

Bourne
toWrite...
creative writing
workshops

Jobsworth

by Catriona Millar

I reckoned the solution to my life now was spirituality.

I'm not one to be shallow but my new vocation as a catholic priest gave me the opportunity to hide behind the pews if I heard anyone from my rather chequered past. Being a Vick was a nice little number, free house lots of wine, juicy confessions and...flowers.

The thing is people have a sense when your being something your not and this time we'll I think I sound legit...the main thing is I haven't been caught, well not yet anyway.

Let me explain.

After uncle Jim left his cat and a sizeable amount of money to me in his will I felt it was time to set myself up in my own business and maybe change a few of my ingrained likes and dislikes. Initially I decided to become a plumber and like cats. Uncle Jim had made plumbing (and liking cats look easy) but plumbing just wasn't for me and I still couldn't stand cats, in fact I hated cats more than ever and permanently bugged up my neighbour's central heating system.

With the plumbing chapter of my life over I decided to buy a van and set up a mobile hairdressing business. With my logo as my face and my hairdresser's name 'Cut and Run' ablazened across my smart new vehicle I set about shampooing and trimming almost half the village. I saved everyone a small fortune with my competitive prices but found it impossible to get regulars, apart from Zeb Jenkins that is with his nice new white stick and everything. It wasn't difficult to cut hair according to my readers digest *How to do Anything* manual it was just that a lot of people in the world get very hung up about incidentals...like symmetry and the likes.

Never mind though, soon I found the well wishers a bit of a bore queueing up at my house with their melodrama and hair and everything... "go buy a hat!" I shouted, "not my fault your so bloody vain!"

Once the dust had settled I moved a fair distance away into the house uncle Jim had bequeathed me and set up a budget dental surgery for the hard up. People don't want to pay extortionate rates for something like their teeth I thought, and you don't need much of an outlay for dentistry just a white coat a nice lazy boy recliner and relaxing fish tank. I found most of the equipment I needed in uncle Jim's garage. Once I had given it a good wipe I was up and running.

What is it with people? You do them a favour and then they report you to the authorities because they have a (what I would have thought) a very RARE and SPECIFIC allergic reaction to DUCT TAPE! I save them some money and then they claim they don't like wire cutters and pliers...if I had known about their idiosyncrasies in the first place I certainly wouldn't have gone out of my way for them.

But shit, now they're going to know who I am and I can't keep a low profile anymore. But I kept one anyway had too after the litigations, and for relaxation purposes flicked through my reader's digest manual and borrowed Auntie Betties head scarf tinted glasses and stay press skirt to pretend I wasn't who I was down in the village.

The place was flooded with tourists all bustling about, especially Japanese. I wonder if they would like to learn English or even French? I thought to myself... then I had what you might call a eureka moment. I had lived a lie too long. I stared at my reflection in Boots window... why couldn't I just be happy the way I was without being someone or something I wasn't? I ran home with a feeling of freedom in my heart. I felt the burden of pretence fall away as I made myself a nice cup of tea and looked up the index at the back of my readers digest "page sixty three ...French made easy...for the Japanese.

But, *'allo allo may I have a nice beeg lof of bread and a bottle of red wine siv ou play Monsignor!*' May have worked for the more challenged members of our society but unfortunately not for them all...oops sorry have to go I've a feeling Mrs Biggerstaff wants to fess up to me about her and the council Gardner.

"Good evening my dear do come into my confessional booth."