

# The Vile Stuff

Richard Dawson

Year 7's on a school trip to Featherstone Castle and some wee scallywag's brung a Coca-Cola bottle containing  
a spirit  
Poor Peter Hepplethwaite cracks open his head on a shiny brass bedknob  
And has to be rushed by helicopter ambulance to Haltwhistle Hospital  
Si Shovell fills a Reebok pump with the pulp from his belly then sets off a fire-extinguisher in the girl's  
dormitory  
And finally clambers into bed with Miss Bartholomew  
Much to the chagrin of the deputy headmaster whose scarlet skull is firmly locked between her thighs I only  
drank a few little droplets  
I only took a tiny draught of the vile stuff Downing Asda's own-brand stubbies in the lad's bogs  
I listen to the dull reflection of a carillon in the toilet bowl  
My A-Levels drifting away from me  
Matthew Mooney's hockle in my hair smells like menthol tabs  
Outside the chip-shop Thaddeus Wagstaff fractures my cheekbone  
3 empty cans of Castlemaine XXX go rolling down my trouser leg  
Blood, snot and curry coalesce in the corners of my nails  
My friends drifting away from me I only drank a few little droplets  
I only took a tiny draught of the vile stuff Attempting to penetrate a coconut husk with a Philips-head screwdriver  
I pierce a hole straight through my hand into the laminate worktop  
It's a major operation to repair a damaged tendon  
I come around with the tube still down my throat  
The milk of amnesia fills my cup and back into the hole I go  
Snoring like a pan of broth I arouse the ire of my fellow patients wagging their ladles in the dark My neighbor  
Andrew lost two fingers to a Staffy-cross  
Whilst jogging over Cow Hill with a Pepperami in his bum-bag  
He's a junior partner at James & James no-win no-fee solicitor thinking of relocating to a Buddhist monastery in  
Halifax  
He reckons I should try meditation  
He reckons it would benefit my peace of mind My bedroom walls are papered with the stripes of Newcastle  
United  
Between which I perceive the presence of a horse-headed figure holding aloft a flaming quiver of bramble  
silhouettes  
He is the King of Children singing like a boiler, "tomorrow is on its way" I haven't had a wink of sleep and now  
the sun is in my porridge  
I'm starting a BTEC in engineering at Tynemouth College  
My thermos flask leaks parsnip soup on the metro clogging up the keys of my MacBook  
Carrot pennies steam amidst a pyre of pencils  
Ruck-sack dripping up the steps of WH Smith to buy a fresh pad of paper I only drank a few little droplets  
I only took a tiny draught of the vile stuff

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