

## Not a Good Day

Steve has a theory about luck. He'll tell anybody about it who's willing to listen., especially when he's had a couple of beers.

It goes like this:

"God has a list of names that he looks at every now and again. He looks at it and says to himself "Who haven't I dumped on recently." After a moments consideration he says "Hmm, I haven't done Steve for a bit," and he puts Steve's head under his buttocks, releases the anal sphincter, and *phlubbadubbaldump* off he goes."

Steve has a certain amount of proof that this is the case. Here's a case in point.

At the end of Steve's first term at University he was changing digs.

Steve lived in a large house in Werne. He was at a campus University which itself was miles away from anywhere and Werne itself was a one horse village that was reached from the University by travelling down eight miles of winding country lanes. The house itself had five stories and was beside the river Dis. When it rained heavily, the Dis always burst it's banks. On a particularly bad flood it could be wet as high as the third floor. The house was owned by a a mad old woman called Mrs McGinty. Mrs McGinty was well known in the local area. She was an ex mem-sahb who was having difficulties adjusting to life back in the old country. Her son and daughter-in-law were working in Saudia Arabia and they'd left their juvenile delinquent son to live with her while they were out of the country.

Mrs McGinty rented out her house to students during the winter and to members of the local sailing club during the summer. While Steve got on very well with his landlady, at the end of the day, the digs were eight miles away from the University and as he had no means of transport. Buses were infrequent and unreliable and in the cold winter months, the two hour drunken stroll did not have the same appeal as it did in the summer. Also, he wasn't getting on very well with other students who lived in the other rooms and it was definitely time for a move.

He had managed to find another set of digs to move into after the Christmas holidays and so it was necessary to move all his stuff out before he went home. He had managed to pack all his stuff into four containers. He had a rucksack, a suitcase, a shoulder bag and a bag full of records.

The night before had turned into something of a nightmare.

He'd been to the campus to see aging glam rock hero Gary Glitter who had failed to show. Steve had decided to stay and have a pint, but unfortunately his lift had gone straight back to Werne.

After looking around for some one to take him back for about twenty minutes he decided that they'd probably gone back with out him (he was right in this assumption). He decided that his best chance of hitching a lift was to set off now. As he stumbled along the country lanes, he frequently stuck out his thumb in the hope of getting a lift. Although on many occasions before, he had successfully hitched a ride. This was not to be the case tonight.

To add insult to injury, it had started to snow.

By the time he got home, he was cold and tired. Not only that, his thumb had frozen solid. Getting into the house he had been unable to find anything that could possibly be made into a hot drink.

He suddenly remembered that there was a Lemsip in the medical kit in his already packed rucksack and decided it was worth unpacking the bag to take out the hot lemon medication.

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By this time, the beer, the walk, the cold and his numb thumb had made him take leave of his senses and caused him to put his still frozen thumb into a boiling hot Lemsip. Curiously enough he felt no pain.

At least, he felt no pain for at least two hours. At approximately four thirty am the nerves in his thumb suddenly remembered how to function and his scream could have been heard in Venezuela

He decided to give up and repack his rucksack, have another Lemsip and wait for the taxi to take back to the nearby town where he could catch a bus back home.

Steve had booked a taxi for six o'clock to get him to the bus station for seven fifteen. It was a source of irritation that it was going to cost him twice as much to travel the eight and a half miles to the bus station as it was to travel the two hundred and fifty miles home.

By six fifteen the taxi still hadn't turned up and Steve was starting to get panicky. He decided to ring the taxi company.

"Hello, Maxwell Taxis" said a pleasant voiced woman.

"Hello, I've booked a taxi for six o'clock and it's not turned up."

"Oh I am sorry love, where are you?"

"Seven Ruddles Avenue, Werne."

"You're in Werne?"

"Yes."

"Are you stupid? We'll not send a taxi out there in this weather. It's been snowing you know."

"But..."

He got no further. The phone was already dead.

He thought of ringing back, but then decided there was no point to it. There was also no point in ringing another taxi firm. Even if they decided they could send him a taxi, there had to be one free, it had to agree to come over to Werne, they had to load up the car with all Steve's worldly goods, drive back to the bus station and all in three quarters of an hour.

Steve thought of his aching thumb and decided to try hitching a lift for the second time that day.

He managed to load himself up with all his belongings. He had the rucksack on his back, the shoulder bag dangling round his front, the bag of records in his left hand and the suitcase in his right.

He started tromping through the snow and whenever a car came past, he dropped the suitcase and thumbed like crazy.

After half a dozen vehicles had passed, a little red mini pulled up about fifty yards down the road. Steve ran for it, but as he ran, the strap broke on the shoulder bag.

*Forget it he thought get the lift sorted out and then come back for the bag.*

As he got to the car the driver wound down the window, gave a two fingered salute and shouted a short phrase containing seven letters, three of them 'F'. Then, muttering something about bloody students he shot off down the road leaving Steve standing in the snow.

And this is where Steve's theory about God and Luck comes in.

He can accept that the act doesn't turn up.

He can accept that he has to walk home.

He can accept that he causes some permanent damage to his thumb.

He can accept that he gets no sleep.

He can accept can accept that a taxi doesn't turn up.

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He can accept can accept that some one offering him a lift tells him what he can do with himself.

He can accept that the strap might break on an shoulder bag.

But what he cannot accept is that all these things happen within eight hours and that when he gets back to the bag, a dog has shit on it.

It looked like a steaming walnut whip – all it needed was the walnut on the top.

You can see the dog's point of view. Everywhere around was cold and wet for it to squat on and someone suddenly presents it with something warm, flat and dry.

Steve just sat in the snow wondering whether to laugh or cry.