

Splash, eek, splash.

With desperation, a dolphin tries to seize our attention by leaping over the bow of the boat.

It is impressive. But not as impressive as the whale banging its fluke on the sea's surface.

"He's not trying to attract a Sheila; he's just showing off". The captain grins at me. It's no use talking to the other passengers; they're feeling under the weather.

I am surprised. It is a beautiful day.

Splash, eek, etc. The dolphin tries to impress us one more time. Then he leaves.


I feel sorry for it. But then again, I did come to watch whales, not dolphins. I can do that back home.

A humpy jumps out of the water straight ahead.

I sit down, light a cigarette and enjoy the spectacle. But not for long.

Splash, splash, splash. Eek, eek, eek. Splash, splash, splash. The dolphin is back and this time he has brought some friends along. "Goddammit!", he seems to be saying, "humpback whales aren't that interesting".

The captain and I smile at each other and continue to watch whales.



Lawrence Benson

Larry Benson is a dead man. He blew his brains out with a gun. His body is now slowly rotting on the Longreach to Darwin line. That is why Larry never came back home again. That is why trains avoid the Northern Lands.

Time has passed. Larry's bones have been all but bleached by the burning sun. His parents and siblings are still picking over his remains. But what has happened to Larry's soul? Why does he remain so restless?

Larry's spirit may have left this world but his heart still roams the highway. Lawrence Benson is trekking through the Outback. Waltzing Mathilda with his soul, he's hiking past dried out creeks, billabongs and stealing tinnies & steaks from farmers while Kookaboroughs laugh madly.

Lawrence Benson has been and gone; Larry Benson is here to stay.

Trucker's Progress

I'm rolling on through the overcast night with my reading light on. I'm just like you. I'm listening to the radio; I'm going home to the bay.

I like to think I'm a travelling man and a music connoisseur. But don't we all? I know I delude myself, but then again who doesn't? The long hours, the vast distances. The days of solitude and isolation.

Tomorrow morning, I'll be in my lover's arms. Mixing with my crowd, celebrating life with my people.

But till then I've got to keep on rolling. The dark light, the stretches of empty tarmac.

Just me, myself and I.

Aloe Vera

Helen, after meeting her Aunt Vera at a wedding, invited her for tea, with the intention of finding out more about Vera and her mother's eldest sister, Nora. As a child, Helen had seen the photograph of a girl in her late teens on her grandmother's fireplace. She only needed to look at her mother's face to know not to ask any more.

"It's your Aunt Nora. She died not long after her time in France," Granny Peters said.

It was never mentioned again.



Helen put a soap dispenser in the toilet with the label Aloe Vera to make her auntie feel welcome.

When she turned up, Helen thought she saw a figure walking behind her, but quickly dismissed this as one of her hallucinations.

As the two women sipped tea, ate digestive biscuits and talked about Nora, Vera appeared increasingly uncomfortable.

"My dad was not Nora's dad," Vera said. "And Nora..." She sprung up. "I must visit the loo".

Helen, while cutting more Battenburg in the kitchen, suddenly heard a scream. Vera was looking in the mirror at a face that was not hers.

It was holding a gun in its hand.

"Allo Vera", Nora said.



Yoichi's Loom

Usually when I die, things run as they should and I spend my pocket of eternity swimming blissfully with the other soul shapes until it's time to go round again.

But this time, there were complications. I woke up. And heaven is an unsettling place when you're still used to the material world.

They found me huddled in a corner.

"Oh dear," said Marion, "You're looking a bit peaky."

"Don't hurt me! I don't know why I'm here.", I whimpered.

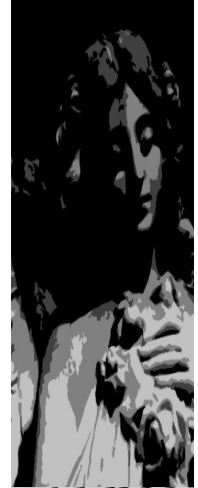
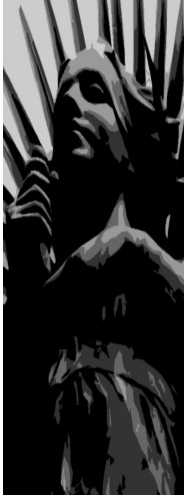
"Don't be silly," replied Marion. "Come on."

She took me to meet Yoichi, to whom she was apprenticed. He was working his loom. The apparatus had a little wad of paper beneath one leg to stop it rocking.

That cloth! I would have watched for hours as the threads dipped and wrapped themselves beyond music, beyond dancing, into the very pattern of someone's life, but Yoichi shooed me away, because I wasn't trained.

"Watch too long they start to feel it. You had a life like that? Feel on edge all the time like you're being watched? That's why - nose weavers."

I would scuff off to the vast ocean behind us where I could dive and swim and almost lose myself in the mixing pot. But when I came back, I would approach quietly and listen in to Marion's lessons.





"See here", Yoichi would say, "and here - you see it?"

"It looks like a spider web, but inwards."

"This person work too hard. Keep getting weave too tight. Then it all falls apart. This their pattern. Happen again and again."

Gradually, I pieced together the language of the looms and could recognise some basic patterns. I could even tell love shapes from fear shapes, and they're pretty similar.

One day, I was swimming in the soul ocean and, feeling braver than usual, I swam deeper and further than ever before. I would have forgotten myself had not Marion fished me out. She looked serious.

"Yoichi wants to see you."

He was at his loom. As usual. He pointed to the cloth before him.

"This soul gonna be born soon."

I looked.

"Great painter. Gonna touch a lot of weaves."

"Wow", I said, admiring the bolt of pure genius that pushed through all the other lines.

"His model becomes his wife. Here - they deeply in love. But he gonna drift away, his painting tug too strong. See here - this darkness?"

I nodded, seeing the ugly knot of colour.

"One day, she jump back in."

Jump back in - Yoichi's way of describing suicide.

I wait.

"We've got a special prerogative," begins Marion, carefully, "We can sometimes give souls a bit of help ... well ... we can wake them up."

"See here," breaks in Yoichi, "This point is where it all hangs."

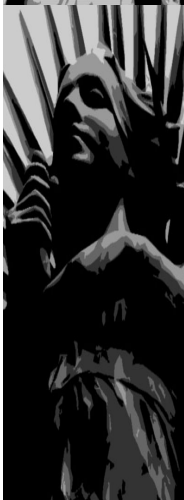
I look, but I can't see the subtlety.

"Here, we can show him how it will go, and he can make a choice: his wife or his art. He choose, he sleep again and never remembers."

"Tell her," says Marion uncomfortably. Yoichi pauses, then meets my eye.

"You gonna be him. When it's time, you want us to wake you up?"

I hang there, between the weave and the ocean.



Tina's Yellow Violin

Tina had a yellow violin. Her great Aunt Alice had left it to her when she was six.

After a few lessons as a child, Tina lapsed.

Now, every New Year, she made a resolution to get out her music and practise.

So, each New Year's Day, when her guests had gone, she got it out and played the strings, filling her flat with its whining tone.

On New Year's Day 1996, her new neighbour, Stephen, hammered on the door.

As she opened it, she saw two eyes glaring at her, then softening.

"Erm...can I borrow some coffee", he said,"haven't had chance to buy any yet. Place is a tip."

"What do you really want?" she asked.

"I want you to stop playing that violin."

"Why?"

"Erm. Because I can think of better things to do. Things with me."

Stephen didn't bother to sort out his flat. Tina made him keep their flat tidy, so they got on reasonably well. And every New Year's Day, Stephen went for a walk while Tina practised on her yellow violin.

Millennia Rumours

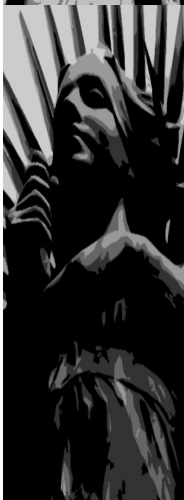
Rumours have it that something nasty is going to happen within the next few weeks. Or that's what some experts want us to believe.

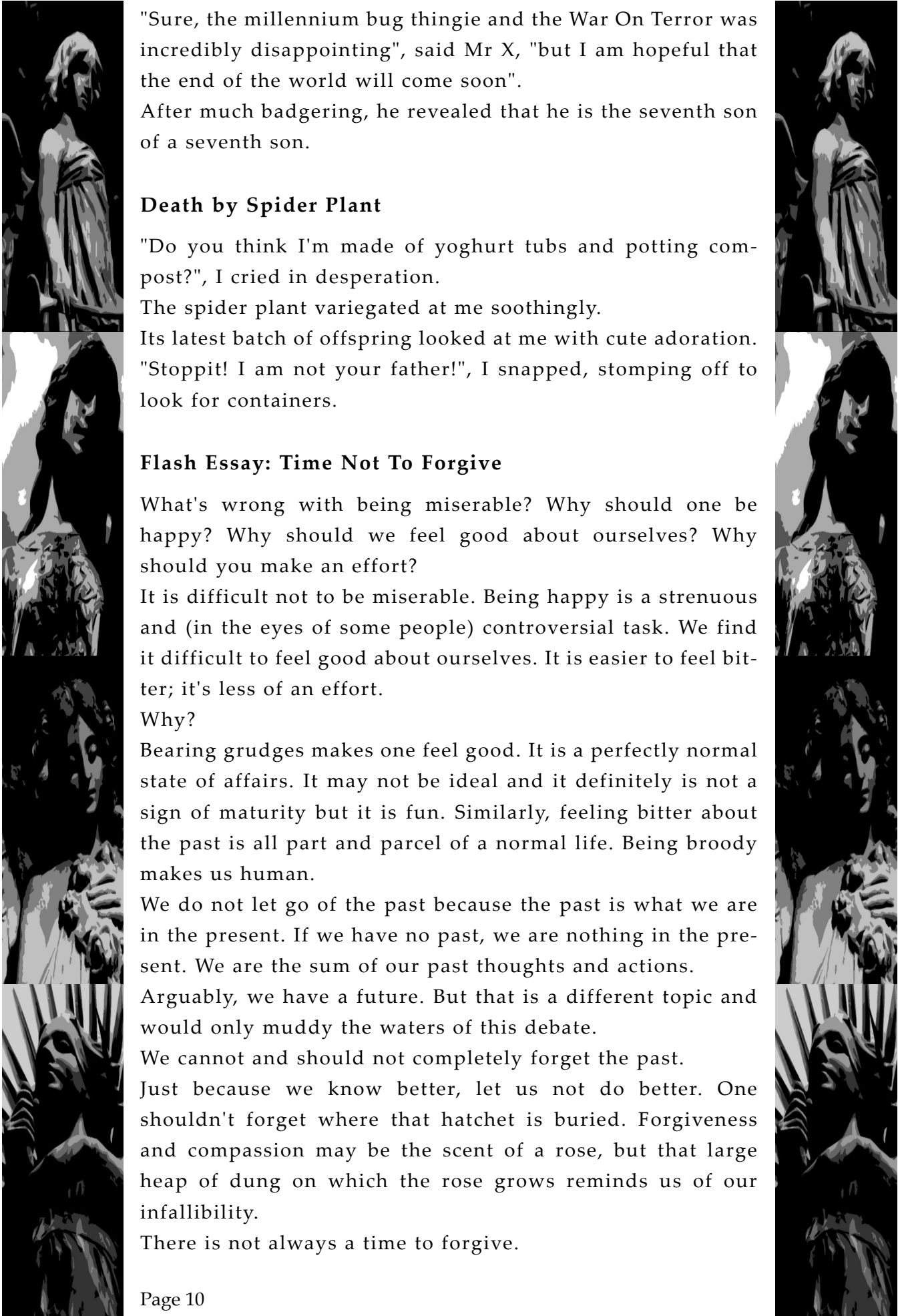
According to the latest scientific research, the day will turn into night or the night will turn into day. Rain may or may not fall from the heavens. Black will become white. Or not.

Other experts, however, argue that the future is not quite as bad as some people make it out to be. In fact, things may even get better soon!

"A mountain of candy will rise from the bottom of the sea, day light will last for 24 hours, lakes and rivers will turn into all hues of wine and the January sales will last all year", argues one expert.

And one particular person, who wouldn't reveal his name to us, is incredibly optimistic.





"Sure, the millennium bug thingie and the War On Terror was incredibly disappointing", said Mr X, "but I am hopeful that the end of the world will come soon".

After much badgering, he revealed that he is the seventh son of a seventh son.

Death by Spider Plant

"Do you think I'm made of yoghurt tubs and potting compost?", I cried in desperation.

The spider plant variegated at me soothingly.

Its latest batch of offspring looked at me with cute adoration.

"Stoppit! I am not your father!", I snapped, stomping off to look for containers.

Flash Essay: Time Not To Forgive

What's wrong with being miserable? Why should one be happy? Why should we feel good about ourselves? Why should you make an effort?

It is difficult not to be miserable. Being happy is a strenuous and (in the eyes of some people) controversial task. We find it difficult to feel good about ourselves. It is easier to feel bitter; it's less of an effort.

Why?

Bearing grudges makes one feel good. It is a perfectly normal state of affairs. It may not be ideal and it definitely is not a sign of maturity but it is fun. Similarly, feeling bitter about the past is all part and parcel of a normal life. Being broody makes us human.

We do not let go of the past because the past is what we are in the present. If we have no past, we are nothing in the present. We are the sum of our past thoughts and actions.

Arguably, we have a future. But that is a different topic and would only muddy the waters of this debate.

We cannot and should not completely forget the past.

Just because we know better, let us not do better. One shouldn't forget where that hatchet is buried. Forgiveness and compassion may be the scent of a rose, but that large heap of dung on which the rose grows reminds us of our infallibility.

There is not always a time to forgive.

Beyond The River

Welcome to the realm of the dead! The place with gored bodies. The place of the deprived... lost souls, demented ghosts, sweet ghouls and all that. Erhem. The place for the depraved. The place with enough blood to satisfy the most blood thirsty of you. Yes, you will find it most entertaining!

Now then, let me see. Where was I? Oh, yes! Well then, here we have some people with green faces and over there, next to the river of sparks and phlegm, are soldiers with blue helmets. Swiftly moving on, (Please try not to jump into the babbling brook of flickering lights and puss!) look at those orange burnt people. They were killed on the whim of someone or other. Ah, and here we see tiny graves decorated with purple lilies. Children soon to be released again into your world, oh yes.

Now then, let me see... Ah! If we now cross this bridge across the mighty river of fire and blood, we come to the red portal of death itself. This is where the dead arrive.

Finally, we have a deadly game of fun before you once again can go back home. You know, that place with that garish yellow orb.

I do hope you enjoyed yourselves.

I did.

Tiny Tot

A tiny tot was responsible for raising the alarm at a block of flats in Morecambe, Lancashire, when a fire threatened to burn down the local compost heap.

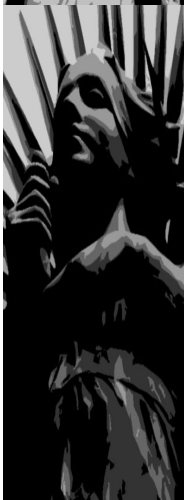
Tiny tot Dew Baldwin alerted the fire brigade by setting off a set of plastic explosives inside the fire brigade's canteen.


Dew, aged four, is said to be very pleased by all the excitement he has caused, although he is somewhat upset by the way police detectives interrogated him after the incident.

"He's done me and the family proud", said his stepfather Sean McNugget.

"Nasty little piece of work", said Superintendent Joel Lebowski, "Lock him up and throw away the key, that's what I say."

Despite police protests, the tiny tot was made an honorary fire man at a ceremony yesterday in Morecambe, you know





that town named after the famous comedian Eric Morecambe. The lucky little fellow was also awarded a large sherbet dip by a once popular soap starlet. The tiny tot known as Dew Baldwin was then ceremoniously run over by a 1969 Triumph T150 Trident. Hooray!

Family Teens

My father had my mother, an old friend and I round the dinner table. His sister was unconscious with leukaemia, the doctors doing everything they could to keep her alive in her final hours. Dad was waiting for that call. I was twelve. Russell was sixteen, drinking lager and listening to the Ruts. It was all part of my brother's defence against the drama going on downstairs. Sandy hair, wiry arms and the German flag (black, red & gold) sewn on his khaki green shirt sleeve. High on pheromones and the smell of cigarettes; tears ran down my face from physical distress; the food untouched on my plate.

"There is still hope, Darling." Mum said.

Flatpacking

It was as Chuck had said the night before: "It's like flat-packing rabbits, you can fit most of them in with a bit of compression, but those big floppy ears - They just go all over the place".

"You've got to staple them down, son! It's messy but it gets the job done."

He packed his bag for Nevada. He was sure there was something he'd forgotten.

"Fuck it", he said and left her.

finis

