

# Reader's Digest

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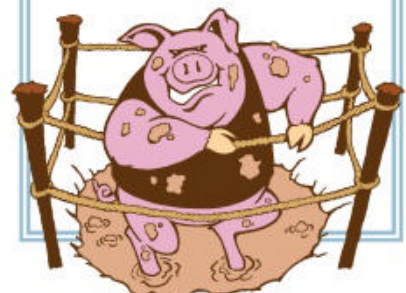


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## EDITOR'S NOTE

# *Creativity In Action*

**THE WORLD'S MOST FAMOUS FOURSOME**, The Beatles, left an indelible mark on the world. But how did they work so productively, crafting some of history's most memorable tunes? It was this very question that our Managing Editor, Zoë Meunier, set out to discover in 'A Lesson In Creativity' on page 68.

In Peter Jackson's documentary, *Get Back*, the world saw a group of musicians ride the highs and lows that is the very essence of the creative process. They did it together, sometimes getting on each other's nerves, but mostly helping one another develop their ideas. It is the perfect lesson on how to tap into your own creativity.

Reunions can spark many emotions, but the meeting depicted in the story, 'Reunited With Her Rescuers' (page 26) is bound to linger long in your memory.

Some two decades after two 23 year olds rescued a young girl they found floating in the sea, the trio revisit the day their lives merged.

I hope you'll forgive a little self-promotion, when I draw your attention to the fabulous Reader's Digest App, the e-magazine version of our magazine to which subscribers automatically receive access. The App includes a Text to Speech function, turning the reading experience into a listening one as well. Just another way to enjoy the Reader's Digest experience. Happy reading (and listening),



*Louise*

LOUISE WATERSON  
Editor-in-Chief

# AUSTRALIA Reader's Digest

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Sheron White

**Mobile Phone** 0421 897 140

**Email** sheron.white@readersdigest.com.au

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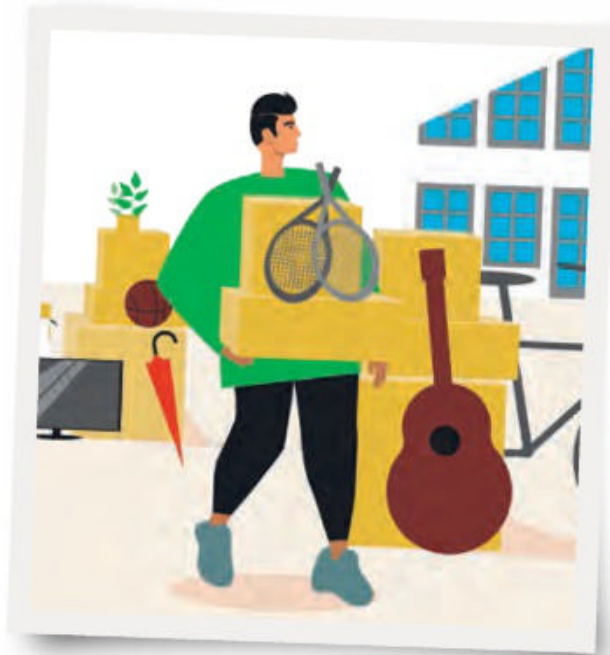
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**LETTERS**

*Reader's Comments And Opinions*

**Clearing The Cobwebs**

**Memories and emotions flooded back to me when I read 'The Garage Sale' (My Story, March). As years of collected clutter were dealt with, it was touching to learn of the writer's deep concern that her four adult children should not have to tackle the daunting task. Hoarding and living with less were two issues clearly addressed and, as with every seemingly insurmountable task, she found that perseverance brought a resolution.** EULALIE HOLMAN



**Remembering A Red Vending Machine**

After reading 'The Vending Machine' (Then And Now, March), a lovely memory from the 1960s came to mind. We had a grocery shop in the Netherlands with a bright red vending machine near the entrance. It dispensed coloured chewing gum

balls for one cent each. Over time, it was out of action more than it worked, because people put all sorts of items into the coin slot, mostly matches. However, I never realised the fame of this particular vending machine until, many years later, I met a man in Australia who was from the same city as me. It turned out

**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.**

ILLUSTRATION: GETTY IMAGES



that he had lived in a side street not far from our grocery shop and he remembered the bright red vending machine very well. **ELLY VENEMA**

### Quite A Spectacle

I was quite surprised when I read the article ‘What Your Glasses Reveal About You’ (March), that there was no mention of the rimless glasses that I wear. I googled them and found that rimless glasses are stylish and continue to soar in global popularity. They feature a minimalist look with low profile frames like titanium. Research I found suggests that people who wear rimless glasses appear more attractive and confident than those wearing full frames. The reason? The attention drawn to a wearer’s eyes rather than the glasses.

**SALEEM RAZA**

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### SPACE ODDITY

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

Pussycat, Pussycat, where have you been?

**BARBARA MERRIFIELD**

I’m feline really spaced out!

**MARTIN NEW**

That catnip made me feel a little bit spacey.

**VIVIENNE COX**

Uh oh! Houston, we have a CATastrophe!

**JAMIE CHEAH**

My vet said I need some space.

**DEEPAK NAIR**

**Congratulations to this month’s winner, Deepak Nair.**



### CAPTION CONTEST

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

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**or see details on page 8.**

### Make AEDs Mandatory

I was heartened to read 'Small Device Saves Lives' (Health, March) which gives a commendable insight into the automated external defibrillator (AED). It is relatively simple to use but can serve an important function in saving lives of cardiac arrest victims. Although I have not yet undertaken basic first aid training, your article has given me the confidence that should a cardiac arrest situation arise where an AED is available, I could promptly use it. Like fire alarms, AEDs should be mandatory in all public buildings. **GREGORY JONES**

### Polar Bears In Danger

What a fascinating article 'A Polar Bear's Journey' (April) was. Bears have captured the hearts of so many over the years. But most people are not aware of the harsh realities of polar bears' lives, and how they and their cubs survive in forbidding environments. I enjoyed the opportunity to learn more about them. This article also sends an alarming message that all life is affected by climate change.

As the world confronts a warming planet, as sea levels rise, as oceans acidify, as rain patterns shift and as weather becomes more extreme, the world must take concerted, creative action to develop a low-carbon economy. Urgently.

**GENNA COOPER**

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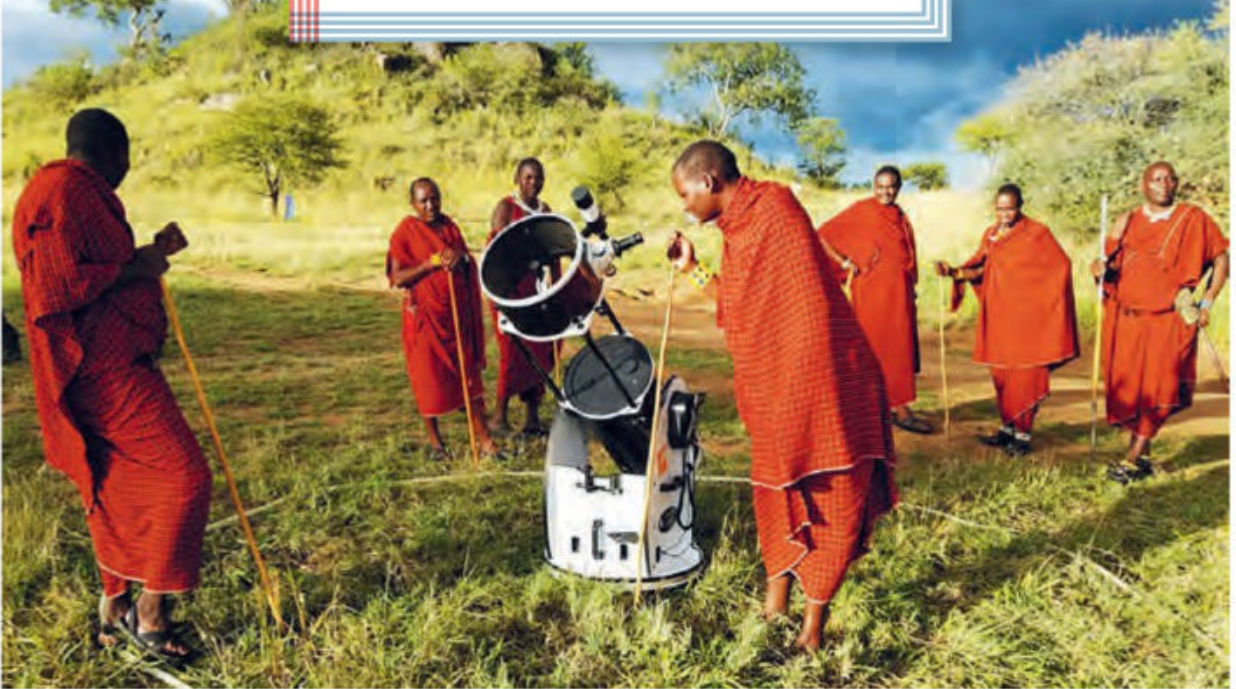
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## NEWS WORTH SHARING



### Bringing Stars To The Eyes Of Students

**A**s a child growing up in Nairobi, Kenya, looking up at the stars wasn't something school children were encouraged to do. For Susan Murabana, that changed in her early 20s when she encountered her first telescope and spotted Saturn. "Seeing something I had only read about in a textbook made me realise how small we really are," says Murabana, who is now an astronomer.

In 2014, Murabana's husband was so inspired by how studying space had opened up Murabana's life, the couple decided to give kids this experience by creating an educational programme. Called 'The Travelling

Telescope', they criss-cross Kenya bringing astronomy education and a portable planetarium to schools and communities. So far, they've met with more than 300,000 children. Kids can't resist the lure of the telescope and the opportunity it offers to see the moon up close, as well as stars and planets, says Murabana.

In January 2021, pop royalty Madonna visited Kenya and booked a private telescope session for her family. Murabana watched the pop star's face light up with the same sense of wonder as the kids. "It reminds people about the universe that sits just above their heads," she says.

COMPILED BY VICTORIA POLZOT

PHOTO: COURTESY TRAVELLING TELESCOPE

## Living Library

**A**nnandale, an inner suburb of Sydney, is not where you would expect to make a connection with nature. For Kelly Parkins, the connection is nowhere more powerful than her front yard, which is home to a community-based plant street library.

Just like the book street libraries, this nature library operates through donations of seedlings and cuttings and exchanges.

Parkins, who hates waste, started leaving her cuttings out on the street in 2019. To her amazement, they would disappear in minutes. It wasn't long before her front yard was open to the public and the community was offered a space in which to take or leave something of interest.

With a contribution of up to 50 new plants a week, there is often a queue for plants, flowers, herbs and vegetable seedlings. For this keen gardener, the library offers a "village vibe" and is all about maintaining a sense of community connection.



## Small Countries Making A Big Difference

**M**any nations around the world are making the necessary pledges to reduce harmful carbon emissions, with a goal of becoming 'carbon neutral' several years from now. But what's truly impressive are the countries certified by the United Nations Climate Change Secretariat as 'carbon-negative'.

This tiny but growing club of forested countries absorb more carbon than they produce, according to the Thomson Reuters Foundation.

Certified so far are Bhutan (the Himalayan kingdom absorbs nine million tonnes of carbon each year, while its economy has been designed to produce just four million tonnes) and Suriname, which lies just north of Brazil. Panama is set to become the third nation certified as carbon-negative.



PHOTOS: (PLANTS) COURTESY PLANT STREET LIBRARY; (BHUTAN) GETTY IMAGES

## MY STORY

# An Unexpected Musical Journey

*A poster helped guide this music lover to fulfil a dream*

BY Ray Maddison

In a few short weeks I will be going to watch my 40th performance of *Les Misérables*. I fell in love with the songs back in 1985 when they were first released – ‘Bring Him Home’, ‘I Dreamed A Dream’ and ‘On My Own’. Even though I hadn’t read the Victor Hugo novel and knew very little about the musical, the songs captured my attention and I happily sang along with gusto whenever I heard them on the radio.

Fast forward five years and I embarked on a trip around the world with my wife and two-year-old daughter. On one of our stops in Vancouver, Canada, I saw a large advertising banner promoting *Les Misérables* and immediately

suggested to my wife that we book tickets. On the drive to the theatre, we discussed what we knew of the storyline – all we could come up with was the French Revolution. Clearly, we were not prepared for the majesty of the Cameron Mackintosh masterpiece. We loved the roller coaster ride of emotions and the tragic story of Jean Valjean.

On the late-night drive home, on a high after this amazing performance, I announced that I wanted to perform in the musical when we returned to Australia. This was a preposterous statement, given we lived 50 kilometres from the nearest large town, Toowoomba. There was little likelihood of ever having a chance to perform.





But some things are just meant to be, and the stars aligned; the Toowoomba Choral Society bought the performance rights in 1992 with the view to perform it in 1994. I had seen a few of their performances but was not a member of the choir. They called for auditions and, emboldened by the chance to be part of the 'Les Mis' experience, I went along. I had had no experience singing and had never performed in any musicals but I believed in miracles and hoped that

---

Ray Maddison is in his 60s and lives with his wife in Queensland's Somerset Valley. Before retiring, he was a primary school principal and is now in his second year at Sunshine Coast University studying writing and journalism.

there was a place for me somewhere in the chorus.

I tried out for the part of Javert but did not have the range. Little did I know there were a host of parts that needed filling. I was going to be in the chorus as well as playing a convict, a sailor, a policeman, a peasant, a pub-goer, a fighter and a member of the wedding party – ten costume changes in all. It was so exciting playing all the different parts. Rehearsals started immediately and I got a crash course in singing, acting and dancing. There was so much to learn and as I drove to rehearsals three times a week a little voice would say, "*You are in over your head, get out now.*"

The rehearsal process was gruelling – first with scripts and sheet music and then without. We were truly fortunate to have some amazing voices within the choral society. Students from the University of Southern Queensland had also joined to fill many of the younger roles. They had magnificent voices, endless energy, a sense of fun and the drive and enthusiasm to take this musical to the next level.

Personally, I struggled. I was the teaching principal of a small country school with a young family. *How could I get it all done?* What pushed me forward was the amazing voices and the harmonies in the chorus as well as the fact that two of my

students were performing the parts of young Cosette and little Eponine.

Opening night was exhilarating. The show was a resounding success with audiences cheering us on and night after night of standing ovations. The quality of the musical was so high we received visits from music-industry personalities Normie Rowe and Bert Newton. They had heard of several of our amazing young singers and came to offer them parts in future productions.

The season lasted a month and I learned so much about the theatre and performing at your best – every night. Often, I would leave home at 6pm after a full day at school and not be back home until midnight. What amazed me was that for a three-and-a-half-hour show, time flew by and with all my costume changes I was often in place with just seconds to spare. I became more confident with my singing, timing and dancing. I only ever faltered once when my little family came along to watch and my youngest daughter, Stephanie, who was four years old at the time, announced very loudly, “There’s my daddy”, as I came on stage to do a solo. I nearly fell through the floor but the conductor gave a ‘you can do this’ look and I picked up the beat.

I loved everything about the show. I was mesmerised by the beautiful songs, magnificent performances and the skill of the orchestra who were faultless every night. The wonderful thing was being right there on stage with the folk on the barricade as Jean Valjean sang

‘Bring Him Home’ and I marched proudly as a chimney sweep as the company sang ‘One Day More’. I was transported back to that first performance in Vancouver. How far I had come!

**“THERE’S  
MY DADDY!”  
ANNOUNCED  
MY FOUR-  
YEAR-OLD  
DAUGHTER**

---

In no time at all closing night came around. I was not prepared for such an emotional night. We had given two years of our lives to this production and it was difficult to accept that it was all over. It was heart-wrenching to watch the cast cry unashamedly during the second act. For me, I had achieved the impossible – rising above my limitations and performing in the greatest musical. I know my contribution was minor but I gave everything and my effort contributed to the musical being an absolute success. I will never forget my unexpected musical journey.

---

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## SMART ANIMALS

*Pets and wildlife provide us with many fascinating moments*



### Reflections On Life

ROBIN KEOWN

We inherited more in the way of 'wildlife' than we ever expected after buying a retirement property in dense bush in New Zealand seven years ago. All manner of native and introduced birds serenade us all day long, along with ground-dwelling birds, such as weka, pukeko and quail.

Quail in New Zealand were originally introduced from California. They were intended as game birds as they are quite plump and tasty, and people eat the eggs.

Recently we noticed a male quail tiptoeing down the path, in inimitable quail style, to our

downstairs flat where he gazed at himself in the window's reflection. We soon realised that it was not vanity which had prompted this behaviour. Instead, he was searching for his mate. Some days earlier there had been a collection of feathers around the lower deck. We had been pestered by a neighbour's cat, which had stalked our two chickens for weeks as well as other flightless birds on the property. We surmised that the cat had caught the female quail and carried her off.

---

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Quails mate for life, and the male probably could not forget his mate, nor adjust to the loss of his lifelong partner.

We had to clean quail excrement endlessly off the mat, but we were too soft-hearted to shoo him away. We had to hope that he would eventually find another partner to share his life, not just a reflection.

In winter, quails form into covies of 200 to 400 birds, and in spring they break into smaller groups, mate and produce chicks. We are hoping our pining quail will do likewise.

Sometimes the most humble of species can teach us a lesson on faithfulness.



## Gentle Gardener

BEV LARSEN

One spring day in 2000, while spending the morning gardening, I stopped to have morning tea out in the garden. I had a cup of tea and a biscuit and our beautiful two-year-old Doberman rescue dog, Sabba, also ate a biscuit. There was one left

and I gave it to her saying “Don’t you dare bury it in my garden!” as she often did.

The next morning, I was watering some large pots and Sabba was sitting very close to a pot growing beautiful pink petunias. When I got to it, I noticed a small mound of soil and realised that she had very gently buried the biscuit and covered it up, not touching any of the plants.

## Egg Collector

EVELYN PAIN

Long before free-range eggs became fashionable, our chickens would run around the open spaces of our backyard in the east of London. As kids, it was our job to find the eggs. This wasn’t always easy until Daisy, our golden retriever pup, decided she wanted to help. She saw us looking for the eggs and worked out what we were doing.

Daisy would watch the chickens from a safe distance. When a hen lifted herself after laying, Daisy would be ready to collect the egg. She would then race off with it in her mouth and scratch at the back door to alert our mother of her discovery.

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**PETS**

# Why Is My Pet So Itchy?

*Excessive scratching can be a sign that all is not well*

BY Dr Katrina Warren



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

**ITCHY SKIN** is a common problem for dogs and cats. It can be extremely annoying and uncomfortable for the pet and very frustrating and upsetting for the owner. Both dogs and cats can experience an occasional itch, just as humans do, but it's important for pet owners to recognise when an itch might be an indication of a more serious problem. A process of elimination to identify the cause is often needed, and your vet is the best person to guide you through this process. They can help figure out what is causing the itch and create a plan to manage it. Veterinarian Dr Katrina Warren shares the most common causes of what makes pets want to scratch themselves.

**FLEAS** are by far the most common cause of itchiness in both dogs and cats and should be ruled out before you consider any other causes. Flea bite hypersensitivity, known as flea allergy dermatitis, is extremely irritating for pets. For some animals, just a single flea bite can cause this very aggravating skin condition. Fleas love warm weather, but you should still ensure flea treatments are up to date to keep your pet protected from fleas all year round. Choose a flea product that breaks the flea life cycle and be sure to thoroughly clean your pet's environment by washing all its bedding and vacuuming thoroughly.

## ENVIRONMENTAL ALLERGENS

are another common cause of scratching. While humans with allergies tend to suffer from hay fever symptoms, such as watery eyes, runny nose and sneezing, dogs with allergies often present with itchy skin. Atopic dermatitis is a type of allergy in response to triggers in the environment such as pollens, dust mites or smoke.

**FOOD ALLERGIES** occur when a pet's immune system reacts to something in food such as protein, wheat, preservatives or soy. A food elimination trial with the help of your vet can help figure out the cause.

**BACTERIAL AND YEAST INFECTIONS** can cause intense itching and pain. Bacterial infections can spread rapidly, particularly in hot and humid weather. Regular washing, using antibacterial, antifungal and/



**Scratching ears might mean an ear infection or an underlying skin allergy**

or soothing shampoos can help. Your vet can determine whether antibiotics or other medications are needed to treat the condition.

**EXTERNAL PARASITES**, other than fleas, such as mites, can be another cause of intense scratching. Parasites can lead to a skin condition known as sarcoptic mange. This condition is extremely uncomfortable and can be passed from animals to humans.

## TOP TIPS TO TELL WHETHER YOUR PET HAS FLEAS

- Your pet frantically scratches and bites its coat and might groom and lick itself constantly.
- You can see bald patches, particularly around the base of the tail.
- There are tiny dark brown specks that look like dirt in their coat. These are actually the dried faeces of fleas.
- You can see small black/brown insects (fleas) around the neck, hind legs and/or the base of your pet's tail.
- If you see just one flea, there will normally be plenty of others.
- If you don't see any live fleas, don't assume there are no fleas. They can hide in thick dark areas of your pet's coat.

HEALTH

# Do You Have Frozen Shoulder?

*How to identify and treat the painful condition*

BY Lisa Bendall



When Katja Edler noticed tightness around her right shoulder in 2017, she assumed she'd been spending too much time at her desk. The 44-year-old book editor worked from home. About three months later, her symptoms were worse: "I got up one morning in a lot of pain and couldn't lift my arm."

Edler met with an orthopaedic surgeon, who took an X-ray and then identified the problem: she had frozen shoulder.

Also called adhesive capsulitis, the condition affects up to five per cent of people and occurs when the connective tissue surrounding the shoulder-joint capsule becomes inflamed. Over time, this tissue thickens and stiffens, causing pain and restricted movement. Eventually, even without treatment, the soft tissue will heal. But recovery can take one to three years - or more.

"That's a long time to live with something so disabling," says shoulder surgeon Dr Amar Rangan.

PHOTO: GETTY IMAGES

Early treatment improves the symptoms faster, but identifying the condition can be a challenge, since symptoms mimic conditions like arthritis and rotator cuff injuries. Another mystery is why it develops. It's more likely to happen if your shoulder has been immobile because of a broken arm or a stroke, or after a jarring fall. But in most cases, the problem seems to come out of nowhere.

Women are four times more likely to have frozen shoulder than men, and people with diabetes, thyroid disease, heart disease or autoimmune conditions are at higher risk. "It's surprisingly common in people in their 40s to 60s, and prevalent in people over the age of 60," says physiotherapist Karen McCreesh. She says patients typically describe the discomfort as "burning" and it is often worse at night.

While it's rare to have a recurrence in the same shoulder, about ten to 15 per cent of patients will develop it on the other side, according to Dr Rangan.

Steroid injections or medications like ibuprofen can reduce pain and inflammation, and physiotherapy is often effective for regaining range of motion. While the latter is less invasive and risky than surgical

options, Dr Rangan recently co-lead a trial showing that both physiotherapy and surgery help significantly with recovery. His team is also conducting research into the inflammatory changes, in the hopes of treating the underlying cause.

A 2021 review of studies demonstrated that exercise helps with healing. It can involve the shoulder if the person can tolerate it, although whole body exercise pays off, too. "Some patients develop a big fear of movement," says McCreesh, "but very painful exercise isn't necessary to see benefits." For

example, exercising in a warm pool may feel more soothing.

Edler opted for physiotherapy, going to appointments for six months and doing prescribed exercises at home.

"With each session, I regained some movement range and had less discomfort," she says. Today, more than four years after developing issues, she has 90 per cent function in her shoulder and is pain-free.

There remains no known way to prevent the condition, which is why an early diagnosis is so important.

Dr Rangan suggests "taking your shoulders through a range of movement every day to make sure they don't tighten up. If you notice anything, seek help."

## FROZEN SHOULDER IS SURPRISINGLY COMMON IN PEOPLE IN THEIR 40S TO 60S





# Avoiding Loneliness

BY *Susannah Hickling*



It doesn't follow that you're lonely just because you live alone, but there's evidence that it can have an effect on your health, increasing your risk of heart disease, cancer, diabetes and mental health problems. So, if at times you feel lonesome, don't dismiss it. Acknowledging it and trying to understand what's causing you to feel that way is the first step to doing something about it.

**MAKE TIME FOR PEOPLE.** Instead of watching the TV or checking your phone, go for a walk and chat to someone. Better still, offer to take a neighbour's dog for a walk – dog owners love other 'dog' people!

**BUILD YOUR COMMUNITY ONLINE.** The internet has the potential to bring like-minded people together. However, it needs to translate into meeting up in real life. Try a neighbourhood app like

NextDoor or Nearcircles. Your local council and library will also be able to help you with activities and what's on near home.

**PICK UP THE PHONE.** Or make a video call. Don't wait for family and friends to make the first move; get in touch for a chat and make it a habit.

**GET INVOLVED.** Volunteering is good for physical and mental health, and gives you the opportunity to connect with people. Helping out at the local food bank or charity shop will not only give you a warm, fuzzy feeling, you'll get to meet other volunteers – and it will give you something to talk about with friends.

**PLAN AHEAD.** Everyone's busy, so getting people together can take organisation and motivation. Rather than vaguely suggesting meeting up, follow it up quickly with a proposed date.



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## WORLD OF MEDICINE

### STAND UP FOR YOUR HEALTH

A Finnish study published in the *Journal Of Science And Medicine In Sport* has found a simple step to take towards preventing type 2 diabetes and heart disease: stand more. The researchers discovered that standing for longer during the day is associated with improved insulin sensitivity, ie your body's ability to convert the sugar in your blood into stored energy for later use. When that function is impaired, the body does not respond properly to insulin, which can lead to the aforementioned diseases. If you work sitting down or spend a lot of your day seated, the researchers recommend taking frequent standing breaks.

### HUMAN RIGHTS BENEFIT THE BRAIN

When societies provide citizens with basic human rights, it helps them to thrive - and it also seems to improve brain health, according to a review out of the University of Cambridge in the UK and Brown University in the US. Published in the *Annals Of The*

*New York Academy Of Sciences*, the review looked at 146 studies. Among those, several found that people who had a greater sense of agency - the ability to shape one's choice and actions in the world - also had a greater volume of grey matter in a number of different areas of the brain. Grey matter is crucial because it processes information and is important for learning and memory. The bottom line: advocating for the rights of fellow citizens locally and globally can have a wide-ranging impact.

### REGULATING SUGAR WORKS

Reducing the amount of sugar in packaged food by 20 per cent and in beverages by 40 per cent could have a dramatic effect on our health. It could drastically prevent strokes, heart attacks and cardiac arrests, heart disease-related deaths and diabetes cases over one generation, according to a study in the journal *Circulation*. In the UK and Norway, governments have already put in place sugar reduction targets and sugar taxes for the food industry.





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*Kelvin Fleming,  
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Every year millions of people visit their doctors complaining of tinnitus (ringing in the ears), and most are told that they just have to learn to live with it. Affecting approximately 20% of the population, tinnitus is a stressful condition that can cause sleeplessness, anxiety and social isolation. It is often accompanied by dizziness, sound sensitivity, blocked-ear or hearing loss.

Now there is a home-based treatment which comes from new research on the ear and brain. It uses high frequency stimulation, through music, to re-build and organise brain connections. The result, for most listeners, is relief or reduction of tinnitus and related conditions.

Benefits can also include better sleep, clearer hearing, better memory, relief of dizziness and vertigo and a general feeling that the brain is sharper and communication is easier.

**For a free DVD and information pack call the Sound Therapy national enquiry line on 1300 55 77 96.**

# Reunited With Her Rescuers

*Thirty-five  
years after two  
fishermen plucked  
a young girl from the  
Pacific Ocean,  
a podcast leads to a  
remarkable reunion*

*By Faith E. Pinho*

FROM THE LOS ANGELES TIMES



**2021**

This meeting  
was on happier  
terms

A photograph of a young girl in a red life jacket floating in the ocean. The water is a deep blue with white foam from a boat's wake. The girl is seen from behind, with her head and shoulders above water. The life jacket is bright red with white accents. The overall scene is one of survival and hope.

**INSPIRATION**

**1986**

Desireé Rodriguez,  
nine, floated in  
her life jacket until  
help arrived

# She had been drifting in the cold Pacific water for a night and most of a day.

Kept afloat by her orange life jacket, nine-year-old Desireé Rodriguez had watched helplessly as one family member after another let go of life. Just as she, too, began to give up, the skipper of a fishing boat spotted her bobbing in the water. Within minutes, the boat's first officer leaped in and grabbed Desireé, pulling her back towards the boat – and life.

That was 36 years ago, and the last time the rescuers and the girl saw one another. Until last year.

**May 18, 1986**, was the kind of beautiful sunny day that regularly brought the Rodriguez family to California's Catalina Island for some fishing on their 8.5-metre pleasure boat, the *DC Too*.

Desireé's father, Thomas Rodriguez, a 30-year-old construction worker, loved the sport, especially

catching bass. A strong, slender man, he had instilled in his oldest daughter a love of the outdoors, teaching her how to bait a hook and cast a line.

As was their custom at least once a month, the family boarded their boat that morning for a carefree day trip. For the first time, Thomas's sister, Corinne Wheeler, 33, and her husband, Allen Wheeler, 34, had decided to join them, leaving their three children at home in the Riverside, California, neighbourhood where both families lived. They spent the day fishing in the Pacific Ocean, then left the island in the early evening. Soon dense fog rolled in.

Desireé fell into a light sleep beside her five-year-old sister, Trisha, at a table on the boat's deck. Their father's sharp orders startled her awake: "Get out of the boat. The boat's sinking!"

Desireé pushed her sister into the cold, dark water. Both girls wore life jackets. The adults did not. The girls were followed by their mother, Petra Rodriguez, a petite, quiet and pregnant 29 year old.

Within seconds, the boat capsized, leaving just the tip of its bow in the air – and the six family members stranded. Looking into the faces of her father, mother, aunt, uncle and sister, Desireé wasn't frightened.

"It was like what you would see in a movie," she recalls.

"You could see nothing around

## Reunited With Her Rescuers

you. It was just dark. But it was peaceful, quiet.” After some time, her father told them he would swim for help. “I’ll be back,” he said before disappearing into the darkness.

“My dad was like the superhero to me. I actually thought he would get help,” Desireé says.

After some time, her mother began foaming at the mouth, and then she went still. Desireé wrapped a rope around her mother’s chest and tied her to the boat so she wouldn’t float away. Then her young sister died, too.

“I remember it was just pretty much quiet after that,” Desireé says. “I think we were all just kind of in disbelief and just waiting.”

**Paul Strasser and Mark Pisano**, two strapping 23 year olds, were still new to captaining boats when they pushed off from San Pedro at six on the morning of May 19. They had 35 passengers aboard the *First String*, a boat they’d helped build, for a fishing expedition.

The best friends had met as 14 year olds. Soon after, Strasser had quit his job delivering newspapers to join Pisano working on fishing boats, where they scrubbed decks, cleaned fish and earned the title of ‘pinheads’ – eager young

fishermen learning the ropes. They graduated to deckhands and eventually to full-fledged fishermen. They spent their free time learning their trade. Before long, they became two of the youngest captains at San Pedro’s 22nd Street Landing.

Their fishing trip that day began uneventfully. Pisano remembers the weather was “pea soup fog” – so thick you couldn’t see the stern of the boat – and the fish weren’t biting. “We were going to try one more spot and then go home,” Pisano says.

But then some yellowtail, a prized game fish, started biting. The fishermen hung around for another couple of hours, pulling in fish after fish. As they worked, the fog cleared and the sun started shining.



After the day of the rescue, the two fishermen lost track of the girl they’d saved

As night turned into the next day, Desireé and her aunt and uncle were slipping in and out of consciousness. To keep themselves awake, Desireé and her aunt daydreamed about what they would do after they were rescued. They would stay in a hotel, order room service and burrow under the blankets in bed, cosy and warm.

"We still had hope," Desireé says. "Like, we're going to be OK. We're going to come out of this."

Her uncle evidently didn't share their hope. With the afternoon sun now high overhead, he swam away from the boat.

"He just kind of gave up," she recalls.

She swam after him, propelled by her aunt's plea: "Don't let him drown."

Desireé caught up with him quickly but struggled to keep her tall, stocky uncle above water.

She finally had to let go, and he slipped beneath the surface.

Desireé doesn't remember how or when her aunt died. But soon, the nine year old became aware that she was alone in the ocean.

"At that point, I just made the decision that I need to get away from this boat," Desireé remembers. "I need to swim away, somewhere else ... Where? I don't know."

Late that afternoon, Strasser and Pisano set off on the return voyage to San Pedro with their haul of freshly caught yellowtail.

About 11 kilometres away from Catalina Island, Strasser noticed something white flashing in the water. He steered the *First String* towards it and peered through his binoculars, thinking it might be a boat bumper.

"We've got something going on here; this is weird," Strasser recalls saying. "When I pulled up to it, I saw a dead body face down. It was tangled up in all this rope."

Strasser radioed the Coast Guard.

Passengers were yelling on the deck below. In the commotion, he noticed two other people in the water: one was floating facedown. The other, wearing an orange life jacket, was bobbing with the swells, her head and brown hair

visible just above the water.

"I knew if there was a life jacket, we have a chance," Strasser says. He steered the boat closer, and Pisano jumped into the water. Pumping with adrenaline, he swam towards the figure and grabbed the life jacket. From her near-unconscious state, Desireé flinched. Pisano swam her back to the boat, where Coast Guard medics covered her in warm water bottles that felt prickly on her cold skin.

**IF THE BOAT  
HADN'T COME  
RIGHT THEN, SAYS  
DESIREÉ, "I DON'T  
THINK I WOULD  
HAVE LIVED"**





**Strasser with Pisano (left and right, respectively, in both photos) and, in second photo, a grown-up Desireé**

If the boat hadn't come right then, says Desireé, now 45, "I don't think I would have lived, I'll be honest with you. I think at that point, I was just kind of done."

A Coast Guard spokeswoman said at the time that Desireé had "a strong, resilient constitution". The little girl walked out of the hospital the next day after being treated for exhaustion and hypothermia.

When officials pulled the family's boat out of the water, they didn't find any sign of collision, concluding that a large swell, perhaps from the wake of a passing ship, may have capsized the *DC Too*. The two bodies they had found were Desireé's mother and aunt. The search for Desireé's father, sister and uncle was abandoned two days after her rescue.

"I had even hoped that my dad did make it somewhere," Desireé says.

"Maybe he is living on an island and just got amnesia and didn't know that he has a family. You know, you always have hope. But you get older, and reality sets in, and you're like, *OK. He didn't make it.*"

Desireé Rodriguez, now Desireé Campuzano, was adopted by another aunt and uncle. No one asked about her experience in the water. They didn't want to traumatise her, she says. She attended therapy for a while, but mostly she coped by herself and tried to be a good person, guided constantly by the question: *what would my parents expect of me?*

Desireé attended university while building a career in criminal justice. She married in 2013 and had a son seven years ago.

In her late 20s, Desireé began to wonder about her rescuers. She sent Oprah Winfrey a message to try to get



**Podcaster Friedman (hugging Desiree) helped give this incredible story a new ending**

help finding them, but nothing came of it. Strasser and Pisano sometimes thought of her, too, especially whenever anyone asked, “What’s your craziest story at sea?” But neither Desiree nor the men who saved her knew where to start looking.

“Desiree was a ghost,” Strasser says. “We saved her, she’s out in the world. And that’s all we knew.”

**When the COVID-19 pandemic** derailed Philip Friedman’s plans to return to his teaching job near Shanghai, China, the 63-year-old fishing aficionado decided to stick around Southern California with his family and make a podcast about his hobby.

*Friedman Adventures* launched in December 2020, featuring stories from fishermen around the wharf talking about boats, catches and fishing tips.

On one episode Pisano talked about the 1986 rescue.

That day, 41-year-old Pablo Peña listened to the show on his 20-minute commute to work as a railroad engineer. The incredible story he heard on the air triggered a memory. Peña remembered a conversation he’d had years earlier with a former colleague. She’d once told him she’d lost her parents in a boating accident and was the only survivor.

“I was like, well, it could be her,” Peña says. “But he would have to say her name was Desiree Rodriguez to make this solid.”

Then Pisano said on the podcast, “Her name was Desiree Rodriguez, the girl we rescued,” adding that there were many Desiree Rodriguezes in Los Angeles.

Peña says “I thought, *Wow, this is just surreal.*” He had met the podcaster a decade earlier on a fishing excursion, so he sent a message to Friedman.

“I was like, ‘You gotta be kidding me, dude,’” Friedman says. He knew he wanted to locate her. “We’ve got to finish this story!”

Friedman concocted a plan to surprise the two fishing captains with the woman they’d rescued years earlier. First, he reached out to Desiree to ensure she wanted to meet her rescuers.

## Reunited With Her Rescuers

"I thought, *this is weird. Not a bad weird, but it's just kind of eerie,*" says Desireé, now a sergeant in the Los Angeles county sheriff's department. "After all these years, for this to come up - what are the chances? Very slim."

Desireé agreed to show up at the studio a few days later. The plan was that she would pose as Raquel, a translator who was going to retell the captains' rescue tale on Spanish television.

"I was nervous at first," Desireé says, "just seeing the guys and putting a finalisation to 'what happened'."

All smiles, she listened to her rescuers recount their side of the story. They were clueless to her true identity.

After almost ten minutes, Friedman ended the ruse. "Boys, I want to tell you something," he said. "This is not a translator. I'm going to let her introduce herself to you."

"I'm Desireé," she said, her voice wavering.

Pisano slapped the table in an instant of recognition. Amid hugs and tears, the story that decades earlier had united the strangers came tumbling out.

"I feel like she's sort of our daughter, in a way, because we brought her back to life," Strasser says.

For years, Desireé had wondered about the men who rescued her. Now that she's met them, she says she hopes to stay connected forever.

**On May 18, 2021**, the 35th anniversary of the accident, Strasser and Pisano took Desireé and her family on their fishing boat to Catalina Island, following the same course they took all those years ago.

"It looked just the same as it did the day we found her," says Strasser. They stopped the boat, and the family said some prayers. Then the men handed them bunches of flowers - carnations, roses and lilies - to toss into the water in remembrance.

It was an almost uncannily perfect gesture. The men had no way of knowing, so a teary Desireé explained: Her mother had loved lilies, her favourite flowers. **R**

FROM LOS ANGELES TIMES (MARCH 10, 2021),  
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## They Really Bug Me

**A man who earned a Guinness World Record by sporting 864 tattoos of insects, including beetles, ants and moths, on his face and body revealed that he is actually afraid of creepy crawlies:**

**"I hate bugs," said Michael Amoia of New York. "But there are multiple meanings, that's why I put them all over my body."**

REUTERS



# THE ULTIMATE GUIDE TO YOUR

# GUT



*The bacteria in your intestines affect whether you'll have allergies, your risk of depression and even how well your medication works*

BY *Vanessa Milne* ILLUSTRATIONS BY **KEVIN MORAN**

**A** decade ago, Kaitlyn, a 28-year-old support worker, became very ill. She had painful constipation, fevers and was losing weight. “If I ate too much, I would vomit,” she says. After tests ruled out Crohn’s disease and colitis, Kaitlyn’s family doctor diagnosed her with irritable bowel syndrome (IBS), a chronic disorder that causes cramping, pain and bloating, along with constipation or diarrhoea.

While IBS can’t be cured, it can be managed through lifestyle changes. A dietitian suggested that the bacteria that lived in Kaitlyn’s intestines – collectively known as the gut microbiome – might be out of balance, contributing

to her condition. She recommended Kaitlyn take probiotics to help put things in order. After only a few days of taking the probiotics, Kaitlyn felt a lot better. “The pain and fevers went away, and I was able to eat without getting sick,” she says. She still needed to avoid specific foods that triggered her condition, but she gained back some of the weight she had lost.

The state of our gut microbiome impacts many facets of our physical and mental health. But what is it, exactly? Imagine a jar of fermented food, like sauerkraut, which is full of bacteria. The bacteria that already live on the cabbage flourish when it’s covered in brine and sealed. In that

## READER'S DIGEST

oxygen-deprived space, those bacteria break down the food's components – such as carbohydrates – and release acid, which gives sauerkraut its tangy flavour. A similar process happens inside your intestines every time you eat: bacteria break the food down, transforming it into crucial vitamins, amino acids, chemicals and, yes, gas.

All those bacteria start colonising in you the minute you're born. You pick up bacterial strains from breast milk, your home, the environment outside, contact with other people, the food you eat, and even the family dog. By the age of three, your microbiome has pretty much settled into how it will look when you're an adult. The different types of bacteria that live in your gut help you digest food, but they also impact other aspects of your body, including your immune system, brain and cardiovascular health.

"Your gut is like its own ecosystem," says Sean Gibbons, a microbiome researcher and assistant professor at the Institute for Systems Biology in Seattle, US. "It's warm, humid and wet – like a rainforest."

And, he explains, like any thriving ecosystem, your gut is healthy when it's diverse with hundreds of types of bacteria. Two of the most important are Firmicutes and Bacteroidetes, which feast on dietary fibre and break down complex carbohydrates. Both churn out short-chain fatty acids – microscopic compounds that help

maintain the integrity of the gut wall. That barrier is supposed to be porous to let nutrients through, but if it's too porous, that can lead to inflammation. They also have anti-inflammatory properties and can promote brain health.

You should feed those two types well, because if there's not enough food in your system, they'll turn to a secondary source of nutrients.

"They will actually start to eat your gut mucus," explains Professor Gibbons. If that happens, many bacteria in your gut will suddenly be seen by your immune system as outside agents, setting off a response that can lead to inflammatory bowel disease and other gut problems.

## SIGNS YOUR GUT IS OUT OF BALANCE



### You have a stubborn bowel condition

Crohn's disease and ulcerative colitis – known together as inflammatory bowel disease (IBD) – cause inflammation and breaks in the lining of the intestines, leading to pain, diarrhoea and weight loss. IBD affects more than six million people worldwide and according to Dr Eugene Chang, director of the Microbiome Medicine Programme at the University of Chicago, its exact cause is unknown. But researchers believe affected people

are genetically predisposed to an overactive immune system, and that their microbiome changes in subtle ways to prefer bacteria that thrive in that inflammatory environment. “Those bacteria further activate the immune system. It’s a vicious cycle that eventually triggers IBD.”

IBS, which is much more common and affects up to 11 per cent of people worldwide, shares many symptoms with IBD but without the inflammation and ulcerations.

### Your medicine doesn't work

The medicines doctors prescribe for various conditions don't always work, and in some cases, the gut microbiome may be to blame. Just as microbes break down the fibre and starches in our food, they can also break down pharmaceuticals, making them act unpredictably.

In fact, a 2019 study from researchers at the Yale University School of Medicine looked at 271 drugs taken orally and found that the gut microbiome affected two-thirds of them, with the bacteria consuming about 20 per cent of their active ingredients.

This effect on medicine has even larger implications for cancer treatment. Recently, researchers found that the gut microbiome can affect the progression of some types of cancer, and that it also affects who responds to immunotherapy and bone marrow transplants.

All of the above has given birth to

a new field: pharmacomicrobiomics, the study of how your gut microbiome affects a drug's actions. In ten to 15 years, your doctor may be able to test your microbiome through a stool sample and then modulate the dose – or possibly prescribe a probiotic – to make your pills work better.

### You struggle with your weight

“Two decades ago, we thought that obesity and metabolic disorders were all about how much you ate,” says Chang. “But it turns out that the gut microbiome seems to play an important role.”

The connection is clearest in mice: when researchers from the Washington University School of Medicine transplanted stool samples from obese and thin people into the rodents, the animals who received faecal transplants from the obese participants gained more weight and put on more fat than the ones who received them from the healthier participants, even when the mice all ate the same low-fat diet.

There's some evidence from humans, too: for a study two years ago, Belgian researchers gave people who had insulin resistance and were overweight or obese a bacterium that's more common in the guts of lean men. Similar to the mice, the new bacteria lowered participants' insulin resistance, and they lost more weight and fat than a placebo group.

### You're depressed

We think of mood disorders as originating in the brain, but your gut may also be a source of them. A 2019 study found that people with depression had fewer Coprococcus and Dialister than most people. Other research has found that mice that receive stool transplants from depressed humans get depressed, too.

Could changing someone's gut microbiome improve their mental health? The research is still emerging, but a 2017 study found promising results.

### You have allergies

A diverse microbiome can help regulate your immune system, especially early in life. So if your immune system is hypersensitive because of your particular microbiome, it increases your chances of having allergies, asthma and eczema. That's why exposure to a variety of bacteria from a young age is so important. Kids who are born naturally are less likely to have allergies than those born by C-section, as are people who are raised on farms, have pets or grow up with older siblings in the house.

According to B. Brett Finlay, a microbiology professor at the University of British Columbia and author of *Let Them Eat Dirt*, antibiotic use can have a big impact: as it wipes out the bacteria making you sick, it will also indiscriminately wipe out bacteria that keep your gut diverse and healthy.

That raises the risk your gut microbiome will be inadequate for preventing the conditions that cause allergies, asthma and eczema.

The impact of a less diverse gut persists into adulthood. When researchers with the American Gut Project analysed the microbiomes of more than 1800 people with allergies, they found those with seasonal and nut allergies had less diversity in their gut.

### HOW YOU CAN IMPROVE YOUR GUT



There isn't one magic prescription for everyone, though researchers are hopeful that within five years, microbiome tests will be detailed enough to prescribe personalised probiotics or make other patient-specific recommendations. But there are some changes that can help right now.

#### 1 Eat more fibre

One of the most well-proven connections between lifestyle and gut health is that eating more fibre creates a better microbiome. Fibre is the main food source for the most important gut bacteria, so not getting enough starves them, and many of them die. That means they may produce fewer short-chain fatty acids and other important components of your diet, and begin consuming your gut's mucus lining.

It is recommended that you >>



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## READER'S DIGEST

eat 25 to 30 grams of fibre each day. To do this, focus on eating five servings of vegetables and two of fruit each day, as well as a whole-grain carbohydrate at every meal.

### 2 Diversify your diet

Your overall goal should be to create a diverse gut microbiome. If you eat a large variety of foods, including many different types and colours of fruit and vegetables, that variety will promote a healthy gut.

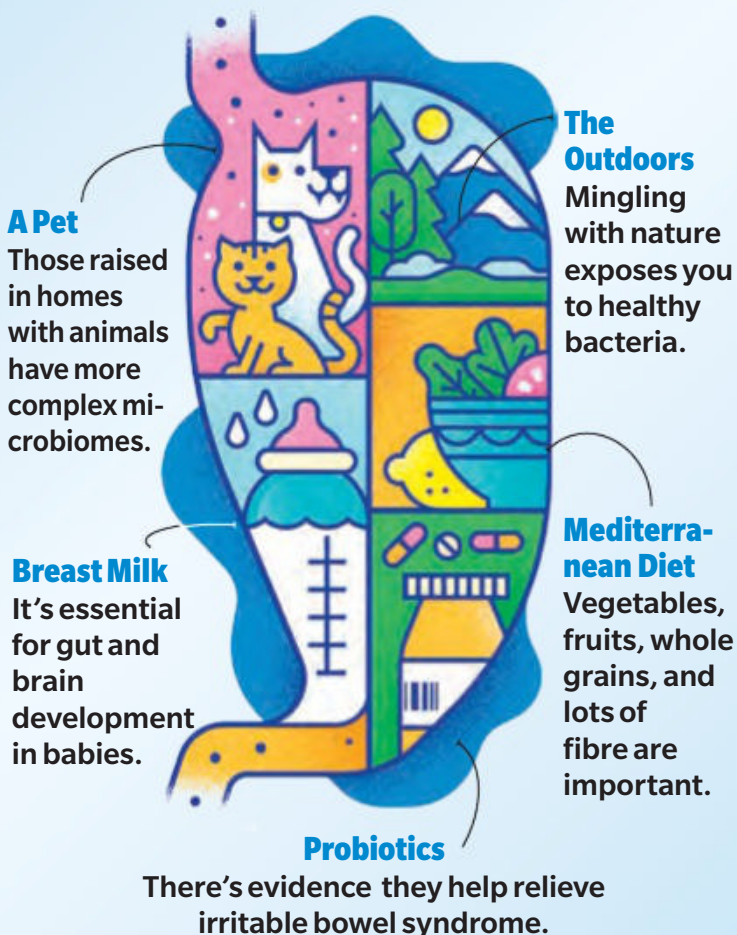
On the other hand, high-fat processed foods deplete healthy bacterial strains, says Dr Chang.

### 3 Go easy on antibiotics

Antibiotics are a lifesaver when needed, but they tend to throw our gut microbiome off balance by killing even the healthy bacteria that help maintain the gut wall. Usually, they are able to crowd out bacteria that can make you sick, but when antibiotics do their job of destruction, bad bacteria can take over before the good have a chance to re-establish themselves.

The clue that something is wrong is often diarrhoea.

## ELEMENTS OF A HAPPY GUT



### 4 Consider probiotics

Probiotics may protect against diarrhoea when we travel to countries where the bacteria in the food and water are different from at home.

### 5 Stay active

Regular exercise improves your gut microbiome. A study from Spain, found that women who exercised three hours a week – even just brisk walking – improved the composition of their gut microbiome. **R**

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# NO ESCAPE!

*The avalanche that roared over Ken Scott  
was so heavy he could barely inhale.  
Death was just a matter of time*

---

BY *Robert Kiener*

ILLUSTRATIONS BY **MARK SMITH**



**DRAMA IN REAL LIFE**



**K**en Scott kicked off his blankets and leapt out of bed at his home in the Rocky Mountain town of Mullan, Idaho.

It was 6am on January 7, 2020, and he was on a mission: he'd just heard on the radio that Silver Mountain Resort had been blessed with more than 40 centimetres of new snow. A self-confessed ski addict who'd worked in the industry for the last 30 years as a ski patroller and equipment salesperson, there was no way Ken was going to miss this 'big dump' of powder. It's what skiers live for – even veterans like Ken who, at 57, still skied 100 days a year. His wife, Ruth, spent just as much time on the slopes, but she wouldn't be able to join him.

When he reached Silver Mountain's locker room, Ken bumped into his friend Rebecca Hurlen-Patano, 59, a former ski instructor who had been a regular on these slopes for more than two decades. She and her husband ran a coffee roasting company but she skied whenever she could. The fit, fun-loving member of Ken's 'ski posse' also couldn't resist the lure of

new snow. "Can you believe it?" she asked Ken as they changed into their boots.

"Forty centimetres! Are you ready?"

For the next hour the pair skied on various runs under a lightly overcast sky, making fresh tracks. They were both in a playful mood, bantering as they tackled the steep runs. Once when they were heading up in the lift, they noticed that the 1900-metre-high Wardner Peak, home to the challenging '16-to-1' expert-only run and other steep trails, was now open to skiers. It had been closed all season, but this morning 13 explosive charges had been set off on the peak to clear loose snow from its upper slopes. This was to help prevent avalanches. There was no direct chair lift to 16-to-1 so skiers reached it by traversing through deep snow and trees. "What do you think?" asked Rebecca.

"Let's go for it!" Ken replied.

Making their way through heavy snow, Ken and Rebecca recognised other Silver Mountain 'regulars' also heading for the run. They waved to Warren Kays, 68, Bill Fuzak, 62, and Carl Humphreys, 58. Everyone was

excited to be the first this season to ski the steep, powder-rich slope. After the others turned and dropped in to the run, Rebecca paused, looked back at Ken and asked, "How about here? Shall we go?" His blue eyes danced and with a huge, toothy grin on his bearded face he answered, "Let's do it!"

**JUST AS REBECCA STARTED** downhill, the snow beneath her gave way. In a millisecond, she realised what was happening. "Heads up! Avalanche!" she shouted to Ken, who had just launched himself into the run behind her. He responded, fear in his voice, "This is happening!"

Instantly, both were hit by heavy slabs of snow that would pummel and carry them some 152 metres down the mountain. For Rebecca, it felt as if the snow under her skis had turned into cottage cheese, heaving up in waves yet at the same time down like a waterfall. She felt it enclose her, moving quickly up her back and over her shoulders, then heavy against her neck. Snow filled the space in front of her and piled up around her thighs. She was engulfed.

Ken too was swept downhill as his feet were ripped out from under

him. He remembered the avalanche survival lessons he'd learned as a ski patroller: keep your head up. Try to swim. Stay on top of the snow. But the snow was too powerful and it tumbled him like a load of clothes inside a washing machine. When he finally

came to rest he was lying on his left side and almost completely buried, skis and poles still attached. But through the half-metre or so of snow on top, he could see daylight, and he could move his right hand and forearm. In his cocoon, he cleared snow from his face and told himself, *shallow burial. I can breathe. I am alive. Stay composed.*

Rebecca had ended up partially buried in a tight squatting position. She scooped snow away, managed to pull herself out – and then her rescue training kicked in. She looked uphill to where she'd last seen Ken and shouted his name. She was relieved when his pole

poked through the snow in response – he was about three metres away. She also called to Bill and Warren, and located them further down the slope. They were partially buried but had survived. She had no idea where Carl was.



**Ken Scott and his long-time friend Rebecca Hurlen-Patano had both had avalanche survival training**

**KEN HAD BEEN PARTIALLY BURIED** by avalanches when he'd worked in avalanche control at a couple of Rocky Mountain ski resorts, but this was the worst he'd ever experienced. He couldn't move much under the weight of the snow. Still, he felt confident he could survive this: Rebecca now knew where he was, and rescue was just a matter of waiting. With his free right hand he cleared half a metre of snow above his face for breathing room. This was crucial; under the snow, typically it takes just 30 minutes to die if oxygen is not replaced. He knew that breathing exhaled carbon dioxide for too long was poisonous. So as he had been taught, he focused on oxygenating – taking small breaths to conserve oxygen – thinking positive thoughts, staying calm.

Though adrenaline coursed through her body, Rebecca knew she had to reach the skiers and get them uncovered quickly so they could breathe. She focused on thinking about the basics. *We are alive. Be fast. And stay in control.*

It had been several minutes since the avalanche had struck. Because she knew Ken was OK, Rebecca crawled downhill to help Bill Fuzak first, who was buried up to his neck. As she knelt above him scooping snow from his face, suddenly the air exploded.

*Whoomph!* It was a sound nobody who has ever heard it can forget: a massive avalanche, much bigger than the first one. Tonnes more snow came

tumbling down the mountain and before Rebecca could even turn around, she was slammed in the back by a wall of snow. She was tossed over Fuzak's head and carried another six metres downhill. Once again, she was only partially buried; luckily, most of the snow had gone over her body and continued down the hill.

This time, after she freed herself, she looked up the mountain and was terrified to realise the landscape had been completely transformed. There were massive new mounds of snow where there had been none at all. All her points of reference had disappeared. Worst of all, there were no signs of Ken, Bill or Warren. And Carl hadn't reappeared. This time her friends had truly been buried alive.

When Ken Scott heard the roar, he immediately thought the unthinkable. *A second avalanche. I'm dead.* While it didn't budge him from where he'd been trapped, there was so much more snow piled on him – 2.5 metres of it – that his world had gone completely black, completely silent.

That wasn't the only difference. Now he was totally immobile, and the breathing space he'd cleared before was gone. Still laying on his left side, tonnes of snow pressed on him so heavily that he couldn't move anything but his eyelids beneath his goggles and his toes inside his boots. He couldn't even twitch a finger, let alone move his right arm as he'd been able to before. It was like he'd been



paralysed, cemented in snow. Even worse, it prevented him from expanding his chest enough to take a full breath. He gasped for small gulps of air.

Still, he knew what he had to do to try to survive a second time: first, he shut his eyes – he preferred images in his mind to the empty darkness. He created a mental checklist of what he was still wearing, from head to toe: hat, goggles, gloves, poles, boots, skis. That meant there was nothing up top for rescuers to see. Since patrollers had no idea where the group had been skiing, Rebecca was the only person who could locate him. But was she OK, or was she buried too? He also knew his chances of survival were small; about three-quarters of avalanche victims die from asphyxia or suffocation. He'd have a 90 per cent chance of survival if rescue came within 15 minutes, but only about a 30 per cent chance if he was under the snow for 30 minutes.

Ken tried to fight back panic but when he thought about his family, of his wife Ruth and his daughter, Tash, and the grandkids, he felt helpless, doomed. This was not the way he wanted to die.

His training had taught him that panicking was not only useless but dangerous. It used up valuable air.



**Wardner Peak features steep runs, including the '16-to-1' that was struck by the avalanches**

Yet he let out a mighty, anguished scream into the silence. *"Ahhhhhh!"*

**REBECCA UNZIPPED HER PARKA** and pulled out her phone. She didn't have the number for ski patrol headquarters but she did know some staffers' numbers. She called Ernie Silva, a patroller she'd seen earlier. He was also a friend of Ken Scott. "Hey! Ruby!" He answered, using her nickname, "Long time, no see. How..."

She cut him off. "There has been an avalanche at 16-to-1 and Ken is in it. Bring help!"

She also called her friend Joan Wroe, a volunteer ski patroller. Joan told her she had already heard about the emergency on ski patrol radio and was on her way. Word spread quickly and Silver Mountain's patrollers and skiers were heading to the avalanche



**Ski patrollers and volunteers use three-metre poles to probe for victims**

site with shovels and three-metre poles to probe for bodies.

Rebecca's final call was a quick one to her husband, Terry. She told him about the avalanche and said, "I'm OK but can't talk. Please don't call me back. I have to help!" Alone on the mountainside, she used her gloved hands to dig frantically at the hard-packed snow. Her friends' lives, she knew, depended on her.

Ken Scott drifted between terror and panic, two things he hadn't felt the first time he was buried. This second burial was much worse. His ribcage was so compressed, he could take only tiny breaths, using his diaphragm to force in air. He fought to stay positive by focusing on this breathing.

But then he'd try to move his head or a finger and when he couldn't, he'd panic again. With so much more

snow on top of him, he feared ski patrollers wouldn't be able to locate him. His time was ticking away. He thought of his tight-knit group of friends who called themselves 'the boys'—three of whom were world-class skiers who had lost their lives in a massive avalanche at Tunnel Creek in Washington state eight years earlier. *This is the end*, he thought. *I'm going to join the boys.*

About ten minutes after the second avalanche, the huge debris field on 16-to-1 was abuzz with some 50 rescuers, includ-

ing red-coated ski patrollers and volunteers. Like a commander marshalling her troops, Rebecca stayed calm and pointed out where she thought her friends were buried. Rescuers formed a line along the slope – each standing just 60 centimetres apart – and inserted their probes down into the deep snow, hoping to hit and locate the skiers. A patroller stood above the probe line and repeatedly called out: "Probe right! Probe centre! Probe left! Step forward!"

**FORTY MINUTES INTO THE SEARCH** a rescuer shouted, "A strike!" Bill Fuzak, unconscious but alive, was dug out of more than three metres of snow. Seeing Bill's location, Rebecca now had a better idea where Ken might be buried. She pointed to a spot some three metres further

up and, pumped with adrenaline, screamed at the rescuers, "There! Move there! Faster!"

Ken, struggling to get oxygen, was frustrated. *I should be dead by now. Why is this dragging on so long? A new feeling of warmth that he knew was a sign of hypothermia reassured him. I'll be asleep soon, and this hell will be over.* Then, a slight pressure on his right hip. A probe?

His mind stood still. A minute passed, then two. Nothing. He'd been trained how to use a rescue probe and knew that if a rescuer hits something, they leave the probe in place as a marker. But the probe was gone and his flicker of hope vanished. They've moved along the grid. My one in a million chance.

Suddenly, vibrations. The pressure on his body seemed to be changing. *Was that the sound of shovels hitting snow?* He started screaming.

In five minutes rescuers had uncovered Ken's face, goggles still on. He gulped in deep breaths of fresh air and saw the grey sky above – along with 30 or 40 people standing over him smiling, while others continued to dig him free.

He couldn't believe it. He had survived two avalanches.

As Ken's arms were freed, he spotted Rebecca among his rescuers and pulled her down on top of him, almost

squeezing the breath out of her.

"Ken, you've got to let go," she told him firmly, as joy and relief filled her. "We have to get you out of here and get you help."

He smiled his toothy grin and continued hugging her. "I can't let go."

While Ken Scott, Bill Fuzak and Warren Kays survived, three other skiers, including Carl Humphreys, lost their lives. Ken suffered no major medical injuries in his ordeal, although he and Rebecca have suffered from a form of post-traumatic stress syndrome and both received mental health counselling to deal with it.

Just nine days after his rescue, Ken Scott was back skiing on Silver Mountain. **R**

### Rescuers dig double-avalanche survivor Ken Scott out of what he feared would be his snowy grave



## LIFE'S LIKE THAT

### *Seeing The Funny Side*



"I'm from the future. You left the toaster on."

### **Traffic Stop**

The police pulled me over the other night and I recognised the officer.

"Do you remember me?" I asked.  
"You used to play with my son."

"I don't remember you," he said.  
"But I do remember you just driving 65 in a 50-kilometre zone."

SUBMITTED BY MISIR DOOBAY

### **Nine-Month Miracle**

My wife and I were at the hospital for her toe surgery, so she asked for a wheelchair. As we made our way

to her appointment, one nurse approached us and said, "Congratulations."

It turned out the wheelchair was labelled 'maternity'. We are 89 and 90 years old.

SUBMITTED BY GEORGE LAHODA

### **Not So Yummy**

After being told that it's rude to call his dinner "gross", our four year old is finding increasingly creative ways to express himself: "This tastes unlucky to me."

"This sends my mouth

into outer space."

"Cauliflower is," as he pinches his fingers together, "this much delicious." ALIX E. HARROW, AUTHOR

### **Mirror, Mirror**

I said to my life partner, "Honey, I looked in the mirror the other day and all I saw was an ugly old man. I need you to give me a compliment."

"All right, then," she said. "Your eyesight is damn-near perfect."

NORM MACDONALD, COMEDIAN

## Deserves A Medal

My eight-year-old son had started to complain he had a sore, itchy foot. So I took him to a pharmacy and they soon diagnosed athlete's foot and sent us away with some cream to apply each evening.

A few nights later, as I tucked him into bed, he suddenly called out, "You forgot to put on the cream for my Olympic foot!"

SUBMITTED BY JENNIE GARDNER



## AHEAD OF THE SERVE

Every Friday, my husband and I have ice cream as our treat.

Last Thursday, while watching TV, I suggested that it would be nice to have ice cream, to which he replied, "Well, it's Friday somewhere."

SUBMITTED BY JACQUELINE VACHERESSE



## THE GREAT TWEET-OFF: SPORTS EDITION



### These tweets game to please.

"Toughen up!" I yell to my kids from the car as they shiver on the field at soccer training.

@FUNNYISFAMILY

When I said I was a bad tennis player, I meant evil.

@LEEMANNISH

My son's high school soccer team has won only one game in two years, and it was to a team that wasn't sure how many players should be on the field.

@HOUSEWIFEOFHELL

"I ran a half marathon" sounds so much better than "I quit halfway through a marathon".

@RICKAARON

If I throw my son a tennis ball, he drops it. A rugby ball, he fumbles. But if I toss him a mobile phone, my man has a sick one-handed, no look.

@SHRINKMEDIA

*I Am The*  
**FOOD ON  
YOUR PLATE**



# *I Am Nutmeg*

## *Sweet And Aromatic*



BY *Diane Godley*

**Y**ou would never guess by simply looking at me, a hard, brown, crinkly seed, that I was once such a fought-over commodity that Manhattan Island (where part of New York now stands) was swapped in a deal to secure a monopoly on my trade. But wait, let me introduce myself: I am nutmeg, I am

one of the most important spices in history.

Native to the Banda Islands, a tiny volcanic archipelago situated in the Banda Sea between Indonesia and West Papua, I was introduced to Constantinople by Arabian traders in the sixth century, where they kept my source top secret so they could charge outrageous prices. However,

I am also mentioned in Indian Hindu scriptures as early as 1500 BCE and in China in 3 CE, where I was used to treat headache, fevers, bad breath and digestive problems.

By the 12th century, I had made my way to Europe, with my distinctive fragrance and warm aromatic flavour bewitching the wealthy, who simply couldn't get enough of me. Food, such as meat, fish, soup, sweets and wine, was richly spiced, and during banquets a spice platter was passed to guests who could add extra seasonings to their already heavily spiced meal.

By the early 1500s, the Portuguese had discovered where I grew and, setting themselves up on a nearby island, stockpiled me, as well as my sister spice, mace, making us more widely available

and affordable. One hundred years later, the indomitable Dutch East India Trading Company (DEITC) seized control of all the Banda islands (now belonging to Indonesia) bar one, Rhun island. This tiny coconut-fringed island, just three kilometres by one kilometre, had been claimed by the English. But as the DEITC wanted a monopoly on the spice trade, they swapped Manhattan Island for the tiny spice island.

I grow best on humid, tropical islands with sandy soil. Rival countries

knew this and made use of their island colonies to smuggle me there and start their own plantations. In the 1770s, French spice traders smuggled a few of my trees (*Myristica fragrans*) to Mauritius. This paved the way for the English who, some 70 years later, planted my trees in West Indies. Today, the West Indies is the second largest producer of nutmeg and mace after Indonesia.

My trees grow to 20 metres and can bear fruit for more than 60 years. The fruit looks similar to an apricot. When it is fully matured, it

### MY DISTINCTIVE FRAGRANCE AND FLAVOUR BEWITCHED WEALTHY EUROPEANS

splits in two, exposing the crimson-coloured aril (mace) which surrounds a single brown seed (me). To extract me I need to be dried. First, the crimson aril is removed, which is then flattened and dried to make mace. The seed

is then dried for six to eight weeks, where I shrink away from the hard, outer-seed casing. When the kernel rattles in the shell when shaken, the shell is ready to be cracked open with a wooden truncheon and I am finally exposed.

I am best stored in a cool, dry place away from sunlight. When whole I can keep for many years, even decades, but I should be used immediately once grated.

Medicinally, I am used to aid digestion and sleep. For culinary purposes,

I am used to add an aromatic warmth in both sweet and savoury dishes, including fruit, baked goods, casseroles, meat, seafood and vegetables. I can be used whole in cooking and removed before serving, or grated over dishes.

My flavour can be quite overwhelming, so best use me sparingly.

Another reason to use me in small doses is that I have psychoactive effects causing hallucination if consumed in large amounts. **R**

### SPICY SWEET POTATO & PUMPKIN SOUP

#### Ingredients

- 1kg sweet potato and pumpkin, peeled and cubed (use about half:half, or more of one veg, as per your taste)
- 1 onion, diced
- 2 garlic cloves, peeled and crushed
- 1 tbs olive oil
- 2 tsp ground coriander
- 2 tsp cumin
- 1 tbs smoked paprika
- ½ tsp freshly ground nutmeg
- ½ tsp chilli flakes (optional)
- 1.5 L (6 cups) chicken or vegetable stock
- Pinch salt and sugar (optional)
- Sour cream or yoghurt, to serve (optional)
- Coriander or parsley

#### Method

1. Heat oil in a large pot over medium heat and sauté onions.
2. Add garlic, nutmeg and other dried spices, cook for 30 seconds or until aromatic.
3. Add sweet potato and pumpkin and toss in spices to cover. Cook for a couple of minutes but be careful not to burn the spices.
4. Add stock and bring to a boil, then simmer, with lid on, until vegetables are soft.
5. Puree soup using a stick mixer, or in batches using a food processor, until smooth.
6. Return to pot over low heat. Taste and add salt, sugar or more spices to taste.
7. Serve in soup bowls with a dollop of cream or yoghurt and garnish with coriander or parsley leaves.





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“Now almost a year later, it has changed my life, I have saved a fortune in toilet paper and, I see going to the toilet as a time of luxury.

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ON YOUR  
LAPTOP?  
TURN IT  
UPSIDE  
DOWN**



PHOTOS: (COMPUTER) GETTY IMAGES. (WATER, GLASS) SHUTTERSTOCK

# *We Found A* **Fix**

*Try these 16 tips and tricks  
to improve your life*

BY *The Editors*



## HEALTH

### **MAKE A 'BACK WEDGE' FOR YOUR CHAIRS**

The problem with most chairs is that they're too soft or too deep. That forces your lower back into a slouched, C-shaped position, which

can lead to pain. To help your posture, roll a jumper, blanket, pillow or towel into a makeshift wedge and place it in the middle of your seat. Then sit on the front part of the wedge with your legs at a 120-degree angle (not 90 degrees). This will help tip your pelvis forward and let your knees sit comfortably lower than your thighs.

### GET POTASSIUM THE SMART WAY

People who need to add more potassium to their diet – which helps relieve muscle cramps, reduce blood pressure and prevent osteoporosis – usually know to load up on bananas. Surprisingly, a banana a day will deliver only about ten per cent of the recommended dose of this important mineral. But white beans, with an impressive 700 mg of potassium in one cup provides twice as much potassium as a banana. Other good sources include watermelon, tomato paste and Swiss chard.

### BREW YOUR TEA COLD

Tea is full of antioxidants, which boost your immune system. Instead of sipping a hot cuppa, brew it cold as levels of antioxidant are higher when tea is brewed with cold water.

## BEAUTY

### CLEAN YOUR TEETH ON THE GO

There's a reason apples are known as nature's toothbrush – food that is firm or crisp help clean teeth as they're eaten. If you know you won't be able to brush your teeth right after eating, you might want to save a 'cleaning food' for the end of your meal. Other choices include raw carrots, celery and unbuttered popcorn.



### BRUSH YOUR HAIR FROM THE BOTTOM

It seems natural to start brushing at the top of your head, but that just drags your top tangles into the knots further down the shaft, making them even worse.

Start brushing or combing at the bottom of your hair, then slowly work your way up.

### KEEP FRAGRANCES REFRIGERATED

If you wish the scent of your eau de toilette or cologne to last longer, store it in the fridge. It keeps the fragrance longer, and is refreshing on the skin on summer days. But take note: very cold temperatures can upset the balance of some delicate perfumes.



## We Found A Fix



## CAR

### REMEMBER WHERE YOU PARKED

Once you've pulled into your spot, open the Google Maps app on your phone and tap your location (marked by the blue dot). Choose 'Set As Parking Location', and the address will become a plot on the map marked by a P.

You'll never lose your car again – as long as you don't lose your phone.

### DON'T USE DISH DETERGENT ON YOUR VEHICLE

Is your car's exterior fading? You might be washing it with the wrong cleaning solution. Though many

people use dish washing detergent on their cars, it can strip out the waxes, oils and resins that protect the paint from ultraviolet light. It is better to invest in an authentic car wash solution, which is designed to get rid of dirt and grease without removing the surface waxes and oils from the paint.

### HELP YOUR WIPERS LAST

If your windshield wipers don't seem to be doing their job, it's possible that they've picked up some sort of particulate that keeps them from staying flat on the glass. You'll have to replace them eventually, but you can extend their life by scraping off the residue.

Simply run a nail file up and down each blade thoroughly.



## TRAVEL

### REDUCE WRINKLES WITHOUT AN IRON

If your hotel room doesn't have an iron, try this trick to get the worst of the wrinkles out.

On a flat surface, place a damp towel over the wrinkled clothing and press down to smooth out deep creases. Then hang to air dry. You can also use the hotel kettle. When the water is boiling, hold your clothing item about 30 centimetres away from the steam.

### TAKE A PHOTO OF YOUR PASSPORT

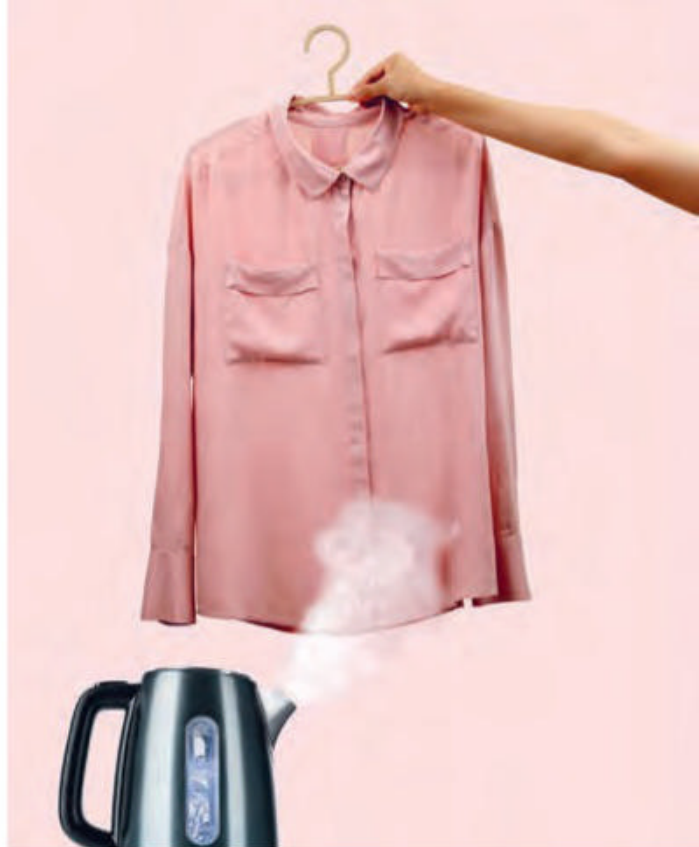
It may be your most important document, but it's best not to carry your passport with you every day you're travelling. Take a photo of it so you can access it if needed. When shopping and filling out tax reclaim forms, you can often use the photo in stores.



## TECHNOLOGY

### HELP YOUR LAPTOP SURVIVE A BATH

If you have spilled a drink on your laptop, turn it off completely, wipe it dry with a towel, and then open



it and turn it upside down to let the liquid drip out. The longer you can leave it that way (up to 24 hours), the better.

And that tip you might have heard about burying a device in rice to suck out the moisture? Don't use it with a computer. The rice grains could harm the system.

### CHARGE YOUR PHONE FASTER

To boost your battery more quickly when charging, turn on aeroplane mode. That pauses your phone's 'background noise' (such as random notifications and GPS roaming), which tends to drain the battery.

The extra power won't be much, but when you're in a hurry, every little bit helps.



## HOME

### USE ESSENTIAL OILS TO DEODORISE

Looking for a way to eliminate nasty bathroom smells that doesn't require a daily spray? Place five or so drops of any essential oil on the inside of the cardboard toilet paper roll, and voilà! Every time someone grabs some paper, the movement will reactivate the pleasant but not over-the-top scent.

### USE MICROFIBRE CLOTHS ON WINDOWS

Your mother might have taught you that cleaning windows with newspapers would make the glass shiny and streak-free. While it's true that

newsprint doesn't leave lint behind the way paper towels do, it can tear easily if oversaturated and doesn't pick up dirt and residue well. For a surefire way to get spotless windows, dilute rubbing alcohol or vinegar 50/50 with water, dab the mixture onto a microfibre cloth, and wipe away grime.

### GIVE CLEANSERS TIME TO WORK

When you're cleaning a table, an appliance or benchtop, let the cleansing agent sit at least ten minutes before wiping to give it enough time to cut through grime and disinfect the surface. Be sure to saturate hard surfaces so the cleanser doesn't dry and leave spots before you wipe. Toilet cleaners need up to half an hour. **R**







**SEE THE WORLD...**

Turn the page »





## ...DIFFERENTLY

**A SNOW-WHITE BEACH** as far as the eye can see! Shell Beach in Western Australia stretches for more than 70 kilometres inside the Shark Bay World Heritage area. The name says it all, because what is sparkling in the sunlight here is not sand but billions of tiny shells up to ten metres deep. They all come from a single species of mollusc, the Shark Bay cockle. In the past, these were pressed and cut into blocks to build houses in the nearby town of Denham.

PHOTOS: GETTY IMAGES/  
ISTOCKPHOTO

# LAUGHTER

## *The Best Medicine*



### Friendly Game

Sandy began a job as a school counsellor and was eager to help. One day, she noticed a girl standing by herself at one end of a playing field while the rest of the kids enjoyed a game of soccer at the other.

Sandy approached the girl and asked if she was all right. The girl said she was. But a little while later, Sandy noticed the girl in the same spot, still by herself. Approaching again, Sandy offered, "Would you like me to be your friend?"

"OK," said the girl, looking at Sandy suspiciously.

Feeling she was making progress, Sandy then asked, "Why are you standing here all alone?"

"Because," said the girl with great exasperation, "I'm the goalie!"

Coursehero.com

### Paying It Forward

A woman was getting swamped with calls from strangers because a billing service had launched a number that was identical to hers. When she called the service to complain, she was told to get a new number.

"I've had mine for 20 years," she pleaded. "Couldn't you change yours?"

The company refused, so she said, "Fine. From now on, I'm going to tell everyone who calls that their bill is paid in full."

GCFL.NET

### Knock! Knock!

**Q:** Who's there?

**A:** Control Freak.

**Q:** Con...

**A:** OK, now you say, "Control Freak who?"

RD

CARTOON: MARY LAWTON/THE CARTOON BANK

## Doesn't Add Up

**Paul:** "I've got problems with maths."

**Michael:** "Me too."

**Eric:** "Yeah, that makes four of us."

## No Safety In Numbers

Did you hear about the mathematician who's afraid of negative numbers? He'll stop at nothing to avoid them.

RD

## Build Up

What's the fastest growing city in the world? The capital of Ireland. It's Dublin every day.

Seen online



## Moral Two The Story

Young Billy and Willy were walking home from Sunday school where they had just learned about Noah's Ark.

Willy asked, "Do you think Noah did much fishing?"

"How could he?" said Billy. "He only had two worms." [Theadvocate.com](#)

## COW JOKES TO LIGHTEN YOUR MOO-D

*These legen-dairy cow jokes should do the trick.*



**Q:** What did the mama cow say to the baby cow?

**A:** It's pasture bedtime.

[Buzzfeed.com](#)

**I'm looking now but I can't see the cows at the moment, they must be camouflaged.**

[@balatacarter](#)

**Q:** Where do cows eat lunch?

**A:** In the calf-eteria.

[Thoughtcatalog.com](#)

**Q:** Why was the cow so afraid of messing up?

**A:** Because the steaks were high.

[Thoughtcatalog.com](#)

**Q:** What subjects are a cow's favourite?

**A:** Moosic, psycowlogy and cowculus.

[@KtizoCrafts](#)

**Q:** What do you call a sleeping bull?

**A:** A bulldozer.

[Reddit.](#)

# *A Lesson In* ***Creativity***

*A documentary on the world's  
most influential band reveals how to  
tap into your own creativity*

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BY *Zoë Meunier*



## IMAGINATION



**I**t's early January 1969, and four friends sit together in a sparsely furnished film studio in the London suburb of Twickenham. Their winter coats are draped over the backs of their plain wooden chairs, which are positioned round a range of guitars, a drum set and a black grand piano with its lid open. A large rectangular amplifier completes this otherwise large empty space.

Paul McCartney, John Lennon, George Harrison and Ringo Starr, The Beatles, have an ambitious agenda - to write and rehearse 14 songs for a new album that they plan to perform in their final live concert on the rooftop of the Apple Studio in London's Savile Row on January 30. The album is *Let It Be*.

Much has been said about what went down during those 21 days, shot by filmmaker Michael Lindsay-Hogg. But since the November 2021 release of New Zealand filmmaker Peter

Jackson's three-part documentary, *The Beatles: Get Back*, in which he used unused footage and audio recordings from these sessions, the Fab Four's lasting musical legacy is again a hot topic of conversation. Over eight hours, viewers get a fly-on-the-wall perspective of the group's creative song-making process. What we witness is a lesson on how to maximise our own creativity.

### **ALL YOU NEED IS... SILLINESS**

The Beatles were experts in larking about, having fun and being spectacularly silly. Rarely do we see bickering in Jackson's film, despite the widely-held belief that the band was at loggerheads at this point in their career. Instead, while clearly aware of their tight deadline, they are also relaxed with the task at hand.

"It shows the four of us having a ball," Paul McCartney told *The Sunday Times* after watching the series. "It was

so reaffirming for me. That was one of the important things about The Beatles, we could make each other laugh... John and I are in this footage doing 'Two Of Us' and, for some reason, we've decided to do it like ventriloquists. It's hilarious. It just proves to me that my main memory of the Beatles was the joy and the skill."

According to Professor Barbara Doran, a lecturer in creativity and innovation at Sydney's University of Technology and author of *Creative Reboot*, being fun-loving and playful are core traits of creative people.

"Play is vital to learning, adapting, finding new possibilities and connecting socially," says Professor Doran, referencing the work of leading psychiatrist and play expert Dr Stuart Brown, who maintains that society needs to re-evaluate the role of play. "It's become something we associate with childishness or childhood, but it's actually so important to ongoing happiness, and creativity and vitality in our lives."

Actor and comedian John Cleese has also spoken extensively on the importance of goofing around in the creative process and the importance of being in 'open' mode, rather than worried about delivering and doing.

"We might be mucking around, we might be experimenting, but we're actually tuning in to all kinds of stuff," explains Professor Doran. "Then, when you get to a point where you actually have to do something in a really

focused way, you bring all that intel into those moments of action."

**What The Beatles did:** They dived deep into silly voices, danced around, went off on playful tangents.

**What you can do:** Have fun and experiment by yourself and with others BUT hold back with the judgement. Just go with the flow and see what comes up.

### NOWHERE MAN

Equally important to the time spent mucking around, were the many moments the band spent in downtime, simply hanging out, drinking cups of tea, reading newspapers and not doing much of anything. While these weren't the most riveting parts of the documentary, they are also crucial to inspiring creativity - particularly in a group setting.

"Just 'having time' is so important," says Professor Doran. "We often think downtime is a waste of time, but there's all this synthesis and connection and subtle things happening inside our brain, inside our bodies and between each other ... we're tuning into each other, things that may have happened in the larking around or focused periods of activity get a chance to be metabolised."

One notable moment of intense focus occurs when Paul McCartney starts conjuring up the song 'Get Back' out of nowhere, simply by drawing into himself, singing and playing over and over and almost 'willing' it into existence.





**The Beatles perform an unannounced concert in January 1969 on the rooftop of London's Apple Studios**

Professor Doran describes this as being in a flow state, a concept popularised by psychologist Mihaly Csikszentmihalyi.

“[Being in flow] is where you’re in this state of being completely immersed in whatever it is you’re doing,” she says. “You lose sense of time and you are so in the zone that the world kind of becomes one. When you find what works for you, you can find how it’s easy to be creative.”

Paul McCartney has spoken of experiencing this when he was composing the song ‘Blackbird’. He said that the words and music had tumbled out as if they had come into being without any conscious effort.

**What The Beatles did:** They broke up moments of intense concentration, focus and ‘flow’, with dedicated downtime.

**What you can do:** Don’t work through your lunch and coffee breaks. Instead, take time out to absorb the work you’ve done.

### **WITH A LITTLE HELP FROM OUR FRIENDS**

During the first week of rehearsals, The Beatles were feeling a little stagnant and struggling to find their rhythm. It wasn’t until they invited keyboardist Billy Preston to sit in that they were given a discernible lift. “What Billy gave them was a

## READER'S DIGEST



**The Beatles' 'Let It Be' album cover – the band's 12th and final studio album was released on May 8, 1970, almost a month after they broke up**

rush of excitement, their songs just lift up,” Peter Jackson told Marc Maron’s *WTF* podcast, when recalling the moment he first saw it on film.

Professor Doran says this searching for new stimulus is critical to creative thinkers finding the motivation to push forward. “Being comfortable with making yourself a bit uncomfortable or bringing in something that may or may not work [can often be a] precursor to creativity.”

Billy Preston wasn’t the only collaborator to join the rehearsals. John Lennon’s partner Yoko Ono – who for the most part sat silently by watching – occasionally jumped behind the microphone for some

impromptu vocals. John accompanied her on guitar, while Paul McCartney, happily joined in on the drums.

“That’s serendipity,” says Professor Doran, who marvels at the band’s ability to go with the flow of what’s transpiring around them. “Suddenly, you’ve made a discovery and it’s like, ‘woah, we’ve got a new sound or a new set of lyrics...’ and we never would have found it if we hadn’t given it the opportunity to muck around with it.”

### **What The Beatles did:**

They accepted, embraced

and invited new stimulus and ideas (and people).

**What you can do:** Ask for help. Look outwardly for fresh ideas.

## **MAGICAL MYSTERY TOUR**

The traditional Beatles line-up featured Paul and John writing the songs, Paul on bass guitar, George on lead guitar, John on rhythm guitar and Ringo on drums. But throughout Jackson’s documentary, we see all four members play the piano, Paul play the drums and George write songs. The band’s ability to delve outside their comfort zone of expertise in order to experiment was a key part of their musical and song-writing creative genius.

“There’s always a tweaking, shifting and modifying in the creative space, going beyond where you’re at,” Professor Doran says.

“It’s also an experimentation of the materials they’re playing with, so in this case the sounds and the instruments and the discovery of their medium. It’s part of that whole creative play space.”

Another example of play and experimentation at work was when the band rehearsed George Harrison’s new song ‘Something’. While most of us have grown up singing along to the lyrics “Something in the way she moves/attracts me like no other lover”, George was stuck coming up with the end of that second line. John suggested ‘a cauliflower’. George instead settled on, ‘a pomegranate’.

It makes for a funny clip, but Professor Doran says it once again demonstrates the importance of play – and a willingness to fail.

“If you’re happy to play, you’re happy to fail,” she says. “You’ve got this broad palette of options, so it’s a case of going with whatever is there, but not being so bound to it that you can’t change it.” (In this case, we’re happy he did.)

**What The Beatles did:** They continued to learn, grow and try new things.

**What you can do:** Don’t stick to your comfort zone. Perhaps try a course or class that’s slightly different to anything you’ve done before.

### GETTING BETTER


We’re led to believe that there was a healthy rivalry between Paul and John and that this contributed to the band’s huge creative success. Yet while competition can fuel creativity it’s not an essential component.

“Stuart Brown articulated it best by saying we all have different ways of playing,” says Professor Doran, referring to the Harvard University psychologist and head of the US National Institute of Play. “Some people are naturally drawn to being competitive, they thrive on that sense of outdoing one another.”

However, she adds, there needs to be an understanding that it’s a healthy, creative and collaborative space rather than a destructive, tear-down space.

In 1992’s *The Making of Sgt. Pepper* documentary, Paul said of his and John’s competitiveness, “He’d write ‘Strawberry Fields’. I’d go away and write ‘Penny Lane’. If I’d write ‘I’m Down’, he’d go away and write something similar ... you know, to compete with each other. But ... it was very friendly competition because we were both going to share in the rewards, anyway.”

**What The Beatles did:** They used friendly competition to spur each other on to greatness – ‘getting better all the time’.

**What you can do:** Collaborate so you can grow and learn from your peers, colleagues and mentors. 

## HUMOUR



# *When Life Needs* **A MANUAL**

BY *Richard Glover*

**A**re there things that took you years to discover? It was only a decade ago that someone explained to me about the petrol tank thing. On the dashboard of your car, there's nearly always a drawing of a petrol pump plus an arrow indicating the side

of your car that houses the petrol cap. Bingo. With various cars over 30 years, I'd tried to remember each time I drove in to fill up. I'd crane around, trying to spot it. I'd pull the petrol latch as I drove, hoping the door would spring into view.

It was all pointless. I'd always get

ILLUSTRATION: SAM ISLAND

it wrong, ending up with the hose pulled tight over the car, trying to stretch another millimetre out of the rubber tube so I could lever the nozzle into the tank. That's when I debated whether I should pull even harder on the hose (possible downside: a broken hose, petrol splashing everywhere, my own painful death through fire), or move the car.

Naturally, I never moved the car.

Now, though, I know better. I glance at the ideogram and, whistling a jolly tune, nose my car calmly into the right spot. Life is good. Why didn't someone tell me earlier?

Then, two years ago, I learned how to clean silver with bicarb soda, aluminium foil and hot water. You have some tarnished cutlery or jewellery? No more scrubbing away with silver polish and an old toothbrush. The foil creates a chemical reaction in which all the tarnish instantly flees the silver and ends up on the foil.

I don't know how it works, so don't ask me. But you could clean all the silver in *Downton Abbey* and then, ten minutes later, be sitting in the butler's pantry swapping stories about the lords and ladies upstairs.

Why isn't there some sort of manual given to all of us when we turn 18, explaining both these life lessons?

When it comes to adding to the sum of human happiness, this information is better than designer clothes and first-class flights.

But, lo, what's this? A third revelation arrived just recently. It's information which, had it emerged earlier in my life, would have saved – let me do some mental arithmetic – 174 hours of frustration, bad temper and self-contempt.

Here's the thing: apparently, there's a common standard used by the manufacturers of fitted sheets. They

are designed so that the label goes on either the top left or the bottom right of the mattress.

Align it in this way and you'll never again experience the deep unhappiness of trying to fit the short

end on the long end and the long end on the short end, and then having to start all over again, cursing yourself and lamenting the unfairness of a heartless and unprincipled world.

Of course, even with the new method, you'll probably discover you were trying to fit a queen sheet to a double bed, or a double sheet to a queen bed, so life remains a sub-optimal experience.

Maybe there's a solution to this problem, too. Perhaps there's some trick in which people fold the sheets origami style – the double into a

## COULDN'T SOMEONE WRITE A BOOK CONTAINING THE FULL LIST OF TRICKS?

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peacock, the queen into a poodle - ready to put on the beds.

Who knows? My only certainty: there is so much wisdom I have yet to receive.

Is there a way, for instance, of packing an esky so that the meat doesn't end up wet? Or a way to make compost in which it all doesn't turn into bug-filled sludge?

And is it possible to install 12-volt lights in the back garden without rats chewing through the power cord three days after you put in the work?

I fear, on current experience, I'll be told the answer to all these things when I'm 104 and can no longer bother installing backyard lights or packing an esky.

Couldn't someone, right now, write a book containing the full list of tricks? You could call it *Life: A User's Guide*.

It's true that I have already learned some of life's best lessons. I know that whisky is always a mistake. I know that bacon, while delicious,

inevitably leads to regret. And I know that it's never a good idea to buy cheap tools.

I can now put away a power cord so it doesn't tangle (learned at age 35); I can uncork Champagne so the contents don't end up on the floor (age 45); and I can fry an egg so the bottom doesn't end up hard and dry (just last week).

But, still, the questions swirl. How do you clean dog hair off the floor of the car, since the vacuum cleaner makes no difference? How do

you open one of those juice or milk boxes without the contents ending up all down your shirt? And how do you stop crumbs accumulating in the cutlery drawer, even though nobody ever goes near it with a piece of toast?

With luck, my life still has a decade or two to run. I'll need it. There remains so much to learn.

For instance: how does one amass a cellar of elegantly aged red wine if some idiot keeps drinking it as soon as it arrives? **R**

**I CAN NOW PUT  
AWAY A POWER  
CORD SO IT  
DOESN'T TANGLE  
(LEARNED  
AT AGE 35)**

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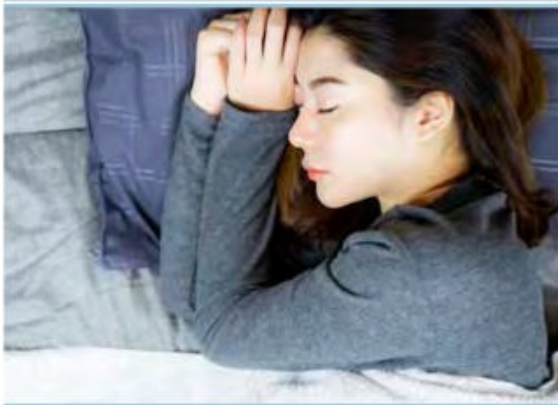
**Lovely Jubbly**

**A Chinese manufacturer made over 10,000 souvenir jubilee tea cups, mugs and plates to mark the Queen's seven decades as monarch, only to discover a spelling mistake under her image: 'To commemorate the Platinum Jubbly of Queen Elizabeth II.'** REUTERS



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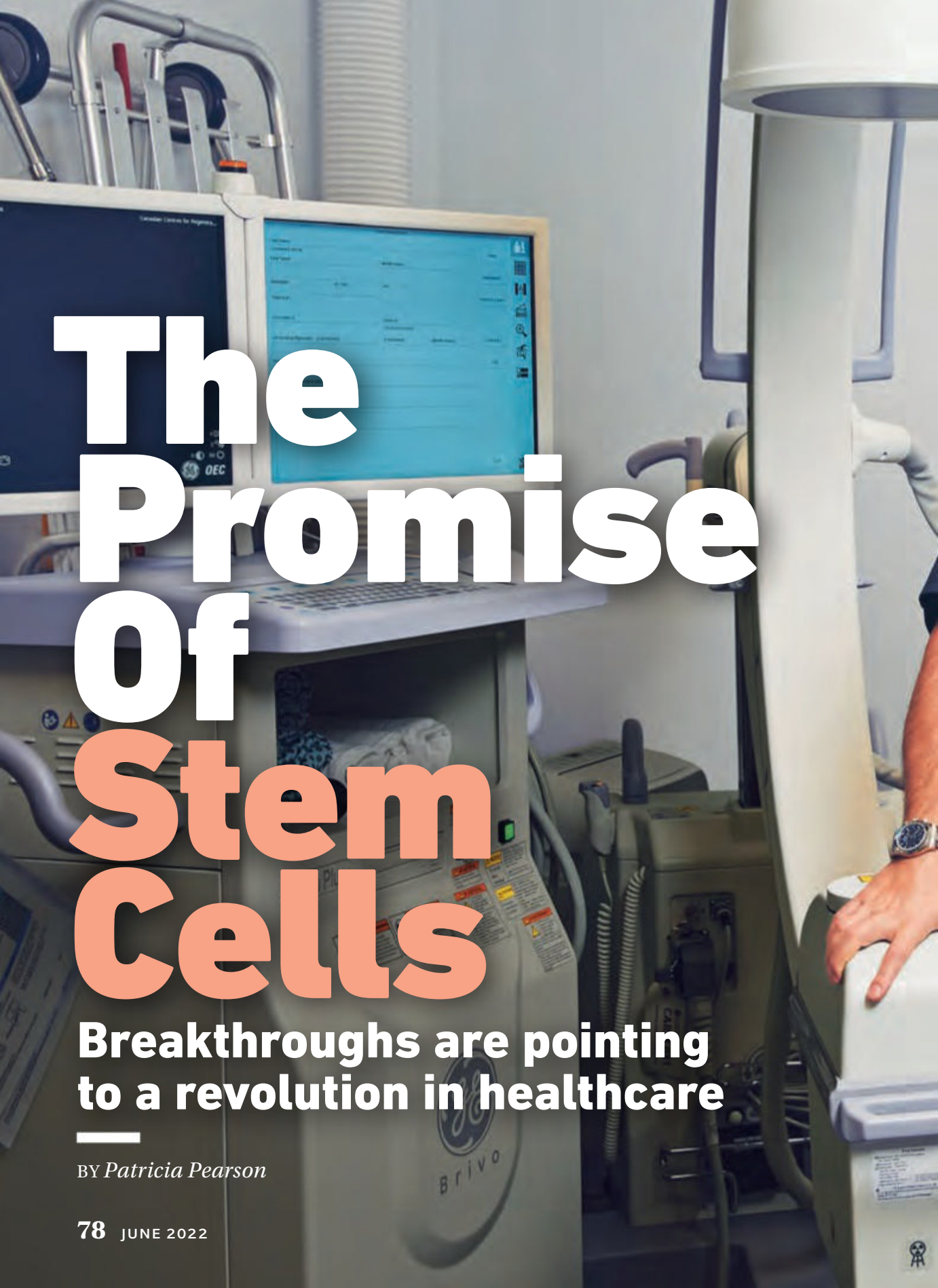
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# The Promise Of Stem Cells

**Breakthroughs are pointing  
to a revolution in healthcare**

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BY *Patricia Pearson*





**SCIENCE**



**Dr Riam  
Shammaa  
treated  
Annissa Jobb's  
lumbar spine  
with stem-cell  
therapy**

## READER'S DIGEST

**A**nissa Jobb first limped into the office of Dr Riam Shammaa, a sports medicine and pain specialist in Toronto, in 2017. The personal support worker in long-term care homes was desperate for help after a decade of back pain due to an undiagnosed herniated disc.

"It's been my calling in life, taking care of people," says Jobb, now 54. But working with frail seniors involves a lot of lifting, bending and pulling. It wasn't an option to rest her injury. So she gritted her teeth through the worsening pain. "I had a drawer full of pain medication. None of it was working. I'd snap. My husband and I came close to getting divorced."

By November 2016, Jobb could scarcely walk 200 metres. "My family doctor finally said, 'You will end up in a wheelchair if you don't stop working there'."

Jobb was referred to Dr Shammaa, who began by administering nerve-block injections, similar to an epidural, every few weeks. They held the pain at bay for anywhere from a few days to a few weeks, but then it always returned.

Historically, the treatment of complex, chronic back pain has been less than ideal, sometimes resulting in patients becoming addicted to opioids, or involving major – often

unsuccessful – spinal-fusion surgery, which is suitable for only about one in 20 patients. Aware of these limited options, Dr Shammaa had been reading about ground-breaking stem-cell therapy research in Europe, and began a study with 23 of his patients. Since Jobb fit his inclusion criteria, he asked if she wanted to participate, cautioning that there were no guarantees. The procedure had been proven safe and would involve using her own bone-marrow cells. She agreed to try it.

The procedure, also being investigated at the University of Montpellier in France and the Mayo Clinic in the US, involves extracting bone-marrow tissue from a patient and concentrating the marrow's stem cells, known as mesenchymal stem cells, or MSCs. This concentrate (called bone marrow aspirate concentrate, or BMAC) is then injected into the patient's herniated disc in the hope that it will regenerate and heal the damaged tissue.

An MRI showed two discs were causing Jobb's problem. "Out of five levels on the lumbar spine, one or two showing damage tells you that the spine hasn't deteriorated everywhere," says Dr Shammaa. "By contrast, when you have five levels of severe disc disease – in other words, if the spine is really messed up – there is not a lot you can do."

The procedure took three-and-a-half hours, beginning with an extraction of Jobb's bone marrow – the most

## The Promise Of Stem Cells

painful step – which was immediately distilled and concentrated. Then, guided by a type of X-ray called fluoroscopy, Dr Shammaa inserted a needle through Jobb’s spine to place the BMAC in the discs. Jobb was awake for the entire procedure to alert Dr Shammaa if he touched a nerve.

She recovered in bed for two weeks, then, slowly, began to walk. A month later she strode into the clinic, a moment Dr Shammaa recalls with delight. “She was in disbelief,” he says. Whereas Jobb had previously described her pain as “beyond ten”, she says that it’s now a two.

When Dr Shammaa published his findings in the March 2021 issue of *Frontiers In Medicine*, he reported that 90 per cent of his patients gained two to three millimetres of height that had been lost due to disc

compression. Furthermore, 80 per cent of them stopped using opioids.

**T**he use of stem cells\* is part of a field called regenerative medicine that began emerging two decades ago. In regenerative medicine, a body’s own cells and growth factors are deployed to repair tissues by restoring their lost function. Several cellular therapies and products have already been approved by regulators and are in use, including skin substitutes for treating burns, ‘scaffold’ products for healing surgical incisions, and products derived from umbilical-cord blood for treating certain blood diseases and disorders.

The use of stem cells in regenerative medicine has the potential to revolutionise the treatment of many conditions over the next decade. As



**A regenerative medicine scientist examines a stem-cell culture**

## READER'S DIGEST

researchers report from stem-cell clinical trials being conducted all over the world, the hope that these cells can repair damaged bodies (long discussed and debated in scientific circles) appears to be well-founded.

"We're looking at regenerative medicine as something that will one day be a medical specialty of its own," says Dr Shane Shapiro, assistant professor of orthopaedic surgery at the Mayo Clinic in Jacksonville, Florida, "much like cardiology or neurology".

Success stories abound. For instance, in a study treating congenital vision loss with retinal stem cells at the University of California, Irvine, one woman was able to see her family for the first time in years. A child from Germany suffering from a sometimes-fatal skin disease called epidermolysis-bullosa recovered after receiving a transplant of genetically modified skin cells at the University of Modena and Reggio Emilia in Italy. American actor Selma Blair reported last year that she was in remission after participating in a stem-cell transplant trial for multiple sclerosis. And a study underway in Ireland, France and the Netherlands on treating osteoarthritis is showing promising initial results from 18 patients.

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**\*Stem cells are the building-block cells found in embryos and in tissues in the adult body; they are self-renewing and can, uniquely, generate a new type of cell.**

Despite these early successes, Dr Shammaa cautions that the science is so new that it is easily misunderstood and misapplied. "There are a lot of snake-oil salesmen out there," he says, pointing to private stem-cell clinics all over the world that claim to cure such things as erectile dysfunction or dementia, without genuine evidence and in defiance of regulatory bodies. "It's important for patients to learn what is possible right now and what is still down the road.

"Some patients are good candidates for simple procedures like a bone-marrow concentrate injection, but others have illness or injury that is too advanced or too complicated. We cannot give them false hope."

So, what are the most recent developments in this exciting new field?

**A**n early breakthrough occurred in 2006, when Shinya Yamanaka, a molecular biologist at Kyoto University in Japan, showed that stem-cell therapy could avoid the morally divisive use of embryonic stem cells. Instead, he discovered adult skin cells could be induced to develop into blood, bone or liver cells, just as the stem cells of a human embryo evolve into the various parts of the body. Yamanaka, who went on to win the Nobel Prize in 2012 for this work, called these "induced pluripotent stem cells", or iPSCs. This discovery moved the stem-cell conversation past the sensitive

subject of using foetal tissue for medical purposes, which is illegal in some countries.

Tokyo's Riken research institute performed the first-ever successful iPSC transplant in 2014, creating retinal cells generated from skin cells of a patient with age-related macular degeneration, a serious eye condition. Shortly afterwards, Dr Henry Klassen at the University of California, Irvine, oversaw a trial for treating retinitis pigmentosa, a group of rare genetic disorders causing gradual blindness, in which a donor's retinal progenitor cells were transplanted into the eyes of 28 study participants. One of them, 64-year-old Kristin Macdonald of Los Angeles, who had gone blind, regained what she describes as a burst of light.

"I can navigate by light now, and see more contrasts and shapes," she says. Macdonald has since become an outspoken patient advocate for stem-cell trials.

Then, in 2018, neurosurgeon Richard Fessler of Rush University Medical Center in Chicago oversaw a year-long trial with iPSC-derived motor neurons transplanted into six patients paralysed by spinal cord injuries. Fessler

reported that all regained some upper-body movement and that a patient who was only able to shrug his shoulders could now use his hands to eat, write and do other tasks.

This is the kind of breakthrough that the late actor Christopher Reeve, best known for playing Superman, was advocating for from his wheelchair after suffering neck-down paralysis following a horseback-riding accident. At that time, governments

around the world were making moves to restrict embryonic stem-cell research. In certain cases, embryonic stem cells are in medical use today; they're derived from leftover blastocysts – the clustering of cells in a fertilised egg – that didn't implant during IVF treatment.

These are still early days, with much to investigate in terms of safety, dosing and

how to manufacture iPSCs for different conditions in a standardised and cost-effective way. But Yamanaka predicted in 2018 that several treatments using regenerative medicine and new drugs will be developed and authorised by around 2030.

In the meantime, the first generation of stem-cell treatments that have regulatory approval in Europe,



## READER'S DIGEST

Canada and the US largely involve simple cell transplants – ones that move the patient's own cells from one part of their body to another, such as the procedure Dr Shammaa performed on Jobb. That said, stem-cell transplants for blood diseases like leukaemia, which have been carried out for several years, are the one exception where cells from a matching donor are also allowed.

The most common procedure that has been used in clinical trials in Europe, Canada and the US is the transfer of BMAC to the spine or the knee. While Jobb sought treatment for her back pain, 58-year-old Rodolfo Corsini was looking for relief for job-related knee pain when he visited the Hamanitis research hospital in Milan, Italy, in 2020. The telecommunications technician had never heard of BMAC until it was suggested to him by surgeon Dr Elizaveta Kon, who didn't see enough damage to merit knee-replacement surgery. He agreed to the injection and it was a success. "I can do almost everything that I did before," says Corsini.

Dr Kon, along with European colleagues, is now involved in a number

of exploratory studies that compare patients being treated with BMAC and stromal vascular fraction (SVF) – another type of adult stem cell – which is extracted from a person's fat tissue.

Certainly the early research on BMAC provides hope, although with limitations. "We couch these treatments as something to help with a chronic, degenerative condition, something that in many cases can

be successful in managing the symptoms and improving quality of life, but in most cases are not a cure," Dr Shapiro says.

"The analogy should be diabetes or high cholesterol. We don't cure those things; we treat them. What we would like to see in future is a way to treat arthritis without metal and plastic, or to treat degenerative disc disease without a spinal

fusion. That's the ultimate goal."

A consortium of ten European institutions is working towards that goal. Researchers are even working on a way to skip the painful bone marrow extraction procedure that Annissa Jobb underwent. Instead, says research scientist Mary Murphy at the National University of Ireland, Galway, they hope to be able to



create MSC cells in the laboratory in a standardised and high-volume way.

Some members of the EU-funded group are focusing on how to generate that sustainable supply, while others are testing new therapies. For example, Leiden University Medical Centre in the Netherlands and the University of Gothenberg in Sweden are developing a treatment for osteoarthritis. But it will be several more years before everything can be tested, approved and made available.

**B**ecause regenerative medicine is still young, patients should be wary of fraudulent stem-cell products being sold by unscrupulous companies. They advertise cures for everything from hair loss to Lyme disease, sometimes offering stem cells in vials, as if they were magic potions. There is reckless administration of unapproved products by non-specialists in disease, which has led to lawsuits and regulatory crackdowns.

In the US, for instance, federal regulators forced a California company to halt sales of its stem-cell products derived from umbilical-cord blood in 2019. Not only is there no approval for

selling donated cord blood, this company – which marketed its product mainly as treatment for back, knee and other joint problems – failed to screen donors adequately for communicable diseases and didn't follow correct cleaning and disinfecting procedures. There are many more examples like this that have given the field of regenerative medicine a reputation for quackery.

To learn about your options, consult with a medical expert on your specific condition. "If it's knee arthritis, start with a specialist in orthopaedic surgery or sports medicine," advises Dr Shapiro. "If it's degenerative disc disease of the lumbar spine, start with a spine specialist." Then, seek a referral to someone in that field who has expertise in regenerative medicine.

For many patients, stem-cell treatments are already making a lasting difference to their quality of life. "My husband and I went hiking last summer," Jobb says. "I walked a whole kilometre. I was so excited. I thought, *maybe I could start cross-country skiing!*"

For those who endure chronic pain, that's liberating indeed. **R**



### When Beer Turns Blue

**A French brewery is using spirulina, an algae with a naturally-occurring pigment, to turn its beer blue. "It's getting an enormous amount of interest and curiosity," the brewery said. REUTERS**



MUSIC

# SAVING THE *Stradivarius* Sound

*An entire city went quiet so  
the world's most iconic violin  
could be immortalised*

---

BY *Chuck Squatriglia*

FROM **POPULAR SCIENCE**





*Antonio De Lorenzi takes a seat onstage in the concert hall of the Museo del Violino in Cremona, Italy, and carefully tucks a **Stradivarius** under his chin. The violin, crafted in 1727 and called **Vesuvio**, gleams in the soft light of the auditorium. Through an earpiece, the soloist hears a metronomic beat as a voice says, “Go”.*

De Lorenzi draws his bow across the lowest string and plays G for half a beat. He pauses, then follows with A-flat. Then A. He moves up the scale, never changing his pace as he works through all four strings. Once he finishes, he repeats the exercise, this time sounding each tone just a bit faster.

This is no ordinary concert. Outside, police have cordoned off the street to traffic. Inside, workers have shut down the heater despite the winter chill, dimmed the lights, and unscrewed buzzing bulbs. As each note reverberates, an audience of 32 microphones dotted throughout the auditorium silently listens.

De Lorenzi's performance in January 2019 is part of a campaign to preserve the Stradivarius sound. Although many of the approximately 1100 stringed masterpieces that Antonio Stradivari and his sons hand-crafted in this city have endured for

three centuries, they are still mortal. Almost half have been lost to accidents or the wear that comes with age. Of the 650 or so that survive, some have grown too fragile to play.

Stradivari remains the defining figure in violin-making, a name on a par with Chanel or Ferrari. He fashioned instruments for kings and cardinals,

and his creations bring their distinctive voice to the repertoires of modern soloists like Itzhak Perlman and Anne-Sophie Mutter. Musicians, luthiers (stringed-instrument makers), and scientists have tried for centuries to figure out what gives a

Strad its beautiful sound, yet no one has ever replicated it.

And so the goal is to create a digital archive that will survive long after the last Stradivarius falls silent, allowing composers and artists to continue making music with them.

De Lorenzi proceeds, working through scales at varying tempos,

**NO ONE  
HAS EVER  
REPLICATED  
THE BEAUTIFUL  
SOUND OF A  
STRADIVARIUS**



### Recording sessions were held in the concert hall of the Museo del Violino

intensities and volumes with the precision and passion he'd bring to a Dvorák symphony or Verdi opera. In a soundproofed room tucked beneath the auditorium's seats, audio engineer Thomas Koritke, whose company will create a virtual version of the instrument, listens through speakers as his computer records it all. He will do this every day for five weeks, meticulously documenting thousands of variations of the sounds Vesuvio and three other masterworks of its era can produce.

"These instruments have been played for 300 years," says Fausto Cacciatori, a curator at the Museo del Violino. "We are committed to making them play for another 300."

The Museo del Violino, which opened in 2013 to celebrate the work of Stradivari and others, sits in the heart of Cremona. The ancient city, about 75 kilometres from Milan, began as a Roman colony in 218 BCE and developed a rich, cosmopolitan culture under Spanish, French, Austrian and Italian rule. By the 17th



**Instruments by Antonio Stradivari and other great craftsmen  
at the Museo del Violino**

century, the city was home to a thriving community of instrument-makers.

It was Stradivari, born around 1644, who combined three key innovations that helped accelerate the violin's transition from the chamber rooms of the Baroque period to the concert halls of the Classical. He designed his violins slighter larger than those of his contemporaries; he created fuller arching for the top plate, called the belly, and the back; and he modified the thickness of both the top and back plates.

These changes provided a powerful sound and projection. "He perfectly understood the new requirements of the violinists of the time," Cacciatori says.

The material used to craft any stringed instrument contributes to its sound. Violin-makers have long considered spruce ideal for the belly; its grain has the strength to endure the tension of taut strings, yet provides enough flexibility to vibrate freely. For the body and neck, luthiers favour maple for its ideal mix of strength, resonance and aesthetics.

Retired biochemist Joseph Nagvary, who also builds violins, has spent four decades seeking Stradivari's secrets. He believes Cremonese luthiers used borate and salts of copper, iron and chromium to prevent woodworm infestations, and that some of these materials stiffened the wood and improved its resonance.

PHOTO: ISABELLA DE MADDALENA/THE NEW YORK TIMES/REDUX

He also suspects that Stradivari took the added step of smoking the timber in his chimney. Beyond killing pests, the practice would have reduced moisture, giving his instruments superior tone. “You cannot have a Stradivari sound unless your wood is preserved and restructured by chemical manipulations,” Nagyvary says. Research at National Taiwan University in 2017 bolstered this idea.

All this speculation stems from the fact that Stradivari didn’t share his methods. He left no notes, no diaries, nothing to reveal definitively how he built his instruments. Science can provide clues, but few believe we’ll ever completely solve the mystery. We are left only with the sound.

**THE IDEA FOR KORITKE’S** endeavour started around 2015 with a sound engineer named Leonardo Tedeschi. The former DJ was working on a project using a software program from Koritke’s company (e-instruments) that replicates an 11-piece string ensemble. Tedeschi found it so impressive that he wanted to create a similar tool for Stradivarius violins. He pitched the idea to Koritke, who immediately saw an opportunity to preserve an irreplaceable masterpiece.

The Museo del Violino’s auditorium, designed to reverberate perfectly the sound of stringed instruments, was

an ideal venue. “When I saw the concert hall, I thought, *This is something really extraordinary*,” Koritke recalls. Yet he worried about ambient noise, proceeding only after city officials promised to mitigate the interference.

Koritke planned to record a lone Stradivarius violin, but after discussing the project with museum staff, chose a string quartet. In addition to Vesuvio, the combo included a violin created by Giuseppe Guarneri named Prince Doria, a viola by Andrea Amati known as Stauffer, and a Stradivari cello also called Stauffer.

His team spent three years planning the undertaking, writing out the thousands of articulations of every sound the instruments can produce. “This was quite a challenge,” he says. “Most of the musicians had never done that kind of an exercise.”

Koritke’s crew spent a day setting up all the recording equipment and another three arranging the array of microphones. During each phase, the musicians would run through scales and arpeggios at varying volumes and tempos, performing dozens of intonations of every note. They repeated the routines for hours at a time, using different bowing techniques or by plucking the strings, playing thousands of transitions with exacting precision.

### IN THE END, ABOUT ONE MILLION INDIVIDUAL AUDIO FILES WERE CAPTURED

---



**Thomas Koritke oversees a digital recording from underneath the concert hall**

“Sometimes the musicians would stop at a certain note because they weren’t happy, but we thought it was OK,” Koritke says. “They would say, ‘No, I don’t like this part; let’s do it again.’”

Outside noise frequently disrupted the process. Although city authorities closed streets near the concert hall as well as a nearby carpark, bicycle tyres rolling on cobblestones, barking dogs and clinking glasses in the museum cafe all interrupted the sessions. That prompted the mayor to urge Cremona’s 70,000 residents to keep quiet in the area, though there wasn’t much anyone could do about the peal of church bells or the drone of airplanes overhead.

In the end, Koritke captured about

one million individual audio files. His team culled the trove to create virtual versions of the instruments that anyone can add to recording programs like Pro Tools. That meant choosing the most musical and precise instance of every tone, a process that took over a year.

Tedeschi is eager to see what musicians create with the digitised string quartet. He sees the software, now available for purchase, introducing the instruments to new audiences through entirely new styles, including DJs doing “crazy stuff” with a Stradivarius violin.

“You can use it in a lot of genres,” he says.

The question is, will anyone realise it’s a Strad?

**THE PREMISE OF KORITKE'S** Stradivarius project rests on the idea that nothing sings as finely as the original. Joseph Curtin isn't sure that's true. He took up the violin at age ten and started making them about a decade later, in 1978.

Like many luthiers, he developed an abiding fascination with Stradivari and his peers, and hoped to replicate the tone of their masterpieces. Curtin began pondering theories to explain their superiority until a physicist friend suggested he first prove that Strads truly do eclipse all others.

"That's when I realised there was no scientific evidence suggesting the old Italian instruments sounded better than modern ones," he says.

That prompted Curtin and three other researchers to conduct studies from 2010 to 2013. Professional soloists wearing dark goggles played a variety of violins including Strads and new instruments: just over half preferred the sound of the modern models, and could not identify the Strads with better than coin-toss accuracy.

That, of course, does not diminish the quality of Stradivari's

masterpieces, or his contributions to the art of making violins. "I don't have one whit less reverence for his work," Curtin says. "I am just challenging the assumption that they are necessarily better-sounding than modern instruments."

All of this might be beside the point. The Strads' unique voice and historical importance alone make them worthy of preservation. Around the world, institutions and archivists conserve paintings, sculptures and documents like the Magna Carta. Those behind the recording project say sound deserves similar consideration.

Koritke envisions museums allowing patrons to use a tool like the Stradivarius software to hear what these masterpieces sound like. He believes that the pipe organs of Europe's great cathedrals and other famous instruments are likewise worthy of saving.

"When you look at museums all over the world, digitising their content is standard," Koritke says. "Why not do that for instruments?" **R**

POPULAR SCIENCE (JANUARY 10, 2020),  
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### Don't Follow These Recipes

**Tired of boiling water every time you make pasta? Boil several litres at the start of the week and freeze it for later.** @SWAGLORDPAT

**I tell people that the secret ingredient in my cookies is 'love', but it's actually 'floor'.** @UGHREVOLUTION

# *Roy Orbison*

*Helped Me Make  
A New Friend*





*Few things are tougher than making friends at a new school. Thankfully, I had a famous musician looking out for me.*

BY Megan Murphy

IN THE AUTUMN OF 1988, when I was ten years old, my parents moved us to a bigger house on the other side of town. I was forced to leave the familiarity of St Paul's and become 'the new kid' at St Teresa's: a one-hallway school with no gym, where the other kids in my Grade 5 class had been together since kindergarten.

I struggled to break into the crowd and spent recesses playing hopscotch alone, gazing longingly at the other kids as they traded their cookies and Fruit Roll-Ups. I was lonely and desperate to make a friend.

One school day in early December, shortly after the move, I poured myself a bowl of cereal and headed to my designated spot at the kitchen table. The radio was tuned to a golden oldies station. The DJs, whose voices were the audio wallpaper of my youth, bantered between songs.

"It's a sad day in the music world," I heard one of them say. "Mr Roy

Orbison has died." *Oh no*, I thought, *how sad, Roy Orbison has died. Wait... who is Roy Orbison?*

I didn't have a chance to ask. I had to get to school before the bell.

I was in Mr Hutchison's class, but he liked to be called Mr 83. He used to teach in Japan and his name sounded like the Japanese numbers eight ('*hachi*') and three ('*san*') – Mr 'Hachi-san'. It seemed pretty clever to this ten year old. I think he felt sorry for me because I was struggling to fit in, so he gave me my own nickname, 'Meggie McMuffin', and I loved it. Mr Hutchison was in my corner.

Every day, Mr Hutchison would ask if there was anyone we wanted to pray for, and he'd write their names on the blackboard so we could keep them in our thoughts.

That day, Johnny, with the gelled hair, asked us to pray for his grandfather who'd just had surgery. Emily, with the long ponytail, asked us to pray for her grandmother who had

pneumonia. Clare, the intimidating popular girl, asked us to pray for her dog, Sparky, who'd just had his manhood removed.

This was it. This was my chance to fit in! Before I had time to fully think it through, my hand shot into the air, and when Mr 83 called my name I blurted out, "I'd like to pray for Roy Orbison!"

A hush fell over the room. The other kids looked confused, but Mr 83 could see the desperation in my eyes. No one had ever been so excited to pray for anyone in the history of his class.

"OK, McMuffin, Roy Orbison has been added to the prayer list." He winked.

I did it! This must be another way we Catholic kids make new friends: you just pray for someone.

I had never met Roy Orbison, nor did I have his album or know who his "Pretty Woman" really was. But I like to think we've played an important role in each other's lives. If there is a heaven, Roy is there because a Grade 5 girl prayed for him.

And because of Roy Orbison, a little girl named Christine came up to me during class and said, "I'm really sorry for your loss. If you're not busy with the funeral, maybe you can come over and play after school."

Thanks to Roy and Christine, I was lonely no more. **R**

**NO ONE HAD EVER  
BEEN SO EXCITED  
TO PRAY FOR  
ANYONE IN THE  
HISTORY OF  
MR 83'S CLASS**



**One Expensive Kennel**

A doghouse with a hole in its roof recently obtained the princely sum of US\$44,100 in an auction. The simple wood and tin kennel, which formerly housed a German shepherd named Rocky in the city of Aguas Zarcas, Costa Rica, was able to fetch that sum of money because of one truly out-of-this-world feature: the hole in the roof was caused when a meteorite tore through it in April 2019, narrowly missing the startled pooch. The kennel and meteorite that hit it sold at a Christie's Martian, Lunar and Other Rare Meteorites online auction in February. A London art gallerist purchased both objects for US\$65,520. While it is a staggering amount to pay for a rusty doghouse with a hole in it, James Hyslop of Christie's had thought they would fetch far more. [ALTASOBSCURA.COM](http://ALTASOBSCURA.COM)

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*Let There Be*  
**LIGHT**

*From glow to glare —  
illumination takes many forms*

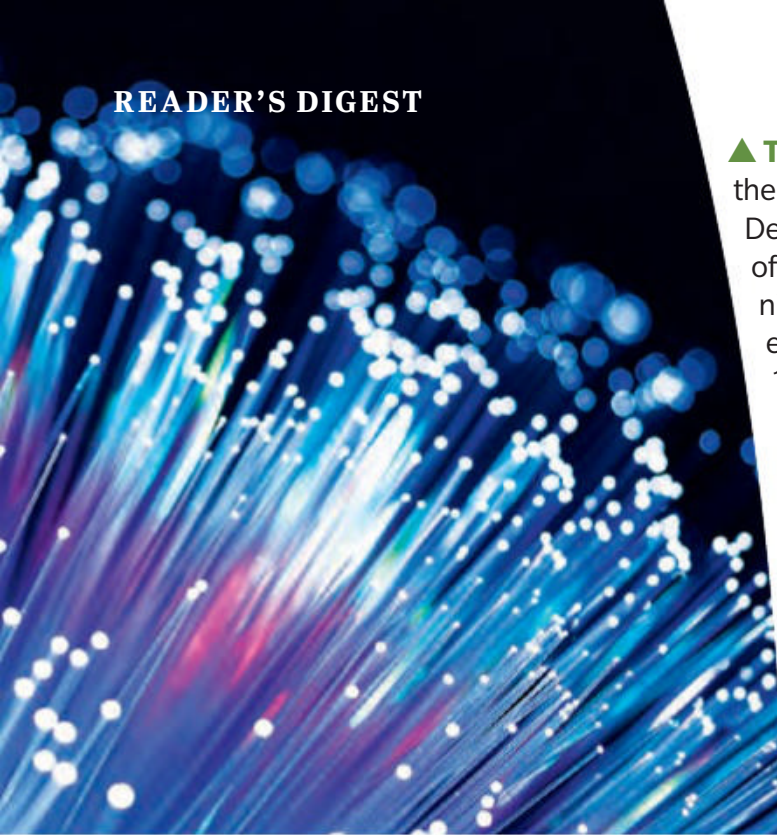
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BY *Doris Kochanek*



PHOTO FEATURE





▲ **The Milky Way** is shown here above the limestone pillars of the Pinnacles Desert in Western Australia. The band of lights that can be seen on clear nights is a galaxy that, according to estimates, consists of at least 100 billion stars. Its four spiral arms, made up of stars, gas and dust, curve out from a centre that contains a black hole. Our solar system – and, thus, the Earth – are part of the Milky Way.

◀ **Optical fibres** allow telecom providers to transport large volumes of data quickly. Unlike many conventional cables, those made of optical fibres transmit data not as an electrical signal but in the form of light.

▶ **Bonfires** are as much a part of New Year's Eve in Iceland as the cold and the fireworks. They are a magnet for locals and tourists alike, and in the capital Reykjavík (shown here), typically there are ten blazes every December 31. In 2020 and 2021, however, none were lit due to the pandemic.

◀ **Fireflies** are found on all continents except Antarctica. With the help of chemical processes in their abdomens, they produce light to help in their search for mates. In some species only the females glow; in others both sexes do. Insectologists can tell whether one is male or female by observing the rhythm of its blinking.



PHOTOS: (PREVIOUS PAGE) MICHAEL GOH; (LEFT PAGE) GETTY IMAGES; (RIGHT PAGE) ARCTIC IMAGES/ALAMY STOCK PHOTO

Let There Be Light







## Let There Be Light



▲ **Glass prisms** refract light rays once when passing from air to glass, and then a second time as they pass from glass to air. In the process, 'white' light, such as sunlight, splits into about 300 colour nuances perceptible to the human eye.

◀ **Lightning** flashes over Monument Valley in the US state of Arizona. The ancient Greeks believed these electrical discharges represented the wrath of Zeus, the father of the gods. Lightning still arouses fear today, and rightly so: it is estimated that lightning strikes kill several thousand people worldwide every year.

PHOTOS: (LEFT) GETTY IMAGES/ROOM RF; (RIGHT) GETTY IMAGES/ADRIENNE BRESNAHAN

## QUOTABLE QUOTES

YOU'VE GOT TO FIND SOMETHING TO LAUGH ABOUT AT LEAST ONCE A DAY, BE IT A DOPEY CAT OR A DAD JOKE.

WHOOPI GOLDBERG,  
COMEDIAN



You need to work hard and the harder you work, the luckier you get. Opportunities present themselves if you're lucky. If you don't work hard, they go someplace else.

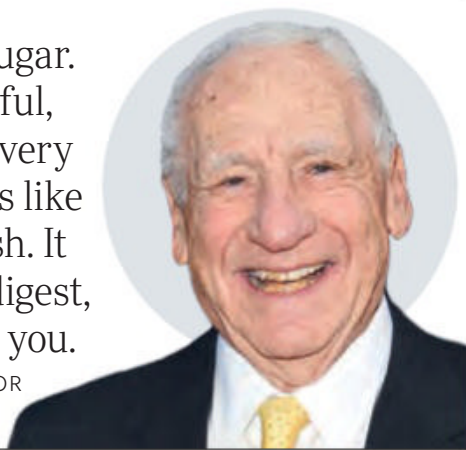
MICHELLE YEOH,  
ACTRESS

*Lean into the things that scare you. That's what's worth doing, because that's what makes you grow.*

LIN-MANUEL MIRANDA, PLAYWRIGHT

Success is like sugar. It's too wonderful, and it burns up very quickly. Failure is like corned beef hash. It takes a while to digest, but it stays with you.

MEL BROOKS, ACTOR



*Search for the truth is the noblest occupation of man; its publication is a duty.*

MADAME DE STAEL, AUTHOR

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**\*Full terms and conditions can be found online. Entries close June 30, 2022.**

13 THINGS

# Serving Up The Sizzle On Plant-Based Meat

BY *Michelle Crouch*



**1** If you tried veggie burgers years ago and dismissed them as rubbery and flavourless, it's a good time to give meat substitutes another chance. You can find plant-based versions of chicken, pork, sausage, mince and deli cuts. Newer varieties mimic the look, flavour and texture of the real thing. Some even 'bleed' like beef and give off that signature sizzle as they cook.

**2** Clearly, plant-based proteins aren't just for vegetarians and vegans. While a 2018 survey conducted by British market research company Ipsos Mori found that three per cent of the world's population was vegan and five per cent vegetarian, another 14 per cent reported that they were flexitarians – people who ate both plant-based foods and meat.

ILLUSTRATION: SERGE BLOCH

## Serving Up The Sizzle On Plant-Based Meat

**3** If you're new to meatless meats, you could start by substituting veggie versions of mince meat into your favourite tacos, curry, stew or pasta sauce, or by topping a salad with faux chicken strips. "It's pretty easy to incorporate vegan meats into something like that," says dietitian Gena Hamshaw.

**4** Buyer beware: mock meats can be high in sodium and can have as much saturated fat and as many kilojoules as real meats, so shop around. As for protein, the amount ranges from about 4 to 20 grams, with some of the better protein options having more saturated fat. Australian company v2food uses protein extracted from legumes for its plant-based burger patties, which provide 20 grams of protein and 16 grams fat per 113 gram patty. A 125 gram real beef patty contains between 17-21 grams protein and around 13 grams fat, according to fatsecret.com.au.

**5** Many meatless manufacturers don't disclose their total emissions, but research shows they generate a lot less greenhouse gas compared to their meat equivalents. One study found that the US manufacturer Beyond Burger uses 99 per cent less water, 93 per cent less land, and nearly 50 per cent less energy making a meatless burger than making a 113 gram beef patty.

**6** Whether or not these products can be called 'meat' depends on where they're sold. A growing number of jurisdictions have banned plant-based companies from using the word 'meat' on their product labels - even with a qualifier such as 'vegetarian'. Lawmakers say they don't want consumers to be tricked into buying 'fake' meat by mistake.

**7** The biggest meat producer in the world (JBS) now sells its own plant-based products. It's a smart sideline: sales of plant-based meats soared to US\$7 billion in 2020, and Bloomberg predicts the market will skyrocket to US\$74 billion by 2030 - a 957 per cent surge.

**8** Even fast food is jumping on the bandwagon. Burger King has the Impossible Whopper. McDonald's is testing a Beyond burger called the McPlant. And KFC is working on fake fried chicken as finger-lickin' good as the original.

**9** You can make your own meatless chicken with only two ingredients, as millions of TikTok users learned in a video that went viral last year. Just mix together flour and water, then knead it and rinse it under more water to wash out the starch. You'll get a dough that looks (and sort of tastes) like chicken. The trick is a version of a meat alternative which has been around for centuries.

## READER'S DIGEST

**10** In the US, 'Big Meat' launched a scare advertising campaign against its plant-based competitors recently. The Center for Consumer Freedom, which is funded by the food industry, placed full-page ads in newspapers with the headline 'What's hiding in your plant-based meat?'

**11** Impossible Foods spent years developing a molecule called heme (rhymes with seem), which gives its products a bloody red appearance and beefy taste. (However, for many who find meat unpalatable, heme may be similarly unappealing.) The US non-profit Center for Food Safety filed a lawsuit challenging FDA approval of heme, but an appeals court later upheld the decision to declare it safe to eat.

**12** The new frontier of meat alternatives is lab-grown, also called cultured or cell-based meat. Grown in test tubes from the stem cells of animals, they are still animal products, but they don't require breeding, raising or slaughtering. A plant-based option is mushroom meat, which mimics the texture of whole cuts such as steaks, and slices and serves like them, too.

**13** New alternate meats are getting a lot of attention, but don't forget old standbys such as tofu and tempeh, or simply making your own patties out of whole grains and vegetables. Beans and lentils are excellent protein substitutes and are nutritious, inexpensive, and more sustainable than processed meatless substitutes. **R**



### Retirement Homes For Old Hens

Chickens who have turned 18 months and deemed too old to mass-produce eggs are being rehomed by a rescue service. Tania Daykin, CEO of Let The Ladies Go based in New South Wales, has spent the last five years working with egg producers to rehome thousands of chickens. She said Let The Ladies Go had taken in more than 54,000 hens over that time but were not able to rehome them all. "We are not a sanctuary, we are a rehab facility and a rehome facility," she said. The 'ladies' who are rehomed find their new-found freedoms are a far cry from their former egg-laying lives. "My four beautiful ladies love running around their new home," said new owner Michelle Fraser. Hayley Lovett agrees. "We have five rescue girls enjoying their new free-range lifestyle." ABC.NET.AU



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# ALL IN A DAY'S WORK

## Humour On The Job



### Hot Under The Collar

I got a temporary job at an office going through files and shredding old documents. What they didn't tell me until I got there was that the shredder was actually a leaf shredder located on a loading dock in the scorching sun.

So, on my first day in my smart new work clothes, I loaded a trolley with paper boxes, trekked to the loading dock, and fed paper into this leaf shredder, back and forth several times.

u/moinatx, BUZZFEED

### Happy To Help

**SCENE:** *Bookstore.* I answer the phone... "Hi, this is [Bookstore]. Can I help you?"

**CALLER:** "Yes, do you have *Ulysses* in stock?"

**ME:** "We have it in paperback and hardcover. Do you want me to put it aside for you?"

**CALLER:** "What is the author's name?"

**ME:** "It's James Joyce."

**CALLER:** "J-A-M-E-S- J-O-Y-C-E, ten letters... Thank you! I'm doing a crossword, and I needed the answer to this." *Click!*

notalwaysright.com

### Dream Job

My 12-year-old cousin asked my boyfriend, who's a teacher, how he sleeps at night knowing he's giving kids homework.

@LEMONMOMBLEY

### Not For Free

**ME:** "I've looked at the brief and it'll cost [total price]."

**CLIENT:** "I thought you were a freelancer."

**ME:** "I am."

**CLIENT:** "No, you're not. You're a chargelancer!"

CLIENTSFROMHELL



### Career Advancement

If you spent last year working from home with a partner, overhearing their meetings and calls, you are now legally entitled to work and practice in whatever their profession is. You have completed your apprenticeship. Congrats.

@shawnmicalef

### Help Desk

My wife's been working at home for more than a year now and has started complaining to me when her wireless connection is slow like I'm the office IT guy, so I made her submit a customer support ticket.

@tryptofantastic

### Knowledge Sharing

**DENTIST:** So, are you flossing?

**ME:** Are you using a unique password for every computer account?

@chompie1337

### Matter Of Degrees

*I am the office manager in a company. Most other employees have upper-level degrees. This happened one morning.*

**EMPLOYEE:** "Do you have something that can make copies of this piece of paper?"

**ME:** "You can use the copy machine."

**EMPLOYEE:** "Where is that?"

**ME:** "It's the large black machine you are leaning on."

**EMPLOYEE:** "Oh, boy. I don't know if I can handle that. It looks complicated," says the person with a Doctorate of Pharmacy.

notalwaysright.com

### Shifting Responsibility

The company I worked for decided to run a course for all senior staff. The course was pretty dull and we were all looking forward to the lunch break. The tutor announced that after lunch the subject would be delegation. I put my hand up and asked if I could send my assistant along for that one as I was a bit busy.

My colleagues thought that my comment was hilarious but unfortunately the tutor was not amused.

SUBMITTED BY CLIFFORD RICHARDSON



### A CLOSED BOOK

**I witnessed a fellow walk into the library, wander around for a good while, then ask pleasantly, "What is this place?"**

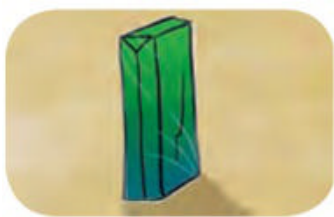
ALIX HAWLEY, NOVELIST

A collection of colorful jewelry including necklaces, bracelets, and a ring scattered on a tan background. The items include a red faceted gemstone, a pink pendant, a yellow and red beaded necklace, a blue and white beaded necklace, a silver chain with yellow crosses, and a yellow ring.

# *Accidental* TREASURE!

*It's always nice stumbling across a stray banknote or a voucher for a free drink at your favourite coffee shop. These people really lucked out, though!*

FROM BATHROOM READERS INSTITUTE



### *High Score*

**THE FIND:** A rare video game still in its original packaging.

**WHERE IT WAS FOUND:** In an attic.

On Mother's Day in 2019, Scott Amos was visiting his childhood home in California to finally clear his stuff out of his mother's attic. While he was going through the boxes, he came across a shopping bag. Inside it was a Nintendo video game called *Kid Icarus* that Amos didn't even remember owning. Judging by the December 1988 receipt, it was most likely a Christmas present that had never been wrapped. Nor had it been opened, which makes this lucky find a huge deal. According to gaming expert Valarie McLeckie, *Kid Icarus* is a highly sought-after cult classic, and there are fewer than ten known unopened copies in existence: "To

find a sealed copy 'in the wild', so to speak, not to mention one in such a nice condition, is both an unusual and rather historic occurrence."

Amos put the video game – which originally cost \$38.45 – up for auction, and sold it for US\$9000. He used the windfall to take his family on holiday.



### *Lucky Was With Him*

**THE FIND:** A 624-gram gold nugget.

**WHERE IT WAS FOUND:** On a walk.

In 2019, a man (who wished to remain anonymous) took his dog, Lucky, for a walk somewhere (he wouldn't say exactly where) outside the city of Bendigo, Victoria. Joining him were his two daughters, and it's a good thing they did. "I actually walked right past it," he later told the *Bendigo Advertiser*. "But my daughter pretty much kicked it as she was walking. She then

goes, 'Dad, is this gold?'" He replied, "I think it might be." They brought the fist-sized chunk to a supermarket deli to weigh it, and it topped 624 grams. Experts have since confirmed the nugget's authenticity. "We'd come on some tough times, so it couldn't have been better timing," the dad said. "Estimated value: AU\$35,000.



### *All's Whale That Ends Whale*

**THE FIND:** A 6.3-kilogram chunk of ambergris (aka whale vomit).

**WHERE IT WAS FOUND:** On a beach.

Jumrus Thiachot was down on his luck. The 55-year-old Thai fisherman had very little money to his name. Then, one day in early 2019, Jumrus was walking on the beach and found a yellow lump of... something in the sand. He thought the waxy substance might be ambergris. Made in the belly of a sperm whale, only a tiny amount of it is needed to make a fragrance last longer. That makes this 'floating gold' highly desirable in the perfume industry. Jumrus took a few slivers of it to be tested, but the tests were inconclusive.

Unsure of what to do next, Jumrus stored the lump in his shed. Nearly a year passed. Jumrus "needed to know the truth," so he contacted the

provincial governor, who brought an expert to the fisherman's house. Result: the substance was determined to be at least 80 per cent ambergris, with an estimated value of AU\$470,000.



### *Hand Of Gold*

**THE FIND:** A hand-shaped 27-kilogram gold nugget.

**WHERE IT WAS FOUND:** In a state forest.

Kevin Hillier was staying in a bus in a campground with his wife and four children in 1980. It started out as a fun extended road trip, but Kevin injured his back and was unable to work. As he recovered from his injury, his doctor told him to take up metal detecting, saying that the exercise would strengthen his back. Hillier was doing just that in the Kingower State Forest in Victoria in September 1980 when his metal detector started chirping. He dug about 30 centimetres down into the soil and uncovered the tip of a gold nugget.

"I thought, *Hey, it looks like a 50-ouncer [1500 grams]*, but it just kept getting bigger," he told the *Weekly Times* in 2010.

After more than two hours of digging, he uncovered the entire thing: a

hand-shaped nugget. Forty years later, the 'Hand Of Faith' nugget remains the largest gold nugget ever found by a metal detector, and the largest nugget that remains intact today.

The Hilliers sold the Hand Of Faith to the Golden Nugget Casino in Las Vegas for \$1 million. They used the money to buy a house, a new car, a holiday and other goodies. They also staked a gold mining claim in the area where they found their nugget, then cleared the site with a bulldozer. So did they get rich twice? Nope: "We found a few 20-gram nuggets," Hillier said. "But otherwise, not a thing."



### *Digging For Gold, Silver And Jewels*

**THE FIND:** 3500 gold, silver and jewelled items.

**WHERE IT WAS FOUND:** A field.

In July 2009, Terry Herbert, a British man living near Hammerwich, Staffordshire, England, was unemployed. So he had plenty of time to pursue his hobby of metal detecting. He asked a farmer he knew, Fred Johnson, if he could search Johnson's ploughed field for treasure. Johnson reluctantly agreed, on condition that Herbert look for a wrench that Johnson believed he'd lost somewhere in the field.

Herbert never did find Johnson's wrench, but after walking about 73 metres into the field, he got a signal and started digging.

He had to dig about 3.6 metres down before he found the first object: a gold pin. He kept at it, and after five days of digging he found 244 gold objects, most of them military related.

He and Johnson reported the find to the government, which obtained Johnson's permission to excavate the area further. By the time the excavation was complete, more than 3500 gold, silver and jewelled items dating back to the sixth and seventh centuries had been recovered.

To date, the 'Staffordshire Hoard' remains the single largest collection of Anglo-Saxon gold and silver objects ever discovered.

The find was appraised by the British government to be worth £3.285 million, (AU\$6.2 million). British law gives museums the right to acquire found treasure, but only if they pay the finders a cash reward equal to the appraised value of the treasure. When two museums pooled their resources to buy the Staffordshire Hoard, Herbert and Johnson each received a half share of the £3.285 million.

The treasure made them rich but ruined their friendship. "I think Fred wanted all of the money and is now resentful he has had to share it," Herbert said in 2011. "Sometimes I wish we'd never found that hoard."



### *Perseverance Pays Off*

**THE FIND:** 68,000 fused-together gold and silver coins.

**WHERE IT WAS FOUND:** On an island.

If Terry Herbert thought he had problems with Fred Johnson, they were nothing compared to the trouble that Reg Mead and Richard Miles had with their farmer (unnamed in news reports), who only let them search his field one day each year, right after he'd harvested his crops. But Mead and Miles, two treasure hunters who began searching for coins on the British island of Jersey in the 1980s, were persistent: they had heard stories of ancient coins being discovered on the land. They returned one day each year for more than 30 years, never finding much of anything until 2012. That year they dug up one coin, and then another, and then another. Digging deeper, they found a mass of fused-together coins 1.8-metres long, 20 centimetres thick, and weighing about 680 kilograms. The coins are Celtic in origin and are believed to have been buried around 50BCE, probably to protect them from invading Romans. (It worked!) The 'Grouville Hoard', as it became known, is the largest treasure hoard ever found

on Jersey, and six times larger than the next largest Celtic cache found anywhere on Earth. It's not clear how much Mead, Miles and the landowner got, or how they split the money. In December last year, the Government of Jersey reportedly paid £4.25 million (AU\$8.04 million) to purchase the Grouville Hoard from the Receiver-General, who took ownership of the coins after the discovery.



### *Hidden Ring*

**THE FIND:** Medieval ring.

**WHERE IT WAS FOUND:** Isle of Man.

Gordon Graham, 41, went hunting for treasure in a field on the Isle of Man in 2018 when the detector sounded. He soon found a gold-gilded silver ring engraved with geometric shapes. He wasn't sure how old it was, so he took some pictures and posted them online to see if anyone could tell him about the ring. "An expert identified it as a medieval iconographic ring," he told the BBC. "That was a game changer, and I informed the landowner and the Manx museum straight away."

The ring has been dated to the 1400s and declared a treasure, which means that Graham will split a reward with the landowner for finding it. **R**

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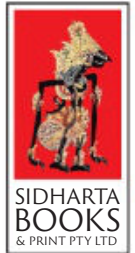


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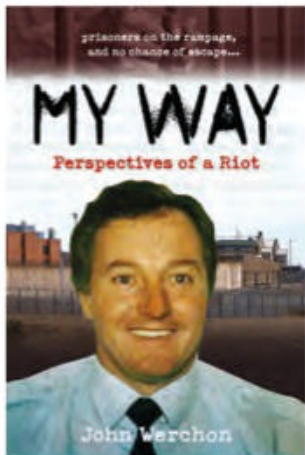
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ISBN: 978-1-925707-77-9

The following book outlines, from lived experience, the true account of a riot situation in a prison facility. The opening pages describe 'business as usual' — the routines, procedures and protocols surrounding work in the prison arena — all from the perspective of a young Correctional Officer.

Fast track a significant period of time to a new and somewhat 'relaxed' correctional context, adopted in an effort to foster communication and openness. However, a sequence of events unfolds that has far-reaching implications for a once 'rigid' system and an unsuspecting officer; when opportunistically, prisoners undertake a riot, and he and other officers are taken hostage, the real repercussions unfolding across a lifetime ...

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Phone: (03) 9560 9920 Mobile: 0408 537 792 Web: [sidharta.com.au](http://sidharta.com.au)

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Marseille and the  
Mediterranean Sea,  
as seen from the  
Notre-Dame-de-la-  
Garde cathedral





# *Magnificent* **MARSEILLE**

*France's oldest city is as vibrant and diverse  
as it was more than two millennia ago*

BY *Paul Robert*

**A** young man in a T-shirt and jeans exchanges a few words in Arabic with the middle-aged woman baking flatbreads over an open flame in a tiny bakery. She cuts one and gives him a slice. It's my second day in Marseille and, curious, I've stopped to watch. I've seen small neighbourhood places like this in the Middle East but did not expect to find one in this southern French city. The customer turns to me with a welcoming smile. "Tourist?" he asks, as he drops a coin on the counter. He takes a bite of his bread and walks off down the narrow street without waiting for a reply.

I'm on the Rue Rodolphe Pollak

in the Noailles area of Marseille, France's second largest city and its oldest, and its main trade seaport. The warren of streets is a few minutes' walk from Vieux-Port, the tourist heart of the city. Noailles's small open-fronted shops sell vegetables, meat, cleaning products, rattan furniture and, it seems, all the spices of the Middle East. In addition to French, languages spoken on the busy streets include Arabic and African French.

This bakery is the size of a small kitchen and is run by Yasmina Ayab and her son Mohammed. When I flaunt a couple of words of Arabic, Yasmina smiles broadly and invites me to sit with her. She tells me she is from Algeria, having come to Marseille about ten years ago with her children, hoping to give them a better future.

It's a familiar story here - one that tells the story of Marseille itself. Migration and invasions have shaped this sunny city on the Mediterranean ever since Greek merchants landed here 2600 years ago, built a harbour, and mingled with the local Celts. Later came Romans, Jews, Visigoths, Burgundians and Franks. During the House of Bourbon dynasty in the 17th and 18th centuries, the port was transformed into a ship-building centre. In the 20th century



PHOTOS: (PREVIOUS SPREAD) ISTOCK/GETTY IMAGES; (THIS PAGE) PAUL ROBERT



**Above: Eclectic Le Panier. Opposite: Bar owner Fabien Chabord (right) with staff**

came Armenians, West Africans, Comorans, and Arabic-speaking people from North Africa. It all adds up to one of the most ethnically diverse cities in Europe.

**THE NOAILLES NEIGHBOURHOOD**, situated a stone's throw from the main commercial artery of La Canebière, is atmospheric: noisy, not very clean and very colourful. Graffiti slogans are on walls, and in a small square that honours the Greek roots of Marseille with a fountain dedicated to Homer, I come across an improvised monument with eight fading portraits. It commemorates the eight people killed in 2018 when two buildings suddenly collapsed from lack of maintenance. This is a neighbourhood with a soul.

And it is very welcoming. Close to Yasmina Ayab's bakery I discover an Algerian restaurant, Le Fémina, on the Rue du Musée. "This was established by my great-grandfather," the owner, Mustapha Kachel, tells me. He points at the fading black-and-white photos on the wall. "My great-grandfather, my grandfather, my father."

The restaurant has been in this building since 1921, and Mustapha celebrated the centennial last year with what he describes as "a huge couscous festival". He makes his signature dish with barley, not the usual wheat, using a recipe that hasn't changed since the 1920s. It originates from a region in Algeria where his great-grandfather was born.

"So, after four generations in

## READER'S DIGEST

France,” I ask, “do you feel French, or Algerian?” Mustapha doesn't hesitate: “Algerian”. But then he puts it in perspective. “Algerian and French are only nationalities. So, I am Marseillais!”

And, he insists, couscous itself is part of Marseille culture. Mustapha was a member of the Algerian delegation that supported couscous being registered on UNESCO's Lists of Intangible Cultural Heritage. They were successful: the dish was added in 2020.

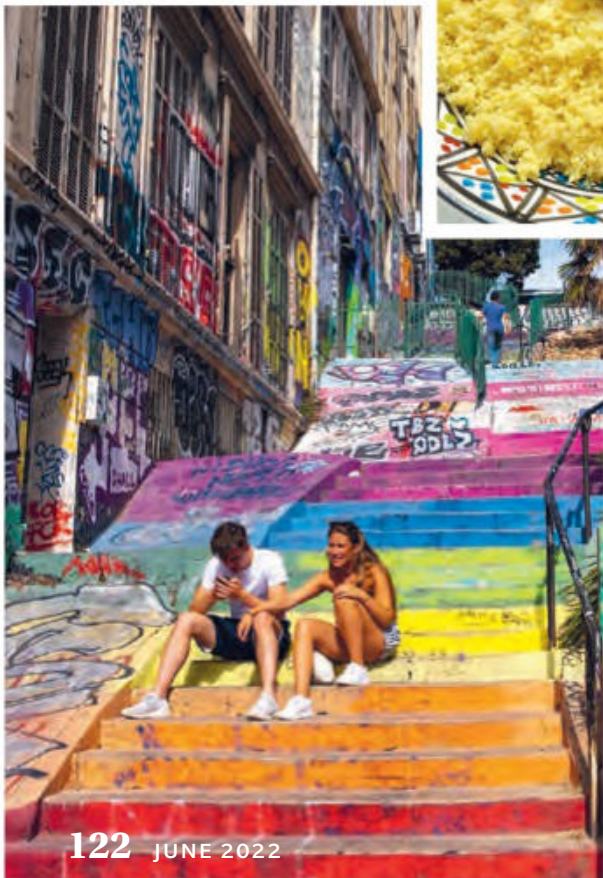
To be honest, before I travelled here, couscous had not been the first meal that came to mind when I thought of Marseille. It

was bouillabaisse, the rich soup with olive oil, garlic, fennel and saffron that fishermen's wives used to make from the catch they couldn't sell to restaurants. I was truly anticipating it a couple of days earlier on the train heading to the south of France from my home in Amsterdam. I answered a friend's text message with: “I'll think about this over a bowl of bouillabaisse.” I envisioned enjoying it with a *pastis* de Marseille – an anise-flavoured aperitif – at a small portside café in the company of locals who would be discussing the world in an incomprehensible dialect.

This was clearly a romantic notion based on earlier experiences I'd had in out-of-the-way French villages. I quickly learned that Marseille was nothing like those places. For one thing, there

are no small cafés at historic Vieux-Port. It is a huge, impressive marina lined with beautifully restored buildings, including hotels and a soap museum. Olive-oil soap, along with *pastis*, is a signature product of Marseille. The marina stands alongside 17th-century fortifications built under Louis XIV.

The restaurants do serve bouillabaisse, but when I see the price at one place I am shocked: 69 euros (A\$100)! No bowl of soup should cost





**Above: The Mucem museum sits opposite Fort Saint-Jean at the Vieux-Port. Opposite: Couscous is widely available in the colourful Noailles neighbourhood**

that much, even if they made it with gold-scaled fish. I check a neighbouring place: 59 euros (A\$86).

I give up and end up two streets away from the old harbour in a new restaurant, Ourea, that's popular with local foodies. For 28 euros (A\$40), Chef Matthieu Roche serves a three-course lunch that includes one of the most delicious tuna steaks I've ever eaten.

More and more young, talented people are discovering that Marseille is an ideal place to realise their dreams. Some, like Roche, are locals, but there is also a growing number of Parisians moving here every year. Tired of the rush and expense of life in larger cities, the newcomers – dubbed “bourgeois bohemians”,

or “bobos” for short – come looking for the more relaxed Mediterranean way of life. “I worked in finance in London,” says Claire Lombard, the 34-year-old co-owner of Maison des Nines, a small restaurant/shop/gallery on the edge of Noailles.

“I had to leave England because of Brexit, but I didn't want to go home to Paris. I wanted something different. Here in Marseille it is easier to start something new. You don't need a fortune to live, so in the worst case, you can afford to fail.”

Lombard started Maison des Nines with two other women. One, Estelle Billet, 29, worked in marketing and retail in Paris and now runs the boutique section of this combined business, selling items

## READER'S DIGEST

such as artisanal soap, perfume and jewellery. The three friends also sell vintage clothes.

The bobo invasion has led to the gradual gentrification of the poorer neighbourhoods in downtown Marseille. One is Le Panier, a village-like area just north of Vieux-Port with boutiques, restaurants and cultural spaces set among old houses in narrow lanes. Whereas in Noailles the street art is gritty, in Le Panier entire walls display sophisticated art by various artists, each with specific styles.

My tour guide here is Corinne Ferrand. She has turned her love of her hometown into her profession, but I've asked her to forget about tourist highlights as she shows me around. After all, the Marseille Cathedral and the splendid Notre-Dame-de-la-Garde basilica, which towers over the

city from a hilltop, are easy enough to spot. As we walk through Le Panier, we pass a *pétanque* court, where the local variant of France's iconic ball game *boules* is played. "The court is run by the community but it can also be rented for corporate events," Ferrand explains. (Did I mention the creeping gentrification?)

Before heading out of Le Panier along the Quai de la Joliette, where ferries head to and from places like Corsica, Algeria and Tunisia, we turn from one small street to the next, enjoying the relaxed atmosphere that contrasts with the buzz of Noailles.

Walking through these contrasting neighbourhoods of Marseille – avoiding, like most locals do, the crime-ridden districts in the city's north – I wonder if the mix of cultures ever leads to problems. That evening I ask Fabien Chabard, who owns a bar on Place Jean-Jaurès in a hipster area up a hill from Noailles. The bars on the square are filled with locals of all ethnicities watching the TV screens; the city's football team, Olympique de Marseille (referred to as OM), is playing Lokomotiv Moscow. OM is ahead and the mood is cheerful.

"You can see that the different groups band together," says Fabien. "The later it gets, you sometimes get tensions; this is a tough town." Laughing, he adds: "I always retire at 2am. That is a good time to do so."

Later, as I walk back through Noailles to my hotel, I think about the

### Olive-oil soap is a favourite souvenir





### BIRTH OF AN ANTHEM

*“Arise, children of the fatherland/the day of glory has arrived”* are the opening words of a song composed in Alsace, some 600 kilometres from Marseille, to rally French troops in its war with Austria in 1792. At the time, the song was called ‘War Song of the Army of the Rhine’. But later that year, a band of revolutionary volunteers marched from Marseille to Paris to help overthrow the monarchy, and they sang the song in the capital’s streets. It was renamed ‘La Marseillaise’ and went on to become France’s national anthem.

distinct communities here living in the same neighbourhoods – together, side by side, but not mixed. There are Tunisian bakeries, Algerian butchers, Armenian grocery stores, Syrian restaurants and boho vintage-clothing shops. Like Mustapha, their owners may also feel they are Marseillais first.

“You’ve seen that very well,” says Adrien Joly when I bounce this idea off him the next day. Joly is a director at the Museum of European and Mediterranean Civilizations (Mucem). Established in 2013, it is France’s biggest national museum outside of Paris. It covers anthropology, history, archaeology and art. Joly takes me around the playfully

displayed collection that explains the history of Marseille and its enduring focus on the Mediterranean world, rather than on the European continent to the north.

It is splendid, though locals were slow to warm to this cultural newcomer because, as Joly puts it, anything that comes from the central government in Paris “is to be distrusted. But when they see it, they love it,” he says. “I think Marseille is now proud of it.”

The museum, like so many newcomers to this grand old city over the centuries, has had to work at earning its place in people’s hearts. And one day, it too will be truly Marseillais. **R**



### Have A Rice Day

I like rice. Rice is great when you’re hungry  
and you want 2000 of something.

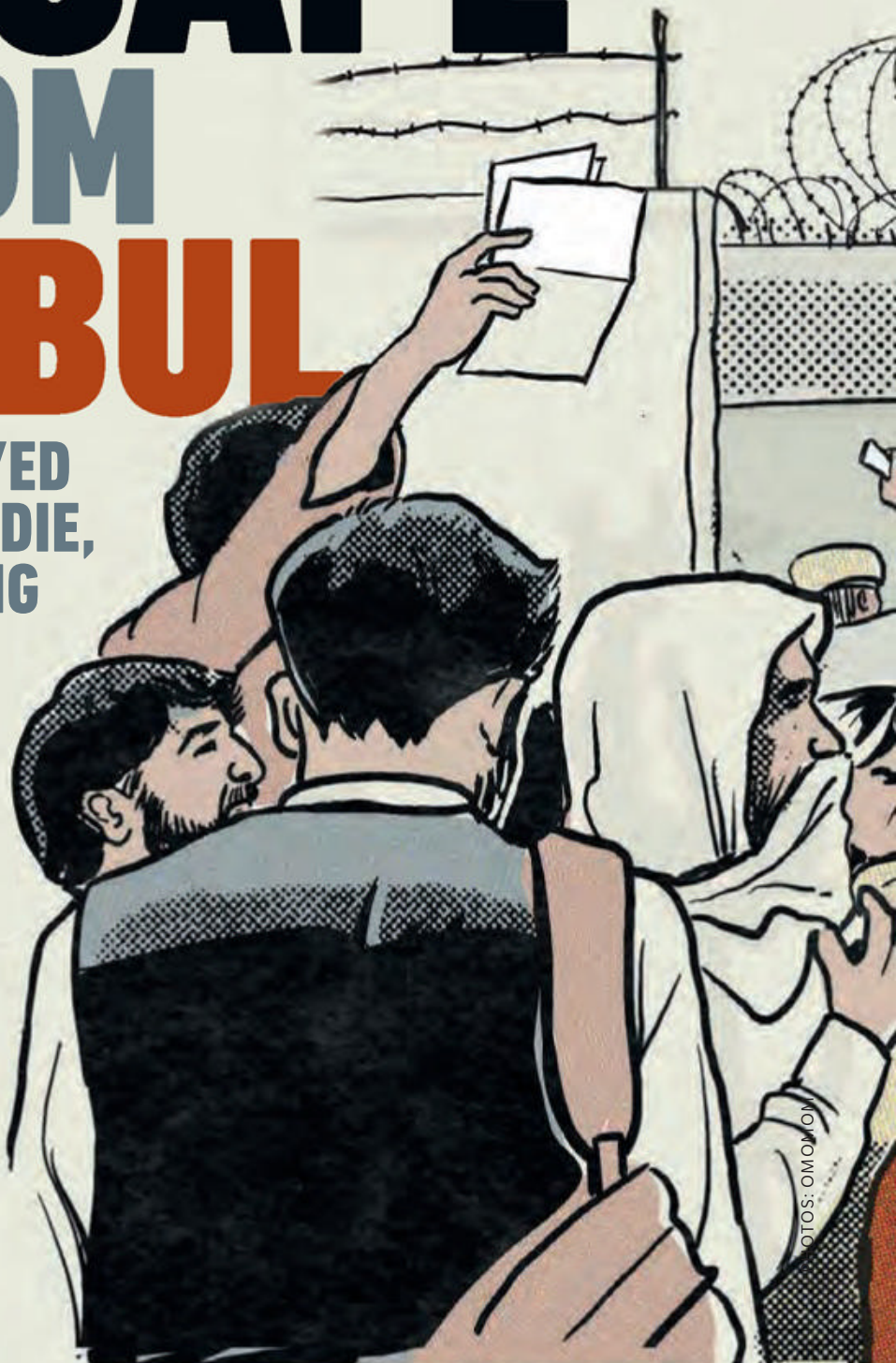
COMEDIAN MITCH HEDBERG

# ESCAPE FROM KABUL

IF SHE STAYED  
SHE COULD DIE,  
BUT GETTING  
OUT MIGHT  
KILL HER.  
HOW ONE  
WOMAN  
FLED FOR  
FREEDOM

BY *Fatema Hosseini*  
AND *Kim Hjelmgaard*  
WITH *Kelley*  
*Benham French*

FROM **USA TODAY**



OTOS: OMOYON



BONUS READ



# Every time I blinked awake, I would meet my mother's eyes. My father, my brother and my baby sister were all asleep, sprawled across the floor in my dark apartment on the western edge of Kabul.

*They had fled just before the Taliban ransacked their home in Herat, in western Afghanistan, and now they were together for one more dusty sunrise.*

The Taliban had not yet knocked on my door, but we knew they would.

I was 27, an educated single woman who asked too many questions and rarely wore a hijab. I was a working journalist, a member of the Shi'a Hazara ethnic group, daughter of an Afghan national soldier.

In my dreams, I had tried to fight, to run. I'd pushed my way through chaos and smoke, crushed by crowds in a desperate surge towards the airport. Hands grabbed at me. Women were crying. Bullets hammering.

"What is it, Fatema?" my mother said when I startled awake again. She had been up all night, watching over me.

"Just a nightmare," I told her.

It was time now. I had to get out of Kabul.

## August 15, 2021 The Day Kabul Fell

It seems impossible that civilisation can be knocked back a few decades in an afternoon, that life as you know it can collapse before lunch, but it did.

Sunday morning, the Taliban were on the edge of Kabul. I picked up warm naan from the bakery and stopped at the ATM because people were worried the banks would close.

The ATM was broken, so I headed to the office. I was wearing my usual jeans, dress, scarf and sneakers.

The streets were crowded. Hundreds of vendors spilled into the road hawking vegetables and fruit over loudspeakers: "Apples! Mel-

ons! Mangos! Fresh tomatoes!" I weaved through their carts among women in colourful dresses. Kabul must be one of the loudest cities on Earth.

I passed my favourite restaurant, Taj Begum, always brimming with hookah mist and laughter. It is named after an Afghan warrior

**MY MOTHER CALLED ME, CRYING. "PUT ON YOUR LONG DRESS," SHE SAID. "THE TALIBAN ARE EVERYWHERE"**



**Lt Alex Cornell Du Houx:** “Fatema please stay in this area as it’s past the Taliban check point. We will see about space on a flight...”

**The foreign troops keep firing and using gas.**

“She’s at the Eastern gate. Taliban everywhere and won’t let her in. Firing in the air and at people. She can’t talk and connection slow...”

princess and owned by the fiercest woman in Kabul. She drives through the streets shouting at the other drivers, all of them men.

In the office of Kabul Now, the English-language section of the Etiaat-e-Roz news agency where I work, phones were ringing as the Taliban advanced.

My mother called me, crying. “Put on your long dress. The Taliban are everywhere.”

“It’s OK. My dress is not that short.”

She started shouting. “You’re not listening to me!”

A rumour spread that President Ashraf Ghani had left the country. Soon no one could focus. Men who came to work that morning in suits came back later in *peran tunban*, the traditional long shirts and loose trousers. The Taliban were in the presidential palace by now, but we didn’t know that.

Early in the afternoon, I decided to

go home, but a colleague warned me that I couldn’t leave without a male escort. That’s when I knew it was real.

I took a car most of the way. The shops were closed and the streets nearly empty. At Taj Begum, the owner had locked the door and smashed all the hookahs. A truck loaded with Taliban flew by. I walked the last few minutes alone. The few men I saw stared at me for a long time.

At the apartment, I hugged my mum. She said, very slowly: “Your dress is short.”

All the evidence the Taliban would need of my infidel status was right inside the front door. I had covered the wall with photos of my friends and me doing normal things: eating ice cream. Laughing. Wearing silly glasses. My hair spills out around my face. My lipstick is a happy shade of cherry.

The Taliban don’t want to see my face. They don’t want to see me with friends from the Asian University for



Women in Bangladesh or the fellowship I did in Dhaka. My education and my work are a threat to their ideology.

The Hazara people are some of the most oppressed in Afghanistan, and among the most progressive about women's rights and education. Before he joined the Afghan National Army, my father guarded a library full of books he couldn't read. My mother was a housewife who was passionate about school but who couldn't continue her education because she needed permission from her mother-in-law, and then she got pregnant.

She took out loans to send me to an international high school, Afghan Turk, a top school in Afghanistan. There I learned Farsi, English, a little Arabic, a little Turkish, a little Pashto. My relatives and neighbours were worried. "She's just a girl," they would say. "Investing at this level will be useless to her."

Instead I became a journalist investigating corruption and giving voice to women.

Now I snatched the photos and took down the song lyrics I'd posted on the wall: "No one can say what we get to be/so why don't we rewrite the stars? Maybe the world could be ours."

I dropped them into a bucket and lit a match. The room filled with smoke.



*Kim Hjelmgaard, 44, a London-based international correspondent for USA TODAY, was worried about Fatema Hosseini who, in addition to her work at Etilaat-e-Roz, was a freelance reporter for USA TODAY.*

*Hosseini had never lived under Taliban rule. Her family left for Iran when she was three months old because of the group's persecution of Hazaras and abhorrent treatment of women. She returned at age ten, after the 2001 US invasion ousted the Taliban from power.*

*Hjelmgaard knew that Hosseini had later interviewed Taliban fighters and reported about women's lives now versus then. Then being a time of moral darkness when women and young girls were excluded from public life and education, when they were beaten publicly for daring to venture outside*

*without a male guardian, for wearing nail polish, for listening to pop music.*

*Her hashtags on Twitter were enough to get her killed: #TalibanGoToHell, #TalibanTerror, #TalibanNeverChange, #FreeAfghanistan.*

*Hjelmgaard contacted Hosseini just before noon London time that Sunday, August 15. "I hope you are OK," he wrote in a WhatsApp message. "Tell me how I can help."*

*Hosseini emailed Hjelmgaard her passport information, national ID card and a visa application she had texted to the US State Department.*

*The only secure way out of Kabul was the Hamid Karzai International Airport. Land routes out of Afghanistan were clogged and dangerous.*

*Later that day, but the middle of the night in Afghanistan, Hjelmgaard had one more question. "Would you be prepared to go without your family?"*

*She quickly wrote back. "I think so."*

*The next day, Monday, August 16, Hjelmgaard rose early and started messaging anyone he could think of with connections to Afghanistan or the Middle East. Contacts in the US military, members of Congress, European diplomats, aid workers and journalists. He also wrote to senior USA TODAY editors informing them that Hosseini*

*was hiding in her home. They started calling contacts as well.*

*As the US evacuation gathered pace, thousands of Afghans streamed into the airport. Women were trampled. Crying children were handed over airport walls to American soldiers. Terrified Afghans clung to the undercarriage of a US military plane on the runway, dropping to their deaths one by one as it took off.*

*Getting Hosseini safely through an airport spinning out of control was daunting. Then a US Navy reserve public affairs officer responded to one of Hjelmgaard's messages.*

*"Hi Alex, asking for a real favour here," Hjelmgaard had texted.*

*"Absolutely," he replied, adding, "It's going to be tough." He promised nothing, but it felt like progress.*

*Hjelmgaard had met Lt Alex Cornell du Houx, 38, two years earlier aboard a US Navy destroyer patrolling the Persian Gulf. He was*

*Hjelmgaard's media guide for the trip. Cornell du Houx had served twice in the Maine House of Representatives and now had a civilian job addressing climate change. Within a few hours, he had an update for Hjelmgaard. The Ukraine government had offered some seats on a flight.*

*Hjelmgaard wrote back thanking*

**RELATIVES  
WORRIED THAT  
INVESTING IN  
MY EDUCATION  
WAS USELESS.  
"SHE'S JUST  
A GIRL,"  
THEY'D SAID**

*him, thinking, We're almost there. Hosseini would go to the airport, the Ukrainians would get her through the gate, and she'd board the plane. They'd work out later how she would get to the US.*



## **August 17** **My First Attempt To Reach The Airport**

I got a message from Ukraine's Special Forces to head to the airport, but when I got near, I was told to go home and wait for word. Out of the open window of the cab I could smell mouldering fruit from the market. Kabul was a place of struggle and joy, and it hurt to see Taliban fighters rip through it in US armoured vehicles and Ford Ranger-style pickup trucks.

That night, I ran into a married female policewoman who lived on the same floor of my building.

"What is your plan?" she asked me.

I shrugged, unsure how much to reveal. "Well, you'd better make one because the Taliban have already started forcing young girls and widows to marry them. They will find you and marry you off."

She wasn't wrong. The previous summer, when the Taliban took over Baman, where I was born, they

ordered local leaders to provide a list of girls over 15 for marriage with Taliban fighters.

It made me angry that the policewoman was so matter-of-fact about my future. Policewomen are role models for girls in Afghanistan.

"I will never become a Taliban wife," I replied. "I would rather die, and if I have to kill that person too, so be it."

## **August 18** **A Tense Wait**

My mother sat on the floor cutting up documents that told the story of our family's achievements. My dad's ID cards, photos in his army uniform.

My sister's certificates for courses in computers, QuickBooks, English. My brother's certificates from English classes and boxing training. If they were written in English, they identified us as people who might have worked with foreigners.

While she cut she did not talk. The certificates were laminated, and the scissors struggled to cut through them. Blisters rose on her fingers.

I'd kept a memory notebook since 2009. Inside were my drawings and poems in Farsi and English, a dried flower. My friends signed it each year. "I have a feeling you will be someone

**"I WILL NEVER  
BECOME A  
TALIBAN WIFE,"  
I TOLD MY  
FEMALE  
NEIGHBOUR.  
"I WOULD  
RATHER DIE"**

powerful someday,” one friend wrote in 2014. “You are intelligent and smart.”

I gave it to my mother. “I don’t have the heart to burn it,” I said. “Maybe you can.”

On Twitter, the Taliban were celebrating. I deleted the app.

I didn’t pray. Not then, not even later, in the worst moments. I felt embarrassed to turn to God when I needed something, even though I never doubted He was there.



*Meantime, Lt Alex Cornell du Houx was working with Iryna Andrukh, 33, a colonel in Ukraine’s military, to get Hosseini on a Ukrainian Air Force jet to Kyiv. They had met in 2019 at NATO School in southern Germany. Andrukh was a war hero. During a past conflict between her country with Russia, she walked across a battlefield unarmed and negotiated the release of Ukrainian hostages.*

*Andrukh told Cornell du Houx, “We’re sending this plane to Kabul to get our people. Maybe we could make this a humanitarian task.” She got a general to approve it. Cornell du Houx sent instructions to Hosseini by WhatsApp.*

*Ivan\*, a Ukrainian Special Forces*

\*NAME WITHHELD TO PROTECT HIS IDENTITY



*soldier who had been deployed to Afghanistan many times, was charged with finding Hosseini at the airport and getting her through the gate.*

*Hjelmgaard sent him a message, thanking him for his efforts.*

*“No drama,” Ivan wrote back. “Will try my best to bring her.”*

*It was getting late in Kabul, and Cornell du Houx had one more message for Hosseini: “Please be flexible if the Special Forces tell you to go to another location. They have not landed and don’t know the entire situation.”*

*“OK,” Hosseini replied. It was 10.30pm in Kabul. “I will try to be.”*



## **August 19** **Saying Goodbye To My Family**

My mother woke me at 4am. She held a scarf across my back, measuring me, and sewed my university diploma into it, in a pouch. It was the one

certificate she couldn't bear to cut up. I tied the scarf across my back. She sewed another scarf into a belt that held my passport and a hard drive containing some of my work. Over that I put on a sleeveless dress and a jeans jacket. I put on a long chador that belonged to my mother. It covered my head and upper body, leaving room for just my face, and I had to clutch it tight to keep it on.

I had no idea if I would see my family again. I tried not to cry.

I wore a backpack and carried a suitcase. The weather had been above 30°C all week and I was overdressed, but my mother had said, "It's just one day."

My brother and brother-in-law came with me, because I needed a male escort now any time I left the house. Traffic grew intense as we neared the airport. The area was swarming with Taliban fighters searching cars and turning people away.

Kim Hjelmgaard was calling but I couldn't answer. I didn't want the taxi driver to hear me speaking English. I hid the phone under my chador to type: "Can't talk."

*"Proceed with caution," Cornell du Houx advised Hosseini. "Coordinate with the Special Forces on the ground."*

*At each of the half-dozen airport entrances, the Taliban had erected*

*checkpoints that travellers had to pass before they could reach barricades controlled by US and NATO forces. The Taliban appeared to have lists of people they did not want to allow to leave Afghanistan. They also were trying to keep some vague order and deter tens of thousands of people trying to flee.*

*Others were bullies and opportunists who saw a chance to solicit a bribe, exert influence, wield power.*

*Once at the airport, Hosseini had to walk past three gates: the main terminal gate, then Abbey Gate, and finally the east gate, where the Ukrainians would be looking for her.*

### **An Impossible Struggle**

I got out of the taxi, and right away lost my brother, who had my suitcase, in the crowd. A militant chased him and he was gone. My brother-in-law had gone back home.

When I reached the first checkpoint, I faced a huge crowd – men lined up on one side, women on the other – and fought my way through. At the front, two militants were lashing people with whips and firing bullets into the air.

"My brother. My brother is there, let me pass," I shouted in Farsi.

Two militants controlled the line. One of them angrily shoved me back, cursing me. For some reason, I couldn't take my eyes off his face – his crazy, tired eyes lined in kohl



– which made him furious. “You’re shameless!” he shouted. “Look down if you talk to me!”

He swore to God that he would kill me. He shoved me with the butt of his rifle. He raised his arm to whip me, but his colleague stopped him. The colleague looked at me and said, “This is your only chance.”

I ran through the checkpoint, leaving them arguing. The first one shouted that I would be dead if he ever saw me again. Sweat was running down my back, and I was so thirsty my tongue felt sticky in my mouth.

I made it to the second checkpoint, where NATO troops were standing on the wall, tossing down water bottles. The Taliban commanders were opening the bottles and pouring water on people. We needed to be drinking it.

A Taliban militant was speaking, but I didn’t understand his language. I pushed forward and saw him raise his whip. I dodged it and it hit the woman behind me on her shoulder. It tore her dress, tore her flesh. I heard her crying. I couldn’t move, so I just sat, right in front of the soldier.

Around me, people were shouting that it was my fault. As much as I

wanted to, I could not turn and tend to her, because I would be shot or lashed, and I’d never make it to the gate. “Can you let me pass?” I asked in Farsi.

“Where do you want to go?”

“The other side. My brother is there. I want to take him back home.” I must have looked so pale and thirsty. My voice was stuck in my dry throat. “Just let me go.”



*Hjelmgaard, Cornell du Houx, and Ivan were all trying to reach Hosseini, but the connection kept dropping out.*

*“Stay strong, Fatema,” Hjelmgaard wrote. “You can do it.”*

*Cornell du Houx was tracking Hosseini’s location in real time via WhatsApp maps and relaying the information to the Ukrainians.*

*Hosseini sent an audio message: “I think I’m five minutes away [from the east gate], but the place is overcrowd-*

*ed and they started opening fire so I can’t go near it.”*

*Then, “I need help.”*

### Lost And Desperate

The east gate doors were high, and the soldiers were shouting from the walls that they couldn’t open them unless people backed up. Someone

**“YOU’RE SHAMELESS!” THE MILITANT SHOUTED, RAISING HIS ARM TO WHIP ME. “LOOK DOWN IF YOU TALK TO ME!”**

asked me for my documents, and when I said I had a passport, he shook his head.

"Everyone here has a passport," he said. "It means nothing. You have to have a document."

Only Ukrainians were getting through this gate, it seemed.

Alex Cornell du Houx told me to stay there so Ivan could find me. I wandered around trying to get a signal. Then the phone rang and Ivan said, "Go to the north gate." He hung up before I could answer.

I felt so helpless that I couldn't stop my tears. "Where is the north gate?" I kept asking anyone who would listen.

People had been waiting here night after night with no food or water. I was so thirsty and I didn't have the guts to ask anyone for water. They wore days of dust on their faces. Mothers were crying. There were piles of abandoned suitcases.

Someone said that when the gates opened before, people were trampled in the rush. So many injuries. So many children underfoot. God knows whether they were alive.

I had to leave. I had been told the plane would depart at 1pm, and it was past 12.30. A man told me to follow the canal around the far edge

of the airport, then get a taxi to the north gate, which was about half an hour away. I blindly did what I was told.

I walked fast while trying to text my family. When I raised my head a group of armed Taliban were staring at me. They could have beat me to death, but I was too exhausted to care.

I reached a crowded area and approached a shopkeeper to help me get a taxi.

"Go back home," he told me. He said he could tell I worked with foreigners, but the Taliban wouldn't find out about me if I stayed at home and wore a burqa.

I had never worn a burqa, and I couldn't bear hearing that anymore, so I started to cry. I cried so loud people backed away.

I climbed into a taxi with a crazy driver who kept emphasizing that the Taliban were his relatives. He stopped in front of a mosque where a group of Taliban were sitting.

He rolled down the window to say hi to them, and the Taliban looked at me angrily.

We drove for 20 minutes before we reached a public road. Then I saw a sign that read "Welcome to Bagram."

*This isn't the way to the airport, I*

**WHEN I SAID  
I HAD A  
PASSPORT,  
HE SHOOK  
HIS HEAD.  
"EVERYONE  
HERE HAS A  
PASSPORT.  
IT MEANS  
NOTHING"**



thought. *I've been abducted.* Then the car stopped again, and the driver pointed out the flags for Turkey and Afghanistan at the north airport gate, ten minutes away by foot.

It was past 1pm, and I was still on the wrong side of a Taliban checkpoint.

At the checkpoint, people were sitting because the Taliban had warned that if anyone stood they would be shot. Men and women were crowded together. I duck-walked to stay low. I had to keep moving forward.

I saw a woman with her hand dragging on the ground. Her arm seemed disconnected from her shoulder. I glanced at her and then a tear gas canister landed in front of me. People started running and pushing, and tears were streaming out of my eyes.

I stood taller and shouted, "I want to get out!"

A Taliban soldier centimetres away

emptied his gun next to my ear. I went deaf. A woman beside me was hit by bullets. The militant pushed me hard and I stumbled out of the crowd. Everything went black.

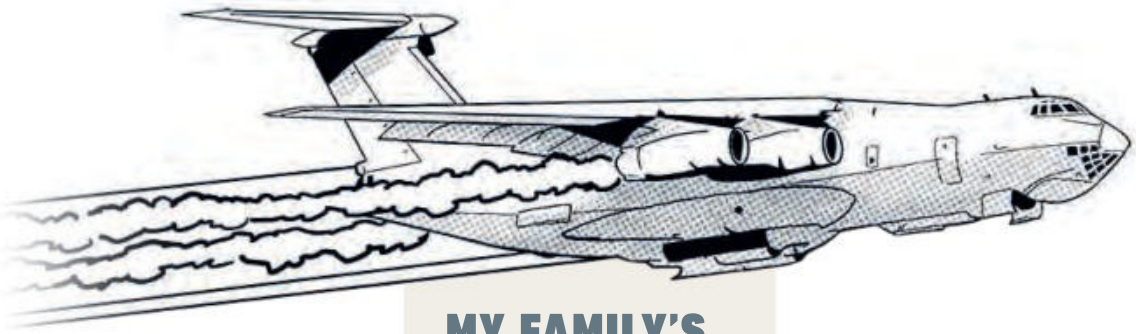
### **I WOKE UP ON THE ROADSIDE.**

Someone was giving me water. "It's salty," he said. I drank it all. I checked my phone. Somehow my brother was on the line. I said: "Bring water and take me home."

For me it was over. I texted Kim Hjelmgaard: "I can't. I will die. They open fire. And throw tear gas."

Then Alex reached out. "Pls pause and think of something you love."

So I did. Dancing in my bedroom to Bollywood songs and singing so loud I forget myself. Being alone under my own roof. My baby sister Mobina's laugh. The courage I feel when I leave the house dressed the way I want. The rhythmic clicking



## MY FAMILY'S PLANE LIFTED OFF JUST MINUTES BEFORE A SUICIDE BOMBING AT THE AIRPORT GATE

of my fingers on keys, a story unspooling before me. My favourite passage from *Azadi*, a book about India; the title means Freedom: *“What we need are people who are prepared to be unpopular. Who are prepared to put themselves in danger. Who are prepared to tell the truth. Brave journalists can do that, and they have. Brave lawyers can do that, and they have. And artists .... We have work to do. And a world to win.”*

I could try to go home but had nothing to go back to. The Taliban would beat me or kill me or own me. We have organisations devoted to women’s rights, but the culture and corruption are too entrenched to allow true gains. Women like me take all the risks. Our progress was not real. It was a bubble that popped.

### Hope

My phone rang. It was Ivan telling me to meet up with a guy who would help. After a few minutes of searching I found him. He took me to a place where many Ukrainian families were waiting to get through the

gate. I saw the Ukrainian flag rise from the foreign troops’ side. “It’s time to move,” I said, and pushed forward.

There was a wire fence. The NATO troops feared a suicide bomber, and when we got too close to it,

both the Taliban and foreign troops opened fire.

A Taliban soldier tried to push me back. I looked at him directly, a man about my age. The words poured out before I could stop them.

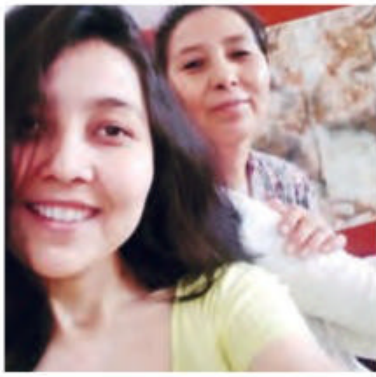
“You are so violent. You don’t need to beat people up, you don’t need to kill them. These are our people.”

He looked as if he were listening, but he was getting cross. He shoved me. But all my fear was gone.

“Look at those troops on the other side,” I told him. “They are waiting for me and watching us now. If you beat me up, they will come after you.”

He let me get closer to the fence where I stood as tall as I could, lifted my hands to the sky, and screamed, “Ivan! Ivan! It’s Fatema! It’s Fatema!”

He was standing right in front of me on the other side of the fence and



**In more carefree times: Fatema and her mother at home in Herat, Afghanistan, in the summer of 2020**

sent one of his forces to get me. This soldier half carried me, half dragged me, and I stepped over many people on the way through the gate.

**UKRAINE'S AIR FORCE PLANE** stayed in Kabul two more days as the Special Forces tried to rescue more of its nationals and others. Finally, at 9.30am on Sunday, August 22, I walked out of the arrivals terminal at Kyiv's Boryspil International Airport. Iryna Andruk sent a photo of the two of us, all wide smiles and blessed relief, to Kim Hjelmgaard.

I was the first Afghan that Alex Cornell du Houx evacuated from Kabul. Afterwards, he worked with contacts to rescue 500 more, among them my parents, my brother and my baby sister.

My family's plane lifted off minutes before ISIS-K terrorists carried

out a suicide bombing at the airport gate, killing at least 170 Afghans and 13 American soldiers.

After my family was safe in the Ukraine, my mum and I talked about the things we left behind.

"My journal," I said, remembering that I'd asked her to burn it.

"I brought that," she said.

That was my mum, salvaging what she could. She forgot my brother's underwear, but she saved my purest memories, the ones where I found my voice.

The Taliban have since been seen in my Kabul neighbourhood. Video shows them beating a woman and forcing men into the boots of cars.

On September 11, I flew to Dulles International Airport outside Washington, DC, the very airport where, exactly 20 years earlier a passenger jet took off, was hijacked by terrorists, and crashed into the Pentagon.

Followers of Osama bin Laden and others are still in Pakistan and Afghanistan, organising and recruiting. Women are cowering under black cloth.

We still have a world to win, and some part of that fight belongs to me. **R**

FATEMA HOSSEINI AND KIM HJELMGAARD WITH KELLEY BENHAM FRENCH (SEPTEMBER 30, 2021), © 2021 BY USA TODAY NETWORK

**Editor's Note: When Russia invaded Ukraine on February 24, Hosseini's family once again found themselves needing to flee. They made it safely into Poland.**

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## RD RECOMMENDS



Movies

### Jurassic World Dominion **Sci-Fi/Thriller**

In the conclusion to the epic *Jurassic Park* franchise, Jeff Goldblum's character Dr Ian Malcolm states: "We are racing towards the extinction of our species. We don't only lack dominion over nature, we're subordinate to it," which gives you good insight into how the movie will play out.

This bold, new adventure takes place four years after the remote volcanic island Isla Nublar was destroyed – where Jurassic Park was developed and dinosaurs were

resurrected and displayed to the public. Now, dinosaurs live and hunt alongside humans all over the world.

However, the balance between man and beast is fragile to say the least, and will reshape the future of the world and determine, once and for all, whether humans will remain its apex predators. Starring New Zealand actor Sam Neill as Alan Grant and Chris Pratt as Owen Grady, *Jurassic World Dominion* features never-seen-before dinosaurs, breakneck action and astonishing new visual effects.

COMPILED BY DIANE GODLEY



### Lightyear **Family/Animation**

If you've ever wondered what Buzz Lightyear's backstory was, wonder no longer. This year's *Toy Story* sequel divulges all while it follows our hero and legendary Space Ranger on an intergalactic adventure with a group of ambitious recruits. "Buzz's world was always something I was excited about," said director Angus MacLane. "In *Toy Story* there seemed to be this incredible backstory to him being a Space Ranger that's only touched upon, and I always wanted to explore that world further... I wanted to see that movie. And now I'm lucky enough to get to make it."



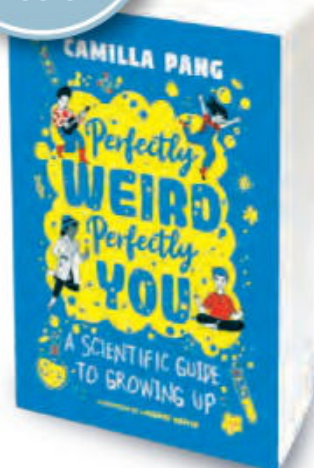
### Elvis **Biopic/Musical Drama**

From director Baz Luhrmann comes the much anticipated *Elvis*, a film that explores the life and music of Elvis Presley (Austin Butler) seen through the prism of his complicated relationship with his maverick manager Colonel Tom Parker (Tom Hanks). The story delves into the dynamics between the two over 20 years, from Presley's rise to fame to his unprecedented stardom, against the backdrop of the evolving cultural landscape and loss of innocence in America. Also starring Australian actors Helen Thomson, David Wenham and Richard Roxburgh.





Non Fiction



## Perfectly Weird, Perfectly You

**Camilla Pang**

HACHETTE

Did you know ... that finding your confidence is a lot like programming a computer? That understanding photosynthesis can teach you about following your passions? And peer pressure and Isaac Newton have something in common? Diagnosed with autism aged eight, Camilla Pang saw the world differently, but with science as her trusty sidekick, she was able to translate things she couldn't understand. Now Pang is giving courage to like-minded kids in this scientific guide to growing up.

PHOTOS: COURTESY PENGUIN RANDOMHOUSE; HACHETTE

## Intolerance-Friendly Kitchen

**Georgia McDermott**

PENGUIN  
RANDOM HOUSE

Best-selling author of *FODMAP Friendly*, Georgia McDermott is again providing delicious recipes to people with a range of intolerances. Packed with gluten-free, low FODMAP and vegetarian recipes, what this cookbook is NOT is dull. After a decade of dealing with her own food intolerances, McDermott has put together sweet and savoury baking recipes (such as cakes, tarts, croissants, pies) so that those on the dietary fringe no longer have to put up with bland food.



## RD Recommends



## Three Minutes With Spirit

**Cael O'Donnell**

PENGUIN  
RANDOM HOUSE

Former mental health therapist Cael O'Donnell now uses his abilities as a psychic medium to help hundreds of thousands of people around the world to deepen their connection to their inner self and lead a more meaningful life. In *Three Minutes With Spirit*, the popular TikTok medium explains how in exploring the three interconnected aspects of our existence – source, spirit and self – we can find true purpose in life, develop trust in our intrinsic sense of direction, and deal with loss.



## Fiction



### The Family String

**Denise Picton**

ULTIMO PRESS

Twelve-year-old Dorcas, her mother's least favourite child, dreams of having a dog or perhaps a guinea pig called Thruppence. Her sister, Ruthy, wants to go to writing school, and her brother, Caleb, wants to play sport with a local team. But her family belongs to the Christadelphian faith, which means they aren't allowed to be 'of the world'. *The Family String* is a darkly amusing and poignant coming-of-age story of a fraught mother-daughter dynamic, and the secrets that adults try to hide from their children.

M.Egan

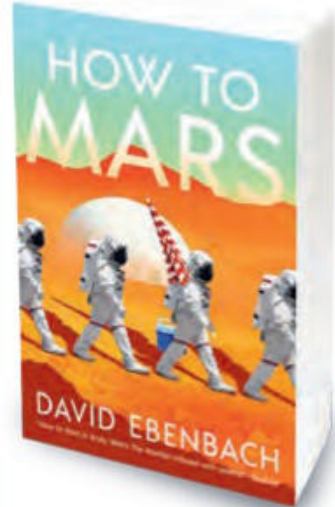
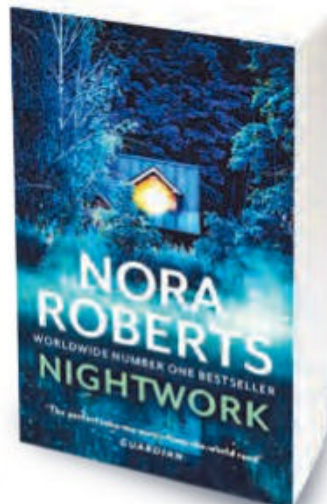
### Nightwork

**Nora Roberts**

HACHETTE

Harry Booth starts stealing at nine to keep a roof over his ailing mother's head, creeping into empty homes at night. When his mother finally succumbs to cancer, he leaves Chicago and leads a quiet, rootless life – although he still keeps up his 'nightwork'. But just when Harry finds happiness, his past comes back to haunt him. And Harry has had dealings with some very bad people in his career as a thief. Fans of Nora Roberts are sure to enjoy this satisfying romance suspense novel.

M.Egan



### How To Mars

**David Ebenbach**

TACHYON

PUBLICATIONS

We can all predict what would happen when humanity leaves the task of Mars colonisation to a reality TV show company focused on ratings and sponsorship opportunities. Two years on, the six 'lucky' scientists are heartedly sick of each other, the bleak Martian scenery and the unappetising food. More worryingly, viewers are getting bored, too, and the TV company has no incentive to continue the project. This is a fun and somewhat wacky read with more serious moments at times.

M.Egan



## Podcasts

**Going Solo**

Award-winning adventurer Andrew McAuley bade farewell to his wife and toddler in 2007 for an epic journey. His aim: to paddle a sea kayak, solo, 1600 kilometres across the Tasman. Using extracts from Andrew's video diary and writings, his wife Vicki tells the story of his 30 days at sea.

**Liar Liar**

Melissa Caddick seemingly led a charmed life of overseas skiing trips, fast cars and designer fashion, until authorities raided her home amid questions over her financial planning business. When Caddick went missing, details emerged of a A\$23 million fraud that ripped off investors, her parents and friends.

**The Imperfects**

Nobody is perfect. Hugh van Cuylenburg, founder of The Resilience Project, and colleagues chat to a variety of people who are willing to talk about their own challenges and imperfections. They then share simple and practical tips to leave you feeling empowered to improve your wellbeing.

**BBC Sounds**

If you like listening to abridged books, download the BBC Sounds app. Scroll down to the 'Categories' section, then tap 'View All' and head to Audiobooks. Choice selections include *The Prime Of Miss Jean Brodie* by Muriel Spark and Booker-winning novel *The Promise* (2021).



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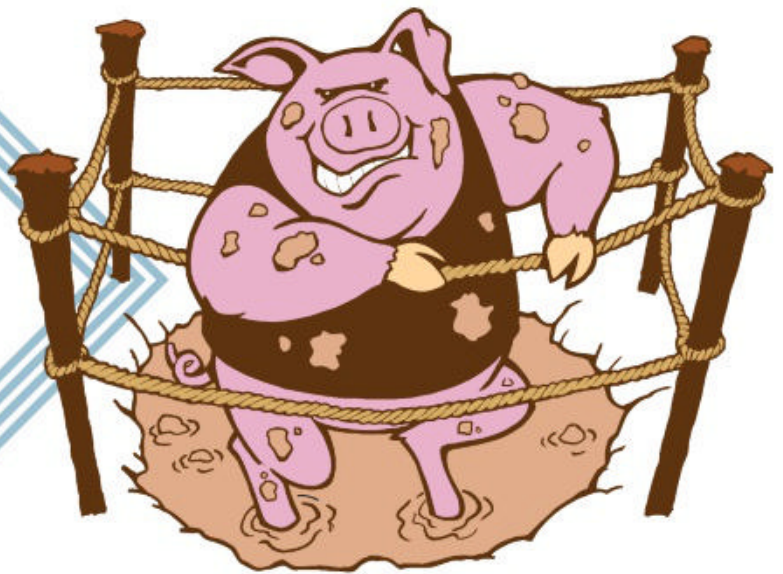
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## THE GENIUS SECTION

Sharpen Your  
Mind



# Pig Wrestling

*This oddly named technique could be the problem-solver you've been looking for*

---

BY Helen Foster

**A**s I sat in my lounge listening to my neighbours shriek on the balcony, again, I was at my wit's end. But two weeks later, as they partied, everything had changed... and the reason was a little technique called 'pig wrestling'. So, could it change your life, too?

Pig wrestling is a problem-solving technique created by British performance psychologists Pete Lindsay and Mark Bawden, and introduced in their book, *Pig Wrestling: The Brilliantly Simple Way to Solve Any Problem... and Create the Change You Need*. The

name comes from a famous saying by George Bernard Shaw, "I learned long ago, never to wrestle a pig. You get dirty and besides, the pig likes it." The authors say that 'unsolvable' problems are like pigs, the more you wrestle with them the harder things get, so, instead of continuing to wrestle, you need to take a different approach.

How you do this is presented as a fable of an office manager complaining about a problem to his local barista - and in the 130-odd pages of the book that tell his story, the authors present a framework they say can help you come up with a solu-

ILLUSTRATION: GETTY IMAGES

tion to any problem. As I discovered, it works. And I'm not alone.

"I started using pig wrestling as a practical method to help clients become unstuck," says online business coach Markus Neukom. "It allows them to create distance between themselves and the problem and come up with alternative views on the issue that they might not have been able to work out alone. If you've ever got to a point with a problem where you think, *Oh, I give up, I've done everything I can think of*, it's a good sign that pig wrestling might help."

One issue with problem solving is we often try to do it in a very linear way. We might think we're trying different approaches, but usually they all have something in common, like trying to fix the same part of the problem.

"One reason for this is that we tend to learn our problem solving skills in childhood and, if we find something that works for us we keep using it," says Professor John Malouff, who studies behaviour change at the University of New England in Armidale, Australia. "It simplifies our life to create habitual behaviours like this, it's also why we often eat the same food or do the same things, but if a habitual approach suddenly doesn't work, you then don't know what else to do [to solve the problem]."

This is what I did with my neighbours – my approach was to ask them to quieten down in lots of different ways. But none of it produced the desired effect.

I was also stressing about it, running it over and over in my head. This, apparently is normal. University of Tokyo researchers found that people who are prone to worry think that they need to spend lots of time trying to come up with a solution to an issue. A second study by two US researchers, Sandra Llera and Michelle Newman, found we don't necessarily come up with good solutions when we're worry-

ing. "There's a lot of evidence to suggest that when you're in a negative mood, and it's very clear that worrying puts you in a negative mood, it's harder to think in a creative or goal-orientated way, which can

keep you stuck," says Llera. "You also focus more on the threat of a problem, rather than how to fix it."

While the people in their study generated solutions to a problem they worried about, an independent evaluator found the solutions of the people who worried were likely to be less effective than those created by the group who didn't worry so much.

If you find yourself stuck with a problem therefore, it seems it's time to stop banging your head against the same bit of wall and start coming up

## INSTEAD OF CONTINUING TO WRESTLE, TAKE A DIFFERENT APPROACH

---

with alternative solutions. "There are at least 50 different ways you can solve any problem," says Professor Malouff. "You just need to become more aware and open to them."

He says that considering what would happen if you do the exact opposite of what you're doing right now is one good way to start this process. He also suggests you look at *all* the causes of a problem, not just the one you assume to be the main issue.

"Let's take your noisy neighbours as an example," he tells me. "You might assume that the person making the noise is the sole cause of the problem, but actually it's also caused by that noise entering your home, the noise entering your ears and your response to it. Now, you have three extra points where you might intervene," he says.

Dropping assumptions is a key lesson of the pig-wrestling approach. As is asking yourself to stop trying to solve the problem and instead, focus on how will you know if it has been solved – which might throw up new ideas of how to tackle it. As they say in the book, "people who think they've tried everything to solve a problem have done nothing of the sort. They may have exhausted their own imagination but they have not yet tried the right thing. Or, there would not still be a problem."

The suggestion that changed everything for me was questioning how my problem would be solved. I realised that it didn't matter if my

### 6 QUESTIONS TO HELP YOU SOLVE A PROBLEM

"What the pig wrestling process teaches you is to take a step back, reframe your thinking and think cleanly," says Markus Neukom. Considering the following questions can help get you started on finding a different solution.

- What solutions have I already tried?
- How would I know that 'the problem' is no longer a problem?
- When is 'the problem' not a problem?
- What is always present when the problem occurs?
- What's the difference between when the problem exists, and it doesn't?
- How can I define the problem in a more solvable way?

neighbours were making noise, if I couldn't hear it. It was like a light-bulb going on. I had already done everything I could to try and stop the noise at the source, but I hadn't done anything to try and change how much of it I could hear.

So, I double-glazed my skylight.

Looking back now, the answer seems embarrassingly obvious, but I was so fixed on one path that I hadn't even considered it. And if it wasn't for a little book about pig wrestling, I'd still be fighting a war I couldn't win. Instead, my pig of a problem is now snoozing (quietly) in the mud. Isn't it time yours joined it? **R**

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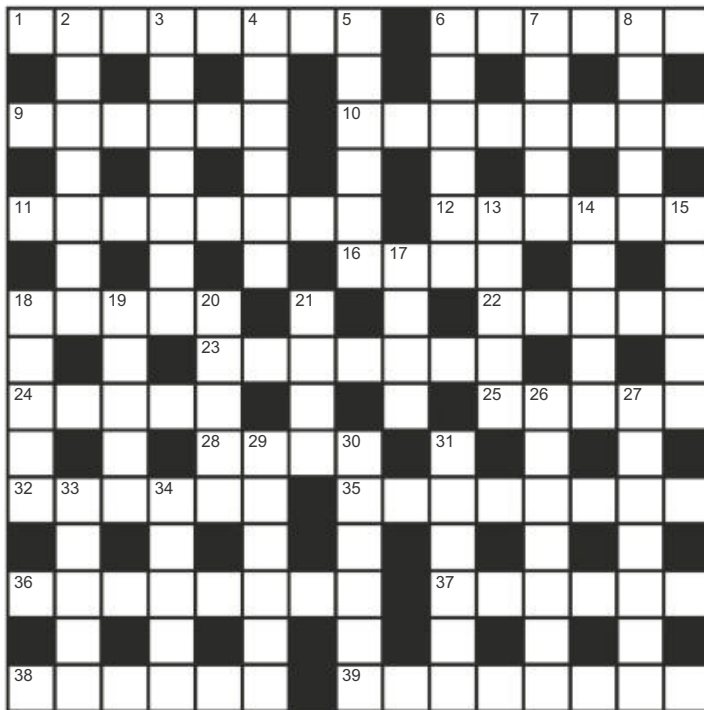
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# PUZZLES

*Challenge yourself by solving these puzzles and mind stretchers, then check your answers on page 154.*



**ACROSS**

- 1** Cave in (8)
- 6** Calls on (6)
- 9** A ten-dollar banknote (6)
- 10** Wide view of an extensive area (8)
- 11** Resident of eg, Fiji, Samoa or Tonga (8)
- 12** Fast (6)
- 16** Reflected sound (4)
- 18** Storage centre (5)
- 22** Ruin (5)

- 23** Breeding place or colony of rooks (7)
- 24** Give consent (5)
- 25** The devil (5)
- 28** 60% of the world's population lives here (4)
- 32** 25% equals a \_\_\_\_\_(6)
- 35** Snakes (8)
- 36** Appreciative (8)
- 37** Water closet (6)
- 38** Insecure knot (6)
- 39** Slaughter (8)

**Crossword**

Test your general knowledge.

**DOWN**

- 2** Supervise (7)
- 3** Once upon a time (4,3)
- 4** Procession (6)
- 5** Die (6)
- 6** Disappear (6)
- 7** Rush (5)
- 8** Shy (5)
- 13** Welsh county (5)
- 14** Vigorous action (5)
- 15** Territory in NW Canada (5)
- 17** Musical symbol (4)
- 18** Diminutive being of folklore (5)
- 19** Hidden (5)
- 20** Something special (5)
- 21** Localities, places (4)
- 26** The New World (7)
- 27** Aardvark (3,4)
- 29** Evasive (6)
- 30** Inviolable place of refuge and protection (6)
- 31** Boxes (6)
- 33** Questionnaire catchall (5)
- 34** Argument (3-2)



# Puzzle Answers

PAGES 154

6							2	5
4	3				8		6	
		9		6		7		
	1			4				
		6	7		5	3		
				2			5	
		7		3		2		
	2		9				3	7
3	6							1

## Sudoku

**HOW TO PLAY:** To win, you have to put a number from 1 to 9 in each outlined section so that:

- Every horizontal row and vertical column contains all nine numerals (1-9) without repeating any of them;
- Each of the outlined sections has all nine numerals, none repeated.

### IF YOU SOLVE IT WITHIN:

**15** minutes, you're a true expert

**30** minutes, you're no slouch

**60** minutes or more, maybe numbers aren't your thing

To enjoy more puzzles and interactive games, go to [www.readersdigest.com.au/games-jokes](http://www.readersdigest.com.au/games-jokes)

**BRAIN POWER**  
brought to you by



**"Write, Erase, Rewrite"**

# FAMILY FUN

**Puzzle Answers**  
PAGE 154

## Spot The Difference

There are seven differences. Can you find them?



## Two Of A Kind

Can you pair each of the stamps with its correct print?

1. ....
2. ....
3. ....
4. ....
5. ....
6. ....

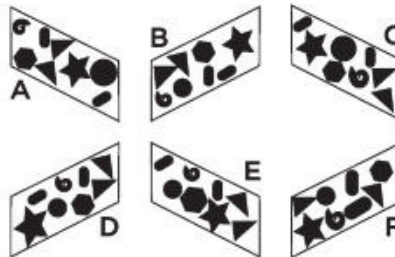
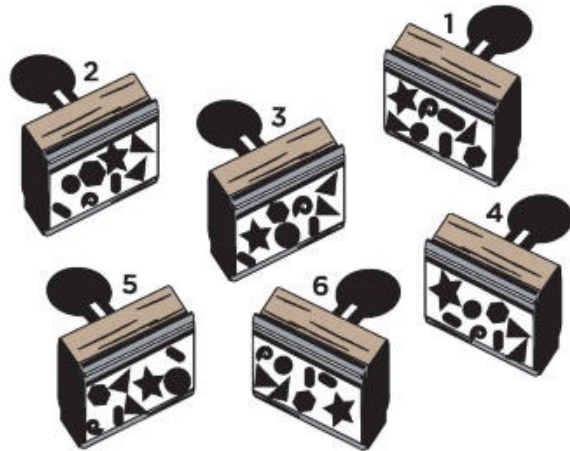


ILLUSTRATION: VECTEEZY.COM

# TRIVIA

## Test Your General Knowledge

- 1.** What country occupies the world's largest archipelago? **1 point**
- 2.** Why do researchers at Norway's Smøla wind farm suggest painting one turbine blade black? **1 point**
- 3.** Flamingos eating a meal and bats giving birth have what in common? **1 point**
- 4.** The BBC's 1957 broadcast about a spaghetti-crop harvest in Switzerland is considered one of the first television examples of what? **1 point**
- 5.** Marius Smit's unconventional tour company organises trips to fish for what in the rivers of the Netherlands' Amsterdam? **1 point**
- 6.** You can find an ATM in every part of the world except Antarctica. True or False? **1 point**
- 7.** Which prized possession belonging to musician Randy Bachman was stolen 45 years ago and found in Tokyo last year? **1 point**
- 8.** Singapore's Changi Airport is home to the world's tallest indoor what? **1 point**
- 9.** In South Korea the number four is considered what? **1 point**
- 10.** In 2011, the UK's Fauja Singh became the world's oldest participant in what sport at age 100? **2 points**
- 11.** Where could you move if you wanted to add 40 extra minutes to your day? **2 points**
- 12.** Dmitri Mendeleev and Lothar Meyer received the Royal Society of London's Davy Medal in 1882 for what contribution to modern science? **2 points**
- 13.** Kiwi fruit originally came from which country? **1 point**
- 14.** Uluru, a famous Australian natural landmark, is almost 350 metres high. How far does the rock extend underground? a) 350m b) 1km c) 2.5km. **2 points**
- 15.** When a book was returned 288 years late, librarians at which prestigious university chose not to levy fees? **2 points**



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

**ANSWERS:** 1. Indonesia. 2. To reduce bird collisions. 3. They both do so upside down. 4. An April Fool's Day hoax. 5. Plastic. 6. False. 7. His favourite guitar (a 1957 Gretsch). 8. Waterfall. 9. Unlucky. 10. Marathon running. 11. Mars (where a day is 24 hours and 40 minutes). 12. The periodic table. 13. China. 14. (c) 2.5 kilometres. 15. Cambridge.

# PUZZLE ANSWERS

From Page 150

## Crossword

1	C	2	O	3	L	4	L	5	A	6	P	7	S	8	E	9	V	10	I	11	S	12	I	13	T	14	S
	V		O		A		X		A		U		I														
9	T	E	N	N	E	R		10	P	A	N	O	R	A	M	A											
	R		G		A		I		I		G		I														
11	I	S	L	A	N	D	E	R		12	S	13	P	E	14	D	15										
	E		G		E		16	E	17	C	H	O		X		U											
18	D	E	19	P	O	T		20	L		L		22	W	R	E	C	K									
	W		E		23	R	O	O	K	E	R	Y		R		O											
24	A	G	R	E	E		C		F		25	S	26	A	T	27	A	N									
	R		D		28	A	S	I	A		31	C		M		N											
32	F	33	O	34	U	R	T	H		35	S	E	R	P	E	N	T	S									
	T		U		I		Y		A		R		B														
36	T	H	A	N	K	F	U	L		37	T	O	I	L	E	T											
	E		I		T		U		E		C		A														
38	G	R	A	N	N	Y		39	M	A	S	S	A	C	R	E											

## Sudoku

6	7	8	3	1	9	4	2	5
4	3	2	5	7	8	1	6	9
1	5	9	4	6	2	7	8	3
9	1	5	6	4	3	8	7	2
2	8	6	7	9	5	3	1	4
7	4	3	8	2	1	9	5	6
5	9	7	1	3	6	2	4	8
8	2	1	9	5	4	6	3	7
3	6	4	2	8	7	5	9	1

## Spot The Difference



## Two Of A Kind

1.           f
2.           e
3.           c
4.           d
5.           a
6.           b



## WORD POWER

### *Small Words To Wrap Your Head Around*

*We've rounded up some short words for your puzzling pleasure. But although they have a minimal amount of letters, they are not necessarily easy. Can you guess the correct definitions? Turn to the next page for answers.*

BY Sarah Chassé

- 1. coif** – A: snub or ignore.  
B: hairdo. C: sea snail.
- 2. awry** – A: off course.  
B: absentee. C: ironically.
- 3. bilk** – A: avoid. B: duplicate unnecessarily. C: cheat.
- 4. udon** – A: gangster leader.  
B: violent uprising. C: Japanese noodles.
- 5. rapt** – A: suddenly loud.  
B: deeply absorbed. C: swaying slowly from side to side.
- 6. coda** – A: final passage.  
B: ancient scroll from the Middle East. C: poisonous snake.
- 7. ecru** – A: violet. B: teal.  
C: beige.
- 8. laud** – A: tax. B: praise. C: roam.
- 9. deft** – A: deceitful.  
B: masterful. C: peaceful.
- 10. lynx** – A: wildcat.  
B: golf course. C: web language.
- 11. oust** – A: hurry along.  
B: fight on horseback. C: force out.
- 12. iota** – A: secret society.  
B: tiny amount. C: dead battery.
- 13. vile** – A: contained. B: foul.  
C: charming.
- 14. espy** – A: catch sight of.  
B: sneak around. C: accuse.
- 15. brig** – A: major general in the army. B: temporary gaol, often on board a ship. C: rifle barrel.
- 16. apex** – A: top or highest point. B: corner. C: closed, two-dimensional shape.

## Answers

**1. coif** – (B) hairdo. Even on a windy day, Zack's slicked-back coif doesn't budge.

**2. awry** – (A) off course. Our plans for a large wedding went awry because of the pandemic, so we had a private ceremony instead.

**3. bilk** – (C) cheat. The financial advisor attempted to bilk investors out of millions of dollars.

**4. udon** – (C) Japanese noodles. Hiro's restaurant serves udon in a savoury broth, topped with steamed vegetables.

**5. rapt** – (B) deeply absorbed. The rapt audience was mesmerised by the violin solo.

**6. coda** – (A) final passage. "What a fitting coda to a terrible day – my tyre is flat!" Hafiz grumbled.

**7. ecru** – (C) beige. "Should I paint my kitchen ecru or a bright green?" Emil asked.

**8. laud** – (B) praise. Students and colleagues alike lauded Mr Ortiz at his retirement party.

**9. deft** – (B) masterful. Known for her three-point shooting and deft

handling of the netball, Paige was named rookie of the year.

**10. lynx** – (A) wildcat. The lynx stalked its prey, ready to pounce.

**11. oust** – (C) force out. After the fundraising scandal, Lily was ousted from the charity.

**12. iota** – (B) tiny amount. "Algebra has never made one iota of sense to me," Jed said with a shrug.

**13. vile** – (B) foul. That vile odour can mean only one thing, Gran burned the cabbage soup again.

**14. espy** – (A) catch sight of. He had such good eyesight that he could espy the ear of a squirrel in a tree.

**15. brig** – (B) temporary gaol, often on board a ship. The captain handcuffed the stowaway and escorted her to the brig.

**16. apex** – (A) top or highest point. From here, it looks as though the clouds are covering the mountain's apex.

---

### VOCABULARY RATINGS

**5–9:** Fair

**10–13:** Good

**14–16:** Word Power Wizard

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**\$2**

**Postage**

Offer ends  
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*Perfect to  
snuggle into  
in the cooler  
weather*

*Add instant life and  
colour to your room*

## **Beautiful Big Butterfly Throws – available in two sizes**

These gorgeous butterfly throws will bring colour and life to any setting. They're made from cosy flannel, so they're ideal for snuggling into when the weather is chilly. Choose from small 130 x 150 cm or large 180 x 200 cm – they're perfect for an armchair or sofa, or even a single bed.

**Butterfly Throw • BTROW Small (130 x 150 cm) \$39.95**

**Large (180 x 200 cm) \$79 or \$19.75 x 4 mths**

## Double Layer Blanket – get ready to snuggle!

Cuddled up on the sofa or tucked up in bed, you'll love the warmth, lightness and unbelievable softness of this amazing blanket. The top is velvet fleece with a smart tartan design, the reverse, sumptuous Sherpa fleece. You can choose from two sizes – 170 x 130 cm or 240 x 230 cm. And as they're made from easy-care polyester, so you can simply pop yours in the washing machine to keep it looking like new.

2 sizes available!

Soft and cosy Sherpa fleece



Large size blanket shown on double bed

**Double Layer Blanket • DLBLK**  
 Small.....\$39.95  
 Large.....\$69  
 4 mths payment terms available

Blue

4 colours to co-ordinate with any outfit!

## All Season Fashion Scarf – set of 4 in gorgeous colours

Add extra colour and impact to any outfit with these beautiful scarves. Made from silky polyester, they have the look of a watercolour painting with their soft, blended shades of green, pink, grey and blue. The polka dots add contrast and an elegant, contemporary twist. They're perfect for every season and, as each scarf measures 180 x 90 cm, you can also style them in all kinds of fashionable ways.



Grey



Pink



Green

Set of 4

**All Season Fashion Scarf • FASHS \$39.95**  
 The Set



## Myerasalome ▼

From Holdson's Dragon Charmers range of beautiful puzzles, this magical 1000-piece jigsaw has been adapted from the work of fantasy artist Nene Thomas, and measures 49 x 68 cm.

• **67677 \$34.95**



## ▲ Holiday Fiasco

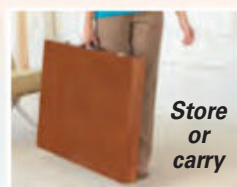
An hilarious jigsaw puzzle to test even the most skilled puzzler. The picture on the box is only a clue. From the Wasgij Original range, this 1000-piece puzzle measures 68 x 49 cm.

• **67811 \$34.95**

## Adjustable Tabletop Puzzle Board ▼

Make puzzling a breeze with this attractive hardwood framed puzzle board case. The board is adjustable, allowing you to select different angles for comfort. The quality felt work surface keeps the pieces securely in place and there is a tray behind the board for storage. The board folds flat and features a special cover that clips over the puzzle to hold it firmly in place, so that you can carry it around easily with the carry handle. The case measures 86 x 61 x 8 cm and the inside work area dimensions are 82 x 57 cm.

• **41264 ONLY \$99 or \$24.75 x 4 months USUALLY \$159.00**

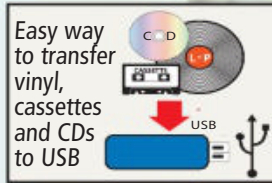


**Only \$2 Postage** on your entire order! Quote code **RM225S** when ordering

# Complete Home Entertainment System

– plays and converts vinyl, CDs and cassettes to digital

You can enjoy music from any era on this versatile system. The compact 21H x 32W x 29D cm main unit includes a 33/45/78 RPM turntable, CD, cassette and MP3 players plus an AM/FM radio. You can use the Bluetooth connection to play and stream music from your device as well as record everything you play to USB/SD. There are also two powerful 15 watt speakers to pump out the crystal-clear sound.



CD/MP3, radio, cassette player



USB/SD card drivers



## Complete Music System

• MUSA \$299 or \$59.80 x 5 mths

*Sit back and enjoy listening to all your media...*

**One stop system:** • Bluetooth 5.0 capability • 21H x 32W x 29D cm main unit • Two 24H x 13W x 15D cm 15W wooden speakers • AM/FM stereo analogue radio, Cassette & USB/SD encoding • 33/45/78 RPM Turntable • Front loading CD / MP3 player with ID3 text

## DVD Storage Cases – set of 2 for your collection

*Keep your DVDs clean, safe and portable*



Set of 2

Each case holds up to 32 DVDs!

**SAVE \$15**

Buy three sets for \$53.85 or \$26.93 x 2 mths

These cases will keep your DVDs organised and easy to find. They're made from clear PVC so you can see the titles at a glance and, at 18H x 31W x 13D cm, they each hold up to 32 DVDs. The tough polyester fabric covers zip closed and, as they're fitted with reinforced handles, the cases are easy to carry around. They're also ideal for keeping out dust when your DVDs are on a shelf. *DVDs not included.*

**DVD Storage Cases**  
• MSCSE \$22.95  
Set of 2

Attractive slim storage anywhere in the home



## Clever Side Table – slim design with 4 drawers and rear storage shelf



Perfect for drinks and snacks, this good-looking table will also keep a surprising amount of clutter out of sight.

A slimline 62H x 29W x 56D cm, it has four drawers to hold everything from remote controls, books and magazines to your glasses and tissues plus a handy shelf at the back for extra storage. Easy to assemble, it's made from veneered MDF with a lovely light-oak finish and pine legs.

Bottom shelf for additional storage

Beautiful oak style slim table

**Slim 4 Drawers Sofa Table • SLMST**  
**\$159 or \$39.75 x 4 mths**

**Only \$2 Postage!** - Quote code RM225S when ordering

**\$2 Postage**  
Offer ends 30/06/22

# Shetland

From award-winning crime writer Ann Cleeves comes this best-selling detective series set in the remote, breathtakingly beautiful Shetland Islands. Good-natured Detective Inspector Jimmy Perez and his team investigate a series of gripping crime mysteries with a uniquely resourceful style of policing to unpick the truth. Series 1 includes pilot. 2 DVDs, 336-458 mins. **SUBTITLES**



- MSHEL Series 1 (2013/14)
- MSHEM Series 2 (2016)
- MSHEO Series 3 (2018)
- MSHEP Series 4 (2019)

\$24.95 each

- MSHEP Series 5 (2021)
- \$29.95



## Magazine Side Table – solid wood, with extra storage!

This quality 44H x 45W x 28D cm side table shows off the colour and grain of natural paulownia wood, which is perfectly complemented by the stylish metal fittings. There are two magazine holders plus a cupboard and drawer to keep things like glasses and remote controls organised and out of sight – and it arrives fully assembled and ready to enjoy. It will look lovely next to your sofa or favourite armchair. *Props not included.*



**Magazine Side Table**  
• MAGST \$149 or  
\$37.25 x 4 mths

*Attractive in your lounge room*

*Lots of extra storage!*



*You can listen to your favourite tunes and songs*

### Great Features

- AM/FM Radio • Clock
- Alarm • Sleep Timer
- Bluetooth • Snooze
- AUX • Dimmer

## Easy-To-Read Alarm Clock Radio – specially designed to give you a better night's sleep!

This feature-packed alarm clock radio will wake you up and, when you program the timer, help soothe you to sleep. During the day, you can stay tuned into your favourite AM or FM channels or listen to your own music using your phone. Measuring a neat 9H x 19W x 5.5D cm, it has a large, clear easy-read display and is powered by a rechargeable battery for portability which is easily recharged using your phone charger. It's a great companion in the kitchen, garden or bedroom.

**AM/FM Alarm Clock Radio • RDCLK**  
**\$59 or \$29.50 x 2 mths**

*All in one alarm clock radio!*





Sherpa Fleece

Armchair

Faux Aged Leather

Feature handy pockets

3-Seater

**Reversible Faux Aged Leather Furniture Covers • RVFV**  
**Armchair (240 x 215 cm).... \$79**  
**2-Seater (282 x 172 cm) ..... \$99**  
**3-Seater (350 x 172 cm)..... \$129**

4 mths payment terms available

*Soft, comfortable reversible design*

## Reversible Furniture Protector Covers – in faux soft aged leather and polyester Sherpa fleece!

Here's a very stylish way to protect your furniture from wear and tear – even cat's claws! In winter, you can snuggle into the thick polyester Sherpa fleece then, when it's warmer or you just fancy a different look, you can flip it over to realistic faux aged leather. There are three pockets on each side for glasses, magazines and remote controls and, it will fit most recliners, 2- seaters or 3-seater sofas.

**\$2**  
**Postage**  
 Offer ends 30/06/22

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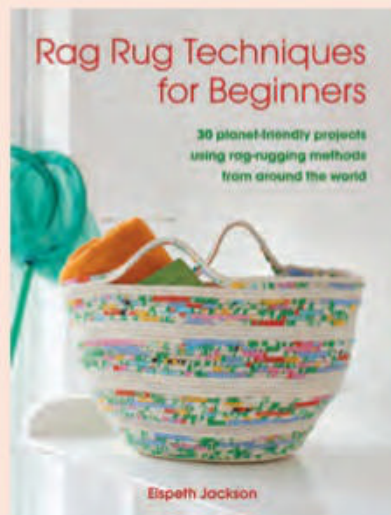
### ▲ Filou & Chipie

Stitch boy or girl outfits for an adorable cuddly grey kitten. Your **Knitting** kit includes one 25 cm plush cat, Bergere de France yarn for two outfits, pattern and instructions.

• 68200 \$69.95 or \$23.32 x 3 months

### ▼ Rag Rug Techniques For Beginners

Discover eight different rag rugging techniques to transform pre-loved fabrics into beautiful



things for you and your home, including eco-friendly rugs, pillows, baskets, wall hangings, wreaths, bouquet, Christmas stockings, pot cover and more. 176 pages.

• 68074 \$39.95



*Soft warm  
Wool  
fleece*

## Women's Fleece Hat

– pure, soft, woollen fleece

Why settle for a boring beanie when there's such a pretty way to stay warm? This cloche-style hat is also far more flattering thanks to the deep, ruched crown finished with a gorgeous flower. The crown is also roomier than other popular styles to help avoid the dreaded 'hat hair'. Made from soft, 100% wool fleece in a cheery shade of maroon, it's designed to be a comfortable fit for all sizes.



**Ladies Fleece Hat**  
• WFHAT \$29.95

## Flip-top Fingerless Gloves

– they're also cosy mittens!

When you need to text, fasten a zip or pull a card from your wallet, these fingerless gloves are ideal. You can then undo the button and flip the top to turn them into mittens – perfect for keeping out the cold. They're made from easy-care acrylic with a touch of spandex so one size fits most. Warm and stylish, they feature a fashionable fair-isle design in black, white and blue to complement your winter outfits.

### Hooded Finger Gloves

• HOOF \$14.95 Pair

*2-in-1  
mittens &  
fingerless  
gloves*



*Keep your  
hands and  
fingers warm  
while writing,  
typing, drawing,  
or driving*

**SAVE \$5**

**Buy 2 Pairs  
for \$24.90**



*Simple to convert from mittens to  
fingerless gloves*



Sumptuous  
warmth &  
comfort

## Pretty Velour Floral Slippers

– cosy with lovely  
embroidery

You'll love the feel of wearing these cosy slippers. Lined with polyester fleece for sumptuous warmth, they have a ruched elastic instep to gently cradle your feet and a tough, slip-resistant sole. You'll also love the way they look. Made from polyester velour in a rich shade of burgundy, they're finished with dainty, floral embroidery in shades of pink. Easy to put on and take off, they're the perfect combination of comfort and style.

Ruched stretch  
panel - so easy to  
slip on and off

Euro Sizes	36	37	38	39	40	41
Australian Fractional Sizes	5	6	7	8	9	10

Floral Slippers  
• FSLIP \$29.95

**\$2**  
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Offer ends  
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## THE GREEN PLANET

DAVID ATTENBOROUGH (2022)

Welcome to a magical world where a life can last thousands of years, where there is ingenuity unlike anything we have ever seen, where beauty knows no bounds.

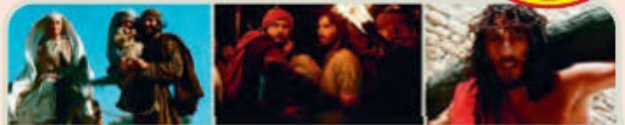
This is the incredible world of plants. Using specialist cameras, this series, narrated by David Attenborough, showcases over two decades of new discoveries. 2 DVDs,

285 mins. **SUBTITLES**

• MGPLAN \$39.95 or  
\$19.98 x 2 mths



2  
DVDs



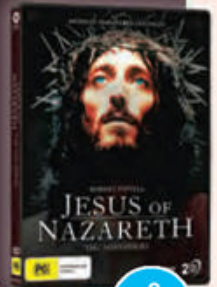
## Jesus of Nazareth

Mini Series (1977)

Beginning before the Nativity and extending through to the Crucifixion and Resurrection, this digitally remastered mini-series brings to life all the majesty and sweeping drama of the life of Jesus (*Robert Powell*) as told in the Gospels.

And this unforgettable series tells the greatest of all stories with tremendous emotion and splendour. Stars *Michael York, Sir Laurence Olivier* and *Anthony Quinn*. 2 DVDs, 360 mins.

**SUBTITLES** • MJESUW \$29.95



2  
DVDs



47 cm to 71 cm

*Easily adjust the height!*

*Large table top – so easy and convenient!*

## Adjust Its Height To Suit Your Needs – great for TV dinners, laptop and hobbies!

With three heights to choose from between 47 and 71 cm, you can sit comfortably whether you're working on your laptop, doing a jigsaw or eating a TV dinner. You'll also find the large 75L x 50W cm table top means there's plenty of room to work. The table has a strong, powder-coated steel frame with a durable, easy-clean ABS top. When you're not using it, the table folds down to an easy-to-store depth of 5 cm. Large enough to keep your project perfectly organised.

### So many uses:

- Craft
- Homework
- TV Dinners
- Work/Laptop
- Jigsaws
- Kids Games

### Folding Activity Table • FACTL

**\$49 or \$24.50 x 2 mths**



*Folds flat for easy storage*



## Compact Kitchen Cooking Station – It even makes coffee!

Fry, grill, bake, roast – this incredible Cook Station can prepare the food you love in all kinds of different ways. Imagine starting the day by cooking bacon, eggs and sausages as you make toast or heat your croissant! You can also make four cups of coffee at any time. And, incredibly, it measures just 45L x 18D x 20H cm so it's perfect for small kitchens or your caravan. It's also very easy to clean.

**Multi Kitchen Set • MKITC**  
**\$99 or**  
**\$24.75 x**  
**4 mths**



*Perfect in a kitchen or caravan!*

**3-In-1**  
*Toaster, Frypan & Coffee Maker*



**Great Features** • 4 Cup Coffee Maker • Multi-Function Toaster • Non-Stick Griddle with lid



## Set Of 3 Comfort Bras – soft, stretchy and seam free

Amazingly comfortable, these bras are perfect for sleep and relaxation. There are no seams, fasteners, wires or clasps to scratch or pinch – even the cups are moulded rather than stitched. Plus they're so wonderfully soft and stretchy that you can simply pull them on over your head. They're made from nylon with a touch of spandex for extra 'give' and the set includes three popular colours – black, white and nude. S, M, L, XL and XXL.

**Soft Seamless Bras • SSBRA**  
**\$29.95**

*Provides soft comfort and support*

**3 colours**  
**- White, Black and Nude**

*Black*

*White*

*Minimise back bulge and discomfort*

*Wide straps for comfort*

*Nude*

Set of 3

**Only \$2 Postage!** - Quote code **RM225S** when ordering

**\$2 Postage**  
Offer ends 30/06/22



### ◀ Old Farm Scenery

Easy, relaxing and super fast, tiny "diamonds" are placed on a pre-printed fabric with adhesive surface, using a special stylus. Your **Diamond Painting** kit includes quality colour printed fabric, round or square acrylic facets sorted by colour, stylus, wax caddy, craft tray and instructions. 80 x 60 cm.

- 68021 Round
- 68022 Square
- \$87.00 or \$21.75 x 4 months**



### Feathertail Glider & Coral Gum ▶

Anyone can be an artist with this kit, with its wonderful detail and expansive colour palette. Your **Paint-By-Numbers** kit includes design printed with numbers on stretched canvas frame, quality acrylic paints, brush and instructions. 40 x 50 cm.

- 67644 \$51.95 or buy two \$93.90 or \$23.48 x 4 months

## Versatile Air Fryer Multi Oven – the easy way to delicious, healthier food

Large enough to roast a whole chicken, this versatile oven can also air fry, toast, bake, grill, prove dough and dehydrate as well as cook fries, bagels, pizza, wings and cookies to perfection. It has an easy-to-use LED digital panel and, at 45H x 37W x 45D cm fits neatly on a benchtop. You also receive a non-stick baking tray, frying basket, wire rack, water reservoir for steaming and detachable handle.

*With one touch you can air fry, steam, roast, bake, grill, toast and dehydrate*



### Air Fryer Multi Oven

• AFOVN  
\$179 or  
\$44.75 x  
4 mths



*Includes a baking tray, frying basket, wire rack and more*



**Air fry**

**Grill**

**Roast**

**Steam**



*Tough and stylish enough to go anywhere*

*Double zip design – so easy to slip your foot into the boot*

## Zipped Faux Suede Ankle Boots

Styled with a fashionable squared-off toe and 3 cm heel, these up-to-the-minute boots are comfortable enough to wear all day. The double zips add an extra design feature – and they also make it very easy for you to slip your boots on and off. The easy-care faux micro suede uppers are lined with suede leather and finished with tough, slip-resistant soles. Available in elegant black to complement your favourite outfits.

### Zippered Boots

• ZIPBT \$69 or  
\$23 x 3 mths



Euro Sizes	36	37	38	39	40	41
Australian Fractional Sizes	5	6	7	8	9	10

# Bosch is the **No.1** brand worldwide for dishwashers.\*

Discover the new Series 6 dishwasher range, available in freestanding, built under and integrated designs.

[bosch-home.com.au](http://bosch-home.com.au)



**BOSCH**  
Invented for life



## Innovative features:

### Speed on demand

Shorten the wash cycle time by up to 50% even after the program has started.



### ExtraClean zone

Three times more water saturation on tougher to clean items placed in the middle of the upper basket.



### Remote control

Pair your dishwasher with your smart device via the Home Connect app to control programs remotely.



### Protect your glassware

Upper basket contains glass shelf with silicone holders and sliding protectors for greater stability.



Model number: SMU6HAS01A

\*Source: Euromonitor International Limited; volume sales 2021

# Overcoming barriers to healthcare



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[www.flyingdoctor.org.au](http://www.flyingdoctor.org.au)

