

Once Upon A Time in Walthamstow

by Alan Miles, March 2014 [[email](#)]

2. Doggey Poo Park

Anyway, Bill returned to Jock's cafe, still flapping his hand about trying to dispel the fumes. We decided to cut through Lloyds Park and go home. There are two halves to this park, Lloyds Park and Aveling Park, and there is an alley way which divides them both, which we all called 'Dog Shit Alley'. It stank and there were lots of dog turds lying on the pavement, and in the summer it could be full of Blue-Bottles.

So anyway, me n Bill were about to cross Forest Road, when three large motorbikes came roaring passed, ridden by Greasers. One shouted out "Hello Darlin" and the last Greaser who roared past, wore a leather jacket with a big picture of a Red Indian on the back. So we shouted out at him "Look at ol' Geronimo".

We had to visit the toilet once more, and we both had a wee, I don't know why but we were four cubicles apart from each other. I think Bill was a bit shy. Anyway, I called out to Bill "where are ya goin tonight?" he said "The Royal probably to see The Dave Clark Five". We finished our widdles and Bill carefully zipped himself up "he suddenly said "sod it I've pissed on me boot. We'll have to ask ol' George if we can wash our hands.

George had his own little office and the window in there had a lace curtain, so that he could peep through it. Looking through the window we could see him eating a sandwich and reading a copy of 'Titbits'. We knocked on the door, and George got up quickly to answer the door. I said " we caught ya George" He said " Caught me what?" , I said " you were having a J Arthur" George just chuckled and didn't deny it.

I said to him "Can we wash our hands please George?" He said "that'll be tuppence each for the towel and soap". Bill said to George "I've got a bit of piddle on me boot, have ya got a bit of tissue paper so I can wipe it off" George put down his sandwich and he said to Bill "Giss it here" Bill lifted up his foot and let George clean his boot. Then George returned to his Spam and Pickle sandwich.

We dried our hands, George picked up a sandwich and said "any of you kids want one of these; I've cut too many for myself. I was a bit late havin me dinner cause I was busy scrubbing the pans out". We both turned about and walked out of the toilets feeling quite sick, but Bill turned around and shouted out "You ol' nonce".

We walked past the old William Morris Gallery and I said to Bill "Me n Freshey and some of the others from school, went in there once a while ago, talk about a laugh. We went in there and all this old furniture lying about the place was roped off. Ol' Freshey climbed over the rope and sat on the chair ,and he tipped his head back and said "Oh I feel tired, I'll have a nap" and guess what the back leg snapped on the armchair and he fell flat on his arse. We all started to leg it sharply.

One of the attendants in his green uniform tried to run after us. Just before we got out the door, he shouted out "I know what school you come from, I know the headmaster and I'm gonna tell him about you". One of the lads turned back and shouted out "it's only a load of ol' junk anyway"

Me and Bill walked to the old fish pool; it was a circular pool full of big fat red and white goldfish. I turned round to Bill and I said "did I ever tell you Bill that we used to blow the fish up. What we used to do me n Freshey, is get a nice big banger, wrap Plasticine around, light it, and it would go off under water, it would go like bump like a big fart in the bath and a bubble of smoke would come up. Then half a dozen of these goldfish came up and lay dead on the water, with their little mouths still moving, and like smoke came out of them. We only done that once" Bill said "you wicked bastards", I said "well I was only young then".

We walked a little way along to the big pond, then Bill said "I'm buying my brothers scooter Al. I replied "you mean the nice white one with the chrome bubbles and the foxtail?" Bill said "that's right" I said "how are you gonna buy it?" Bill said "he said I could pay him when I got the money. He wants to buy a new Ford Anglia. I've bought me parka already.

We walked down the slope a little bit towards the old rockery where there is a special old shed (as I called it). There were three old gaffers in there smoking strong baccy , people told me that they had been gassed in the first world war, and that their lungs were very badly injured and they had to smoke strong tobacco and cough all day to bring up the gob. They used to sit there just gobbing and smoking. I said to Bill "here Bill let's have a laugh.

I walked up to one of the old boys, and asked "were you gassed in the war by the Germans?" One of them coughed "yes son". I said "only the Germans are gonna send you the gas bill". We legged it pretty quick. We could hear the old boys coughing and choking and effin and blindin.

We walked on passed a little way passed the rockery and there was like a red cherry tree there with a long bough on it. I stopped and I said to Bill "A few years ago a bloke tried to hang himself on that bough. I say tried cause he didn't do it properly" Bill said " what dja mean Al" I said " well so my dad told me , and a copper had told him is that he put the rope behind his head and not behind his ear, it was too thin anyway , and when he jumped his feet didn't touch the floor, so his head came off with his backbone attached to it" Bill said " stop larking about " I chuckled and said " no Bill it's true Bill it's true".

Bill said to me "where are you going tonight". I said " I'm going back up Jock's to meet two girls I've met called Joanne and Rita and with a bit of luck I might be able to get a knee trembler off one of em un." Me and Bill left each other at Dog Poo Alley. I turned left into Fleeming Road where I lived and Bill carried on through the park, and do you know what I hardly ever saw him again.