

WELCOME BACK!

My name is the Master Hunter, but you can call me the Editor. Together with my colleagues Mr. Brooks, 00'Leary and Beard I run the Rabid Squirrel Slayers and also this publication, the Independent Squirrel. Mostly, this involves going to the pub and drinking ale. I tried the premier Japanese ale a few days ago. Won't make that mistake again. Tastes worse than squirrel piss. Better aftertaste though.

The Master Hunter
themaster (at) cpwatling.co.uk

OLD SQUIRREL, NEW TRICKS

The Master Hunter's favourite things to do with a drunken squirrel.

Trick 1 – Shave It.

As a great man once said, 'you can't beat the sight of a freshly shaven squirrel. Breathtaking.' I couldn't agree more. Whip up some cream, smother it on the body of your drinking partner and then scrape away. When the squirrel looks like a swollen earthworm it is sufficiently sheared. Wake it up, show it a mirror and then have a camera ready to record the expression on its face. Classic.

Note: due to an ancient squirrel bylaw this is punishable by death in Cheshire unless the offender is wearing a particularly large and effeminate hat.

THE NEXT THRILLING INSTALMENT

It was a perfectly normal day in the RSS headquarters; Master Hunter was making the tea and Mr Brooks was cleaning the bunker from top to bottom while 00'Leary lounged in a large lounge eating party rings and fig rolls. Just then 00'Leary spilt boiling water from the kettle over his hand and woke himself up from his day-dream; he finished making the tea and took it through to the lounge, where Master Hunter and Mr Brooks were engaged in a particularly engaging round of Hopscotch. He dodged nimbly aside as Mr Brooks was sent reeling towards him by a spectacularly well-timed Dostoyevsky Feint from Master Hunter, Mr Brooks reeled onwards and through the door just as Agent Beard opened it.

Once the tiresome business of physical comedy was dealt with and the agents were sat enjoying their tea, or lack of, 00'Leary, in a remarkably fit of continuity, enquired, "Didn't I sell you on eBay?"

"You certainly did," replied Agent Beard. "But they sent me back – something about trades' descriptions I believe. I'm sure the lawsuit will be with you soon."

"So, how go things in the outside world?" enquired Dr Grog, who had not previously been mentioned.

"Gravely," replied Beard.

"So, how go things in the outside world?" enquired Dr Grog, gravely.

"That seemed like rather a lot of effort for very little pay-off," noted Mr Brooks.

"I agree," agreed Beard.

"Enough!" roared Master Hunter, somewhat excessively. "What have you learned on your travels?"

"I fear that the Rabid Squirrels have returned and are in a secret hideout not too far from our very own bunker," replied Beard.

"How could you possibly know?" asked Master Hunter.

"Well, partly because I've been watching 'I'm a Rabid Squirrel, Get Me Out of Here' and partly because their base is in that tree over there and has a large sign on it saying 'King Fuzzball's Brand New Secret Hideout – We Do Not Require: Double Glazing, Pebble-Dashing, Cheaper Gas...' etc."

"What puzzles me," puzzled 00'Leary. "Is – and this is a fairly straightforward one – that we killed Fuzzball, and all of the rabids."

"I feel I may be able to shed some light on this," enlightened Dr Grog. "When the nuclear device planted by the duck detonated in the bunker, in the last thrilling instalment, the trophy claw from Fuzzball's corpse was irradiated causing it to mutate into a clone of Fuzzball. We may be facing an opponent more powerful and deadly than ever before."

Continued on page 2.

“Of course!” interjected Master Hunter – who felt that he hadn’t had anything to say for a while. “That would explain the mysterious letters.”

“Mysterious letters?” enquired someone who, as they were simply advancing narrative, shall not be specified.

Master Hunter withdrew several letter from his stylish, leather, 1930s style pocket book and spread them upon the table.

“I’m back and I’m coming to get you, signed King Fuzzball,” read Dr Grog. “Puzzling indeed, though they certainly do make more sense in light of this latest development.”

“But what shall we do?” enquired Beard.

“As far as I can see,” Master Hunter replied, in an authoritative manner. “We have only one course available to us; we shall have tea and jammy-scones (which he pronounced correctly – in such as manner as to rhyme with stones) and wait for the next thrilling instalment.”

Agent Beard

*Can you endorse this wild rumour or is it merely terrifying gossip? Your opinion counts. Email **themaster** (at) **cpwatling.co.uk***

PLUCKED OFF HIS HEAD

Stretching his manly frame Mr. Brooks stood up from the desk at which he had, for the last four hours, been engaged in ‘general admin’. He cracked his knuckles and flexed his shoulders as he stepped out into the sunny yard of the RSS HQ, letting the winter sun tickle him under the chin with its feeble warmth as he turned his head to the sky and breathed deeply. With lungs full of air and a gut empty of tea he let out a loud bellow,

“00’Leary! Tea me!” he bellowed, and his colleague/minion/monkey scuttled out with a freshly brewed pot clenched between his teeth and a cup clutched between his knees. His hands were busy elsewhere, and so he was forced by this expedient to employ this rather less orthodox carriage of tea. Brooks sucked back his tea and inhaled deeply, he held it for a moment, and then blew it slowly out of his nose, forming a pretty brace of smoke rings in the air as the tea left his nostrils. 00’Leary watched obsequiously, marvelling at this display of teasmanship, and then scurried off again to carry on doing unspeakable things somewhere else. Mr. Brook stood, feet planted slightly wider apart than shoulders, broad shoulders thrown back, chest puffed out, chin thrust forward, lip carefully stiffened, beard cunningly pointed, and eyebrow gently raised. Then he got cramp and doubled up going “ooh, ow, oh, ow, ow, oooooh!!” for a little while. After recovering he sidled back into the house, and slung himself onto the settee, like a man slinging himself onto some pointy rocks, only much more comfy. He remained, as if suspended in blackcurrant jelly, for three hours until his bum started to hurt and he had to move. Then the Master came home.

“Oh, hello dear,” he said upon seeing Mr. Brooks lounging around wincing slightly on the settee, “had a nice day?”

“Fine thanks chum. Been doing ‘general admin’.”

“Spent the day in bed, you say?”

“Actually no, on this occasion I was doing real general admin. Where have you been, you dirty stop out? The time is now approximately 6:25pm and 43 seconds, and getting later every second, and I haven’t seen you since breakfast.”

“We didn’t have breakfast together this morning.”

“I know, but I keep a picture of you on my table, and I gazed at it over my bran flakes.”

“I see. Well, I have been out.”

“You mysterious old fruit, you. I hope you’ve been up to something either dastardly or brilliantly daring.”

Continued on page 3.

“Indeed I have. But is there something wrong with that Irish fellow? I have been here for almost two minutes, and still my throat is dry and my hand cupless.” And at that he bellowed, in a fairly accurate impression of Mr. Brooks’ earlier bellow, for 00’Leary to tea him, and fast. Now, in the old days, before the near extinction of the rabid squirrels and the disbanding of the slayers, this point in the story would usually be about when some Event would occur and everyone would spring into action, but nowadays there are fewer squirrels and slightly more developed plots. But only slightly. These days the RSS has grown up a bit – Mr. Brooks has spent far too long in other countries, and now sports a permanent hat and a large number of interesting scars with funny stories attached to them; Agent Beard has been sold on eBay and replaced about the office with Agent Bread – a much less interesting character than his predecessor, and if you are aware of Beard’s role in previous tales, you will know just how interesting Bread isn’t; the hq has a mortgage; Dr. Grog’s illegitimate sprogs litter the floor; Myself has given up playing scrabble; and the Master Hunter even had a proper job for a while. So, at this point in the story the Master Hunter and Mr. Brooks sat down and had a chat. About interest rates and shares. They drank tea while they did so, brought to them in a never-ending stream by 00’Leary, who simpered and scrounged in a most odd fashion. Soon the Master Hunter declared time, and they went off to the kitchen to eat sandwiches. Mr. Brooks was just rummaging through the cupboards going “Aargh, hmm, food, grr, yum, et cetera!” when the Master Hunter grabbed him by the collar, hauled him to his feet, turned his head and hissed in his ear “What the devil is that fellow doing?” pointing to 00’Leary, who was scrabbling through the bins with a scrap of flesh hanging from his fangs. The Master casually reached over to 00’Leary and plucked off his head. 00’Leary slumped to the floor in a death, and Mr. Brooks screamed in a most unmanly way. It turned out that 00’Leary was a squirrel in disguise. An Event had happened, so, satisfied, the slayer leaders popped him in the pot and gobbled him all up for their tea.

The End.

Vice Master Mr. Brooks

*Are you hairy, Irish and tired of being insulted? Contact **themaster (at) cpwatling.co.uk** for revenge. Bring tea.*

SPOT THE DIFFERENCE



LONELY HEARTS

Male, mid-thirties, with real rhythm, looking for arteries, veins and capillaries with which to form functional circulatory system. Enjoys pumping all night... (*Slap! That's enough of that, thank you – Editor*).

SPOT THE DIFFERENCE SOLUTION

The squirrel has a slightly larger nose than the cheese. You have to look from the right angle.