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needed)

Random Acts of Sentience

A curated stream of consciousness humorous blog posts of a dedicated nutter

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For Ben. My partner and love since 1997.

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Some samples of posts from 2007:

Pea with Ham Soup!

I just went through the trauma of creating Pea with Ham soup!

Now normally it wouldn't be a trauma. I've made this soup a million times. But I haven't done it for at least two years. So what's changed you ask? Ah. Now therein lies the rub.

Bacon bones.

I must have trudged around a dozen butchers and supermarkets trying to get them. I mean, it's not hard when you think about it. They already butcher the pigs don't they?

Well no. No. No they don't.

Every butcher I went to gets their meat pre-packed, pre-consumerized, pre-plasticized and pre-dumbass-customers-who-can't-tell-the-difference-ized.

Bugger. Bugger, bugger, bugger.

I was stunned to realize that in the past few years just about all meat in the UK is now shipped in pre-packed styrofoam shrink-wrapped form. So even the "speciality" butchers get the meat in plasticized form. So why do they have knives and cleavers and all that behind the counter?

Ah.

One butcher said to me:

"Oo Ah. Well, that be so that customers feel at home see..."

Not my home mate. The cleavers were in pristine condition. Not a mark on them. I doubt they've seen use since they were unwrapped from their packaging. Sigh... I thought about getting in the car and going off to some country market or whatever, but after so many blank stares from meat-staff I wonder if it's worth it. What's the point? All I get is this:

Me: Do you have any bacon bones?

Them: Eh?

Me: Do you have any Bacon bones?

Them: Er... Bacon what? You want what?

Me: Bacon bones. For pea and ham soup...

Them: Bones... In soup... Er...

Me: No. Really. You make up a stock and remove the bones. It's easy.

Them: Er... Yeeesss... Well... I'll just get the manager...

....

Manager: Yes Maam, what can I do for you?

Me: Bacon bones. I just want to find out if you sell bacon bones. You know. You make a stock out of the bones and scrape the last of the meat off to make pea and ham soup.

Manager: Er... Bones? [eyebrows reach sky-high proportions] In soup?

Me: No, no, no. You just make the stock out of them. You used to be able to get a bag of bones with bits of meat on them. You make a stock and then discard the bones...

Manager: Er...

Me: BEFORE you make soup. The soup doesn't have any bones!

Manager: Er...

Me: Oh, never mind.

So I ended up getting a plasticized block of ham and cutting it into small pieces and using that instead. I did try to make some stock with the fat and what not, and it "almost" worked. It was okay, but not quite right.

Oh. And I must remember. I **MUST** remember. There's only two of us. So there's no point in making enough for ten people. I ended up with about 10 liters of P&H soup. Nice I must admit and Ben wolfed it down like it was manna, but we'll be eating this stuff for ages now.

Marcel, Speed Cameras and Rat Throwing as a Sport

Marcel has died.

There will be a minutes noise.

I wonder, though, how he will be buried. Presumably upright in a glass coffin with his hands glued to the front. And in any case, it could be that he's not dead, but performing a long running gag.

There's this thing on again about speed cameras in England. Apparently now you will get six points off your license if you refuse to say who was driving when you got caught. This will inevitably lead to the normal English rants and blood vessel bursting carry on about how speed cameras are simply there to generate revenue.

Well hey guys, how about forming a new grass roots movement to deny these vicious money grubbing bastards their money? Tell you what, try this:

"DON'T BLOODY WELL SPEED! It's against the law you dumb-ass."

Don't want to pay a fine? Then lighten your lead foot! If you don't like the speed limit or where the cameras are placed, use your vote or better yet, get on the council or train your kids to become lawyers. But for Vishnu's sake stop complaining about it! And I'm sick to death of hearing the tired refrain:

"If it's safe why can't I speed?"

Bullshit.

Just don't speed.

"I will be late for work."

Bullshit.

Get your fat-ass carcass out of bed earlier.

“I have to drop the kids off at school before going to work.”

Bullshit.

They have legs don't they? Eee, when I were a lass we had to walk to school fourteen miles, thru blizzard. I tell thee, youngun's today don't know they're born...

Throwies.

Now I don't expect you even know what they are. Well, what you do is wire up a small battery, a blinking red led and a magnet and toss it twenty or more foot up onto a metal surface. There it'll stay for ages blinking angrily and totally out of reach of all but the most determined council worker.

Well, now there's a deliciously deviant new twist. And it's all detailed on this website called Instructables. (<http://www.instructables.com>)

What you do, see, is get a stuffed rat.

I know, I know, you can't get them at ASDA.

I know, I've tried.

But in any case, if you have a friendly neighborhood taxidermist you should be able to pick one up. And don't worry, if you don't have a local dead animal stuffer, the site details how to stuff the rat yourself. And given the rat problem in London, you're not likely to run out of ratty volunteers.

Or should I say, “conscripts.”

Ok. You've got your stuffed rat. So you open up its back and place two red leds where his eyes used to be and put the battery and magnet in. Now go find a nice spot to throw him. Sports centers or the Millennium bridge in London for example. Can't you just see the looks on peoples faces when they see this rat seemingly hanging, as if by magic, from up on high with blinking red eyes? Better yet, rig up a few dozen and toss the lot at some other great metal monument. I love it. Wonderfully anarchic.

Actually Instructables have the most supremely divine projects. My favorites are wiring up a barbie doll to an electric chair (Watch her head smoke - all it needs is a small firework inside her head timed to go off after a while) and attaching the back end of a bicycle to a supermarket trolley. That way you can do the shopping, get exercise and avoid the one pound deposit on the things.

Oo. Ooo. We just got back from a quick drive up to Richmond. We originally just popped out to get the necessities of life: booze, cigarettes and cookies, but went into “They Walk Among Us.” No comments about how it should be “Amongst” please. In any case it's a comic and toy shop. It's got all this waaaay cool stuff such as “Action Figures.” We once bought an “Einstein” action figure there, fully posable with chalk and what not. I soooo wanted a Stephen Hawking action figure, but they don't make them.

Sigh. Another dream shattered.

In any case, there were lots of cool games and comics. We already have the game “Zombies,” which is a hysterical tabletop game where you try to out-race the zombies to the Heli-Pad. Tons of little cute plastic zombies and you get cards saying you've found a shotgun or chain-saw or whatever. And would you believe it, Marvel comics have a new set of comics devoted to super hero zombies. Yes really. So if you want to see Captain America or Wonder Woman battling evil while bits of them are dropping off

inconveniencing passers by, then go to a comic store and hunt down the Marvel comics section. I keep meaning to start reading the "Alien vs Predator" series but I'm knee-deep in Manga at present and I need to finish those.

I know there seems to be this zombie obsession running through this blog, but there's a word for it: "Cognitive Dissonance." It's that feeling you get when you decide to get something and all of a sudden you see that thing everywhere. So you go out any decide to buy a red ferrari and suddenly it seems that there's hundreds of them all over the road. Or you decide that the railway system here sucks and suddenly notice that everybody else thinks so too.

Oh. Actually. Um. Yeah, well that example may not be cognitive dissonance. It's actually true.

Anyway, I'm digressing again. Why did I mention Richmond? Oh yeah. That's right. We went into Tesco to get the staples of life and I saw (and photographed) some perfect examples of the highest exposition of English culture: "French Red Wine in Cans" and cans with just the words "Strong Lager" on them - with only the tiniest of Tesco branding on it. Perfect. Says it all really.

And speaking of the French, if they are, as so many people around the world claim, "Cheese Eating Surrender Monkeys," then would residents of some south east asian countries be called "Monkey Eating Surrender Cheeses?" By the way, I'm not even remotely anti-french. Far from it. But you gotta laugh when you see this sort of thing: <http://www.albinoblacksheep.com/text/victories.html>

Mind you, there are other epithets for other countries as well. For example, Graeme Garden described Americans as "Burger Eating Invasion Monkeys." So the phraseology does transcend national borders at least.