

Guilty Party?

Shortly after our Border Collie called Fleck passed away in his sleep, we downsized and embarked on a year-long remodelling of our new home.

With this behind us, we embarked on a series of longer holidays then settled into a new routine, enrolling for classes at the *Centre for Life Long Learning* at Strathclyde University.

A further year had passed when the first big yellow dog turd was left outside our home in the centre of the pavement behind a low boundary wall, hidden from our front door by a tree and bushes.

It was huge, deposited in the centre of the pavement.

Annoyed but very aware that it must be removed before a pram or our almost blind neighbour Marie stood on it, I cleaned it up and sprayed Dettol.

Our stretch of pavement was clear for two days then, in almost the same spot, another larger watery yellow dog turd was deposited.

Again I cleared it but this time I went online and Amazon delivered an aerosol of bright orange marker spray of the sort used by those who constantly dig up our roads and pavements.

I drew a circle around the spot where the latest turd had been left and wrote:

PICK UP?

Two days later, there was a turd near my fading pavement message.

I developed a new routine; before retiring each night I checked our pavement but there was no turd. A week passed and there was no repeat defecation.

Then the turd returned. Two days in a row.

I used my spray can and repeated my previous bright orange graffiti.

I resumed by old routine and checked each evening but the pavement was clear.

Then three mornings in a row the turds were there again.

I added a new wrinkle by getting up at five o'clock and moving my car out of our driveway to sit in it across the road where I could monitor the pavement.

No joy.

After three days I gave up. I gave up.

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At the Newsagents I told Murdo about it.

'Big and Yellow, is it? Sometimes watery?'

'Yes, huge.'

'You're not alone John, it has been happening to others.'

'Margaret has reported it to the Council.'

'Good luck with that. Archie with Remus the Labradoodle said he thought it was that old guy Ivan with the huge hairy Alsatian. It's called Hugo. It's a menace. He doesn't have a lead and it runs about all over the place willy-nilly, barking at other dogs. Ivan does nothing, just keeps his head down and marches on.'

'Okay, if I see him I'll mention it to him.'

'You know he's not from Bearsden? They say he lives somewhere around Anniesland and walks out here through Garscube Estate. But it might not be Hugo. A lot of people are blaming Edna and her big lab Delilah. Edna is going downhill badly. Pulmonary Fibrosis.'

'Is Edna deaf? I've said hello to her a few times but she just ignores me. Just stumbles on, pushing her Zimmer a few steps then stopping to catch her breath. So maybe it is Delilah.'

I now had two suspects in my sights.

I kept watching for Edna with Daisy and Ivan and Hugo, psyching myself up for these encounters.

No sight nor sound.

Then, after a clear month, I told Murdo.

'Outside No 8, it seems the big yellow turds are history.'

'Yes John, that what others are saying too. It seems Edna has been taken into care. And Archie said Hugo ran across Milngavie Road after a cat and was smacked by a Porsche. Its front end was a mess. The driver went ballistic but Ivan just walked away after denying the dog was his, saying it was a stray that just followed him about.'

Footnote.

About a year later a friend who lives about a mile away said he was being plagued by dog turds on his pavement. I told him my story and gave him the remains of my bright orange marker spray aerosol.

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Next day he phoned me to say he gave the can a really good shake then pressed the button: the spray jet nozzle exploded and orange paint cover his hedge and his new trainers.