



*The day
I proposed to
Susan Boyle...
and my other
brilliant
scoops*

Confessions of a red-top reporter

For two years, **Richard Peppiatt** chased 'exclusives' for a national newspaper. This is his own story, burqas and all

Tabloids have never been the preserve of shrinking violets, but human cacti; watered with little praise and able to flourish under blistering heat. It is a work culture that begets broad shoulders, without which a fortnight ago I could not have typed a scathing resignation letter to my media mogul boss, Richard Desmond, copied in another national newspaper, and, finger trembling, clicked send.

Two years I'd spent in the tabloid trenches of the *Daily Star*, sporting the ink-stained suits and moral tinnitus to prove it.

Then came a front page "Exclusive" that shocked me into clarity, a truly rank tale that the English Defence League were set

to become a political party. Except I knew they weren't - and this time I wasn't prepared simply to turn the page.

Since then, much outrage has been focused on my public disclosures about how I was ordered to dress in a burqa or ambush Muslim women while dressed in just my underwear.

But I don't want to give the impression my red-top career has consisted solely of dressing up and doing idiotic and offensive things. Sometimes they let me wear my own clothes.

Here are a few snapshots of the life I've left behind. I do so with gladness, smatterings of nostalgia but, for the most part, just relief ...

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