

u3a SAVES THE DAY

SFX Land line is ringing in JAKE's flat. Enter JAKE who dashes to pick up the receiver.

JAKE: Hi Mum, yes, it's me. Who else would it be? The Crazy Goth Upstairs with her anti-social behaviour?.. Very funny. No, I should **never** have bought this place. Cheap for a reason, Mum. Who told me to?... No, it was YOU, actually. *Close to the station*, you said... *Good price*, you said.

And no, my mobile's still not working... Yes, it still quacks like a duck. No one knows why. The phone people just wet themselves laughing... They can't figure it out. I sometimes wonder if they really try. Or care...

I'll be quick. *She*'ll be home any minute and it's bound to kick off again. We won't hear ourselves speak... No, I didn't get anywhere with the Advice Centre. It shut early. And YES, this place IS driving me crazy. The noise. The chanting. The vicious cat...

But listen... Anyway, there were u3a sessions going on at the Centre... And you're always saying I should try one. So I looked... No. Never Victorian poetry. And all the others full. Except for... Wait for it... The Practical Exorcism class... For real, Mum! They offer Ancient History too. But no one really knows about that stuff EITHER. So you can just make it up.

No, of course I don't believe in Exorcism. But I had to kill time before the train... And No, Mum, since you ask, I am NOT managing my life very well. There's a crazy woman in the flat above me and her cat keeps attacking me. ALL RIGHT? Give me a break...

Anyway, at least the history of exorcism was interesting. And for homework, the Convenor gave us a copy of the Exorcism Ritual on USBs. No, Mum. USB's not a rock band. It's a recording and not too long. I'll plug it into the hifi. You can listen to it while I have a much-needed wee...

SFX Jake presses button and exits to bathroom. Latin chanting begins. Then overlaid by loud heavy metal rock, screaming and mad cat mewing. Ad nauseam. Then suddenly stops. Then Latin chanting stops. Toilet flushes.

JAKE: [Re enters. Picks up phone.] Mum? You still there? I think we've had a power cut. The horrible music stopped. And Mum... Mum? What's going on here? This is Eltham!

SFX KNOCK ON DOOR. JAKE OPENS DOOR.

WOMAN: Hello. You don't know me. I live upstairs.

JAKE: Whoa... You're the... You look different. Somehow... I...

WOMAN: You might have seen me in long black clothes, with black eye-liner and black hair?

JAKE: Possibly... With a feral pussy cat?

WOMAN: Possibly. Anyway I just woke up from a really bad dream and threw out all that black stuff. Even the bed sheets. And I want to say sorry if I've been a pain. I haven't been myself lately. Don't know what came over me. And... Have I been making a lot of noise?

JAKE: Well... Just a bit. And a black cat did keep attacking me. For no reason...

WOMAN: Did she? I am so sorry. Bad Tiddles! But look, can I buy you dinner to make it up to you? Please? Start over? I feel so different now. And I like you. And it would be nice to be friends. And Tiddles thinks so too. Look, she's brought you a present.

JAKE: A dead mouse... How lovely. So where shall we eat?