

NEW ZEALAND Reader's Digest

**RD
TALKS**
OUR STORIES
AS PODCASTS

**SCENT OF
A WOMAN**
Chanel No.5
100 Years On

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*Where Art
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EXCLUSIVE INTERVIEW

RICK STEIN **'Memories That Shaped Me'**

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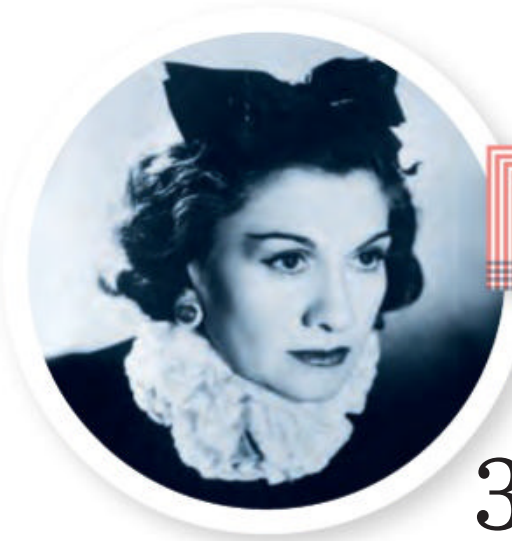


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"Smell Like A Woman, Not A Rose"

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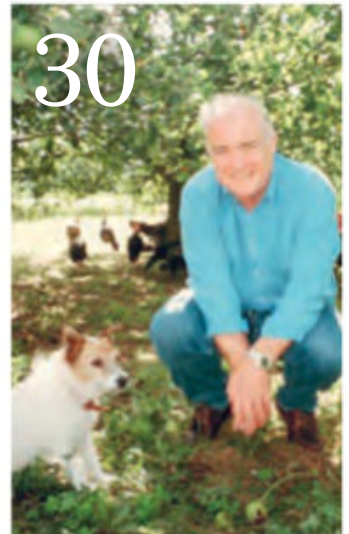
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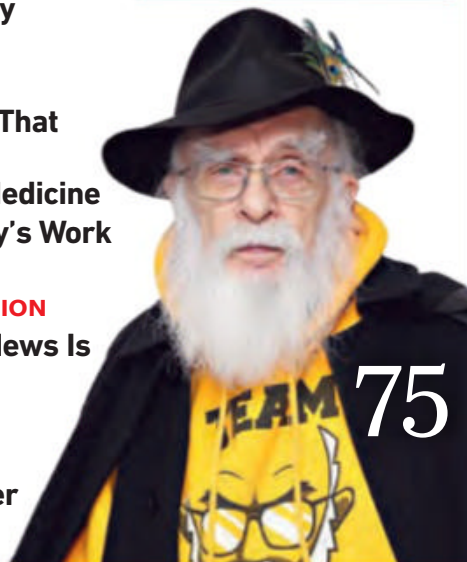
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EDITOR'S NOTE

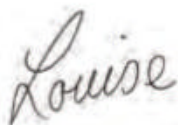
Restoring An Enduring Icon

ON 15 APRIL 2019, the world learnt the terrible news that Notre Dame Cathedral, Paris's famous landmark building and popular tourist attraction, was ablaze. The unimaginable had happened, but with its magnificent 800-year-old roof still smouldering in ruins, the enormous effort to restore the medieval beauty began. In 'Saving Notre Dame' (page 62), we take a look at the restoration effort involving expert scientists and historians from across France to identify the most suitable natural materials to rebuild the cathedral's roof and preserve its other unique structural features.

We also delve into the intriguing life of Coco Chanel, creator of another French icon, Chanel No.5 ('Smell Like A Woman', page 36). This year, the perfume celebrates its 100th anniversary, and though one of the most-recognised global brands, the lesser-known story of its origins and brilliant creator makes great reading. Other unmissable reads celebrate the theme of family, starting with a special tribute to fathers from their daughters ('Daughters And Dads', page 86) - this reader-contributed compilation is magically heart-warming.

This month's drama-in-real-life, 'Lost On Burke Mountain' (page 48), is a sobering account of how a young father's hasty decision while on a mountain hike with his two children turned to disaster. Then, our Making A Difference feature highlights the very personal journey of one man who now strives to help ex-prisoners and families of prisoners with life's daily challenges ('Human Hearts', page 24).

Happy reading,



LOUISE WATERSON
Editor-in-Chief



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LETTERS

Reader's Comments And Opinions

Working With Robots

I found 'Welcome, Robots' (June) an insightful read. While I marvelled at the technology, I worried where it might end. Robots may be more efficient but not at the expense of humans – or so I thought. When Mark Borman said, "We're going through a generational change ... in agriculture" and that younger people aren't choosing these jobs, previously I would have thought it best to encourage humans to fill these positions, not a robotic workforce. But it doesn't have to be one or the other, it can be a collaborative effort.

RAY POULSON



The Lasting Effect Of A Golf Game

'Golf, A Game of Life' (My Story, June) resonated with me. At the high school where I taught, the staff always had a golf day on the first day of the Christmas holidays.

Having young children meant that I couldn't attend but one year, my in-laws were visiting so off I went. At the first tee, I lifted the club and attempted to hit the ball. Failed! So, I swore at it and had another serious go. Result? It didn't move and I

Let us know if you are moved – or provoked – by any item in the magazine, share your thoughts. See page 8 for how to join the discussion.

ended up on the ground. Someone recognised what looked like a knee injury. The doctor said that it was a torn cartilage which would probably worry me in later age. Having now turned 80, it is a regular pain!

WENDY HUDDLESTON

Compassion Still Exists

I was deeply touched reading 'Raincoats for Change' (June). Dipa Swaminathan's small but significant act of kindness towards the migrants in Singapore is truly inspirational. In a world that is bankrupt of compassion, Dipa's initiative confirms that humanity exists and all is not lost. Through their efforts, Dipa and her volunteers have shown that small actions can go a long way in helping the needy.

SHUBHA APTE

WIN A PILOT CAPLESS FOUNTAIN PEN

The best letter each month will win a Pilot Capless Fountain Pen, valued at over \$200. The Capless is the perfect combination of luxury and ingenious technology, featuring a one-of-a-kind retractable fountain pen nib, durable metal body, beautiful rhodium accents and a 14K gold nib. Congratulations to this month's winner, Wendy Huddleston.



DOING THE LEGWORK

We asked you to think up a clever caption for this photo.

The new flexible working arrangements were taking some getting used to.

NATALIE STANWAY

My boss asked me to take my work seriously by putting my head down.

RAJ SANEJA

I can do this job standing on my head. SOPHIA DINSDALE

I've found an easy way to bring down the overheads.

KARTHIK SHANMUGAM

Congratulations to this month's winner, Sophia Dinsdale.



CAPTION CONTEST

Come up with the funniest caption for the above photo and you could win

\$100. To enter, email

editor@readersdigest.co.nz

or see details on page 8.

Future Forecaster

Whether they like it or not, the leaders of the world should listen to what Petteri Taalas has to say ('The Climate Forecaster', June). The UN's top meteorologist says that we can still save the planet if we work together. This is a forecast based on co-operation and not confrontation.

MICHAEL WOUTERS

Grandma Knows Best

Your article on folk remedies (July) brought back memories of my grandmother, who had "strange ideas" according to some of my relatives, but whose advice was always sought when there were medical problems. She advocated the use of goat milk for babies when they suffered from eczema and used something involving marigolds which seemed to help spots.

I would reluctantly accept some of her medications, complaining about how revolting they tasted but never querying the fact that they worked.

MARY ANDERSEN

Sentimental Items

I remember being at our family holiday cottage as a child, selecting a Reader's Digest from the shelf, tucking into my sleeping bag and digging in. The magazines had been bought by my grandparents, who were no longer around. Reading those issues made me feel connected to them.

BRENDA BOWLES

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Anecdotes and Jokes **\$50-\$100**

Send in your real-life laugh for Life's Like That or All in a Day's Work. Got a joke? Send it in for Laughter Is the Best Medicine!

Smart Animals **Up to \$100**

Share antics of unique pets or wildlife in up to 300 words.

My Story **\$400**

Do you have an inspiring or life-changing tale to tell? Submissions must be true.

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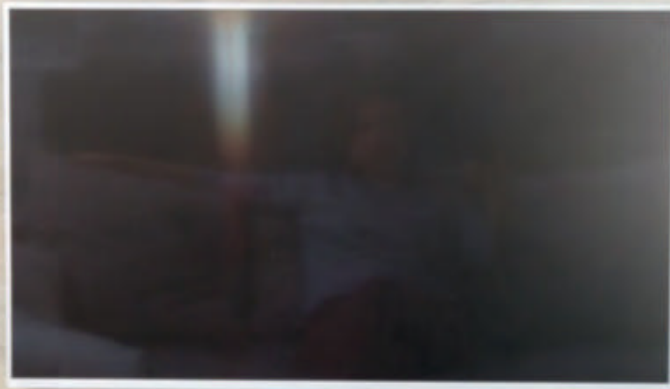
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NEWS WORTH SHARING



Bringing Smiles To Children In Conflict Zones

In her London home, 44-year-old professional clown Samantha Holdsworth is singing and dancing for social workers 8000 kilometres away in Bangladesh, who erupt in laughter. The Zoom call is a training session to equip them to entertain Rohingya refugee children.

Holdsworth is founder of Clowns Without Borders UK, a charity that brings comic relief to children in conflict zones and disaster areas. She launched the chapter of the Spanish-based non-profit in 2014. "There is glorious defiance in their work," she

says. "They don't accept that crisis, conflict or the threat of violence are more powerful than children having the chance to laugh."

Before the pandemic, NGOs would invite Holdsworth and her 17-clown team of volunteers to perform for at-risk communities around the world.

A standard performance consists of slapstick comedy, juggling, song and dance, and was held in an easily accessible open space. Since the pandemic, Holdsworth has shifted her focus on helping local artists continue her work in their own communities.

COMPILED BY VICTORIA POLZOT

Exploring Creative Talents

Two years ago, Diane Lloyd started at Artsenta – an art studio for people who use mental health and addiction services – and found acceptance and joy in creating pottery.

Artsenta is a shared art studio in Dunedin. It's free and provides space and equipment to create jewellery, music, paintings, drawings, ceramics and prints. Specialist artists teach skills and, as creative coaches, develop art plans to guide the creative work.

Artsenta was founded on the belief that the arts, creativity and



Left: Some of Diane's work. Above: Diane working at the Artsenta studio in Dunedin

self-expression are essential to every person's emotional, physical and spiritual wellbeing, and that those in the mental health community should be given the opportunity to realise their creative potential. Diane credits the studio for helping her achieve the right balance she has now found.

State Is A Renewable Energy Powerhouse

Once saddled with some of Australia's highest electricity prices, the state of South Australia now has the cheapest in the country. The turnaround started

less than 20 years ago, when the state began switching from a primarily fossil fuel system to wind and solar power.

An estimated 40 per cent of households

in South Australia have rooftop solar panels. With 60 per cent of its energy needs provided by renewables in 2020, the state has set a target of 100 per cent by 2030.



MY STORY

The Pandemic Lit Up Our Village

*Being together in lockdown
had a bright side*

BY *Salman Mujtaba*

In late March last year, just a month after Pakistan's first reported case of COVID-19, I returned to my village, Shujghal. The village sits at the highest peak of the Hindu Kush mountain range in the eastern valley of Tirich Mir. It is comprised of just 16 houses, and each one belongs to members of my family.

As is the case during the winter months, when resources are more scarce in the villages, most of us head to cities such as Islamabad, Peshawar and Lahore. I teach English at a private school in

Peshawar but the COVID-19 lockdown meant I had to return to Shujghal. On the upside, the lockdown reunited my cousins and I for the first time in years.

To pass the time, most nights after dinner we would play cards.

Our village had been without electricity since 2016, when floods damaged our local hydro power plant.

After a few nights of trying to play under a faint solar light, we came up with a plan to build our own little power plant using water pressure to generate electricity. The





Terich River flows by the village so we knew it was possible.

We proposed our idea to the residents and most, appreciating the importance of electricity, agreed we should see if the project would work.

The first thing we had to do was raise money. Villagers gave donations – everyone contributed according to their means – some

Salman Mujtaba is a 27-year-old English language teacher. He lives in Peshawar and enjoys writing poetry and playing sport. He is a social activist and proud to have taken part in the micro hydro plant project.

more, some less. We allocated PKR 1 million (A\$8340) for machinery and were able to buy a mix of new and used equipment. After many meetings over the course of two weeks, we had successfully managed to raise the necessary funds and did not need to take a loan from the bank.

There were about 23 of us providing the labour – we all got involved in any way we could. Among us, we had carpenters and masons and my elder brother was in charge of looking after the finances. We got technical assistance from an engineer cousin, Maqbool Ilahi, and his friend. Households without expertise pitched in by feeding us lunch. Once we'd settled on the site and completed our research, we were excited to get started.

May 28 was our first day on the job. We started work at 8am and finished at 4pm. Our first task was to blast stones and dig the water channel which was around 610 metres long. We completed the channel in just three weeks and were very pleased and proud to see the water run through it.

The next step was digging the two-metre deep reservoir, followed by the construction of the powerhouse, which took almost four weeks. Everything was going to plan and we worked enthusiastically to complete it.

READER'S DIGEST

THEN, SEVEN WEEKS into the project, on July 17, tragedy struck. As we were coming back from the site a stone rolled down from the cliff above us and struck my cousin Habib Ullah. The blow to his head was so intense that he passed away four hours later on the way to the hospital.

We were so shaken that we couldn't face going back to work. Out of all of us, Habib Ullah was the most enthusiastic about bringing power to our village. It was hard for us to muster up the courage to return to the site but we wanted to finish it as a way to honour Habib Ullah.

As August drew to a close, we found the strength to return to work. This included setting the machinery and fixing the transmission lines. Work became very hard at this time because, as the lockdown restrictions were loosening, some of my cousins returned to the cities and we lacked manpower. Thankfully some neighbouring villagers volunteered their services for a day or two at a time. This went on for five weeks.

At last, on September 29, 2020, we lit up Shujghal. Everyone in the village and all those that

had volunteered took part in the celebration party.

The total capacity of the micro hydro power plant (MHP) is 25 kVA and it is more than enough for 16 houses. The total cost of machinery was PKR 1.2 million

(over A\$10,000) and labour PKR 1.4 million (almost A\$12,000). There was no contribution from the government or non-governmental organisations.

I'VE LEARNT that these kinds of voluntary projects can be managed by small villages in a

well-planned and honest way and I've seen how these communities can boost developing countries from a grassroot level.

Despite losing my beloved cousin, the project gave me the opportunity to learn and labour in a way that I had never before experienced.

Our village now has a power supply from 3pm to 9am daily and life is much easier.



Do you have a tale to tell? We'll pay cash for any original and unpublished story we print. See page 8 for details on how to contribute.



Finally, a good reason to do it later.



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SMART ANIMALS

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Our Lucky Escape

E. PETER VAUGHAN

In the 1940s our family lived in a small farming town at the junction of the Darling and Murray rivers in the far south west of New South Wales. My parents ran a hotel business and my grandfather, who lived with us, was the yardman. At the time there was a severe drought and grass was very scarce.

We had a Jersey cow called Lassie. The only cow in the paddock, she was big and a great milker. My job, as a 12 year old, was to take Lassie down to the river each day where the feed was good. On this particular day, I tied Lassie to a long rope so she could reach better grass. She had to be tied

up or else Charlie Pitt, the village pound master, would impound her. When I returned for her after school, I found her tangled up. As I tried to untangle her she slipped and fell on top of me. I thought that I was done for, laying in the mud underneath a heavy cow.

Lassie was on top of me for about five minutes when she heaved herself to her feet. I was able to breathe again. I was extremely relieved as I didn't know how I would have escaped the mud and Lassie.

You could earn cash by telling us about the antics of unique pets or wildlife. Turn to page 8 for details on how to contribute.

Covered in muck and weeds, I didn't receive a warm welcome from my brothers when I returned home. My grandfather, on the other hand, was very happy as Lassie produced an extra bottle of milk that afternoon. Still, I made sure that I never tied Lassie too close to the river again.



Scamp Lends A Hand

GABRIELLE CAVANAGH

Scamp, my 18-month-old miniature fox terrier, is extremely lively and full of mischief. Scamp loves to play ball, which usually turns into a game of chase. He jumps through hoops and sits on top of his kennel just like Snoopy in the *Peanuts* cartoon strip. If the weather is cold, he pulls the blankets out of his kennel and drags them to a spot in the sunshine and settles down to enjoy the warmth.

Another favourite game is to sneak into the house and steal a shoe or slipper and run away with it.

There is no way he will part with his prize. He will tease me and allow me to almost grasp it, but then dash off with it with a cheeky grin on his face as if to say, *You can't catch me*. This may go on indefinitely until I am thoroughly exhausted. I am always the first to tire.

Recently, I was working in the garden. I always wear gloves when doing gardening but, on this occasion, I could find only one. The other must have fallen from my pocket so my left hand was bare.

Casually, as if speaking to a human, I said, "Scamp, I can't find my other glove - have you seen it?"

I went on digging and Scamp ran off somewhere chasing butterflies or whatever else it is that little dogs like to do.

I was surprised when, a few minutes later, he came back and dropped my glove beside me. He made no attempt to grab it and tease me but stood there wagging his tail and grinning as if to say, *Here you are, I have found your glove*.

Did he understand what I had asked him?

I wonder.

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PETS

Why Does My Dog Do That?

Habits that leave dog owners shaking their heads

BY *Dr Katrina Warren*



Our regular pet columnist, Dr Katrina Warren, is an established and trusted animal expert.

SOME OF THE HABITS OF DOGS can seem strange and downright off-putting at times. However, most of these puzzling behaviours are perfectly normal for dogs and it is how they make sense of their world. Veterinarian Dr Katrina Warren explains the reasons behind some of the natural and instinctive actions of our canine companions.

WHY DO DOGS SNIFF EACH OTHER? While we humans find this habit a strange one, it's the way dogs greet each other and how they pick up information about the other dog by detecting its scent and pheromones.

A dog's sense of smell is thousands of times more acute than ours. A human has around five million olfactory receptors while a dog has around 300 million. When dogs sniff each other's rears they are detecting scent molecules and pheromones from the anal sacs. These anal sacs are unique to each dog and give information about their gender, health and reproductive status.

WHY DOES MY DOG FLICK GRASS? This is also normal dog behaviour after it has done its business. Dogs have scent glands in their feet that secrete pheromones. When a dog scuffs the ground they are

PHOTO: GETTY IMAGES



releasing and spreading pheromones. These pheromones are a form of communication and are a way for a dog to mark its territory and provide information to other dogs about gender and availability to mate. If there are other dogs around, you may notice your dog kicking with more vigour.

Scuffing is generally harmless but can become a problem if they are digging up your garden or scuffing on hard surfaces. You can manage this by teaching them to do their business in a designated spot or having them on a lead.

OTHER BEHAVIOURS The habit of eating stools is called *coprophagia* and, although revolting to us, is a common problem in puppies and dogs.

For many puppies, it is a part of their exploratory behaviour and something they usually

Dogs have a sense of smell that is thousands of times more acute than humans

grow out of. There are numerous medical reasons why an adult dog may do this and these should be discussed with your vet. They include parasites, malabsorption syndromes, a poor quality diet, constant hunger and certain prescription medications. Other causes are behavioural and include boredom, isolation and stress.

Remove the opportunity for your dog to access stools by keeping your dog on a short lead while walking. Give your dog lots of mental and physical activity to help alleviate boredom.

INTERESTING FACTS ABOUT DOGS

- Contrary to popular belief, dogs do not see the world only in black and white. Scientists believe that their vision is similar to that of a person who has red-green colour blindness.
- Dogs and many other animals have three eyelids per eye. The third eyelid is called the nictitating membrane and helps to keep the eye clean and prevent it from injury.
- Dogs have 18 muscles in their ears and can move them independently which means they can swivel them in the direction of a sound. Their ears also express emotions.

HEALTH

Why are some adults developing allergies they never had before?

Achoo!

BY *Viviane Fairbank*



The world is full of allergens, such as food, bugs, pollen, latex, drugs, mould, animals and more. Many of us assume our susceptibility to them develops only during childhood, so if you don't have allergies in your 20s, you won't get any. But researchers are finding it's possible for adults of all ages to acquire allergies - even if they've never had one before.

In 2019, for the very first systematic study of allergies in adulthood, the Center for Food Allergy & Asthma Research (CFAAR) surveyed approximately 40,000 people across the US and found that

one in ten were food-allergic. Half of those people, the survey revealed, developed at least one of their allergies after the age of 18.

"We were very surprised by the results," says Ruchi Gupta, CFAAR's director. Her team had long suspected, based on anecdotal evidence, that rates of adult-onset food allergies were rising, but they didn't expect the number to be so high.

While CFAAR's study primarily looked at food allergies, it also provides insight into other types of allergies, since people with one type tend to have others. That's because our bodies react in a similar

way to them all: after exposure to a benign substance that the immune system mistakenly sees as harmful, antibodies cause cells to release chemicals such as histamine, which triggers inflammation. This is the body's way of protecting itself from potentially dangerous substances. But as a side effect, histamine brings on hives, watery eyes, nasal congestion and, in some severe cases, a drop in blood pressure, leading to anaphylactic shock.

While scientists don't know for sure what causes new allergies to form in adults, Gupta's team has identified some likely triggers. Exposure to a new environment, such as after a move to a different climate, could introduce new allergens to your system. People experiencing a hit to the immune system (such as a viral illness) or going through hormonal changes (such as puberty or menopause) may also be at higher risk of developing new allergies, since their body's defence systems may already be weakened.

Unfortunately, it's not always easy to discern which allergy you have or whether you really have one. According to Gupta, people can easily mistake food poisoning and food intolerance for allergies. To identify a real one, doctors might

conduct a blood test, a pinprick test (when a small amount of an allergen is inserted into the skin), or an 'oral food challenge', when a patient is supervised by a doctor while they consume a particular food.

There's no one-size-fits-all treatment for allergies, but antihistamine medication serves as a helpful over-the-counter treatment for mild symptoms. To

address environmental allergies, doctors can prescribe a regular series of injections that gradually expose and habituate the immune system to larger doses of the allergen. New treatments, such as oral immunotherapy, which is the same basic idea but through ingestion, are an

option for food allergies.

Gupta's research is at an early stage, and it's still unclear whether adult-onset allergies eventually resolve or persist for life. That's why the best strategy may be preventative, says Christopher Warren, a researcher at CFAAR: to avoid developing allergies, a good bet is to expose ourselves to allergens regularly, so our body is acquainted with the substances. Children and adults should be eating a healthy, diverse diet that includes, if possible, the most typical allergens, such as shellfish, milk and peanuts.

THERE'S NO ONE-SIZE- FITS-ALL TREATMENT FOR ALLERGIES



Keeping It Regular

Daily habits to promote healthy bowel movements

BY Lisa Bendall

Maintaining good bowel health is important for your overall health. The best way to promote optimal digestive health is to drink plenty of water and consume high-fibre foods at every meal.

EXERCISE Regular physical activity, such as a brisk daily walk, can help prevent constipation.

BOOST YOUR MICROBIOME You share your gastrointestinal tract with about 100 trillion microbes, and that's a good thing; a diverse ecosystem keeps you healthy. If you're not getting enough fibre, probiotic supplements can help promote healthy bacteria.

KEEP CALM AND CARRY ON Stress can impact your digestive system. The gut literally has a mind of its own – it's



lined with millions of nerve cells that make up what's known as the enteric nervous system – and it sends signals to the brain, and vice versa. That's why if you feel anxious, you may get cramps and diarrhoea. Conversely, research has found that strategies to reduce stress can improve symptoms in people who have irritable bowel syndrome (IBS).

UNDERSTAND HORMONAL SHIFTS

Hormone fluctuations also seem to affect your gut. Both men and women experience hormonal shifts as they get older, which is thought to be influenced by the decreasing diversity and robustness of our microbiome as we age. Unfortunately, these bacterial changes can weaken immunity.

ADVERSE EFFECTS All kinds of drugs, from antidepressants to blood pressure pills, list diarrhoea or constipation among potential side effects. "If your medication is giving you bowel problems, talk to your doctor," says gastroenterologist Dr Geoffrey Turnbull.

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Helps keep you regular as clockwork

Dietary supplements are not a replacement for a balanced diet. Always read the label and use as directed.
If symptoms persist, see your healthcare professional. Douglas Pharmaceuticals, Auckland.

Human HEARTS



Firdaus Abdul Hamid: founder of Human Hearts

PHOTOS: COURTESY FIRDAUS ABDUL HAMID

After changing his life, an ex-offender helps convicts and other former prison inmates get back on track

BY *Lam Lye Ching*

“Your mother is not well at the moment,” Firdaus Abdul Hamid heard his father say during a visit to the Singapore prison where he was incarcerated. It was 2003, and 23-year-old Firdaus was a reluctant inmate. The young repeat offender was no stranger to prison life but learning of his mother’s illness, with father and son separated by a thick glass panel and speaking through a corded phone watched over by guards, was devastating. “Please pray for her,” his father said.

Back in his cell, Firdaus’s thoughts turned to his mother resting at home, enduring the pain and discomfort of a breast cancer operation, diabetes and heart disease. Despite her illness, she made a point to visit him every week,

walking the one kilometre from the prison bus stop to the visitors’ room. Her visits were his lifeline. “She would talk about my sister and other things happening outside prison,” Firdaus recalls. “For me, seeing her was enough, it made me feel human again.”

When his father broke the news about his mother’s weakening condition, he was serving the longest imprisonment he’d yet faced – an 18-month sentence for being absent without official leave from the Singapore Armed Forces (SAF), as well as insubordination and other offences. A harsh reality hit him: “I felt the punch – what if she passed away while I was still in prison?”

It was the first step of a long and difficult road to redemption.

PRISON EXPERIENCE

Firdaus left school at age 15, soon after his parents divorced. He found a job as a dishwasher at Changi Airport, and later worked long hours as a canteen helper, a cleaner and a bus-boy. Despite his labours, his monthly salary was S\$1500. Occasionally he gave his mother \$100 for expenses but for the most part, he spent the cash on himself and partying in nightclubs. He

soon found a bar attendant job. But as his social circle grew, Firdaus slipped into the wrong crowd, joining a gang and playing his part in their activities.

His young life began to spiral out of control after he was caught driving without a licence. He reacted angrily, throwing his wallet at the police officer, which saw him sentenced for four months. "I felt proud going to prison then – but that was my youth," said Firdaus.

Searching for a stable life, he quit the gang and joined the SAF, where he was placed in its combat division.

But three years later, while doing training in the forest, he tripped on a tree root and fell, dislocating his left shoulder. The injury healed badly and Firdaus was no longer able to do combat work. He was transferred to the army's logistics division and his salary was reduced. Firdaus found the change traumatic. Unable to manage his mood swings, he landed in trouble and in army detention. "I was frustrated and demoralised," he says.

"I love combat work so I started to quarrel with the officers, I fought in camp, I absconded from work and I was even absent without official leave (AWOL).

"But when I heard that my mother was sick, it pushed a button in me."

THE RIGHT PATH

"I told myself enough is enough. I rebooted my brain. I wanted to pay forward and make her happy," says Firdaus. He was scheduled for the pre-release programme where prisoners are given small privileges, such as reading books and watching television. But following his father's visit, Firdaus went to the officer in charge and asked for those privileges to be withheld. "Punish me all the way," he said, which meant staying in his prison cell until the day of his release with "no extras".

However, when he was released, he found it difficult to find a job without proper qualifications. He needed to study further but found people reluctant to help because of his past, "saying that I'd

just find my way back to prison".

Firdaus found help when a close friend recommended him for an assistant technician job at a local marine engineering company. For the next six years he got by with a salary of \$900, before joining a Norwegian marine company. Over the following six years he worked his way up from a technician to a marine engineer. The company sent him on large projects to Southeast Asia, Africa and Saudi Arabia and his salary jumped to a five-figure amount.

Unable to manage his mood swings, he landed up in trouble and back in prison

Proud of his achievements, Firdaus left to launch his own logistics and engineering company. However, after two years, he realised that running a company was much harder than being an employee. After winding down the company, he took a contract job in Saudi Arabia helping set up petrol stations, before his life took another dramatic turn.

In June 2017, Firdaus returned to Singapore for a holiday to celebrate Hari Raya Puasa (a religious holiday that marks the end of Ramadan) with family and friends. Exhausted after a long day visiting relatives, he fell asleep at the wheel while driving, crashing the family's car into a tree. His wife and three children were seriously injured, and Firdaus fractured two ribs. The trauma that followed affected his sleep and mental health. He suffered flashbacks and constantly worried about the family's spiralling medical costs.

Absent from Saudi Arabia for months, Firdaus also lost his job, but he stayed positive, saying he was "just thankful that my family was alive."

The life-changing event made Firdaus determined to give back to others, and at the age of 38, his dreams of studying finally became a reality. He received a Study Award in 2018 from Mendaki, a self-help group, and



Firdaus and his volunteers help ex-offenders get their lives back on track

graduated with a diploma in counselling at Kaplan Singapore, while working as a freelance marine engineer.

One year later, with his diploma under his belt, Firdaus and a few friends founded the non-profit organisation Human Hearts.

Human Hearts focuses on assisting current- and ex-offenders to navigate the social, emotional and psychological journey towards rehabilitation and reintegration into the community. It also offers support in family care, youth guidance and education.

Last year, when Firdaus lost his job due to the COVID-19 pandemic and funds for the organisation dried up, he and his friends pooled their money to keep Human Hearts activities going. Human Hearts has about 300 beneficiaries and four volunteers and depends on private donations for its operations. "We are not an IPC

organisation [an organisation registered under Singapore's Charities Act], so it is very difficult for us to get funding to run our programmes," says Firdaus.

But he is not one to avoid challenges. While doing odd jobs such as cleaning, house painting and delivery services to eke out a living, Firdaus has helped find homes for ex-convicts made homeless and jobless during the pandemic, and supported them with their reintegration to a stable life. "So far, they have not relapsed," he says.

During the COVID-19 pandemic, Firdaus would get two people per week coming to his centre for help.

He also visits prisoners for counselling. "I don't plan a programme for them," he explains. "I just talk to them and tell them 'you are here now, I don't need to know your past, just tell me what you want to do'.

"One session can carry on for four or five hours. I want our beneficiaries to leave our centre with something."


One prisoner he helped rehabilitate had a very caring family, but he initially relapsed because he was

not comfortable with the special treatment he was getting at home. He turned to drugs for respite, Firdaus recalls. "It is not easy because it is unlike a mass programme that is usually given to ex-offenders. I focus on the heart. If the heart can heal and repair itself, other things will fall into place," he says.

"If the heart can heal and repair itself, other things will fall into place"

Human Hearts takes an holistic approach by offering its beneficiaries help with speech and language training, counselling, as well

as support for offenders' children with behaviour or learning issues in school. During one counselling session, for example, a beneficiary revealed that his daughter was doing poorly at school. Human Hearts found out that the child was dyslexic and they taught her to read and write. Eventually, she even wrote her own book which is now for sale on Amazon Books.

Firdaus is currently looking for sponsorship and plans on doing a degree in psychology and criminology. He hopes to develop Human Hearts into a hub where other organisations can come together to support former offenders holistically. 



Grammatically Speaking

The following can be read forwards and backwards: Do geese see God? Any word, sentence or phrase which can be read the same forwards and backward is called a palindrome.

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I REMEMBER...



Rick Stein

Restaurateur and television personality Rick Stein tells Reader's Digest the good, the bad and the often hilarious memories that have helped shape his life

AS TOLD TO *Caroline Hutton*

...SITTING IN PUB CAR PARKS WHILE MY PARENTS ENJOYED A DRINK

My younger sister Henrietta and I would wait in the back of my Dad's pale blue Jaguar getting bored with our ginger beers and crisps. Or we'd lurk by the door until they came out and the exotic waft of beer and cigarette smoke would billow forth. My parents weren't alcoholics; they just enjoyed the pub atmosphere. Those

memories are one of the reasons I now own a pub myself, The Cornish Arms in St Merryn.

...LEARNING TO COOK I picked it up from my mother. She used to make spaghetti bolognese, which was pretty radical in those days. She did really nice puddings; apple charlotte and wonderful crumbles and bread-and-butter puddings.

PHOTO: GETTY IMAGES



READER'S DIGEST

...HOLIDAYS IN CORNWALL It was the best place on Earth. We had a house on Trevoze Head, about eight kilometres from Padstow. It had huge curved windows around the sitting room. There was a Cornish slate patio where we'd all lounge in the sunshine and enjoy the spectacular views over the Atlantic.

...FISHING WITH MY FATHER He had bipolar disorder and I was a bit scared of him; he found it hard to connect with people. But fishing was something we both enjoyed. I think boys and their fathers often find it easier to do some activity together. Shortly before he died he was going to take me fly-fishing in Scotland and I was very excited. When he cancelled it – probably because he was too ill – I was terribly disappointed.

...MY FIRST SEX-EDUCATION LESSON

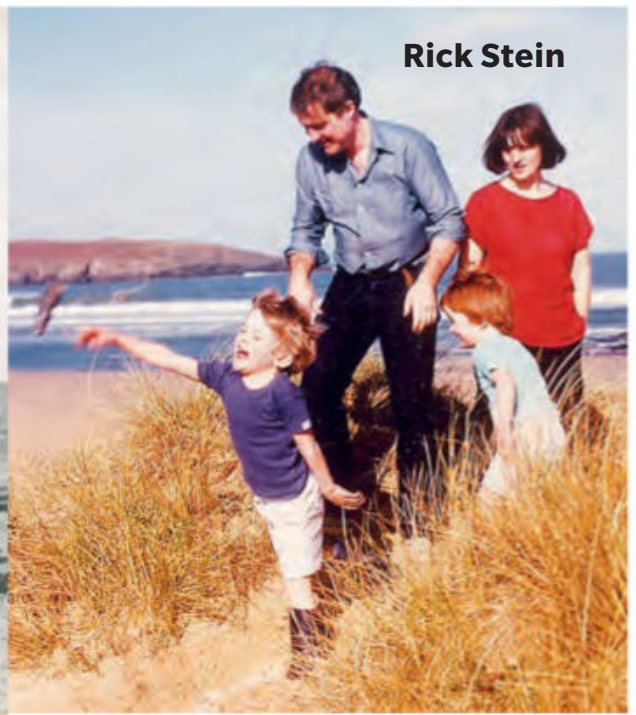
I was about 12 and things were stirring, but the information we got from library books was woefully inadequate. As a dare, a couple of friends and I went to our headmaster and asked him to explain what it was all about. We were stunned when he obliged and told us how babies were made. We missed a whole other lesson and had to explain to the teacher where we'd been. I said, "We've been to a lecture, sir," and he asked, "What sort?" I said, "A sex lecture, sir," and was overcome with embarrassment.

...BECOMING A ROAD SWEEPER

I hadn't done well at school. I'd got a job as a management trainee in The Great Western Royal Hotel in London, but I had a few months to kill before it started. I was taken with George Orwell, particularly his book

Left to right: Rick, holding the bucket, with the Stein family in Cornwall in the 1950s; Rick with his mother and sisters outside the pub he now owns





Rick Stein

Left to right: Working as part of a track-maintenance gang while in Australia; taking a windy walk with first wife Jill and sons Edward and Jack in Padstow in 1984

Down and Out In Paris and London, and I thought I should experience the real world. But I was disturbed by the odour of my fellow sweepers – stale alcohol and general unwashedness. And it was cold and rainy. I got a little depressed.

...BEING TOLD MY FATHER HAD DIED

I was sweeping the road outside the Natural History Museum when my friend Tim Dale drove up and told me to get in. When something momentous happens, every part of your surroundings become etched in your memory. For me, the grey skies, the green seats of Tim's Land Rover and the brown raincoat I was wearing are as clear as the moment Tim said, "I've got something to tell you. Your father has died." I didn't

know then that he'd committed suicide. Tim said that he'd been blown off the cliffs during a storm. Nothing was ever the same after that.

...MOVING TO AUSTRALIA

Maybe I was running away, maybe I just wanted to be somewhere sunny. But the two years I spent in Australia were life-changing. I took a variety of jobs, including a stint as a fettler – someone who maintains the railway tracks – some 80 kilometres from Alice Springs. I worked for five months with a group of petty criminals and I loved it. One day there was a stand-off between myself and Billy. He was incredibly fit and had been in and out of prison for robbery and violence. We went outside to fight, but in the end neither of us made the



Above: The Seafood Restaurant staff in the early 1990s



Rick's dog Chalky became a TV celebrity in his own right. "He was a bit of a rascal and used to bite people," says Rick

first move. Billy was fiercely intelligent and we became unlikely friends.

...MEMORABLE ACHIEVEMENTS

Winning Best Restaurant in England in 1984 and my first book *English*

Seafood Cookery being voted Glenfiddich Cook Book of the Year in 1989. Getting my OBE for Services to Tourism in Cornwall was great, too, because of the years I've spent building up four restaurants in Padstow and the pub and restaurant in Falmouth.

...ASKING MY SON JACK TO READ MY MEMOIR UNDER A MACKEREL SKY

I said to him, "It'd be nice if you would," but he replied, "The thing is, I don't want to read about my Dad having sex". I suppose that's fair enough. **R**

If you or someone you know has had thoughts of self-harm or suicide, visit lifeline.org.nz or call 0800 LIFELINE (0800 543 354) or text HELP (4357) for free support.

PHOTOS: COURTESY OF RICK STEIN

GREEN THUMBS & GOLD MEDALS



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INSPIRATION



*“Smell Like
A Woman,
Not A Rose”*

*Chanel No.5 one hundred years on, an
iconic fragrance born from an orphanage*

BY Gary Mortimer AND Rebekah Russell-Bennett

FROM **THE CONVERSATION**

PHOTO: GETTY IMAGES



*When Marilyn Monroe was asked,
“What do you wear to bed?”
she famously replied,
“Just a few drops of No.5.”*

Marilyn Monroe was perhaps the most famous fan of the French perfume that celebrated its 100th birthday in May. Since it was launched by Coco Chanel on May 5, 1921, Chanel No.5 has endured in popularity, selling an estimated ten million bottles globally every year.

Already a successful fashion designer and businesswoman, Chanel became an icon at a time when women were mostly employed in agricultural or domestic duties. She trained as a seamstress, later working as a shop girl and cafe singer, and in 1910, opened her hat shop Chanel Modes at Number 21 rue Cambon, in the centre of Paris.

By 1913, she had opened stores in the French resort towns of Deauville and Biarritz, selling hats and a limited line of garments.

In 1918, she decided she needed larger premises in Paris and acquired the entire building at Number 31 rue Cambon.

Having been raised by nuns in an orphanage, the perfume she went on to create was inspired by their cleanliness and stark simplicity.

Fresh linens and yellow soap

Chanel was born Gabrielle Bonheur Chanel, on August 19, 1883, in Sauxur, France. After her mother died, Chanel was sent, at the age of 12, to the Abbey of Aubazine Orphanage in Corrèze.

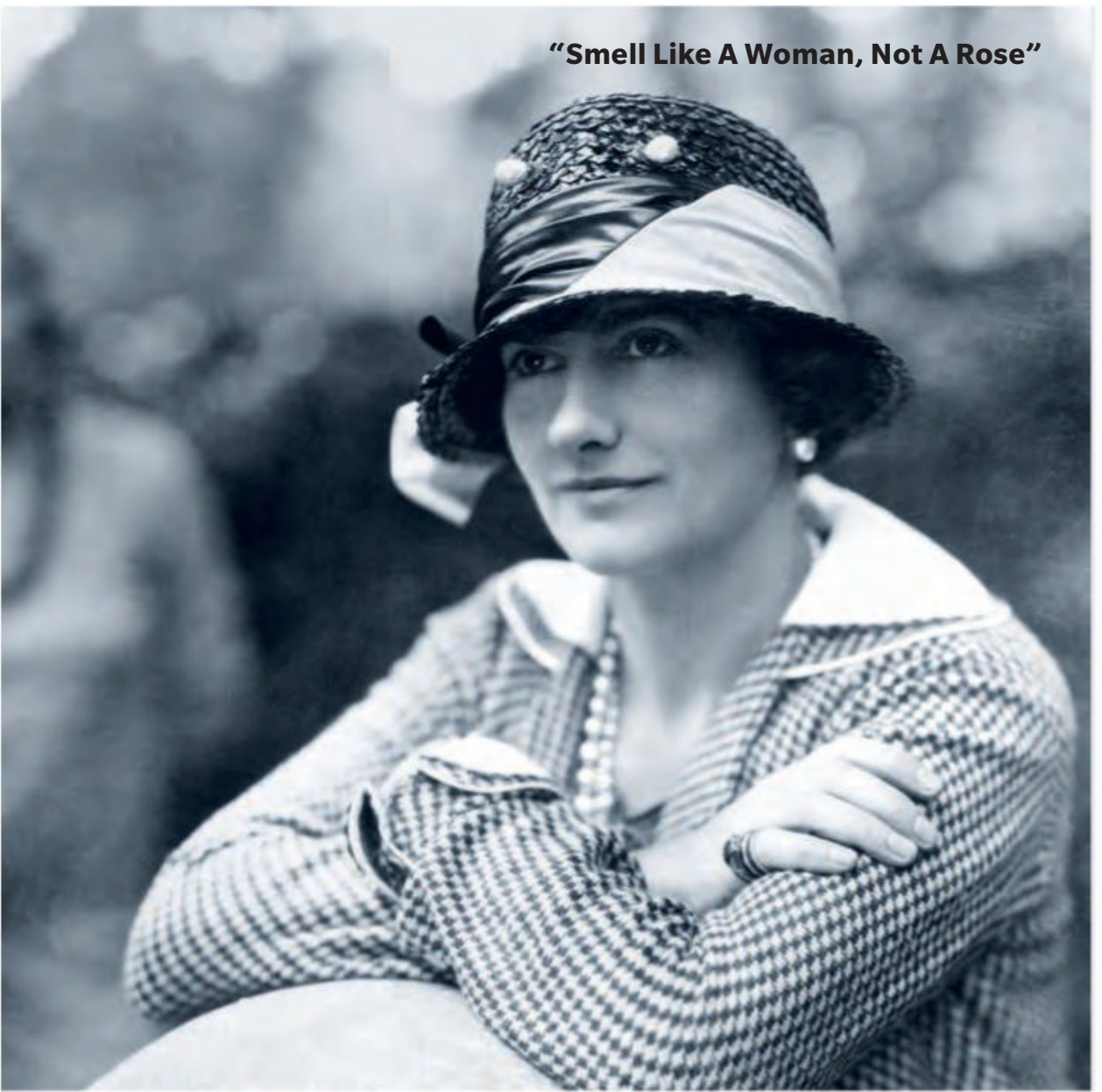
According to her biographers, her company logo, her signature colour of black, her minimalist style and, indeed, the number five (as one story has it, she would cross a series of five paths that led to the cathedral for daily prayer) were all inspired by life in Aubazine.

During the summer of 1920, on holiday on the Cote d'Azur, Chanel learned of a sophisticated perfumer called Ernest Beaux, who had worked for the Russian royal family and lived close by in Grasse, the centre of Europe's perfume industry.

The fresh linens and the smell of the yellow soap used by girls at the orphanage had left an impression on Chanel. She asked Beaux to create a scent that would make “its wearer smell like a woman, and not a rose”.

Just like the fragrance, Chanel's perfume bottle was as plain and

“Smell Like A Woman, Not A Rose”



Coco Chanel is arguably the most influential fashion designer of all time

minimalist “as a laboratory vial”. Since the 1920s, it has only been modified eight times.

Up until the first half of the 20th century, fashion houses were not in the business of creating perfumes, but the launch of Chanel No.5 inspired many. The House of Worth launched *Dans La Nuit* in 1922.

Jeanne Lanvin launched *My Sin* in 1925, and Jean Patou launched *Joy* in 1930.

Today, couture and fragrances are nearly synonymous, with brands such as Yves Saint Laurent, Karl Lagerfeld, Guy Laroche, Pierre Cardin and Paco Rabanne all making perfume.



Left to right: The romantic 2004 commercial starring Nicole Kidman presented like a short film; Chanel's famed store at Number 31 rue Cambon in Paris, open since 1918

Iconic No.5

An iconic brand has five key elements: it is aspirational, with strong visual identity and persona, it is omnipresent throughout society, and consumers feel a personal connection with it. Chanel No.5 ticks all these boxes.

Such brands transcend simple purchases. Brand charisma has been described as “sophisticated, iconic and magical” - offering consumers a touch of magic simply through owning the item.

It is, of course, not just the power

of the brand that makes No.5 successful, but also the fragrance itself, with floral scents blended over what has been described as a “warm, woody base”.

Have you ever experienced the fragrance of Chanel No.5 in a crowded shopping centre, or at a party, and immediately thought of someone who wore it? Studies have determined a clear link between smell and emotions and memories.

For iconic brands, such as Chanel No.5, it isn't just the perfume being sold: it is also the history - a

PHOTO (STORE): ALAMY

history enhanced by the bittersweet quality of nostalgia in the ways our brains link scent and memory.

No.5 and tomorrow

Coco Chanel's focus remained on fashion, running Chanel Couture until her death in 1971. In 1924, she had handed control of the distribution and production of all Chanel cosmetics and fragrances to her business partner, the venture capitalist Pierre Wertheimer.

Wertheimer launched the company's perfume branch, Les Parfums Chanel in that year. It has created many more scents – but none as enduring or popular as Chanel No.5.

Chanel and Marilyn Monroe weren't the only faces of the perfume. Celebrities such as Audrey Tautou and Brad Pitt were paid to promote

No.5. In 2004, the brand spent US\$33 million on a three-minute ad starring Nicole Kidman and directed by Baz Luhrmann – that's roughly 300,000 bottles of perfume worth.

Today, the company Chanel started as a small hat shop is ranked 52 in the world on Forbes' list of most valuable brands, valued at US\$12.8 billion.

Through it all, No.5 has lived on. **R**

Gary Mortimer is Professor of Marketing and Consumer Behaviour, Queensland University of Technology and Rebekah Russell-Bennett is a Social Marketing Professor, School of Advertising, Marketing and Public Relations, Queensland University of Technology.

THIS ARTICLE IS REPUBLISHED FROM
[HTTPS://THECONVERSATION.COM](https://theconversation.com)
UNDER A CREATIVE COMMONS LICENCE.



Long-Lost Rembrandt Falls Off Wall

A Rembrandt painting has been rediscovered after it fell off the wall of a home in Italy in 2016 and was sent for restoration. The Italian Heritage Foundation recently confirmed the painting, *The Adoration of the Magi*, was painted around 1632-1633. Art restorer Antonella Di Francesco said the painting had been darkened by old varnish, but during the restoration it became clear that it was a Rembrandt. The painting could be worth between US\$83.5 and \$238 million.

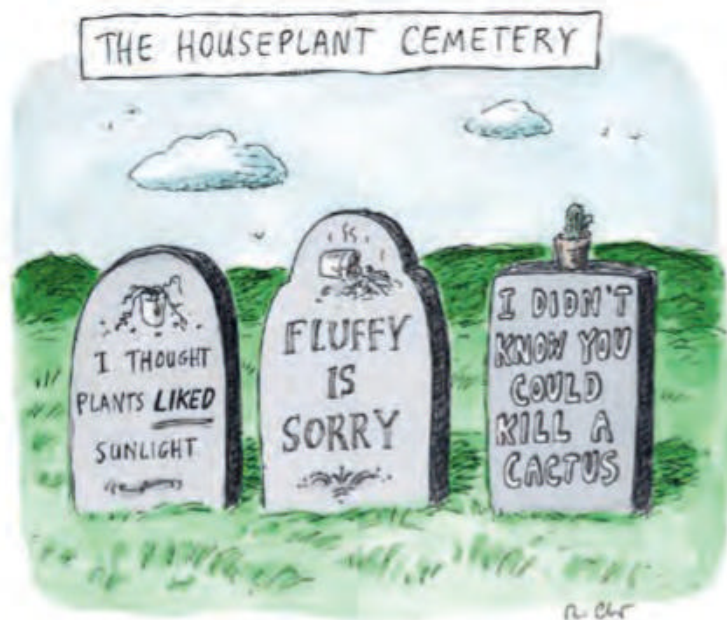
Many of Rembrandt's paintings have been lost to time, but every so often one resurfaces. In 2018, Dutch art dealer Jan Six claimed to have discovered Rembrandt's *Portrait of a Young Gentleman* (1635).

In 2020, a Rembrandt thought to be a fake, *Head of a Bearded Man* (ca. 1630), was re-attributed to the artist after its frame was discovered to come from a tree felled around the time the artwork was painted.

UPI, ARTNEWS

LIFE'S LIKE THAT

Seeing the Funny Side



Treading Lightly

I actually don't mind losing an hour to daylight saving time because I chose the one when I go on the treadmill.

@KENTWGRAHAM

Somebody Else

My elderly aunt was rushed to the hospital by an ambulance with what eventually transpired to be a burst appendix. Major surgery and several litres of blood later, she luckily made a good recovery.

When, post operatively, a nurse arrived to take some blood to test, my aunt helpfully advised her,

"Oh, didn't anyone tell you? I don't think you'll need to do that for me because the blood I have now isn't mine."

SUBMITTED BY JOANNE THOMAS

Tune Out

While doing volunteer work, I began to sing a favourite song of mine to pass the time. Another volunteer perked up his ears.

"Who sings that?" he asked.

"The Traveling Wilburys," I replied.

He nodded. "Well, let's keep it that way."

SUBMITTED BY CHRISTOPHER THORSEN

Prior Knowledge

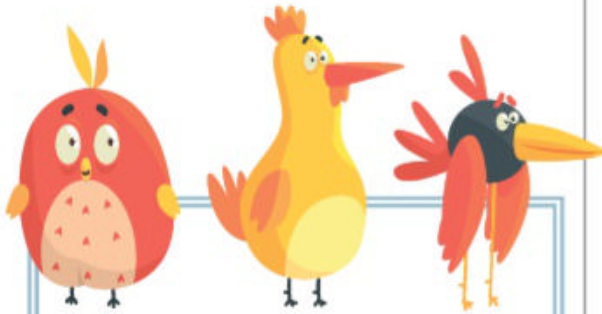
Before we went out for dinner, my 80-year-old mother-in-law stopped off at the beautician.

“All the women did was complain about their husbands,” she said over our meal.

“Did you complain about your husband?” I asked, adding a sly nod towards my father-in-law.

“I didn’t have to,” she said.
“They all know him.”

SUBMITTED BY CYNTHIA BOEHNING



STORK RAVEN MAD NAMES

Species of our feathered friends named by people who clearly hate birds:

Double-eyed fig-parrot

Drab seedeater

Goaway bird

Wandering tattler

Common loon

Sad flycatcher

Australian bustard

Perplexing scrub wren

Satanic nightjar

Monotonous lark

@STU_BOT3000;
YEAROFBIRDS.BLOGSPOT.COM



THE GREAT TWEET OFF: PARENTHOOD EDITION

The parents of Twitter are keen to share the greatest joys of having children.

Hi, I’m a parent. You may remember me from such greats as ‘Repeating Myself’ and ‘Arguing over Shoes’ and ‘Stepping on Cereal’.

@RODLACROIX

My daughter just asked me, “Do fish get thirsty?” and I have no idea what to say. @CROCKETTFORREAL

Blew my nose in front of my daughter and her friends today. Please respect her privacy during this difficult time.

@SIMONCHOLLAND

What parenting books don’t teach you is that your child can simply look at objects and make them feel sticky.

@CHHAPINESS

8 year old: *fights with her sisters*

Me: All right, who started it?

8 year old: You did when you had so many kids.

@XPLODINGUNICORN





I Am the
**FOOD ON
YOUR
PLATE**

Mint

The coolest of them all

BY *Diane Godley*

There is no denying it, you just can't get fresher than me, Mint. Mixed with a splash of lime juice and soda water, I am undeniably the coolest drink around – making the perfect mocktail or cocktail for hot summer days and balmy evenings.

But I am so much more than just a refreshing beverage. I am added to all sorts of recipes to provide a stimulating twist on a tired formula.

Think baked spuds or steamed vegies. Even a fresh fruit salad can gain a new zest of life with a little of me scattered over it. I am also the perfect companion when married with roast lamb, peas and beans, summer salads and cold soups.

I'm super easy to grow, and even the world's worse gardeners can't go too wrong with a little pot of me in the garden. Did your ears prick up when I mentioned 'pot'?

Yes, I can be the devil incarnate for novice green thumbs. If allowed to flourish without some sort of hard border, I will take over. At first, I will look pretty and polite, providing a succulent green accent to your garden, but look away for too long and I will have laid down my underground rhizomes, or runners, conquering the land and bullying other plants into giving me their share of nutrients.

But don't let me scare you. Thriving in full sun or partial shade, I behave perfectly well on balconies and kitchen gardens when planted in my own pot, and picked and pruned often. Much like Norman Lindsay's character in the *Magic Pudding*, I am a cut-and-come-again food. When in easy reach of budding chefs, I can do no wrong. I am at my best when young, so pick my green tender leaves and eat me fresh from the pot, but I can also be frozen and air-dried in bunches.

Got an insect problem? Hey, then you need me! My oil is an environmentally friendly insect repellent which can help control pests like wasps, hornets, aphids, ants and cockroaches. Place pots of me around your garden in areas they like to haunt, or simply lay sprigs among the plants you want to protect, replacing me often.

Did I say I am also a pretty awesome medicinal herb? Native to Europe and Asia, I have been used for thousands of years for my pleasant taste and to treat all sorts of ills. I gave smelly breaths a mouthful of freshness and relieved post-meal indigestion. Simply plucked and chewed, this old folk remedy is still used today to freshen breath sans sugar, and provide relief from

indigestion and bloating.

Alternatively, turn me into tea. Why buy herbal teabags when you can pick me straight from your kitchen garden? Simply place several torn or bruised leaves in a cup and pour over boiling water. Let me steep for a few minutes, strain and drink. Ah, my tea is the perfect way to help you digest your evening meal.

Feeling a little tense? Crush my leaves into a compress and apply to your forehead to relieve tension

headaches. Tooth decay? My antibacterial properties help kill the germs that cause tooth cavities and gum disease - that's another reason why you see me in so many toothpastes and mouthwashes.

Venturing further back in time, it is believed I was used in an-

cient funerary rites to mask the smell of the dead, and therefore came to be regarded as a sacred plant of Hades, king of the underworld in Greek mythology. In fact, Minthe, a water nymph, was named so because Hades's wife Persephone turned her into a mint plant after discovering she was having an affair with her husband. The problem for Persephone was that every time she trod on Minthe, she revealed my delightful minty scent.

Stepping on me became a bit of a thing. In Europe, when they still

**I AM AT MY BEST
WHEN YOUNG,
SO PICK MY GREEN
TENDER LEAVES
AND EAT ME
FRESH FROM
THE GARDEN**

lived in places with dirt floors, I was strewn across the ground to be used as a room deodoriser. Every time I was stepped on, my scent permeated the room and covered up the odour of the hard-packed earth.

Turn to modern times, and my oil is an essential ingredient in many cosmetics and perfumes, while my leaves add a freshness to South East Asian cuisine, such as the Vietnamese Rice Paper Rolls recipe below. **R**



VIETNAMESE RICE PAPER ROLLS

- 50 g rice vermicelli
- 8-12 rice wrappers (22 cm diameter)
- 8-12 large cooked prawns (peeled, deveined and cut in half lengthways) or shredded barbecued chicken
- ½ cup mint leaves, chopped
- ½ cup coriander leaves, chopped
- 2 lettuce leaves, shredded
- ½ cup bean sprouts
- 1 tbs fish sauce
- ¼ cup water
- 1 lime, juiced
- 1 clove garlic, minced
- 2 tbs white sugar
- 1 chilli, finely sliced

DIPPING SAUCE #1

DIPPING SAUCE #2

- 3 tbs hoisin sauce
- 1 tbs crushed peanuts

- Cook rice vermicelli to packet directions. Chop ingredients and place on large platter.
- In a small bowl, mix all the ingredients for Dipping sauce #1.
- In another small bowl, mix the hoisin sauce and peanuts.
- Gather the family around the table. Let everyone dip one wrapper in a large bowl of warm water for 1 second to soften.
- Lay wrapper on a plate and place prawn halves or chicken, a pinch of vermicelli, mint, coriander, lettuce and bean sprouts along the centre line, leaving about 5 cm at the top and bottom.
- Fold top and bottom over mixture, then tightly roll.
- Dip rice paper rolls in the fish sauce and hoisin sauces.
- Enjoy!

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DRAMA IN REAL LIFE

Lost On Burke Mountain



**WE'RE ENCOURAGED TO
FORGIVE OTHERS, BUT IF
YOU MAY BE RESPONSIBLE FOR
YOUR CHILDREN'S DEMISE,
HOW WOULD YOU EVER
FORGIVE YOURSELF?**

BY *Gary Stephen Ross*

A father of two, Brandon Hoogstra had hiked the heavily forested Burke Mountain once before. He knew the route to the summit and an abandoned ski lodge.

But he and his wife, Claire, objected when their two eldest, six-year-old Ezri and seven-year-old Oliver, begged to join him for another hike in May 2019. The route was too long – at least 11 kilometres. Even if the weather was nice, they'd surely get tired. And while she loved her husband dearly, Claire worried about him – Brandon is socially awkward at times, highly sensitive and prone to choices that might seem erratic.

The Hoogstras were new to the Canadian town of Coquitlam, British Columbia. Thirty-five-year-old Claire and 34-year-old Brandon had both grown up around Atlanta. Wanting to experience life outside the US, they'd lived for a couple of years in Chiapas, Mexico, where Brandon worked at a water-treatment plant. In 2018, they decided to give Canada a try, and rented a basement suite in Coquitlam for themselves and their four kids (Gabriel was 22 months, Holly six months).

Ezri and Oliver were so keen to climb the nearby mountain that the parents finally relented. Just after

8am on a beautiful Sunday morning, they set off. Brandon's backpack held his phone, energy bars, packets of apple sauce, apples, water bottles and fishing gear. They'd refill the bottles in the clear streams up the mountain.

Brandon had planned a varied route up the mountain. The winding ascent was fun and uneventful. Near the top, thick snow blanketed the trail. Excitedly, the kids raced across the crusted surface.

At the summit, Oliver and Ezri shared the second-last energy bar while Brandon looked around. His phone showed 1.30pm and no reception. They'd rest for an hour, he decided, then head back to Claire and the babies.

When the kids started down the far side of the slope, Brandon said, "You guys really want to find those fishing lakes, don't you?" He'd [earlier] identified them on Google Earth.

"Oh, yes!" Ezri said.

So they took an unfamiliar route down the other side of the mountain.

By the time Brandon realised the path they were on had become an

animal trail alongside a stream, it made sense to keep following it. When the stream reached a cascading waterfall, they clambered carefully down the slippery rocks to the pool below.

The stream sang to them, and they kept following it down. The day had been bright and beautiful. By mid-afternoon, when the sun disappeared behind heavy grey clouds, they suddenly felt disoriented, cold and hungry. Brandon tried to light a fire, but couldn't ignite the wet twigs.

They decided to continue hiking down. For half an hour they cautiously descended until they reached a sheer cliff edge. The stream became a noisy, six-metre waterfall. Brandon cursed himself

for taking an unknown route. He hadn't studied this area and he didn't have a map. Ezri took his hand. She, like her Dad, had a unique way of processing the world. "Dad," she said, crying, "I love you, and I don't blame you for getting lost. You're my dad, and you're nice."

"Babies," he said, "hopefully there are no more waterfalls. We'll take it nice and slow." They held hands as they carefully descended. Finally, Brandon said, "It's too steep. We'll have to slide on our butts."

Still holding hands, they inched down the slope. Tree trunks were rest stops. Fir saplings, their roots sunk deep in the rock, made handholds. It worked well until they reached a sheer, ten-metre drop and the stream became a deafening waterfall. Mist soaked them as the water raced over a tumble of boulders.

"Easy-peasy," Brandon said, like a character from the kids' favourite

movie, *Horton Hears a Who*. They made their way, bit by bit, until Oliver slid on a loose rock and all three went flying.

Mid-air, as if in slow motion, Brandon watched his son's head smack a boulder. Then his own head hit rock. Stunned, ears ringing, he realised he'd

**BRANDON
WATCHED HIS
SON'S HEAD
SMACK A
BOULDER. THEN
HIS OWN HEAD
HIT ROCK**

split open his forehead.

"Help me, Dad!"

Oliver was in the water being swept away. Brandon desperately lunged and pulled him to safety. One of Oliver's shoes floated off.

Brandon wiped blood from his eyes and gathered his senses. *Was anyone hurt?* Oliver, crying and shivering, seemed OK. Ezri was wailing, but she appeared uninjured. Brandon himself, though disoriented, didn't feel anything worse than the gash on his forehead. The backpack was lodged

in the rocks six metres away. He saw no use trying to retrieve it.

After calming the kids, he said, "Stay here while I look for a way out. I'll be right back." As he worked his way downstream, the terrain became less steep. It seemed they were through the worst of it. He climbed back up to the kids to share the good news.

"I'm missing a shoe, too," Ezri said.

"Honeybunch," said Brandon, "if you guys can't have both shoes, I don't need mine either." He pulled off his shoes and threw them as far as he could.

The slope was gentler at first, but when they emerged onto a gravelly plateau near a 30-metre waterfall, their plight was suddenly, painfully clear. The air was cold and getting colder. They were wet and exhausted. And Brandon had no idea where they were.

This plateau was a safe spot. To save the kids, Brandon realised, he had to go for help.

"Oliver, Ezri," he said, taking off his grey hoodie and draping it around them, "stay here, no matter what. Do you understand? I'm going to get friendly people who'll pull you out. They'll come in a helicopter." He kissed each of them on the forehead.

"I love you. Stay right here."

"We will."

Brandon gazed down the treacherous cliff face. Before starting his descent, he didn't look back. He didn't want that mental picture, in case it was the last time he saw his kids alive.

Brandon managed to bushbash a few kilometres down to the base of the mountain, suffering another bad fall on the way. Fortunately, he'd landed on his back in a dense bed of ferns.

Exhausted and bloodied, bare feet

in shreds, he emerged from the forest and bumped into a family of hikers. They called emergency services.

"Your kids will be OK," the father assured him.

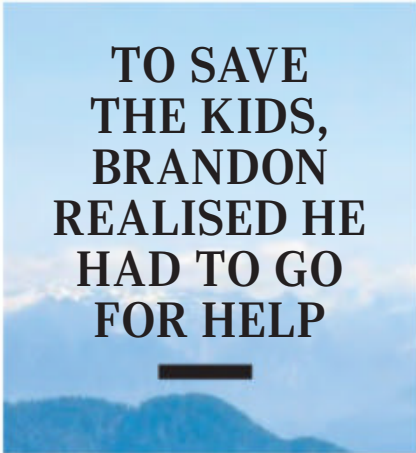
Around 4pm that afternoon, at home in Coquitlam, Claire felt a weird sensation. Brandon had said

they'd be home by nightfall. It was still hours away, but something didn't feel right. She went to phone him but couldn't find her phone, and then the babies needed attention.

Around 5pm her phone rang. Relieved, she imagined it was Brandon, calling to say when they'd be back.

It was a dispatcher from Coquitlam Search and Rescue. "Mrs Hoogstra? I'm sorry to tell you that your husband and children took a bit of a fall."

"Oh my gosh. Are they hurt?"



**TO SAVE
THE KIDS,
BRANDON
REALISED HE
HAD TO GO
FOR HELP**

"Your husband hit his head, but he said the children are alive. We're going to pull them out with a helicopter. That's all we know so far. I'll keep you updated as I get more information."

Around 8pm the dispatcher called Claire again. "Your husband's at Eagle Ridge Hospital," he told her. "He hit his head, but appears to be OK."

"Oh, thank goodness."

"We are having trouble locating your children."

"What?" Claire gripped the kitchen benchtop. "Aren't they with him?"

"He made his way out, but he had to leave them behind."

For a moment, she couldn't speak.

"Ma'am? Are you still there?"

Claire focused on her breathing. "I'm here. I'm not going to pass out. But I can't lose my children."

An hour later, when two police officers knocked at the door, her stomach dropped. *Dear God*. Her father had been a police officer. He said the worst part was informing a parent of their child's death.

Mercifully, the officers only needed more information.

Around midnight, the police brought Brandon home for fresh clothes. He'd been stitched up, given a tetanus shot and checked for internal injuries. Claire understood the fragile emotional state he'd be in.

"Honey," he said, trying not to weep, "I'm *sooo* sorry about what I did to the kids..."

"No, you were just taking them on a

hike," she soothed. "They're coming home, I promise. Now go and help find them."

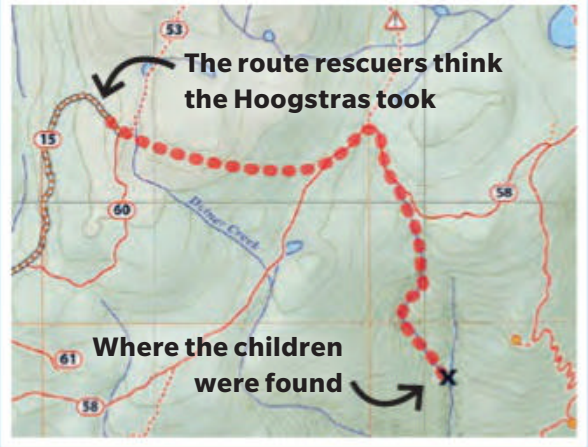
Al Hurley and Bill Papove, two veteran volunteers with Coquitlam Search and Rescue (SAR), had been dropped off by a helicopter part way up the mountain, just before darkness fell. Details were still scarce. They only knew two young children were stranded in Class 5 terrain – the most difficult.

The two men, wearing 18-kilogram emergency backpacks, spent all night zigzagging down the treacherous terrain. GPS recorded their route as they searched for signs indicating which of the drainages Brandon and the kids had been descending.

At 4.30am Hurley and Papove, in need of food and rest, met another SAR team on the mountain to hand over information. Then, the two men hiked down to base camp – a caravan equipped with live satellite images and a topographical map. Brandon helped trace their route as best he could.

When the teams set off again, he began to cry. Soon he was bawling in agony. As a parent, he knew he had one job: protect your children. *If you're responsible for your children's demise, how do you ever forgive yourself?* he wondered.

Police constable Morgan Nevison introduced himself. Though Nevison had not been specifically trained in emotional support, he had a gift for it.



Clockwise from top left: Rescuers descend in search of the Hoogstras; a map of the family's hiking route; recovered backpacks; the children are found safe and sound; a helicopter used in the rescue; recovered shoes

He'd served in the military, and Brandon's dad had fought in Vietnam and developed PTSD. The two men were soon chatting like old friends.

"You know," said Nevison, "a buddy, he got lost in these woods a few years back. He was missing for three days before they called it off. As they were preparing to leave, he knocked on that door right there."

Just then, SAR volunteer Jim Mancell stopped in with good news: searchers had spotted a blue shoe.

Nevison, with his easy manner, kept Brandon engaged until Jim returned.

"We've got voice confirmation. I'll keep you posted."

Please God, let them be unharmed, Brandon thought.

Finally, 20 minutes later, Jim came back inside: "Great news. We're with your kids."

Brandon leapt up, laughing and crying. When Nevison drove him to an open field, he was moved to see so many strangers in SAR jackets.

Soon the thwack-thwack-thwack of rotors announced the arrival of the helicopter. Oliver was dangling from a long line, between Al Hurley and another volunteer. Brandon ran to embrace his son.

Before long the helicopter returned with little Ezri on the line. The kids

were rushed to hospital to check for injuries and hypothermia.

It turned out they were fine, just cold and hungry. After Brandon left, the children had talked a bit. Just before dark they heard a helicopter. They were so exhausted they soon fell asleep, huddled together for warmth. The kids kept their word and didn't move from their spot all night.

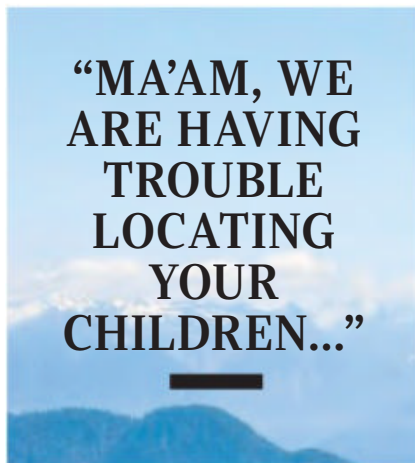
"They had very little trauma afterwards," Claire explained later. "They both felt that Brandon had been

truthful about their rescue and it was just a matter of waiting for a helicopter."

Of the hundreds of rescues he's participated in, Al Hurley found this one among the most satisfying. "Many of us are parents," he explained. "When you hear the words 'injured,' 'child'

and 'wilderness,' it gets intense. This one had a happy ending. That's not always the case." **R**

Two months after the rescue, in July 2019, the Hoogstras moved back to the US. Before the family left, a volunteer dropped by to return their recovered items – a backpack, fishing gear and shoes, which one search manager called "a trail of bread crumbs" that helped to lead the rescuers to the children.





A creature made of teal fur and screws. The creature has a head with a tuft of teal fur on top, two large silver screws for eyes, and two long, thin legs made of teal fur. The legs are attached to the body with silver screws. The creature is standing on a light-colored surface.

SEE THE WORLD...

Turn the page »

...DIFFERENTLY

WHAT DO YOU GET when you combine cross-stitching and graffiti? These fantastic murals. Portuguese artist Ana Martins witnessed her grandmother cross-stitching and realised that both her graphic designs and Grandma's tablecloth were based on pixels. Now the young artist's work can be seen on the streets of Portugal. The one pictured is on the wall of a kindergarten in Apelação near Lisbon and is titled *No Glass to Hold Me Back*. This amazing work is 7.5 x 5 metres and uses ten kilometres of wool and 15,000 screws.

PHOTOS: ACTION PRESS





Got This Covered

I thought seriously about getting a weighted blanket, but now that I have seen how much they cost, I guess I will just do it the old-fashioned way: by putting some cats on top of myself when I go to sleep.

@SDAMNED

Here To Help

I went into a clothing shop and a lady came up to me and said, "If you need anything, I'm Jill."

I was like, "I've never met anyone with a conditional identity before. What if I don't need anything? Who are you?" DEMETRI MARTIN, COMEDIAN

WE LOVE DAD JOKES!

Thousands of British fathers recently battled it out in a competition that was no laughing matter to determine the nation's best Dad joke. Stand-up comedian Mark Watson picked father-of-two Austin May as the winner.



MARK'S FAVOURITE ENTRIES WERE:

- **Why did the scarecrow get an award?** Because he was out standing in his field!
- **What did the buffalo say to his son when he left for work?** Bison.
- **What do you call a blind dinosaur?** A Doyouthinkhesaurus!

- **Why did the man fall down the well?** Because he didn't see that well!
- **I stood behind a customer at an ATM and he turned around and said, "Could you check my balance?" So I pushed him.** His balance wasn't that great.

- **Someone has glued my pack of cards together** – I don't know how to deal with it.
- **What do you call a zombie who cooks stir fries?** Dead man wok-ing.
- **Two guys walked into a bar.** The third guy ducked.

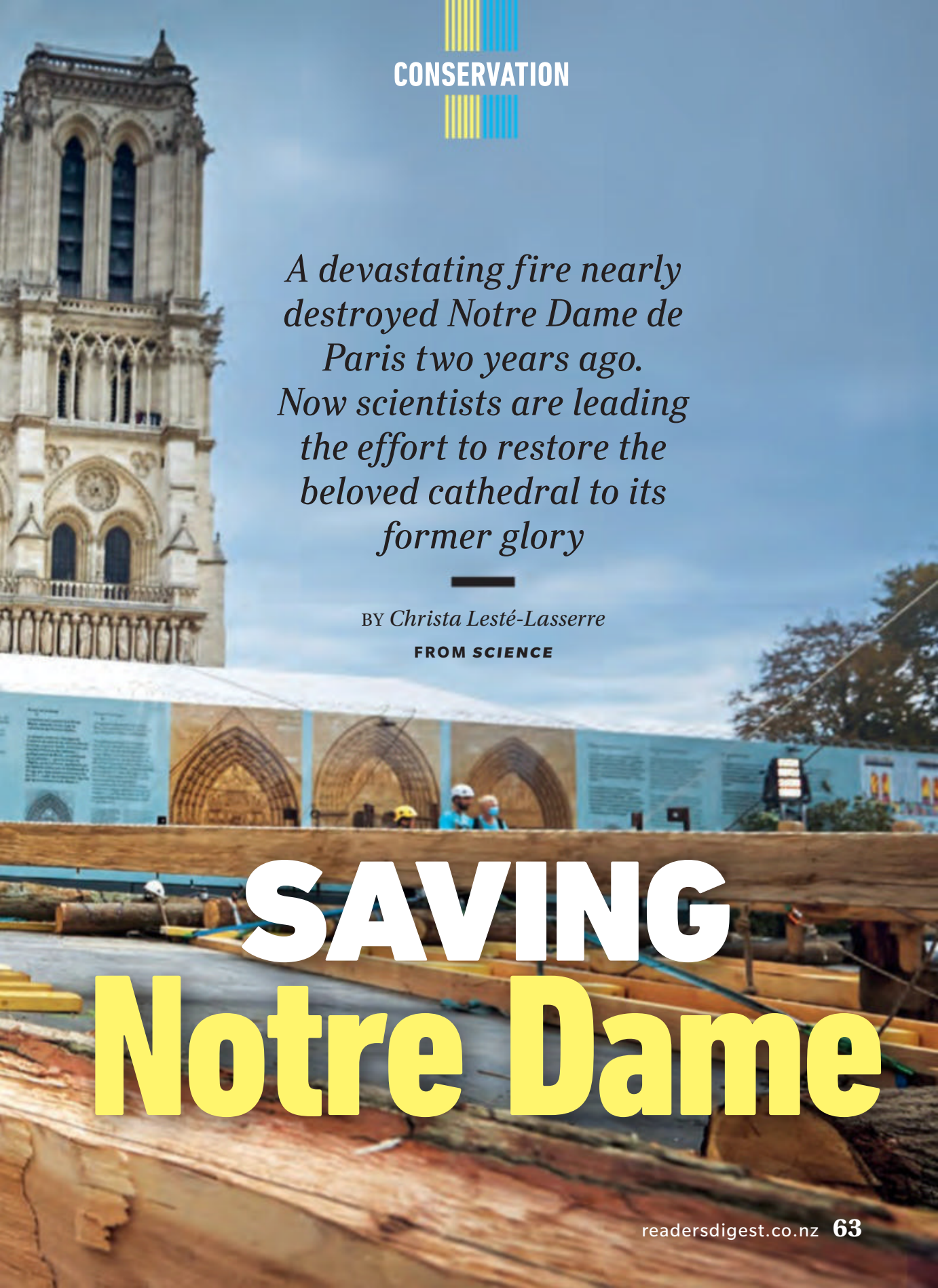
SKY NEWS

THE WINNING JOKE WAS:

I once hired a limo but when it arrived, the guy driving it walked off!
 I said "Excuse me? Are you not going to drive me?"
 The guy told me that the price didn't include a driver...
 ... so I'd spent \$1000 on a limo and have nothing to chauffeur it!

A carpenter demonstrates how wood will be shaped into the beams needed to rebuild Notre Dame's roof





A devastating fire nearly destroyed Notre Dame de Paris two years ago. Now scientists are leading the effort to restore the beloved cathedral to its former glory

BY *Christa Lesté-Lasserre*

FROM SCIENCE

SAVING Notre Dame

Eight restoration scientists put on hard hats and heavy-duty boots, and stepped inside the blackened shell of Notre Dame de Paris, the world's most famous cathedral. Ten days earlier, a fire had swept through its attic, melted its roof, and sent its spire plunging into the sacred space. Now, it was silent but for the flutter of house sparrows. The air, normally sweet with incense, was acrid with ash and stale smoke. Piles of debris covered the marble floor.

Yet the scientists, called in by France's Ministry of Culture to inspect the damage and plan a rescue, mostly felt relief – and even hope. Rattan chairs sat in tidy rows, priceless paintings hung undamaged, and, above the altar, a great gold-plated cross loomed over the Pietà, a statue of the Virgin Mary cradling the body of Jesus.

“What matters isn't the roof and vault so much as the sanctuary they protect,” said Aline Magnien, director of the Historical Monuments Research Laboratory (LRMH). “The heart of Notre Dame had been saved.”

On April 15, 2019, an electrical short was the likely spark for a blaze that threatened to burn the 856-year-old cathedral to the ground. Following a protocol developed for just such a disaster, firefighters knew which works of art to rescue and in which order. They knew to keep the water pressure low and to avoid spraying stained glass windows so the cold

water wouldn't shatter the hot glass. But even though their efforts averted the worst, the emergency was far from over. More than 180 tonnes of toxic lead from the roof and spire was unaccounted for. And the damage threatened the delicate balance of forces between the vault and the cathedral's flying buttresses: the entire building teetered on possible collapse.

At LRMH, the laboratory tasked with conserving all the nation's monuments, Magnien and her 22 colleagues apply techniques from geology to metallurgy as they evaluate the condition of Notre Dame's stone, mortar, glass, paint and metal. They aim to prevent further damage to the cathedral and to guide engineers in the national effort to restore it.

French President Emmanuel Macron has vowed to reopen Notre Dame by 2024. The operation involves many government agencies and has drawn philanthropic pledges of about \$1.5 billion. But it is the LRMH researchers who lead the critical work of deciding how to salvage materials and stitch the cathedral back together.

THE LRMH TEAM works in the former stables of a 17th-century château in Champs-sur-Marne, in the eastern suburbs of Paris. The neighbourhood is quiet, but the day I visited, the lab was anything but sleepy.

Véronique Vergès-Belmin, a geologist and head of LRMH's stone division, slipped a hazmat suit over her

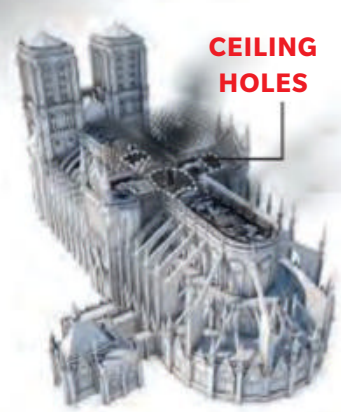
**6.18PM
FIRE BEGINS**



**7.50PM
SPIRE COLLAPSES**



**4.00AM
FIRE UNDER CONTROL**



The grim progress of the Notre Dame fire, which started on April 15, 2019

clothes and slid on a respirator mask – necessary when dealing with samples contaminated with lead. In the lab’s storage hangar – once a garage for the château’s carriages – she presented several dozen stones that had fallen from the cathedral’s vaulted ceiling. Fallen stones hint at the condition of those still in place.

Heat can weaken limestone, and knowing the temperatures endured by these fallen stones can help engineers decide whether they can be reused. Vergès-Belmin has found that the stones’ colours can provide clues. At 300°C to 400°C, she said, iron crystals that help knit the limestone together begin to break down, turning the surface red. At 600°C, the colour changes again as the crystals are transformed into a black iron oxide. By 800°C, the limestone loses all its iron oxides and becomes powdery lime.

“Any coloured stones or parts should not be reused,” Vergès-Belmin said. Colour evaluation isn’t an exact science. Still, in lieu of mechanically testing each of the hundreds of thousands of stones that remain in the cathedral, colour could be a useful guide to their strength.

Water can also wreak havoc. When the firefighters drenched the stone vault, the porous limestone gained up to one-third of its weight in water. In the lab, LRMH researchers monitored a fallen stone, weighing it to track the drying process.

Meanwhile, rain continued to fall on the roofless vault. Engineers couldn’t install a temporary cover because of a mangled skeleton of scaffolding, set up in 2018 for long-term renovations. The cathedral walls supported the scaffolding, so it had to be dismantled to prevent a potentially “catastrophic” collapse, Magnien said.

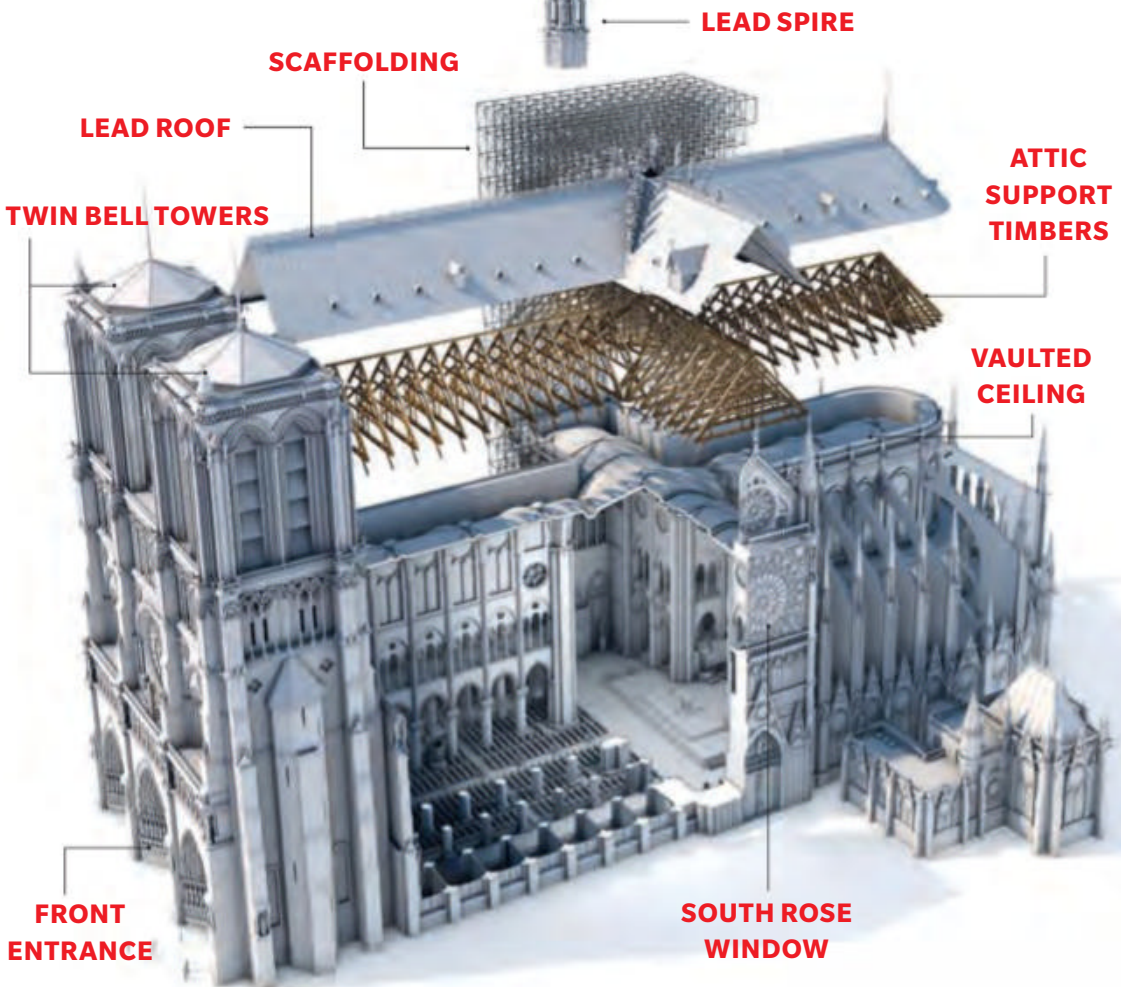
READER'S DIGEST

Until the stones finish drying on their own, their changing weights will likely continue to have non-negligible effects on the vault structure, according to Lise Leroux, a geologist in the LRMH stone division. Not only does the extra weight play with the precarious balance of forces, but when the water freezes in winter, individual stones expand or contract.

A few weeks after the fire, engineers installed steel beams above the vault so technicians could rappel with ropes as they removed scaffolding and stabilised

the structure. Leroux obtained rappelling certification so she could take a closer look. When she inspected the top of the vault for the first time in February 2020, she found that its plaster coating was still mostly intact and had shielded many stones from fire and rain. "It seems to have done its job," she said.

The COVID-19 lockdowns slowed the removal of the scaffolding, which was finally completed in November 2020, and work could finally begin on the cathedral's interior. In December, the Grand Organ was



dismantled and removed, and the pipes taken for repair and cleaning to remove lead dust from the fire. Next, a 27-metre-high scaffold was built to give access to the vaults. Reconstruction of the interior was due to begin in the second half of 2021.

AMONG PARISIANS, the fire stirred both grief and fear that vaporised lead from the roof and spire had drifted into nearby neighbourhoods. In fact, Aurélia Azéma, a metallurgist who leads LRMH's metal division, and other scientists have concluded that the fire maxed out well below lead's vaporisation temperature of 1700°C. Most of the lead simply melted at 300°C, pouring into the gutters and dripping into stalactites hanging from the vaults.

In places, however, temperatures did exceed 600°C, at which point lead oxidises into microscopic nodules. "It's like hair spray," Azéma said. A yellow cloud that billowed from the cathedral during the fire showed that some of the lead did become airborne.

Some nearby schools were decontaminated after samples showed worryingly high lead levels. But it's not clear whether the lead came from the fire or from some other source, such as lead paint or leaded petrol.



Saving Notre Dame

Glass researcher Claudine Loisel tests techniques for cleaning lead from Notre Dame's 113 stained glass windows

Much of the lead mobilised by the fire remains in Notre Dame. In June 2019, when Azéma and her colleagues brought their first samples from the cathedral back to the lab, tightly sealed in plastic bags, yellow lead dust appeared to be everywhere. She unrolled small organ pipes from layers of bubble wrap and pointed her gloved finger at their holes. "Even down in here," she said.

Because of lead's toxicity, France's national health agency imposes a legal limit of 0.1 micrograms per square centimetre on the surfaces of any building, including historical monuments. "My first sample was 70 times that," said Emmanuel Maurin, head of LRMH's wood division, who tested surfaces like the oak confessional and choir seats.

The national work inspection agency has enforced stringent safety requirements. People entering

READER'S DIGEST

the cathedral must strip naked and put on disposable paper underwear and safety suits and wear protective masks with breathing assistance before passing through to contaminated areas.

After a maximum of 150 minutes' exposure, they hit the showers, scrubbing their bodies from head to

toe. "We're taking five showers a day," Zimmer says.

The Ministry of Culture has charged LRMH's researchers with finding a way to cleanse the cathedral of lead without harming it. For most smooth surfaces – glass, metal, waxed wood and even paint – they've found that a wet/dry vacuum and cotton pads,

NEW LIFE FOR A FOREST IN THE SKY

Over the centuries, Notre Dame's roof was commonly known as 'the forest' – a reference to its intertwined oak beams. The 2019 fire completely destroyed the roof, and 2000 oak trees will be needed to rebuild it exactly as it was.

Numerous countries stepped forward to offer trees for the reconstruction. Ultimately, the body overseeing the restoration of Notre Dame decided to use only French oaks due to time constraints involved in harvesting and drying the wood.

At the beginning of March this year, before the sap began to rise, foresters from the Office



One of the 2000 oak trees that will be used to rebuild the roof

National des Forêts (ONF) felled the first eight oaks in the Bercé Forest, 120 kilometres southwest of Paris. The wood from these exceptional trees – 230 years old, one metre in diameter, with more than 20 metres of useful

trunk – is destined for the base of the rebuilt spire. Five of them had to be perfectly straight, and three had to have a specific curvature needed for the construction of the base.

The remaining trees are being harvested this year from forests throughout France. After the oaks are felled, the wood is left outdoors for several months to allow rain to wash out the tannins. Then it needs another 12 to 18 months to dry. Once the wood's moisture content drops below 30 per cent, the Notre Dame carpenters can get to work rebuilding this one-of-a-kind forest above the streets of Paris.

Stéphane Calmeyn

moistened with distilled water, remove the lead. Raw wood surfaces require fine sanding first. The best method for porous stones is cleaning with compresses and latex, supplemented with laser cleaning for the joints.

AS THE FIRST 'EMERGENCY' PHASE of scientific work advanced, Notre Dame started slowly opening to scientists interested in studying its history and architecture – now exposed by the fire and available to study without intruding crowds of tourists.

The Ministry of Culture and CNRS created a dedicated science team of about 100 researchers from multiple institutions. “We’re sorting all these thousands of fragments – some from our world, some from another and more ancient world – and it’s like we’re communicating with the Middle Ages,” Dillmann said.

Yves Gallet, an art historian at Bordeaux Montaigne University, oversees a group that aims to study stones that are still in place. Through detailed photographic analysis, researchers want to understand how 13th century stonecutters designed and assembled the encasements that cradle the four-storey-diameter rose windows.

The charred remnants of attic timbers have stories of their own to tell. “Wood registers absolutely everything while it’s growing,” said Alexa Dufrasse, a CNRS researcher heading the wood group. Notre Dame’s oak beams grew in the 12th and 13th

centuries, a warm period. By connecting the growth ring record with what’s known about economic conditions at the time, researchers hope to see how climate variations affected medieval society, she said.

Across centuries marked by war and disease, Notre Dame has witnessed cycles of decline and renewal before. The LRMH scientists hope that when the vaults and buttresses are again dry and sound, the lead accounted for, and the great cathedral’s history and resilience understood more deeply than before, the sense of grief and loss surrounding the fire will once again turn to joy and gratitude.

“There’s an extraordinary unity of people coming together to not only save this monument, but to learn from it,” Magnien said. “Notre Dame will be restored! Its artwork, stone and stained glass will be cleaned; it will be more luminous and beautiful than before. Notre Dame will come out of this experience enriched. And so will we.” **R**

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Notre Dame will reportedly reopen for worship with a thanksgiving Te Deum on April 16, 2024, five years after the fire. Later that year, Paris will host the Summer Olympics. The cathedral will be 861 years old in 2024. Renovation work, however, will continue on the cathedral for many years to come.

The Quest For Curls

Wrap your head around some extraordinary gadgets that wave, frizz, crimp and perm

BY Zoë Meunier

Fire. The wheel. An implement to curl hair with. Yes, when it came to the inventions humanity simply had to have, a hair curling tool was right up there at the top of the list – and we were willing to go to any lengths to get the job done.

Our ancient ancestors used wet clay on their hair, which when dried in the sun, set their hair into curls. A tad crispy, heavy and muddy, perhaps, but a small price to pay for beauty.

Early Babylonian, Assyrian, Persian, Greek and Egyptian civilisations heated iron or bronze rods over a fire, to produce impressive hairstyles that signified beauty and wealth. They were the first – but definitely not the last – to appreciate that a lack of heat control could sometimes lead to a less than desirable outcome. Hopefully potential suitors, alerted to their attractiveness and financial wellbeing, would have been willing to overlook any burnt patches.

Several centuries (and many fried locks and scalps) later in 1866, Sir



READER'S DIGEST

Hiram Maxim, a US-born citizen of England, patented one of the earliest curling iron designs – along with, among other things, a mousetrap; asthma inhaler; light bulb; and Maxim machine gun. A man of varied interests, indeed.

Frenchman Marcel Grateau, however, was all about the hair. In 1872, he opened the first successful hair salon for women in Paris and his iconic 'do, the Marcel wave, was the defining hairstyle of the late 19th and early 20th centuries. Grateau designed his own curling iron in 1890, a slight variation to Sir Maxim's patent. While popular, like those before it, Grateau's tongs would also become unbearably hot. Apparently, singed hair was the defining smell of the era.

Women who didn't have access to curling irons – or who didn't want to risk third-degree burns – used non-heating methods to curl their locks. With ringlets in fashion, ladies opted for Victorian rag curls,

which involved cutting rags into strips, sectioning their dampened hair and wrapping each strand around a rag. They went to bed and (after a decidedly uncomfortable night's sleep) unravelled the rags the next morning to find delightful spiral curls.

Another option was pin or finger curling – wrapping strands of hair into tight curls and pinning them in place until the next morning. It was also around this time that (non-heated) rollers made their first appearance. These were metal rollers covered in fabric and leather, around which the hair was rolled and once again, left to work their magic overnight. Curls were clearly far more important than sleeping well.

In 1905 Karl Nessler (aka Charles L. Nestlé), a German hairdresser in London, came up with an early method for permanently curling hair, which he had spent many years devising. The hair was wrapped in a spiral around several rods connected

A CURLY QUESTION
The hair necessities through time



Ancient Egyptians

STYLING
TOOL



Late 1800s

CURLING
TONGS



1930s

'SCARY PERM MACHINE'
IN BROADWAY GIRLS FILM

to a machine with an electric heating device. Sodium hydroxide (caustic soda) was applied and the hair was heated to 100°C or more for around six hours at a time. Sounds safe enough, right?

Well, no. Nessler's wife, Katharina Laible, was his perm guinea pig, and his first two attempts resulted in completely burning her hair off as well as some scalp burns. His method eventually improved (although perhaps not the state of his marriage), and the hot rollers were kept from touching the scalp by a complex system of countering weights suspended from an overhead chandelier mounted on a stand. It looked like an instrument of torture, but nonetheless was a big hit in London in 1909 among the long haired of the time.

In 1930, the Great Depression may have taken hold in the US, but the beauty industry was whooping for joy, as inventor Solomon Harper created the first electrically heated hair rollers.

The permanent wave sector also saw a major improvement in 1938, with Arnold F. Willat developing a system that used no heat or machinery while providing superior results. An ammonia solution was applied to the hair to break down protein structures before hair was rolled around curlers. An oxidising solution was then applied to reform the protein bonds, allowing the hair to take on the shape of the rollers more permanently.

Known as the 'cold wave', it was a huge hit, with the majority of middle-class women having their hair set once a week and permed perhaps once every three months as new hair replaced the waved hair. Sure, the harsh chemicals sizzled one's tresses a bit, but at least it was a fond farewell to potential electrocution!

Frenchmen Rene Lelievre and Roger Lemoine patented the first electric curling iron (or tongs) in 1959, which also meant much better temperature control. They soon started cropping



1960s
BONNET
HAIR DRYER



1960s
'SPACE AGE'
HAIR DRYERS



2020s
DYSON
AIR WAVE

up in ordinary households, rather than just the wealthy ones, with many households having money (and hair) to burn after decades of imposed thriftiness due to wartime rationing.

At the same time, roller-setting hair was a weekly occurrence for many well-coiffed ladies of the '50s and '60s. Wet setting of the hair was still popular, with beauty salons finding endless rows of women ensconced under hard-hat hair dryers, browsing books or magazines. At-home options for drying wet-set rollers included the fetching bonnet hair dryer - picture a shower cap attached to a vacuum cleaner and you have the basic concept.

As hot rollers picked up steam throughout the '60s, they gave rise to impressive bouffant and beehive hairstyles, as different-sized barrels provided a greater variety of curls - and people discovered the power of backcombing.

Another advancement came in the '70s with acid perms, which - despite their unreassuring name - used gentler chemicals and low heat to minimise damage. Clearly they did something right because the '80s was the Decade of the Perm, with almost every woman - and many men

- happily subjecting themselves to the eye-watering procedure in their quest for poodle-like-preeminence. The bigger, the better.

Perhaps in response to this, by the '90s the fashion was for stick-straight hair. Save for the odd Velcro roller, there was not too much innovating in

curling, as women embraced hair straighteners instead. These became increasingly sophisticated with ionic or ceramic plates and various heat levels.

By the mid-2000s - perhaps over guilt about how much they'd spent on their hair straighteners - women stumbled upon the method of using a straightener to create the glamorous,

beachy waves of recent years. Although a woman called Erica Feldman is credited with first using a hair straightener to curl hair in 1872 - well ahead of her time.

So what's left to innovate when it comes to curling hair? If the new Dyson Airwrap is anything to go by, the future is all about air flow. This tong-like tool wraps air around its curved surface - leaving you with perfect curls and no risk of burning your fingers or scalp on a hot barrel. Ah well, it's only taken 2500-odd years. **R**



Roller-setting hair was a weekly occurrence for many well-coiffed ladies

QUOTABLE QUOTES

True wisdom lies in gathering the precious things out of each day as it goes by.

E.S. BOUTON, EDITOR



The pandemic accentuated that part of me that says, why am I useful? Am I useful for anything? I'm only useful if I feel I can respond to need.

YO-YO MA, MUSICIAN

The worst thing about catching the cat drinking from my water glass? Wondering how many times I didn't catch her.

KELLEY ARMSTRONG,
AUTHOR



Home is not where you were born. Home is where all your attempts to escape cease.

OMAR TAHER, WRITER

I CAN LIVE WITH A MISTAKE. WHAT I COULDN'T LIVE WITH IS SLOPPINESS. AND THERE'S A DIFFERENCE.

DANA CANEDY, PUBLISHER



Magicians do not lie about the universe.

JAMES RANDI, ILLUSIONIST



7 Common Causes Of Dental Anxiety

*You don't have to suffer
from dentophobia*

—
BY *Reader's Digest Editors*



Do you balk at the idea of visiting the dentist? Oral health care professionals say mild anxiety is common among patients, and is even expected.

However, statistics on dental anxiety are alarming, to say the least. It's estimated that approximately one in seven adults have high levels

of anxiety about a visit to their dentist, and the problem affects more women than men. Those who suffer from a dental phobia – known as dentophobia – frequently avoid visiting the dentist for years. It is not surprising then that this type of avoidance can lead to the destruction of not only a person's oral health, but their overall health and wellbeing.

PHOTO: GETTY IMAGES

7 Common Causes Of Dental Anxiety

Gaining an insight into the reasons why you fear the dentist can help you overcome your angst.

We spoke to dentist Dr Steven Shapiro who explained the seven most common causes of dentophobia.

1. FEAR OF PAIN

A lot of people experience dental anxiety due to a fear of pain, even though most dental procedures are painless. For some patients, the fear comes from a bad dental experience that they had when they were children, or from horror stories of pain that they have internalised from other people in their lives.

2. NEGATIVE EXPERIENCES WITH DENTISTS

The most common cause of dental phobia is generally caused by a negative experience that occurred in childhood, such as a painful procedure or an unpleasant attitude from an oral health care provider. This has the potential to scar you for a very long time, and lead a person to assume that all future dental visits will be unpleasant and so therefore they avoid the chair.

3. EMBARRASSMENT

Some patients may feel ashamed about the state of their oral health or hygiene due to the fact that they have badly injured or rotting teeth. If they believe they have bad breath,

they may be self-conscious, and talking about the state of their teeth may cause them to be embarrassed and result in anxiety about seeing a dentist. The good news is that seasoned dentists have training to deal with all types of oral health issues and won't be shocked at the state of your teeth.

4. PERSONAL SPACE

There are many people who are uncomfortable with people encroaching on their personal space. They may also not be comfortable with someone placing instruments into their mouth or poking around inside their mouth.

5. SIDE EFFECTS OF ANAESTHESIA

Most people have seen the side effects of anaesthesia from personal experience or online videos. The patient may feel nauseous, dizzy or have localised numbness when the procedure is over. Nonetheless, these side effects usually resolve quickly.

6. LOSS OF CONTROL

Some people feel a loss of control while seated in the dentist's chair. And no wonder. We are made to lean back with our mouths wide open and can't see what is happening. Fortunately, you can reduce some of this stress by asking your dentist to explain the procedure beforehand, so there are no little surprises. These

READER'S DIGEST

days many dentists have computer screens to explain procedures as they go along or televisions on the ceiling to distract patients. You can also take along a headset to listen to soothing music or a podcast.

7. FEAR OF INJECTIONS

Many people are afraid of needles, especially when they are injected into their mouths, while others are sometimes afraid that the anaesthesia will not do its job and that the procedure will be unbearably painful. Remember that the dentist will be trying to make the procedure as painless as possible. You can also ask them to use a topical anaesthetic (numbing cream) first.

HOW TO OVERCOME YOUR FEAR OF THE DENTIST

The good news is that more and more dentists understand the fears their patients go through, so the first step to getting rid of your phobia is to book an appointment.

So that it is over and done with as soon as possible and you don't spend the whole day worrying, book an early morning appointment. If you're able to, bring a friend or relative for moral support.

Let your dentist know what it is you're feeling worried about. To ensure that you're comfortable throughout the procedure, explain that you would like to feel in control of the situation. **R**



The Smell of History

At the Institute for Digital Archaeology in Oxford, UK, scientists are conjuring up ways for visitors to catch a whiff of the past. In a planned exhibit at Oxford's Bodleian Library, visitors will experience odours captured from rare books and manuscripts using sealed chambers and high-tech filtration systems. The essences will be disseminated with nebulisers that create scent clouds of superfine mists. Included in the collection is a copy of the Magna Carta (*a 13th century document detailing the rights, privileges and liberties of the clergy and nobles, and placing limits on the power of the English crown*) from 1217 with a slightly swampy odour. Other smells include Egyptian papyrus and a perfumed *Romeo and Juliet*. The quantity of scent essence possible to extract from a single book is limited, however, and only the exhibit's first visitors will get to whiff the literal molecules of the archive. Future visitors will get a spray of the institute's synthetic reproduction of 'eau de Magna Carta' instead.

READER'S DIGEST



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PHOTOS: GETTY IMAGES



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JUST STOP!



A symbol known around the world, the stop sign was first introduced in Detroit in the US in 1915. The iconic octagonal shape came in 1922, and in 1954 its red-and-white colour scheme was made official across the US – and has since become recognised globally. Here it graces a T-junction in the desert near Moreeb Dune in Abu Dhabi, the capital of the United Arab Emirates.



PHOTO FEATURE



*This simple message has a clear meaning
— no matter where it's found*

BY *Markus Ward*







Just Stop!

◀◀ **This little switch** can bring the luxurious 'Eastern & Oriental Express' to a standstill. It has scheduled stops in places such as Kuala Lumpur, Singapore and Bangkok – and unscheduled ones wherever a passenger or crew member flips this tiny lever.

◀ **Guiding an aircraft** taxied by a pilot with a limited view is a big responsibility as the safety of passengers, crew, plane and airport are on the line. The crossed wands over the head mean either 'stop' or 'STOP!', depending on accompanying arm movements.

▶ **The very first signal lamp** for controlling pedestrians was the idea of railway engineer John Peake Knight and installed in London in 1868. It exploded only a few weeks later and it wasn't until 1933 that the city of Copenhagen got this idea to work.

◀ **On August 23, 2020**, a human chain spanning an impressive 32 kilometres was formed from the Lithuanian capital Vilnius all the way to the Belarusian border to protest this neighbouring country's dubious election results. Unfortunately, this particular act of public demonstration didn't stop anything.

PHOTOS: (PREVIOUS SPREAD) ROSEMARY BEHAN/ALAMY STOCK PHOTO; (THIS PAGE, CLOCKWISE FROM LEFT TO RIGHT) ALAMY STOCK PHOTO; ALAMY STOCK PHOTO; PICTURE ALLIANCE/ROMAIN FELLENS; PICTURE ALLIANCE/JOKER



READER'S DIGEST

► **End of the line!** These two buffer stops unmistakably mark the termination of the railroad tracks at the Gulf of Aranci, in Sardinia, the picturesque Italian island in the Mediterranean. Coming in many shapes and sizes and using various energy absorption techniques, such as friction or hydraulic dampers, these stops are used worldwide to prevent slow-moving trains or cars from going 'off their rails'.

► **Language barriers** don't exist with this gesture. Especially when administered by a uniformed police officer. Or do they? If his fingers were slightly more spread out, such an outstretched palm is understood as an insult in many cultures. For example the gesture is called the *Moutza* in Greece and has been an insult since antiquity. In Western countries, a similar gesture could be construed as "Talk to the hand" (meaning "I am not listening to what you say").

►► **What raises a red flag** at the beach? Large waves, rough surf or other dangerous conditions. The most dangerous of those is probably the rip tide, which pulls swimmers out to sea, sometimes at speeds not even Olympic swimmers can counter. Strangely enough, even a wind-torn red flag like this one still indicates that the beach is closed and you should not enter the water.

PHOTOS: (TOP) CHRIS WILLEMSSEN/ALAMY STOCK PHOTO; (RIGHT) ISLANDSTOCK/ALAMY STOCK PHOTO; (LEFT) MICHAEL REYNOLDS/PICTURE-ALLIANCE/DPA/DPAWEB



Just Stop!







FATHER'S DAY SPECIAL

Daughters *And* *Dads*

**A PLACE WHERE
REAL-LIFE
HEROES RULE**

*He may not wear a cape,
but to these daughters, their dad
definitely saved the day!*

BY Charlotte Hilton Andersen

PHOTO: GETTY IMAGES

My dad made me finish high school because he didn't

"By the time I was in the final years of high school I was basically over it. I just wasn't doing anything and didn't care if I graduated or not.

"But then I moved in with my dad and he decided I was going to finish, and that was it. It was only seven months until graduation and I had done nothing, but he knew that I would need to in order to be successful, and he wouldn't let me fail. He signed me up for an online school and pushed me to do it. He woke me up every morning and set a schedule where I did nothing but school for six hours a day, seven days a week. He checked all my homework and monitored my grades. He was pretty annoying, honestly, but I knew it was for the best. And hey, it worked.

"I got it all done and graduated with my class last year. I know he's so proud of me and I'm proud of me,

too. Now I am applying to catering schools to follow my dream of being a chef, and I know with the 'get it done' attitude I learnt from him, I can do anything."
CHASE CUBELO

My dad was my invisible guardian angel

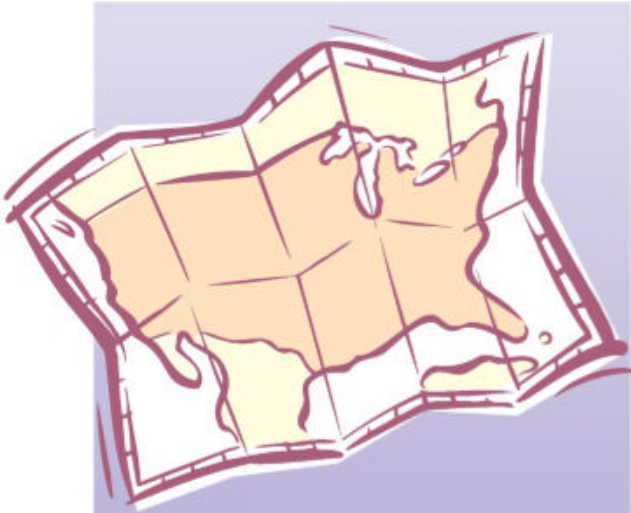
"My parents divorced when I was just four years old, and from that point on I rarely saw my dad. Both my parents remarried other people and I grew up thinking that he didn't care much about me – that is until I got married. It was then that my stepmother told me that my mother had warned him to stay away from us kids, blocking him from seeing us.

"But he loved us so much that every morning he would drive and park across from the school crossing near our primary school. It was a very busy road and he never went to work until he made sure we all made it safely across and into school. He did this every day until we all finished



"You gotta love dads. At my wedding, when I tripped on my wedding dress and fell flat on my face, Dad said, 'Don't worry, you'll do better next time.'"

MELANIE WHITE



“If you ever want to torture my dad, tie him up and right in front of him, refold a map incorrectly.”

CATHY LADMAN

primary school. None of us kids ever saw him at the time, but after my stepmother shared the story with us, I was so touched.

My dad was far from perfect but I love that he watched over me and was with me, even when I didn't know he was there.”

ANN HETZEL

He stepped in as a surrogate father when my daughter needed one the most

“I'm a single mum and I've often worried that my daughter Cynthia is missing out, but my dad stepped in to be a father figure for her, making sure

she had whatever she needed – right up until the day he died.

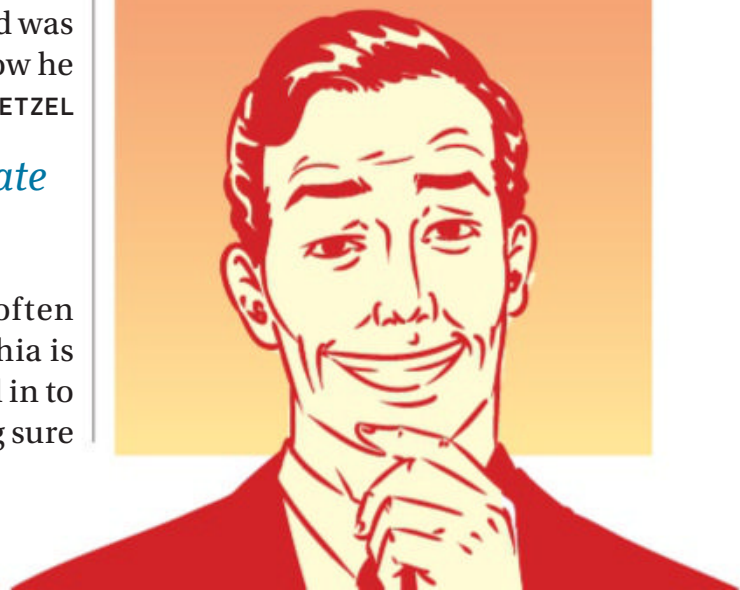
“I still come to tears remembering all the activities he'd do with her and the trips he'd take her on. Her favourite was when he taught her how to fish; those trips meant so much to her. It may seem like a small thing but being the 'dad' she never had and exposing her to new experiences changed her life.

“His dedication, love, and compassion for not just me but my children makes him a true hero in my eyes. I still miss him every day.”

JOCI SMITH

“Sorry, Dad, but sometimes your jokes just really aren't all that funny... but we love you anyway.”

AMY SZARKOWS



He rescued me from the high school mean girls

"During high school, I went to a sleepover party with my friends from my dance class - at least I thought they were my friends.

"After they thought I was asleep, they started saying the meanest things about me. I pretended I didn't hear them but I was absolutely crushed. The next day, between sobs, I told my parents everything they said and that I didn't want to go back to school where I'd have to see them.

"Obviously, I couldn't drop out of school but my dad took my hurt feelings very seriously and dropped everything to whisk me off to our farm. We spent several days together, just the two of us. I felt so loved. Not only did he get me away from those girls for a bit but he showed me that friends come and go but family is forever. I (mostly) forgot that awful time but I'll never forget how much my dad loves me."

EMILY GARRISON

He helped me put my life back together after our home burnt down

"Several years ago, I lost my house in a fire and with it, everything we owned. It was devastating. My dad came out to help as soon as he heard.

"He arrived before I knew how much our insurance company was going to cover so I wasn't spending money on anything but absolute



"It was my father who taught me to value myself. He told me that I was uncommonly beautiful and that I was the most precious thing in his life."

DAWN FRENCH, ACTRESS

necessities. I remember we were out shopping and he could see I had picked up and then reluctantly put back down a pair of running shoes. Running is my passion but I knew it wasn't strictly 'necessary.'

"But before I knew it, my dad had bought the shoes for me along with any other gear I needed to get back out running. It was something so small but he knew that it really was necessary for my survival. I realised how well my dad really knows me and cares about me."

MARY SMITH

He may not have been my biological father but he was the best dad I could have asked for

“When I was three years old my father died, leaving my mother, who was 25, to raise us four kids – all under nine years old – by herself. It was so hard on her, she had to do both jobs, working to support us but also making sure we were taken care of at home.

“Nearly a year later Mum met a man by the name of Max Powell. He not only married my mother but us kids as well. He loved us as his own and made sure we always had everything we needed. He gave up a lot to marry my mother knowing that he would never be able to father children of his own.

“Until the day he died, Mum, us kids, and our families were the most important things in his life. I’ll always see him as my dad and my hero.”

CORAL PRICKETT

He saved me from drowning

“When I was young, one of my favourite activities was to tube down a local river. The best (and scariest) part was the cement chute that would spit us out at the end.

“One day I decided to go down the river by myself; I’d done it many times and wasn’t worried. But this time was different. The current sucked me under the water, pinning me under the bottom of the cement slide. All I remember was feeling so

helpless and trapped, and then a giant hand reached down, grabbed me by the hair and yanked me out of the water. To this day I don’t know how he knew I was there.

“At the time I didn’t realise the seriousness of my situation and was just really angry that he’d pulled my hair so hard. But as an adult, and now a mother, I realise he saved my life. He’ll always be my hero!”

MICHELLE STILLEY



“Dads are most ordinary men turned by love into heroes, adventurers, storytellers and singers of song.”

PAM BROWN

“I gave my father \$100 and said, ‘Buy yourself something that will make your life easier.’ So he went out and bought a present for my mother.”

RITA RUDNER, HUMORIST



He never made me feel dumb for making mistakes

“When I was a teenager and still a new driver, I decided to get my car washed. I pulled up to the car wash, put my car in park and proceeded to get out to go and get car-wash tokens while my car was still running. Not thinking, I shut the door and walked away to get the coins.

“I walked back and after a few seconds of pure horror, I realised I’d locked my keys in the car. The first thing that popped into my head was to call my dad; I knew he would help me. I went to use a pay phone but didn’t have any change because, duh, it was all in the car. So I called him reverse charges. Not only did he accept the expensive call but he did it without hesitation and was there in 15 minutes with my spare key.

“And he didn’t even tease me about locking the keys in my car. My dad died recently of kidney cancer, and it’s memories like this that make me realise he was my hero not just that day, but every day in so many little ways.”

KATIE HUFFMAN



Baby Geniuses

What if a name could define the fate of your baby? A fun new study has claimed that some monikers are more likely to generate geniuses than others and John and Marie are top of the list. Over 900 names of people with an impressively high intellect including Mensans, Nobel Prize winners and notable scientists were analysed.

DAILY MIRROR; EDUBIRDIE

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The EMPTY NEST CURSE

The departure of his son made this dad long for the parenting days of past

BY Rick Bragg

The boy has gone off to university now. And here I am, left with all the peace and quiet I have learnt not to miss.

I was not a man who wished for children. It seemed contrary to the notion of human happiness, like wishing for lice, or tinnitus, or the more awful forms of gout. I was single most of my life, and parenthood was something that afflicted other people. I watched it from a distance, and shuddered.

When they were small, children seemed to scream for no apparent

reason. As teenagers, they seemed to lose all sanity, ping-ponging through mood swings like Ricochet Rabbit and marking their bodies with more tattoos than a harpooner from *Moby-Dick*, while listening to music with more foul language than my drunk uncles used at a football match. In between infancy and high school graduation (if their parents were lucky), they were mostly just unclean.

Then one entered my life. I did not plan on him. He just came in the package, like a ninth piece of chicken in an eight-piece box, and, in time, made me pay for all the happiness



I had enjoyed. He was 11 when he appeared, past the screaming years and before the age where everything that fell from my mouth was deemed idiotic. I got him in the unclean years, when I tried to avoid close contact with him because I was never quite certain where he had been. This is the child who once licked spaghetti sauce off the underside of his arm. No more needs to be said.

When he discovered girls he got much cleaner, but suddenly I was unfit to be around. I always said the wrong thing, or a dumb thing, or too loud a thing. When he had a girl over, I was banished to whatever room he was furthest from, like a cave troll.

"I used to be cool," I said. "Some people think I still am."

He gave me a pitying look. So did his mum.

And now he is gone to university and I miss him, which is how I know there is indeed a God and He is a great Prankster, and knows how to make a man pay for his transgressions.

He remembers that long-ago day I sulked in my plane seat, thinking over and over that the screaming baby one row over should've been left at home, even if it meant her grandparents wouldn't see her until she went to university.

I am not alone in this sadness in our house, in this empty nest. I barely even had a nest, before it was empty, though I guess I have no one to blame but me. His mum misses him, too, of course. Even the dog misses him.

The dog loved the boy. Woody Bo met him every day at the door after school, knowing he was home because every time the boy locked his car, it gave a short, quick honk. Woody, who is too fat to jump (usually), bounded into the air at the sound, defying gravity, flinging rugs about, and destroying furniture on a wild-eyed dash to the door. A dog should love his

**"I USED TO
BE COOL. SOME
PEOPLE THINK
I STILL AM."
HE GAVE ME A
PITYING LOOK**

boy, I suppose.

His world is in pieces now. The boy has been gone for months. The dog will not even go in his room – not one time since he left. Recently, my wife had to use the boy's car and, unsure if she had locked it, aimed the fancy remote thingamajig at the window and pressed 'lock'. The horn gave its quick honk, and the dog bounded into the air and raced to the door, his tail wagging... He sat there a long time.

I guess I know how he feels. **R**

Rick Bragg is a Pulitzer Prize-winning journalist and author. His seven books include the bestselling memoir All Over but the Shoutin'.



TELL ME WHY...

Canned and Bottled Soft Drinks Taste Different

BY Stacey Marcus

While some people love to chug a soft drink straight from the can, others prefer the taste from a bottle

While soft drink manufacturers state that they use the same recipe regardless of whether the soft drink is packaged in a can or bottle, there is no denying that ice-cold cola tastes different when you chug it from a can compared to drinking it from a bottle.

The aluminium cans have a polymer lining that can absorb some of the soft drink's flavours, food chemist Sarah Risch tells *Popular Science*, potentially making the taste milder. If you are slugging your soft drink from a plastic bottle, Risch notes, the drink's flavour may be altered by some of the acetaldehyde in the plastic transferring into the liquid.

Since glass bottles are basically

inert, they'll deliver a product very close to the original intent, experts tell *Business Insider*. One chemist states that the metal taste some people note from soft drink in cans may have more to do with their sensitivity to metal – they're tasting the can as they put it to their lips, not a metallic taste that's actually present in the cola.

A researcher from Harvey Mudd College who studies taste told *Business Insider* that other variables in flavour occur based on the sensitivity of someone's tastebuds – some people can pick up extremely tiny differences. What's more, the way the product is stored may alter flavour: light, temperature and time will also change the way your soft drink tastes.

PHOTOS: GETTY IMAGES

ALL IN A DAY'S WORK

Humour On The Job



Management For Beginners

In case you're wondering how being manager is going ... no one showed up today because I forgot to make this week's schedule. @ARIIGONZALEZ

Stock In Trade

A sign spotted outside a flooring store: "If it's in stock, we've got it!"
SUBMITTED BY CHARLES THOMAS

Bad For One's Health

My husband is a doctor and uses a dictation service to transcribe his oral notes. On occasion the typists have

accidentally altered the sentence structure or words, resulting in something he had not intended. For example, one transcriber wrote, "The patient is recently married; otherwise, he is normal and healthy."

SUBMITTED BY ELAINE EHRENPREIS

Happy Meal

As she finished her meal, my granddaughter turned to her mother and declared, "Mum, you make hamburgers so well, you could work at McDonald's!"

SUBMITTED BY LINDA RAUCH

Going Postal

Two colleagues of mine at the post office – a supervisor and a postal worker – were always at each other's throats. Recently, they were at it again, this time a real humdinger of an argument. I walked in just in time to hear the supervisor deliver a devastating insult, or so he thought: "I've taught you everything I know, and you still don't know anything!"

SUBMITTED BY MICHAEL JOLLIE

Flattening Remark

After taking my time selecting and trying on shoes, I finally found a pair of flats that were both comfortable and stylish. Of course, beauty is in the eye of the beholder, and when I brought them up to the register, the shoe shop assistant gave them a zero-star review: "They make the ugliest shoes these days."

SUBMITTED BY A.P.

Reaping The Rewards

Sometimes I like to treat myself at work... and just do one thing at a time.

From the internet

Neighbourly Hood

It was 1930s Chicago at the height of the Great Depression. My grandparents owned a small grocery store, and one of their regulars was a charming man who seemed to be the centre of attention wherever he went.

Though she didn't know his name, my grandmother admired how he

embraced everyone as family. He'd send food baskets to the poor, pay others' rent, and help people with their troubles.

Grandma was so struck by his innate decency that she admonished my grandfather to be more like him. She knew that one day this kind stranger would be recognised by the world for his deeds, and she was right. One morning, Grandma picked up the newspaper. There on the front page was a picture of her hero arrested for tax evasion. His name: Al Capone.

SUBMITTED BY MARCIA WEISENFELD

WHY SHOULD I HIRE YOU?

INTERVIEWER: "What would be your main strength?"

ME: "Well, I can communicate with animals ..."

INTERVIEWER: "Wow, that's impressive. Any weaknesses?"

ME: "They can't understand me."

@EndhooS





QUIZ



ALL ABOARD!

Whether you're a Puffing Billy or a bullet train when it comes to train trivia, this quiz will keep you on track

BY Markus Stier

QUESTIONS

1 Innovation trumps everything. Not only is entrepreneur Elon Musk building electric cars and revolutionising space travel with reusable rockets and mini-satellites, but he also wants to transport people in trains that go nearly as fast as the speed of sound. How is this speed to be generated?

- a.** By magnetic force
- b.** By rocket propulsion
- c.** By low-pressure tubes
- d.** By solar-powered batteries

2 The Trans-Siberian Railway is the world's longest continuous railway line and connects the Russian cities of Moscow, in the

west, and Vladivostok, on the Pacific coast. But there was a shortage of local labour for the construction of the 9000-kilometre-long line, so Russia brought skilled workers from Italy to work on it. What did they do?

- a.** Cook meals
- b.** Blast work during tunnel driving
- c.** Stonemasonry work during bridge construction
- d.** Concrete work inside tunnels

3 London's Kings Cross Station may be less important than Waterloo or Victoria, but it's just as famous, in part as it is the station the 'Hogwarts Express'

READER'S DIGEST

leaves from. In J.K. Rowling's best-selling books, it takes Harry Potter and his friends to Hogwarts, the boarding school for witchcraft and wizards. How do passengers get to the train?

- a.** Through the coin slot of a ticket vending machine
- b.** Through a pillar between platforms nine and ten
- c.** Through a telephone box in front of the station
- d.** Through a hidden pillar on platform six

4 The inhabitants of many countries saw the invention of the railway as a blessing as it meant that goods and people could now be transported more quickly. However, for the Native Americans, the construction of the first transcontinental railway line was nothing but a curse. What did the 'iron horse', as they called the steam engines, bring them?

- a.** The death of the bison herds, which were so vital to their existence
- b.** A measles epidemic started by the construction workers
- c.** More settlers seizing their land
- d.** Both a and c

5 During the 19th century, the new form of transport also had its critics in Europe. Some passengers believed their health had suffered because of it. What ailment

did the so-called 'railway sickness' cause?

- a.** Breathing problems caused by the smoke from the steam engines
- b.** Numbness in the posterior caused by the hard benches
- c.** Anxiety and hearing loss
- d.** Sudden fainting

6 Steam engines struggled to cope on high and steep railway lines. At the end of the 19th century they were replaced by more powerful traction engines. On which famous line were electric engines nicknamed 'crocodile' used?

- a.** The Gotthard railway line in Switzerland
- b.** The Lhasa railway line in Tibet
- c.** The Train to the Clouds line in Argentina
- d.** The Liverpool and Manchester railway line in England

7 'Commuter hell' is what the Japanese less than flatteringly call the Tokyo Underground. How do railway companies ensure everyone gets onto the trains during rush hour?

- a.** By railway employees (people pushers) pushing passengers into the carriages.
- b.** By allowing commuters to travel free of charge
- c.** By increasing the number of carriages on each train

- d.** By running standing-only (seat-free) carriages

8 The London Underground opened in 1863, followed by the Paris Métro in 1900. From the beginning to the middle of the 19th century the 'Underground Railroad' in the US had already transported tens of thousands of people. Who travelled on it?

- a.** The residents of New York
- b.** Runaway slaves on their way north
- c.** Coal miners in Kentucky
- d.** Skiers in the Denver Alps

9 The first money George Mortimer Pullman made was moving buildings. Although he died in 1895, his name is still a household word today, yet he is remembered for something completely different. What does posterity have to thank him for?

- a.** The onboard restaurant
- b.** The car train
- c.** The sleeping car
- d.** The driver's compartment

10 The 1879 rail disaster on Scotland's Firth of Tay was one of the worst railroad accidents of the 19th century. What happened in this disaster, which claimed the lives of 75 people and made international headlines?

- a.** A train was buried under a landslide



At peak times passengers are more densely packed in Tokyo's underground than the ones in other cities. How do computers squeeze on? See question 7

- b.** A storm brought down a bridge as a train was passing over it
- c.** A switch malfunction caused two trains to collide head-on
- d.** The brakes suddenly engaged causing the train to derail

11 Get on the train to Perth in Sydney and you know you're about to set off on a world-record journey. What's so special about this journey spanning more than 4300 kilometres across the Australian continent?

- a.** The train reaches record speeds of 495 km/h
- b.** The route runs along the longest straight track in the world
- c.** There are no stops on the way
- d.** The train has the largest number of carriages of any tourist passenger train

>> Turn to page 104 for quiz answers

ANSWERS TO RAILWAY QUIZ

1 c. Elon Musk's 'Hyperloop' proposes to use low pressure to transport passengers in a tube at speeds up to 1200 km/h. No one knows whether the system will ever be put into operation. To date, only a one-kilometre-long test track exists. Speeds of 463 km/h have been reached so far.

2 c. Stonemasons from Italy helped to build the bridges. Work on the line began on 31 May, 1891, and took more than a quarter of a century to complete.

3 b. Fans of the *Harry Potter* books know that the 'Hogwarts Express' departs from platform 9¾ and that the wizardry students and their families get to it through a stone pillar. The Jacobite Steam Train, which runs from Fort William over the famous Glenfinnan Viaduct to Mallaig in Scotland, played the role of the train in the film version of the books.

4 d. The construction of the first trans-continental railway led to more and more white settlers entering Native American territories. The railway companies also organised hunting parties where paying passengers shot herds of bison from the wagons for their hides. This deprived the Native Americans of an essential source of food.

5 c. After a series of rail crashes in 1867, many people came forward claiming they suffered long-lasting effects. Symptoms ranged from hearing loss to headaches to paralysis, and the mystery illness was called 'railway spine'. However as doctors could find no physical injury, this was largely put down to hysteria. It is believed today it would be given the name PTSD – post-traumatic stress disorder.


6 a. From 1919, locomotives hauled heavy goods trains from Immensee in Switzerland at an altitude of 460 metres over gradients of up to 26 per cent to the Gotthard Tunnel at 1106 metres. They were called crocodiles because they were green and had long narrow 'snouts'.

7 a. The stations employ staff who push as many passengers as they can into the carriages. During rush hour, the notorious Tozai Line carries twice as many passengers as originally intended. Since 2019, the train line has been offering free food vouchers to early commuters to try to ease congestion at rush hour.

8 b. The 'Underground Railroad' didn't have any rails and was used by escaped slaves to find their way to freedom. Harriet Tubman, herself a freed slave, and her comrades-in-arms led the runaways from hiding place to hiding place over hundreds of kilometres.

9 c. George Pullman recognised the potential of train carriages with sleeping cars. He also built the first hotel on rails, and a high-class chain of hotels that still bears his name today, as do luxury stretch limousines from Mercedes.

10 b. At three kilometres long, at the time the Tay Bridge was the longest iron bridge in the world. But on December 28, 1879, gale-force winds caused 13 of its 85 piers to collapse. Unfortunately, the bridge's architect, Thomas Bouch, had neglected to take wind loading into account in his calculations.

11 b. A section of track between Port Augusta and Kalgoorlie on the Trans-Australian Railway runs straight for 478 kilometres, a world record. 



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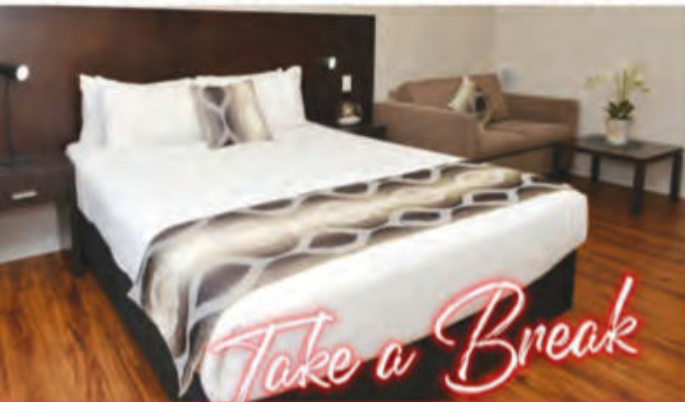
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Between April and November, horseback fishermen set out almost daily in search of the 'white gold' of Flanders



CULTURE

SHRIMP-FISHING

By Horseback

*On Belgium's Flanders coast,
a centuries-old tradition survives*

BY *Cyril Hofstein* FROM **LE FIGARO**
PHOTOS BY *Jeremy Lempin/Figarophoto*

Good, you are on time. If we miss the tide, we won't bring back any shrimp." Dominique Vanden-driessche, one of the last *paardenvissers* – Dutch for horse fishermen – in Oostduinkerke, Belgium, is in such a hurry to leave that he definitely would not have waited for us if we had arrived late. It's still dark. The sandy landscape is pastoral, with pretty, low houses.

"Before the popularity of seaside tourism, people in the region were starving," explains Dominique. "Nothing was growing properly. We were poor from one generation to the next, and the farmers had to fish for shrimp to make ends meet. Times were hard and so were the men.

"Sometimes, despite progress, and the madness of our times, I tell myself that nothing has really changed," he says. "You still have to fight to earn a living."

With a steady hand, the young man – he's 31 – brings out Jako, an imposing Brabant, from his stall and prepares to harness him to his cart. In the pungent cold, the horse's nostrils release two white plumes. At the age of six, this placid and powerful Belgian draft horse, weighing almost a tonne, has been going to sea only for a year, but

he is already so used to the task that he could almost put himself in the shafts of his cart. With a soft voice and in a sung language known only to the two of them, Dominique guides Jako gently after harnessing him.

In a few minutes, everything is ready. It's time for us to go. A walk of three kilometres awaits before we reach the shore. Here in West Flanders, between De Panne and Nieuwpoort near the French border, the link that has for centuries united horses, men and the North Sea has never been broken.

FROM APRIL TO NOVEMBER, THE LAST OF THE HORSEBACK FISHERMEN SET OUT IN SEARCH OF SHRIMP

Almost every day from April to November, the last of the horseback fishermen set out at low tide in search of great shoals of shrimp, the 'white gold' of Flanders. This tradition, unique in the world, has been going on for more than 500 years. Before



**Above: Oostduinkerke, West Flanders, where men and horses have fished for shrimp for centuries in the North Sea.
Below: The smallest shrimp are returned to the water to keep growing**



World War II, this method of fishing was practised throughout the region – in Belgium, northern France, the Netherlands and southern England. But it has gradually fallen into oblivion, except here in Oostduinkerke, where since 2013 it has been listed as a UNESCO Intangible Cultural Heritage of Humanity. Among the 20 or so horseback fishermen that the town still has, Dominique is undoubtedly one of the most dedicated; alone or with his friend Katrien, he heads to the sea three or four times a week.

TO REACH THE HIGH dunes and the beach that stretches as far as the eye can see, Dominique's route is always the same: he crosses the streets of the chic residential seaside resort area of Koksijde, then heads towards the main boulevard. Residents often open their windows to greet the passage of the cart loaded with fishing equipment. Here in Oostduinkerke, paardenvissers are so famous that statues in their image have been erected on the promenade along the waterfront to honour them. Even the tram, which normally has right-of-way, stops to let him pass. And motorists rarely lose patience behind Jako, whose enormous, shod hooves squeak with every step on the asphalt.

VIBRATIONS FROM A CHAIN DRAGGED ALONG THE SAND CAUSE THE SHRIMP TO JUMP INTO THE NET

At low tide, the North Sea is nothing more than a thin slate-coloured line on the sand. As we approach the water, dozens of gulls gather. "They are always waiting for us," Dominique says with a laugh. "These birds know that they will soon be able to pounce on the small fish, crabs and shrimp that escape our net. It's been this way for years. Nothing is ever wasted."

Jako is now uncoupled from the cart and the fisherman, who has just adjusted his yellow raincoat, attaches the cables of a long funnel-shaped trawl net to Jako's sides; it's held open by two wooden panels with iron rings. About 30 metres long, the net is equipped with a chain, the end of which drags along the sand, creating vibrations that compel the crustaceans to jump inside. Then he attaches a wicker basket on either side, straddles his horse, and gently directs him into the waves. Fishing has begun.

Dominique first advances at a right angle to the beach before turning to move along the coast. Every half hour or so, the fishing stops and he returns to shore before the net becomes too heavy to pull. This is also an opportunity for Jako to take a breather.

Amid the shouting and bickering of the gulls, and with onlookers

Shrimp-Fishing By Horseback



Above: Horseback shrimp fishermen pull a funnel-shaped net behind them in shallow water. Below: Dominique Vanden-driessche commuting to work with Jako, his powerful but placid Belgian draft horse





Above: Dominique tends to Jako. Below left: freshly cooked shrimp; (below right) he prepares his catch that will be turned into tasty dishes such as shrimp croquettes at his restaurant



Shrimp-Fishing By Horseback

gathering, the fisherman opens the end of the trawl and pours his harvest into a sieve to sort. It's almost all shrimp. While the smallest ones slip through the mesh and drop back into the shallow water, the future is darker for the small crabs and fish, which Dominique tosses aside: almost none escape the gluttony of seabirds.

It is when the water is coldest that shrimp are most abundant, and this morning, Dominique is not displeased to have got up so early. The tide will return in a few hours, and he will repeat the same manoeuvre before returning home to sort his catch. After being washed, the shellfish will be cooked in a salted-water broth for ten minutes, then spread out on a rack and drained before being shelled by hand and then sold.

"I'm 31 years old and I've lived like this since I was a child," says Dominique. "I started at a very young age with my father, who taught me everything. But more than the shrimp, it's the horse that fascinates me. The horse and the work you can do with it." He says that it is no longer possible, especially for a couple, to make a living from this work only. "On average, we bring back seven kilos of shrimp per fishing day, which we sell for about 12 euros (A\$19) per kilo."

"It's a set price that we horseback fishermen have agreed on in order to avoid the supply-and-demand scenario of the boat fishermen," he says. "But it's not enough. The boat fishermen bring back much larger quantities every day, and can often sell their shrimp for much more than we do."

To continue to make a living from his passion, Dominique went into debt to open his own farm-to-plate takeaway restaurant, called Het Trekpaard, where you can taste specialties such as shrimp croquettes, bisques and cassolettes. He also started a stable dedicated to Belgian draft horses and an equestrian educational centre that offers horse-drawn carriage rides.

The city of Oostduinkerke organises an annual shrimp festival with the participation of the Royal Order of Horse Fisherman on the last weekend in June. Created in 1967, the Royal Order conducts research on the practice of horseback fishing and raises public awareness of the tradition. Because nobody here can imagine that the horseback fishermen of Oostduinkerke may one day disappear. **R**

FROM *LE FIGARO* (NOVEMBER 13, 2020),
© 2020 BY LE FIGARO



Off the Turntable

I walked by a record store. The sign in the front said they specialised in hard-to-find records. Nothing was alphabetised. MITCH HEDBERG

**Thirty years
after his
adoption,
Izidor still
struggles with
the emotional
scars of his
childhood**



BONUS READ



Learning To LOVE

*The Ruckel family opened their hearts
to a boy from Romania's former
'child gulags', but they weren't prepared
for the challenge of raising him*

BY *Melissa Fay Greene*

FROM **THE ATLANTIC**

PHOTO: BENJAMIN RASMUSSEN

For his first three years of life, Izidor lived at the hospital. The dark-eyed, black-haired boy, born on June 20, 1980, had been abandoned when he was a few weeks old. The reason was obvious: his right leg was a bit deformed. After a bout of illness (probably polio), he had been tossed into a sea of abandoned infants in the Socialist Republic of Romania.

In films of the period documenting orphan care there, you see nurses like assembly-line workers swaddling newborns with casual indifference and sticking each one at the end of a row of silent, worried-looking babies. The women don't coo or sing to them.

In his hospital, in the Southern Carpathian mountain town of Sighetu Marmației, Izidor would have been fed by a bottle propped against the crib bars. Well past the age when children begin tasting solid food, he and his age-mates remained on their backs, sucking a watery gruel from bottles. Without proper care or physical therapy, the baby's leg muscles wasted.

At age three, he was deemed 'deficient' and transferred to a *Cămin Spital Pentru Copii Deficienți*, a Home Hospital for Irrecoverable Children. The cement fortress emitted no sounds of children playing, though as many as 500 lived inside at one time. Izidor was served nearly inedible, watered-down food at long tables where

naked children on benches banged their tin bowls. He grew up in overcrowded rooms where his fellow orphans endlessly rocked, or punched themselves in the face, or shrieked.

Izidor was destined to spend the rest of his childhood in this building. Odds were high that he would die in childhood, malnourished, unloved.

Communist dictator Nicolae Ceaușescu, who'd ruled Romania for 24 years, was executed on Christmas Day, 1989. The following year, the outside world discovered his network of 'child gulags,' in which an estimated 170,000 abandoned infants, children and teens were being raised.

Believing that a larger population would beef up Romania's economy, Ceaușescu had curtailed contraception and abortion, imposed tax penalties on childless people, and celebrated women who gave birth to ten or more children. Parents who couldn't handle another baby might call their new arrival 'Ceaușescu's child,' as in "Let him raise it".

To house a generation of unwanted or unaffordable children, Ceaușescu ordered the construction or conversion of hundreds of structures. At age three, abandoned children were sorted. Future workers would get clothes, shoes, food and some schooling in *case de copii* or children's homes. 'Deficient' children, even those with such treatable issues as crossed eyes or cleft lip, wouldn't get much of anything in their *Cămin Spitale*.

After the Romanian revolution, children in unspeakable conditions – skeletal, splashing in urine on the floor, caked with faeces – were discovered and filmed by foreign news programmes, including *20/20* in the US which broadcast *Shame of a Nation* in 1990.

DANNY RUCKEL, a computer programmer, and his wife, Marlys, lived with their three young daughters in San Diego in the early 1990s. They thought it would be nice to add a boy to the mix, and heard about a local independent filmmaker, John Upton, who was arranging adoptions of Romanian orphans. Marlys called and said they wanted to adopt a baby boy. "There's thousands of kids there," Upton replied. "That'll be easy."



Children abandoned in Communist-era Romania lived in horrendous conditions in facilities such as this Home Hospital for Irrevocable Children

Undone by *Shame of a Nation*, Upton had flown to Romania and made his way to the worst place on the show, the Home Hospital for Irrevocable Children in Sighetu Marmației. He went back a few times. On one visit, he filmed a bunch of kids for prospective adoptive parents. His video would not show children packed together naked "like little reptiles in an aquarium", as he'd described them, but as people, wearing clothes and speaking.

By then, donations had started to come in. The staff skimmed the best



Top: Izidor in front of his orphanage in June 1991, four months before the Ruckels adopted him.

Bottom: Eleven-year-old Izidor meets Marlys Ruckel for the first time in Romania, with one of the orphanage workers

items, but on that day, in deference to the American, nannies put donated sweaters on the kids. Upton and his Romanian assistant found it slow-going. Some children didn't speak at all, and others were unable to stand up. When asked the children's names and ages, the nannies shrugged.

At the end of a wooden bench sat a boy the size of a seven year old – at

age ten, Izidor weighed about 22 kilograms. He knew about Americans from the TV show *Dallas*. On Sunday nights, kids, nannies and workers gathered to watch *Dallas* on a donated TV. When rumours flew up the stairs that day that an American had arrived, the reaction inside the orphanage was, *Almighty God, someone from the land of the giant houses!*

Izidor knew the information the nannies didn't. John Upton would ask a child, "How old are you?" and the child would say, "I don't know," and the nanny would say, "I don't know," and Izidor would yell, "He's 14!" He'd ask about another child, "What's his last name?" and Izidor would yell, "Dumka!"

"Izidor knows the children here better than the staff," Upton grouses in one of the tapes. He lifts Izidor into his lap and asks if he'd like to go to America. Izidor says that he would.

BACK IN SAN DIEGO, Upton told the Ruckels about the bright boy of about seven. "We'd wanted to adopt a baby," Marlys says. "Then we saw John's video and fell in love with Izidor."

In May 1991, Marlys flew to Romania. Just before travelling, she learned that Izidor was almost 11, but she was undaunted. She travelled with a new friend, Debbie Principe,

who had been matched with a little blond live wire named Ciprian.

In the director's office, Marlys waited to meet Izidor. "When Izidor entered," she says, "all I saw was him, like everything else was fuzzy. He was as beautiful as I'd imagined. Our translator asked him which of the visitors in the office he hoped would be his new mother, and he pointed to me!"

Izidor had a question: "Where will I live? Is it like *Dallas*?"

"Well ... no, we live in a condo, like an apartment," Marlys said. "But you'll

"Marlys was the tall American and Debbie was the short American ... 'Roxana, which one is going to be my new mother?' I asked the translator.

"The tall American," she replied.

"When I picked Marlys, she began to cry, filled with joy that I had picked her."

In October 1991, Izidor and Ciprian flew with Romanian escorts to San Diego. The boys' new families awaited them at the airport. Izidor gazed around the terminal with satisfaction. "Where is my bedroom?" he asked. When Marlys told him they

SUDDENLY INSULTED, IZIDOR WOULD STORM OFF TO HIS ROOM AND TEAR THINGS APART

have three sisters. You'll love them."

This did not strike Izidor as an interesting trade-off. He dryly replied to the translator: "We will see."

That night, Marlys rejoiced about what an angel Izidor was. Debbie laughed, and told Marlys, "He struck me more like a cool operator, a savvy politician type. He was much more on top of things than Chippy." Ciprian had spent the time in the office rummaging wildly through desk drawers and everyone's pockets.

"No, he's an innocent. He's adorable," Marlys said. "Did you see him pick me to be his mother?"

Years later, in *Abandoned for Life*, the memoir Izidor self-published at age 22, he explained that moment:

were in an airport, not his new home, Izidor was taken aback. Though she'd explained that the Ruckels did not live like the Ewings in *Dallas*, he hadn't believed her.

In the car, when Danny tried to click a seat belt across Izidor's waist, he bucked and yelled, fearing he was being straitjacketed.

Marlys homeschooled the girls, but Izidor insisted on starting at the local school, where he quickly learned English. His canny ability to read the room put him in good stead with the teachers, but at home, he seemed constantly irritated. Suddenly insulted, he'd storm off to his room and tear things apart.

"He shredded books, posters,

family pictures," Marlys tells me. "If I had to leave for an hour, by the time I got home, everyone would be upset: 'He did this; he did that.' He didn't like the girls."

Marlys and Danny had hoped to expand the family fun and happiness by bringing in another child. But the newest family member almost never laughed. He didn't like to be touched. He was vigilant, hurt, proud.

"By about 14, he was angry about everything," she tells me. "He decided he'd grow up and become the American president. When he found out that wouldn't be possible because of his foreign birth, he said, 'Fine, I'll go back to Romania.'"

"He'd say: 'I'm fine when nobody's in the house,'" Marlys says.

"We'd say: 'But Izidor, it's our house.'"

When banished to his room, for rudeness or cursing or being mean to the girls, Izidor would stomp up the stairs and blast Romanian music or bang on his door from the inside with his fists or a shoe.

ONE NIGHT when Izidor was 16, Marlys and Danny felt so scared by Izidor's outburst that they called the police. "I'm going to kill you!" he'd screamed at them. After an officer escorted Izidor to the police car, he insisted that his parents "abused" him.

IZIDOR MOVED IN WITH SOME GUYS HE KNEW; THEIR INDIFFERENCE SUITED HIM

"That's when that started - his goal of returning to Romania. We thought it was a good thing for him to have a goal, so we said, 'Sure, get a job, save your money, and when you're 18, you can move back to Romania.'" Izidor worked every day after school at a fast-food restaurant.

"Those were rough years. I was walking on eggshells, trying not to set him off," Marlys says. "The girls were so over it. It was me they were mad at. They'd say, 'All you do is try to fix him!'"

Danny and Marlys tried taking him to therapy, but he refused to go back.

"Great," said Marlys. "Did he happen to mention how we abuse him?"

Back in the car, the officer asked: "How do your parents abuse you?"

"I work and they take all my money," Izidor yelled. In the house, the officer searched Izidor's room, and found his savings-account book.

"We can't take him," the officer told the Ruckels. "He's angry, but there's nothing wrong here. I'd suggest you lock your bedroom doors tonight."

The next morning Marlys and Danny offered Izidor a ride to school and then drove him straight to a psychiatric hospital instead. "We couldn't

afford it, but we took a tour and it scared him,” Marlys tells me. “He said, ‘Don’t leave me here! I’ll follow your rules.’”

“Back in the car, we said: ‘Listen, Izidor, you don’t have to love us, but you have to be safe and we have to be safe. You can live at home, work, and go to school until you’re 18. We love you.’ But, you know, the sappy stuff didn’t work with him.”

Living by the rules didn’t last long. One night Izidor stayed out until 2am, and found the house locked. He banged on the door. Marlys opened it a crack. “Your things are in the garage,” she told him.

Izidor would never again live at home. He moved in with some guys he knew; their indifference suited him. “He’d get drunk in the middle of the night and call us, and his friends would get on the line to say vulgar things about our daughters,” Marlys says. “Admittedly, it was finally peaceful in our house, but I worried about him.”

On Izidor’s 18th birthday, Marlys baked a cake and wrapped his gift, a photo album documenting their life together: his first day in America, his first dental appointment, his first job. She took the presents to the

house where she’d heard her son was staying. The person who answered the door agreed to deliver them when Izidor got back.

“In the middle of the night,” Marlys says, “we heard a car squealing around the cul-de-sac, then a loud thud against the front door and the car squealing away. I went down and opened the door. It was the photo album.”



Top: Danny Ruckel and Izidor head for home after the boy’s arrival in California. Bottom: Izidor takes Marlys’s picture at the airport



By 1991, the Ruckel family had adopted two children: Izidor (front, left) and Izabela (in the wheelchair)

IN THE DECADE after the fall of Ceaușescu, the new Romanian government welcomed Western child-development experts to help and study the tens of thousands of children still warehoused in state care. Researchers hoped to answer some long-standing questions, such as: if an institutionalised child is transferred into a family setting, can he or she recoup undeveloped capacities? Implicitly, poignantly: can a person unloved in childhood learn to love?

In 2000, Charles A. Nelson III, a professor of paediatrics and neuroscience

at Harvard Medical School and Boston Children's Hospital, and two colleagues launched the Bucharest Early Intervention Project (BEIP). It would become the first-ever randomised controlled trial to measure the impact of early institutionalisation on brain and behavioural development and to examine high-quality foster care as an alternative.

They worked with 136 children, ages six months to two-and-a-half years, from six Bucharest *leagăne*, baby institutions. None was a Home Hospital for Irrecoverable Children; they were somewhat better supplied and staffed. By design, 68 would continue to receive 'care as usual', while the other 68

would be placed with foster families recruited and trained by BEIP. Local kids made up a third group.

"Our coders, unaware of any child's background, assessed 100 per cent of the community kids as having fully developed attachment relationships with their mothers," says Charles H. Zeanah, a child-psychiatry professor at the Tulane University School of Medicine. "That was true of three per cent of the institutionalised kids."

Thirteen per cent displayed no attachment behaviours, such as seeking comfort for distress from a carer

or exhibiting anxiety when separated from a carer. “These children had no idea that an adult could make them feel better,” Zeneah told me. “Imagine how that must feel – to be miserable and not even know that another human being could help.”

As early as 2003, it was evident that the foster-care children were making progress. Glimmering through the data was a sensitive period of 24 months during which it was crucial for a child to establish an attachment relationship with a caregiver.

“Timing is critical,” the researchers wrote. Brain plasticity wasn’t “unlimited”, they warned. “Earlier is better.” After the researchers announced their results, the Romanian government

– seemingly worked overtime in the still-institutionalised children.

Nelson cautions that the door doesn’t “slam shut” for children left in institutions beyond 24 months of age. “But the longer you wait to get children into a family,” he says, “the harder it is to get them back on an even keel.”

IN A RENTAL CAR, I drive slowly around the semicircles and cul-de-sacs of Izidor’s subdivision in Denver until I see him step out of the shadow of a 418-square-metre house with a polite half-wave. It’s 2019 and he sublets a room here, as do others, including some families.

At 39, Izidor is an elegant, wiry

“THESE CHILDREN HAD NO IDEA THAT AN ADULT COULD MAKE THEM FEEL BETTER”

banned the institutionalisation of children under the age of two.

Meanwhile, the study continued. At age three and a half, the portion of children who displayed secure attachments climbed to nearly 50 per cent among the foster-care kids, but to only 18 per cent among those who remained institutionalised.

Unattached children see threats everywhere, an idea borne out in brain studies. Flooded with stress hormones like cortisol and adrenaline, the amygdala – the main part of the brain dealing with fear and emotion

man with mournful eyes. His manner is alert and tentative. A general manager for a fast-food restaurant, he works 60-to-65-hour weeks.

“Every time we got into another fight,” Izidor remembers, “I wanted one of them to say: ‘Izidor, we wish we had never adopted you and we are going to send you back to the hospital.’ But they didn’t say it.”

Unable to process his family’s affection, he just wanted to know where he stood. It was simpler in the orphanage, where either you were being beaten or you weren’t. “I responded better

to being smacked around," Izidor tells me. "In America, they had 'rules' and 'consequences.' So much talk. I hated 'Let's talk about this.'"

"As a child, I'd never heard words like 'You are special' or 'You're our kid.' Later, if your adoption parents tell you words like that, you feel, *OK, whatever, thanks*. I don't even know what you're talking about. I don't know what you want from me, or what I'm supposed to do for you."

Once, when he was about eight, Izidor had a happy day. A kind nanny named Onisa had started working at the hospital. "She loved to sing and often taught us some of her music," Izidor writes in his memoir.

now. He looked in astonishment at the cars and houses and shops.

"When I stepped into Onisa's apartment," he writes, "I could not believe how beautiful it was; the walls were covered with dark rugs and there was a picture of the Last Supper on one of them. The carpets on the floor were red."

Onisa's children arrived home from school, and Izidor learned that it was the start of their Christmas holiday. He feasted alongside Onisa's family at their friends' dinner table that night, tasting Romanian specialties for the first time, including *sarmale* (stuffed cabbage), potato goulash with thick noodles and yellow sponge cake.

IZIDOR HAS RE-CREATED THE SETTING FROM THE HAPPIEST NIGHT IN HIS CHILDHOOD

One day, she intervened when another nanny was striking Izidor with a broomstick. To cheer him up, Onisa promised that someday she'd take him home for an overnight visit. Sceptical that such an extraordinary event would ever happen, Izidor thanked her for the nice idea.

A few weeks later, on a snowy winter day, Onisa dressed Izidor in warm clothes and shoes, and led him out the front door and through the orphanage gate. She took the small boy, who swayed with a deep, tilting limp, into the town. "It was my first time ever going out into the world," he tells me

On the living-room floor after dinner, the child of that household let Izidor play with his toys. Izidor followed the boy's lead and drove little trains across the rug.

The next morning, Onisa asked Izidor if he wanted to go to work with her or to stay with her children. Not wanting to be parted from her, he chose work.

"I got dressed as fast as I could, and we headed out the door," he remembers. "When we were near her work, I realised that her work was at the hospital, my hospital, and I began to cry ... Somehow I thought I was going to be

part of Onisa's family now." Through his own stupidity, he had let the most wonderful spot on Earth – Onisa's apartment – slip away. He sobbed until the other nannies threatened to slap him.

TODAY IN HIS BEDROOM

Izidor has re-created the setting from the happiest night in his childhood. "You see this?" he says, picking up a tapestry woven with burgundy roses on a dark, leafy background. "This is almost identical to Onisa's. I bought it in Romania for that reason!"

For Izidor, these possessions signify peace. "It was the first time I slept in a real home. For many years I thought, *Why can't I have a home like that?*"

Now he does. But he knows there are missing parts.

In 2001, at age 20, Izidor felt an urgent desire to return to Romania. Short on cash, he wrote to TV shows, pitching the story of a Romanian orphan making his first trip back to his home country. One took him up on it, and on March 25, 2001, a film crew met him at the Los Angeles airport. So did the Ruckels.

"I thought, *This is it. I'll never see him again,*" Marlys says. She hugged and kissed him and told him, "You'll



At age 16, Izidor started work at a fast food restaurant, with the goal of earning enough money to return to Romania

always be our son and we'll always love you."

Izidor showed the Ruckels two family photographs in his wallet. "In case I do decide to stay there, I'll have something to remember you by," he said. Marlys was chilled by the ease with which Izidor seemed to be exiting their lives.

In Romania, the producers took Izidor to visit his old orphanage, where he was feted like a returning prince, and then they revealed that they'd found his birth family three hours away. They drove through a snowy landscape and pulled over in



Izidor and Marlys during a visit to Romania in 2015

a field. Wearing a white button-down shirt, a tie and dress pants, Izidor limped across the soggy, uneven ground to a one-room shack. He was shaking. A narrow-faced man emerged from the hut and strode towards him. They passed each other. “*Ce mai faci?*” – How are you? – the man mumbled as he walked by.

“*Bun,*” Izidor muttered. Good.

That was Izidor’s father. Two young women then hurried from the hut and greeted Izidor with kisses on each cheek; these were his sisters.

Finally a short, black-haired woman not yet 50 identified herself as Maria – his mother – and reached out to hug him. Suddenly angry, Izidor swerved past her. *How can I greet someone I barely know?* he remembers thinking.

She began to wail, “*Fiul meu! Fiul meu!*” My son! My son! The family offered Izidor the best seat in the house, a stool.

“Why was I put in the hospital?” he asked.

“You were six weeks old when you got sick,” Maria said. “We took you to the doctor to see what was wrong. Your grandparents checked on you a few weeks later, but then there was something wrong with your right leg. We asked the doctor to fix your leg, but no one would help us. So we took

you to a hospital in Sighetu Marmației, and that’s where we left you.”

“Why did no one visit me for 11 years?”

“Your father was out of work. I was taking care of the other children. We couldn’t afford to come see you.”

“Do you know that living in the Cămin Spital was like living in hell?”

“My heart,” cried Maria. “You must understand that we’re poor people; we were moving from one place to another.”

Agitated, Izidor got up and went outside. His Romanian family invited him to look at pictures of his older siblings who’d left home, and he presented them with his photo album: here was a grinning Izidor poolside, wearing medals from a swimming competition; here were the Ruckels at

the beach; here they were at a picnic. When the TV cameras were off, Izidor tells me, Maria asked whether the Ruckels had hurt him or taught him to beg. He assured her neither was true.

“You look thin,” Maria went on. “Move in with us. I will take care of you.” She pressed him for details about his jobs and wages and asked if he’d like to build the family a new house. After three hours, Izidor was exhausted and eager to leave.

“He called me from Bucharest,” Marlys says, “and said, ‘I have to come home. Get me out of here. These people are awful.’”

A few weeks later he was back in Temecula, a Southern California town

of the world’s top specialists caring for post-institutionalised children adopted into Western homes.

“In the early years, everybody had starry eyes,” Federici says. “They thought loving, caring families could heal these kids. I warned them: these kids are going to push you to breaking point. Get trained to work with special-needs children. Instead of ‘I love you’, just tell them, ‘You are safe.’”

But most new or prospective parents couldn’t bear to hear it.

Federici and his wife adopted eight children from brutal institutions themselves: three from Russia and five from Romania. In his clini-

HE CALLED FROM BUCHAREST AND SAID: “I HAVE TO COME HOME. THESE PEOPLE ARE AWFUL”

where the Ruckels, who have adopted five children from foster care in recent years, now live.

Friends told him there were jobs in Denver, so he moved there. Danny and Marlys visit him there and have gone on trips to Romania with him. It’s harder for him to come home to California, Marlys says. “Thanksgiving, Christmas – they’re too much for him.”

NEUROPSYCHOLOGIST Ron Federici was another of the first wave of child-development experts to visit the institutions for the ‘unsalvageables’, and he has become one

cal practice in Virginia, Federici has seen 9000 young people, close to a third of them from Romania. Tracking his patients across the decades, he has found that about 20 per cent are able to live independently.

The most successful parents, he believes, were able to focus on imparting basic living skills and appropriate behaviours.

“The Ruckels are a good example – they hung on, and he’s doing OK.”

Within his own family, Federici and his wife have become the permanent legal guardians for four of his Romanian children, who are now all adults.

Two work, under supervision, for a foundation he established in Bucharest; two others live with their parents. The fifth is a stirring example of the fortunate 20 per cent – he's an emergency department doctor. Both of his adult sons who haven't left home are cognitively impaired, but they have jobs and are pleasant to be around, according to Federici. "They're happy!" he exclaims. "They've figured out ways, not to overcome what happened to them – you can't really overcome – but to adapt to it and not take other people hostage."

BY ANY MEASURE, IZIDOR – living independently – is a success story among the survivors of Ceaușescu's

person's parents, because they show you love and you can't return it."

Sometimes, Izidor has feelings. Two years after the Ruckels kicked him out, Izidor was getting a haircut from a stylist who knew the family. "Did you hear what happened?" she asked. "Your mother and sisters were in a terrible car accident yesterday. They're in the hospital." Izidor tore out of there, bought three dozen red roses, and showed up at the hospital.

"We were in our vehicle coming out of Costco," Marlys recalls, "and a guy hit us really hard. After a few hours at the hospital, we were released. I didn't call Izidor to tell him. We weren't speaking. But he found out, and I guess at the hospital he said, 'I'm here to see the

"I HAVE KNOWN SINCE I WAS 15 THAT I WOULD NOT HAVE A FAMILY," IZIDOR SAYS

institutions. "Do you imagine ever having a family?" I ask.

"You mean of my own? No. I have known since I was 15 that I would not have a family. Seeing all my friends in dumb relationships, with jealousy and control and depression – I thought, *Really? All that for a relationship? No.*"

He says he doesn't miss what he never knew, what he doesn't even perceive. He focuses on the tasks before him and does his best to act the way humans expect other humans to act.

"I'm not a person who can be intimate," Izidor says. "It's hard on a

Ruckel family,' and they said, 'They're not here anymore,' which he took to mean 'They're dead.'"

Izidor raced from the hospital to the house – the house he'd been boycotting, the family he hated.

He assumed Danny Ruckel wasn't going to let him in without negotiation. "What are your intentions?" he would ask. "Do you promise to be decent to us?" Izidor would promise. Danny would allow Izidor to enter the living room and face everyone, to stand there with his eyes wet with tears. Izidor would lay the flowers

in his mother's arms and say, with a greater attempt at earnestness than they'd ever heard before, "These are for all of you. I love you." It would mark a turning point. From that day on, something would be softer in him, regarding the Ruckels.

But first, Izidor was obliged to approach the heavy wooden door, the door he'd slammed behind him a hundred times, the door he'd

battered and kicked when he was locked out.

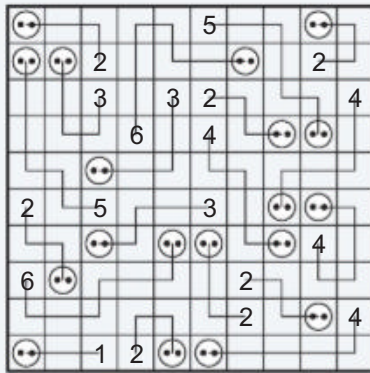
He knocked and stood on the front step, head hanging, heart pounding, unsure whether he'd be admitted. *I abandoned them, I neglected them, I put them through hell,* he thought.

And then they opened the door. **R**

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Puzzle Answers
From pages 140-142

CONTACT



CROSSWISE

- Across:** 7 Cobbler 8 Inertia
10 Reprisal 11 Refuse 12 Make do
13 Newly-wed 14 Concentration
17 Hay fever 20 Rarely 22 Smelly
23 Unbutton 24 Undergo 25 Scatter
- Down:** 1 Topeka 2 Aberdeen
3 Seashore 4 Andrew 5 Crafty
6 Einstein 9 Planetarium 14 Charming
15 Aerobics 16 Irritate 18 Fillet
19 Voyage 21 Loosen

SIX SUDOKU

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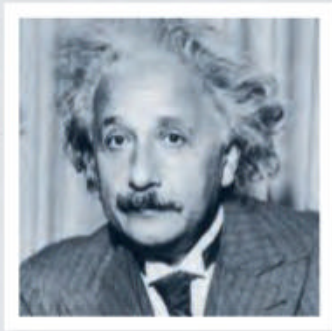
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WHAT'S NEW IN RD TALKS

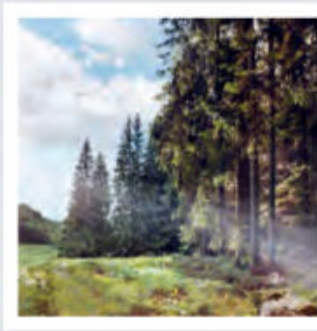
Join the happy readers who have downloaded our podcasts over 120,000 times. Each story guaranteed to thrill, engage and inspire.

READ BY *Zoë Meunier*



UNFORGETTABLE ALBERT EINSTEIN

How shall I sum up what it meant to have known Einstein and his works? asks Banesh Hoffman, who provides an insider's view of the genius scientist.



THREE DAYS TO SEE

What would you look at if you had just three days of sight? The dawn? A sunset? Helen Keller, blind and deaf from infancy, describes what she would choose.



THE DOG WHO CAME BACK FROM THE DEAD

On a run in the mountains, the author's dog fell more than 240 metres, injured beyond hope. But he wasn't done yet. Don't miss this incredible story of survival and hope.



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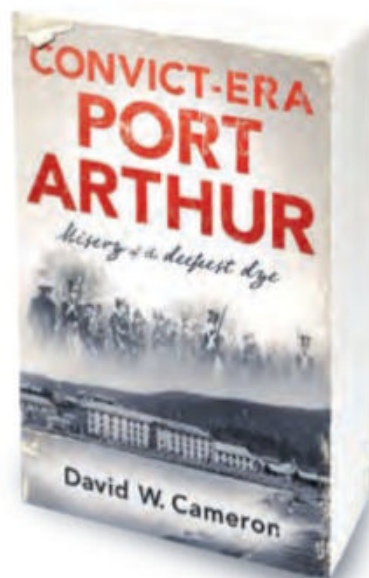
RD RECOMMENDS



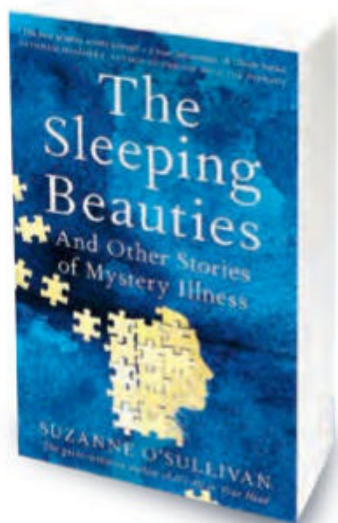
Convict-Era Port Arthur

David W. Cameron PENGUIN

Author of several books on military history, David W. Cameron delivers a comprehensive account of the horrors and the ever-changing role that Port Arthur – one of the most remote and feared convict locations in Australia – played during its 50-year reign. In gripping detail, using the experiences and words of the convicts, soldiers and administrators who spent time there, Cameron brings to life these deeply miserable days. An evocative narrative of the tragedies that fell upon those who were forced to serve their sentences in Port Arthur.



COMPILED BY DIANE GODLEY



The Sleeping Beauties

Suzanne O'Sullivan

PAN MACMILLAN

In Sweden, hundreds of refugee children have fallen into coma-like states and not woken up, sometimes for years. US diplomats in Cuba, experiencing headaches and dizziness, believe they are victims of a terrifying sonic weapon. However, neurologist Suzanne O'Sullivan postulates that these and other mystery illnesses are 'mass psychogenic illnesses', once called 'mass hysteria'. Behind these disorders, she argues, are psychological and social causes that need to be addressed.

M.Egan

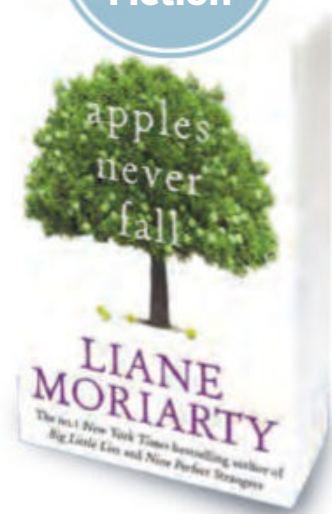
How To Get A Good Job After 50

Rupert French

EXISLE PUBLISHING

Many older people are seeking satisfying jobs that give them a sense of purpose and capitalise on their skills. At the same time, many companies struggle with how to train and grow their younger workforce. While the prospect of getting a good job after age 50 may seem daunting, this step-by-step guide covers aspects of the job search, such as finding job leads, writing compelling resumes, networking and using social media. It also emphasises the importance of adopting a positive approach.

M.Egan

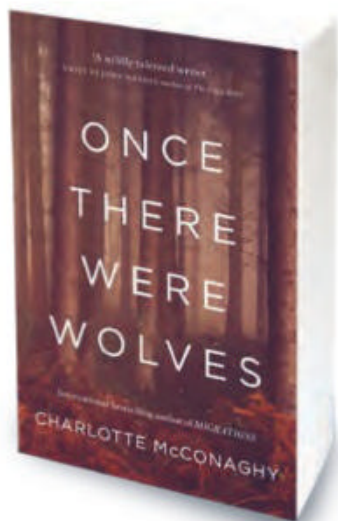


Apples Never Fall

Liane Moriarty

PAN MACMILLAN

From the best-selling author of *Big Little Lies* (and many other novels), Liane Moriarty spins yet another family drama into a breathtaking page-turner. Joy and Stan Delaney have sold their tennis coaching business to retire, but when Joy suddenly disappears, their four adult children re-examine their parents' marriage and their childhood with fresh eyes – especially after a mysterious house guest arrives to upset the apple cart. Full of wit and beautifully written, I simply could not put this down.



Once There Were Wolves

Charlotte McConaghy

PENGUIN

Biologist Inti Flynn, accompanied by her twin sister Aggie, plans to reintroduce packs of grey wolves to the remote Scottish Highlands to re-wild the ecosystem. The project is met by anger and fear from the local sheep farmers, but more understanding from the town sheriff. After a man is found dead and livestock are attacked, the wolves come under threat. Haunting and atmospheric, with compelling descriptions of wolves and the dark, wild forests, at heart this book is several love stories.

M.Egan

Widowland

C.J. Carey

HACHETTE

Widowland is a counterfactual novel based on an alternative history with a strong feminist twist. Instead of fighting the Nazis in WWII, Britain forms an alliance with Germany, and when the war is over, the world looks something between *A Handmaid's Tale* and 1984. With Hitler in control, able men are sent to the 'mainland' to work (or disappear), while the women left behind are assigned castes, where they are forced to dress a certain way and work in particular fields. A gripping thriller and clever dystopian tale.



Candyman

Horror

Candyman is a supernatural slasher film and sequel to the 1992 cult classic of the same name. Residents living in a housing project neighbourhood have been terrorised by a ghost story for as long as they can remember: the Candyman. The supernatural killer is summoned by repeating his name. When newcomer Anthony McCoy explores the story, he unwittingly unleashes a terrifying wave of violence.



Shang-Chi And The Legend Of The Ten Rings

Action/Adventure

Shang-Chi, also known as the Master of Kung Fu and Brother Hand, is the latest superhero to make the jump from the pages of a Marvel comic to the big screen. The character Shang-Chi (played by Simu Liu of the Canadian sitcom *Kim's Convenience*) seeks peace and harmony while opposing those who want to tear it down. But when he is drawn into the web of the mysterious Ten Rings organisation he must confront a past he thought he left behind. Also starring Malaysian/Australian comedian Ronny Chieng (*Crazy Rich Asians*) and Hong Kong singer/actor Tony Leung as Wenwu.

Eiffel

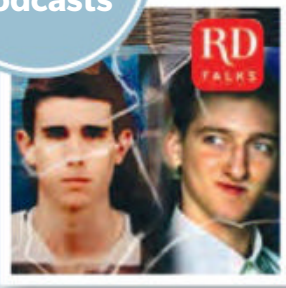
Period Biopic

There would be few who are not familiar with the Eiffel Tower, but many who wouldn't know a thing about its creator. Gustave Eiffel (Romain Duris) was at the high point of his career after collaborating on the Statue of Liberty, when the French government requested he create something spectacular for the 1889 World Fair in Paris. But uninspired, Eiffel turns down the offer, until he bumps into his long-lost lover, Adrienne Bourgès (Emma Mackey), who provides all the inspiration he needs to change the face of Paris forever. Rich in period drama and technical engineering feats, *Eiffel* is a foreign-language film that ticks many boxes.





Podcasts

**The Thrill Killers**

The two teenagers saw themselves as big-time bad guys, serious criminals who would be infamous. A life of crime requires cash, though, and one way to get cash is to steal it. So on a chilly weekend, the pair headed towards a university campus, looking for trouble.

**International Infamy With Ashley Flowers**

15 countries. 15 true crimes. Ashley Flowers, host of *Crime Junkie*, takes you on a world tour of evil, investigating notoriously high-profile criminal cases as well as the societal context in which they occurred, both at the time they happened, and through the hindsight of history.

**The Pineapple Project**

Now hosted by comedian Nazeem Hussain, *The Pineapple Project* looks at spending less, spending better and the psychology of why we buy things. Easy-to-listen-to episodes include whether the rich think differently about money, and saving money on fashion, pets, cars, phones, food and at the gym.

**Open Culture**

This free content curator runs out of Stanford University. OpenCulture.com has over 1000 fiction, non-fiction and poetry audiobooks you can download for free. It also offers free movies, online courses, language lessons and eBooks.



Audio Book

HOW TO GET PODCASTS To listen on the web: In a search engine, look up 'The Pineapple Project', for example, and click on the play button. **To download:** Download an app such as Podcatchers or iTunes on your device and simply search by title.

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THE GENIUS SECTION

*Sharpen Your
Mind*

WHEN ALL NEWS IS BAD NEWS

*Six tips for coping when
the news is getting to you*

BY Dawn Branley-Bell

FROM THE CONVERSATION



It can often feel difficult to escape a bad news story. The news plays a prominent role in our lives, something that has been emphasised even further during the past 18 months. The pandemic has brought with it daily news briefings and a seemingly never-ending influx of COVID-19 related headlines.

Staying informed and educated is important. However, constant exposure to negative reporting may be bad for your wellbeing. The World Health Organization (WHO) has found news coverage can increase distress and anxiety, and a recent study suggests news reports shared through social media lead to increased panic.

Some people may be particularly vulnerable to negative impacts of specific stories. For example, people with eating disorders have reported being triggered by an emphasis in the media on exercise and weight loss during the pandemic.

Whatever it is that triggers you, the goal is to find the balance between using the news to stay informed and not becoming overwhelmed.

BEING 'TRIGGERED'

A trigger is something that causes negative feelings or behaviours for someone. They can be driven by many internal processes, for example a reminder of past trauma, or intense emotions such as stress, anxiety, entrapment or a lack of control.

PHOTO: GETTY IMAGES

When someone is 'triggered' they experience negative consequences such as a panic attack, flashbacks or an increase in mental health symptoms – for example, disordered eating, self-harm, anxiety or depression.

You may be able to spot that you're at risk of being triggered by listening to your psychological and physiological responses. For example, you may notice an increase in negative or brooding thoughts, increased heart rate, rapid breathing or feeling like you're in a state of high alert.

You may also have started to notice other physical symptoms related to stress, such as fatigue or changes to your sleeping pattern. Tuning into your mind and body responses can provide the earliest signs that the news may be having a negative impact on your wellbeing.

If you find yourself beginning to feel negative impacts from the news, now is the time to start putting protective steps into place.

1 Regulating consumption of news includes making the conscious decision to take 'time out' from the media for a period of time. Alternatively, you may have noticed a pattern around the negative impacts you are experiencing.

Do you tend to feel more negative impacts if you read the news when you're tired or just before bed, or during periods of increased stress? If so, you may wish to limit exposure

at certain times of day, in particular contexts or both.

You may notice that certain news sources use communication styles or content that you find particularly distressing or triggering. Perhaps they are particularly confrontational, biased or controversial. If so, try to find more positive sources that work for you. For example, during the pandemic, the WHO suggests limiting access to health authority websites which aim to provide just the facts on the current situation.

2 Never blame yourself for experiencing negative emotions. It is important to acknowledge that it is your right to feel how you do. In doing so, acknowledge that you also have control over your reactions. This can help you to feel more in control and more empowered to work towards more positive coping mechanisms.

3 Take care of your health. Investing time in your physical care can help provide you with the best chance to react positively to stressful situations. Healthy body, healthy mind. Try to eat healthy meals, get regular – but not excessive – exercise and maintain a good sleeping pattern. Remember the emphasis is on health, not weight loss or other potentially negative drivers. Similarly, take care of your mental health by striving for positive work-life balance, practising mindfulness

READER'S DIGEST

or staying in contact with supportive friends and family.

4 Focus on the positive. If you're being triggered by negative news coverage, try to find some positive resources to focus on. For instance, during the current pandemic, the WHO suggests focusing on recovery stories.

5 Replace unhealthy coping skills with positive alternatives. There are resources available to help individuals identify positive behaviours which they can use to replace unhealthy coping mechanisms. Similar resources are available for a wide range of behaviours.

6 Contact support groups or healthcare professionals. It's important to recognise the value of positive social support and to recognise that seeking help is a positive and strong step. These contacts can also help you find other helpful resources. You are not alone, reach out for support.

It can be difficult to find the right balance between being informed by the news media and not becoming overwhelmed – especially during a global crisis. This has been a very difficult time for many.

It's natural to feel concerned, apprehensive and stressed at times. However, it's also important to invest time in self-care and to seek help if you are experiencing negative impacts on your health.

It is important to recognise that everyone is an individual, and what works for one person may not be the best approach for another. Be prepared to take some time to find the techniques that work for you, and do not be apprehensive about seeking professional help to guide you through this process. **R**

Dawn Branley-Bell is a Chartered Psychologist & Research Fellow in Psychology, Northumbria University, Newcastle, UK.

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Riddle Me This

a) You live in a one-storey house made entirely of redwood.

What colour would the stairs be?

b) Who is that with a neck and no head, two arms and no hands?

RIDDLES.COM

ANSWERS: a) What stairs? You live in a one-storey house. b) A shirt.

TRIVIA

Test Your General Knowledge

- 1.** In which ancient South Asian language is the text of *The Vedas* written? **2 points**
- 2.** Prince William's Earthshot Prize promises one million pounds for solutions to what kind of global problem? **1 point**
- 3.** A string quartet consists of two violins, one viola and one of which other instrument? **1 point**
- 4.** What is the name of the famous street that runs through Singapore's main commercial district?
a) Orange Road. b) Orchard Road. c) Rose Road. **1 point**
- 5.** What fiction genre addresses the effects of climate change? **2 points**
- 6.** Extending about 2300 kilometres, what is the longest coral reef in the world? **1 point**
- 7.** What British screen and music legend reads bedtime stories on her family podcast? **2 points**
- 8.** Velocipede, penny farthing, gravel, randonneur and folding are all types of what? **1 point**
- 9.** Which centenarian was featured on the cover of *Guinness World Records 2021* after breaking two records in 2020 and passing away earlier this year? **2 points**
- 10.** Astronauts have compared what attribute of outer space to hot metal, seared steak and raspberries? **1 point**
- 11.** According to legend, Pharaoh Pepi II had servants cover themselves in what substance in order to lure flies away from him? **1 point**
- 12.** At 4528 metres, Mount Kirkpatrick is the highest peak of which mountain chain? **2 points**
- 13.** Rubik's Cubes, magic squares, and logic puzzles are examples of what branch of mathematics? **1 point**
- 14.** In efforts to create bespoke products, some beauty companies are collecting DNA from clients to map the microbiome of what organ? **1 point**

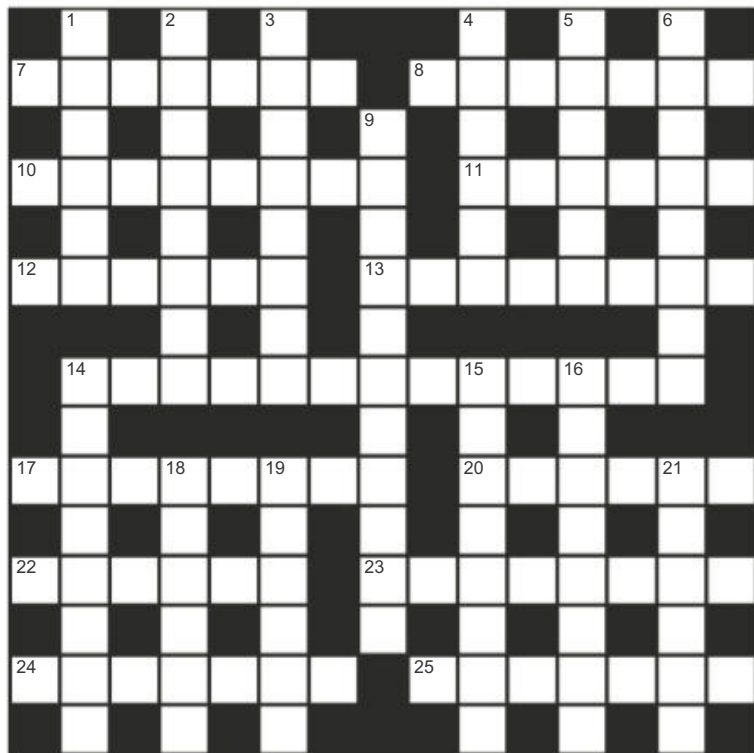


16-20 Gold medal **11-15** Silver medal **6-10** Bronze medal **0-5** Wooden spoon

ANSWERS: 1. Sanskrit. 2. Environmental issues. 3. Cello. 4. b) Orchard Road. 5. Cl-fi. 6. Great Barrier Reef. 7. Julie Andrews. 8. Bicycle. 9. Captain Tom Moore. 10. Its smell. 11. Honey. 12. Transantarctic Mountains, Antarctica. 13. Recreational maths. 14. The skin.

PUZZLES

Challenge yourself by solving these puzzles and mind stretchers, then check your answers on page 129.



Crosswise

Test your general knowledge.

DOWN

ACROSS

- 7** Person who mends shoes (7)
- 8** Sluggishness (7)
- 10** Retaliation (8)
- 11** Decline (6)
- 12** Improvise (4,2)
- 13** Recently married (5-3)
- 14** Close mental application (13)

- 17** Allergic rhinitis (3,5)
- 20** Seldom (6)
- 22** Emitting a strong odour (6)
- 23** Unfasten (8)
- 24** Experience (7)
- 25** Throw loosely about (7)

- 1** Capital of Kansas (6)
- 2** Scotland's 'Granite City' (8)
- 3** Land along the coast (8)
- 4** One of the 12 apostles (6)
- 5** Cunning (6)
- 6** Well-known physicist (8)
- 9** Astronomical building (11)
- 14** Delightful (8)
- 15** Vigorous exercises (8)
- 16** Annoy (8)
- 18** Boneless cut of meat (6)
- 19** Journey (6)
- 21** Make less tight (6)

Puzzle Answers

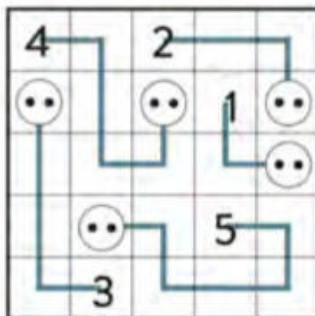
PAGE 129

| | | | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| ☺ | | | | 5 | | | ☺ |
| ☺ | ☺ | 2 | | | ☺ | 2 | |
| | | 3 | | 3 | 2 | | 4 |
| | | 6 | | 4 | | ☺ | ☺ |
| | | ☺ | | | | | |
| 2 | | 5 | | 3 | | ☺ | ☺ |
| | | ☺ | | ☺ | ☺ | ☺ | 4 |
| 6 | ☺ | | | | 2 | | |
| | | | | | 2 | | ☺ |
| ☺ | | 1 | 2 | ☺ | ☺ | | |

Contact How to play

Draw a line from each number to an outlet. Each line should pass as many empty squares as the number indicates. No square remains empty, and no outlet remains unused.

EXAMPLE



BRAIN POWER
brought to you by



"Write, Erase, Rewrite"

SIX SUDOKU

**Puzzle
Answers**
PAGE 129

1

| | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1 | | | | | |
| 6 | | 2 | 3 | 5 | |
| | 2 | 6 | | | |
| | | | | | 6 |
| | | 1 | 2 | 4 | |
| | | | | | 3 |

How to play

Insert the numbers 1 to 6 just once in each
a) row,
b) column,
c) bold outlined area and
d) white or grey rectangle.

2

| | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | 1 | | 6 | | |
| | | 4 | | | |
| | | | | 2 | |
| | 3 | | | 4 | |
| 4 | 5 | 3 | | | |
| | | 6 | | | 3 |

3

| | | | | | |
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| | | 3 | 1 | | |
| | | | | | 6 |
| | | | | | |
| 4 | | | | | |
| 2 | | | | 5 | |
| 1 | | | 3 | | |

EXAMPLE:

| | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1 | 2 | 6 | 5 | 3 | 4 |
| 3 | 5 | 4 | 1 | 2 | 6 |
| 6 | 4 | 2 | 3 | 5 | 1 |
| 5 | 1 | 3 | 6 | 4 | 2 |
| 2 | 3 | 1 | 4 | 6 | 5 |
| 4 | 6 | 5 | 2 | 1 | 3 |

4

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| | | | 2 | | |
| 1 | | | | 3 | |
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Beware!

The bold outlined areas are no longer 2x3!

6

| | | | | | |
|---|--|---|--|---|---|
| 3 | | | | | 6 |
| | | | | 1 | |
| | | 4 | | | |
| | | 2 | | | |
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WORD POWER

In Duplicate

What do fettuccine, football and grasshoppers have in common? If you think you're seeing double, you're right – each of those words contains two sets of repeated letters, as do all the words this month. Will your answers be errorless? Turn the page for the answers

BY Sarah Chassé

1. buccaneer – A: early settler.
B: pirate. C: bullfighter.

2. terrazzo – A: mosaic flooring.
B: seasoned pork. C: public square.

3. heedless – A: outgoing.
B: inconsiderate. C: unselfish.

4. muumuu – A: sweetheart.
B: wild ox. C: loose dress.

5. settee – A: place mat. B: sofa.
C: tennis match.

6. hippogriff – A: mythical animal.
B: early automobile. C: complainer.

7. bassoon – A: court jester.
B: woodwind instrument.
C: hunting dog.

8. suffragette – A: suede cloth.
B: kind of dance. C: a woman who
campaigns for the right to vote.

9. guerrilla – A: large monkey found
in West Africa. B: outlaw soldier.
C: grilled pita.

10. milliwatt – A: tooth whitener.
B: unit of power. C: earthworm.

11. abbess – A: deep wound.
B: convent leader. C: grand estate.

12. fuddy-duddy – A: old-fashioned
person. B: sticky cake.
C: mock turtleneck.

13. lessee – A: free trial
B: rope trick. C: renter.

14. kookaburra – A: vegetable
stew. B: giant oak tree.
C: Australian bird.

15. riffraff – A: questionable
character. B: expert surfer.
C: fishing fanatic.

Answers

1. buccaneer (B) pirate. After boarding the ship and tying up the crew, the band of buccaneers divvied up their loot.

2. terrazzo (A) mosaic flooring. Tamara installed cheery green-and-white terrazzo in her guest bathroom.

3. heedless (B) inconsiderate. "How can you be so heedless of my feelings?" Chang asked, looking heartbroken.

4. muumuu (C) loose dress. While visiting Honolulu in Hawaii, I bought two flower-patterned muumuus.

5. settee (B) sofa. Our dog Harpo likes to nap on our vintage settee despite having a bed of his own.

6. hippogriff (A) mythical animal. According to legend, a hippogriff has the front half of an eagle and the hind half of a horse.

7. bassoon (B) woodwind instrument. Erica is the only bassoon player in her school's orchestra.

8. suffragette (C) a woman who campaigned for the right to vote. Mary Gawthorpe was an early

suffragette who left teaching to fight for women's voting rights.

9. guerrilla (B) outlaw soldier. The guerrilla leader hatched a plot to overthrow the government.

10. milliwatt (B) unit of power. A milliwatt is equal to one 1000th of a watt - not enough to give off much light.

11. abbess (B) convent leader. The younger nuns looked to their abbess for guidance.

12. fuddy-duddy (A) old-fashioned person. Call me a fuddy-duddy, but I'm still not getting a smartphone.

13. lessee (C) renter. Per the contract, the apartment's lessee pays the electricity bill.

14. kookaburra (C) Australian bird. The kookaburra's call sounds like fiendish laughter.

15. riffraff (A) questionable character. It was a suave, sophisticated affair with no riffraff allowed in the door.


VOCABULARY RATINGS

5-9: Fair

10-12: Good

13-15: Word Power Wizard

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