

# The Vile Stuff

## Richard Dawson

Year 7's on a school trip to Featherstone Castle and some wee scallywag's brought 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 clammers 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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