

Malcolm Twigg - Flash in the pan

Reginald Wellbeloved was a meticulous, pernickety little man, and so environmentally aware that he used to bottle anal wind, hoping to delay the onset of global warming that little bit longer. By the time he died, alone and unloved, from terminally trapped wind at the age of 89, he had a cellar full of neatly labelled glass jars that mapped out his entire gastronomic life. Which was all very interesting, but ultimately academic when an incredulous and careless house clearer called, appropriately enough, Albert Crapper accidentally dropped one of the largest jars whilst lighting up an environmentally unfriendly cigarette. Then, the whole cellar went up in a sheet of blue flame, blowing the door and Albert into the garden and releasing a lifetime's collection of fermented methane into the atmosphere at one fell swoop. Reginald would have been mortified, if he hadn't been dead already.

As it was, Albert was in one sense lucky to have escaped with his own life, although extremely unfortunate in having been blown, singed and deafened, into the neighbourhood cesspit which had been ruptured in the blast. Understandably, considering the traumatic experience and the nature of his surname, he had subsequently developed a phobic mania about things excremental and devoted his immediate life thereafter to waging a single-handed vendetta against the increasingly disgruntled proprietors of the many Curry-houses in town. "Stop it at source" seemed to have been his cry. When the police firmly warned him off his self-appointed task, Albert had turned his talents in other directions. If he couldn't stop it going in, he thought, he could at least prevent it coming out.

Inspired by his seminal experience in Reginald Wellbeloved's cellar, he had joined an electronics evening class. This is not the complete story. To read further, please either register as a new reader or login now if already registered. For persons with arthritic conditions, however, had other options. Albert, toilet pans, his subsequent method of disposal, forcibly released intestinal gases, which lit a flame, igniting the passing flow right back to source and thus temporarily welding the walls of the rectal passage together. Which for Albert, if not for the hapless recipients of the treatment, was a source of immense satisfaction.

Whilst bemused medical practitioners wrote learned papers about the increasing incidence of anal perversion in a small-town environment, Albert went quietly about his business, removing his devices when they had done their work, and installing them elsewhere. And all would have gone well, but for a curious combination of events caused by an obese and flatulent businessman, and a sticky trembler switch. Closeted in the cubicle next door, Albert was amazed to hear the long, drawn-out expulsion of gases that, by rights, should have long since resulted in a flash of flame and a howl of anguish. He was not to have foreseen, of course, the effects that shoddy workmanship and the hermetic seal of overhanging thighs would have upon a pan full of noxious gases: when the trembler switch finally kicked in, both they and the device's fuel tank exploded. Not only was the unfortunate businessman's rectum sealed forever, but his entire alimentary canal was blown out through his ear, and Albert suddenly found himself scrabbling about in the rubble of the demolished cubicle frantically trying to recover the remains of his device before he hurried off into the night, covered in excrement for the second time in his life.

Luckily Albert lived alone and, whilst his neighbours poked about half-heartedly in the drains trying to discover the location of the awful smell, he managed to rid himself of it after three baths and a good scrub with a wire brush. Mystified, but mollified as the smell waned, the