

TT 13 Day 15

It's lucky we are a family of simple tastes. Clyde, Loopy and I are perfectly happy with lamb and rice kibble twice a day with the occasional apple core to give us our One-a Day at lunchtime whereas the Guvnor, his wife and the other members of their family isolating here are generally content with 'meat and two veg' or fish or, very occasionally, an unwittingly vegetarian dish because they haven't found anything in the freezer that looked appetising enough to bother to defrost. Each to his or her own and that is simply how they are although they would be first to deny having brought up their children to believe that if God had not meant us to eat animals (but not dogs or horses, of course) he wouldn't have made them of meat.

This crisis will teach us to be more varied in our diet because if you are locked down you have to depend on the kindness of neighbours, and sometimes of strangers, and on what the supermarkets can stack on their shelves on the day you are able to shop. Yesterday, for example, there were no lemons, no frozen peas and no eggs which mattered not one jot to the Guvnor because, apart from lemons, he has never been known to put an egg or any peas in his gin and tonic. I must be careful not to be frivolous about this but if you are faddy you are much more likely to be frustrated at best and furious at worst; and you may even become undernourished.

The Guvnor has always been partial to, for example, the dairy-rich alternative to the non-dairy option which is why he looks like he does – ruddy-faced and chubby-tummied but I haven't been able to work out what has removed so much of his hair (he has just butted in and suggested it was

the vegan meal he was forced to have two Julys ago). Now, if you think that is an extreme view, and it is to some, what do you think of the picture he keeps in his mind and exposes to us whenever he feels aggrieved, that has a man and a woman in the office at mid-morning. The man is looking at his watch and says, "Ah, time for my fat-free, half soy/half almond, semi-mocha frappatini break."

He reminds me of Oscar Wilde's view, 'Every piece of bacon I eat takes twelve years off my life. If true, I should have died in 1879'. I remind him that in dog years he should be long dead. Talking of death, as we weren't really, he loves the story of two old friends sitting on their bench musing about whether there is cricket in Heaven. They make a pact; whoever dies first will, somehow, come back and tell his friend whether it is true. The weeks go by and one of them dies. His friend is woken by a presence in his bedroom and it is his late departed chum. "Hello, Fred, it's me; all is well here, and I can tell you that the good news is that there is, indeed, cricket in Heaven. The bad news is that you are opening the bowling on Saturday."

Finally for today, here is another story about Heaven (and bad luck if you don't believe in it): St Peter rises at 7.30 in the morning, stretches and looks out of his gates to find a very long queue of men waiting patiently behind a sign that says 'Hen-pecked husbands'. Unwilling to commit to a whole day's work before breakfast, he looks to the left at one solitary man standing behind a similar sign, but which said, 'Non-henpecked husbands.' "Good morning; I admire you but how did you manage such a life?" "I don't really know", answers the man; "my wife told me to stand here."