

The Barbers' Chair

By Gareth Walton

"Well, cheers Greg – good to see you mate. I'm glad we've managed to get a pint in before we go back into bloody lockdown again."

"Yup, me old pall. Good to see you too. You've just reminded me, though. Don't suppose there's any chance of you running the old clippers over me barnet before we all get shut down again? I don't want to end up with hair like bloody Boris by the time we come out of it."

"You left it a bit late!" said Paul. "Everyone's had the same idea - I've been booked solid for days. But I shut up shop at half six tomorrow, so if you come round a bit after that I'll sort you out when I've finished clearing up."

"Thanks mate. I've actually got a bit of business up at the rugby club tomorrow afternoon, so that's perfect – I'll drop in on me way home," said Greg. "My shout. Same again?"

"Please- but I think I'd better unload the last one first," said Paul.

"Me too mate – I'm busting. Make room for a few more while we've got the chance, eh?"

It was empty in the gents as they unzipped and stood at the long trough.

"Boy, I'm ready for this," said Paul as he reached inside his shorts for his penis.

"Yeah, me too," Greg replied. "I got out of practice holding me pints when the pubs were shut before," replied Greg.

They chatted away unconcerned as they let loose. Greg was still going strong when Paul felt his stream weaken. He'd stopped and begun milking the last drops from his long foreskin when he caught Greg glancing across at him. He might have been worried by that had he not known Greg so well. They had both joined the army straight from school and, they discovered later, had actually run into each other on a tour of Afghanistan, although not in the best of circumstances to become friends - it was only at a reunion after they had been de-mobbed that they had got talking and worked out that Greg had been the Medical Orderly who had treated Paul when he'd been grazed by a sniper's bullet. They had kept in touch on and off after that, but since Paul had set up his own barber shop in Greg's home patch in South London, they had become regular drinking buddies until lockdown had intervened. With anyone else, Paul might just have been worried that there was something a bit gay going on when he saw Greg looking at his cock, but this was his mate, and no-way was Greg gay - not that there was anything wrong with that, just that both of them were definitely ones for the ladies.

Greg realised that his sideways glance had been noticed, and blushed.

"Shit, sorry mate, you caught me there!"

"No worries, but I'd have thought we'd both seen enough cock in the army to last us a lifetime."

"Yeah, true," said Greg. "I reckon we must have seen every shape and size over the years. It's just, well - funny really, knowing each other for so long like - that I never seen yours before. That's quite a tassel you got on the end of that thing, mate."

“What, – my snout, as my ex-Mrs used to call it? Yeah, ‘spose so. But I wasn’t wanking it, just in case you were worried. Just sometimes it takes a while to get the drops out of it after a good piss. You get that too?”

“Nah – not me, mate. Nothing like. I’m one of the roundheads. You never thought about getting yours tidied up a bit, then?”

“Nah, no way. I’m happy how I am,” said Paul.

“Well, each to their own, mate,” said Greg as he put his penis away and zipped up his jeans. “But having the low-maintenance variety saves valuable seconds when you’re anxious to get back to your pint and, talking of which, what are you on - Stella or Heineken?” said Greg

The next evening, Paul had had more than enough by the time his last customer finally left. He’d been at it solidly since 8:00, not even stopping to grab any lunch. Finally, he was able to turn the sign on the door to “closed”, pull down the blinds and turn off the outside lights before starting on sorting out the till and the tips jar. It had been a long day, but he was glad to have had so much business before it all went dead again for the second lockdown. He was putting the scissors in the steriliser when he heard the tap on the door and groaned. He’d forgotten that he’d said he’d do Greg and just wanted to get home, but a mate was a mate and a promise was a promise. At least it wouldn’t take long – Greg never wanted anything fancy. A quick run over with the clippers would do, he thought, going to the door to let Greg in.

“Evening mate. Come on in.” said Paul. “I’m nearly ready for you. Take a seat while I get sorted. I’ll put the kettle on in a sec.”

“Thanks,” said Greg. “Good night last night, eh?”

“Certainly mate, but I was regretting that last pint when the alarm went off at 6:00 this morning. So how was your day up the rugby club then? I thought you’d finished refurbishing the bar? said Paul.

“No, it wasn’t that. We got all that done weeks back,” said Greg.

“So, what have they got you doing up there now then?” said Paul, making conversation more than anything else. “I didn’t think they had the cash for any more improvements, not after being shut so long for lockdown.”

“Well, it was an improvement, I suppose you could say, but a different sort this time. They call me in there every now and then for it, but it’s not building stuff.”

“Yeah? said Paul, curious. “What’s that about then?”

“Well, it’s my army medical training they needed today. They get me when they got someone in one of the teams wants circumcising.”

“Nice try mate! What you really doing up there?” said Paul, laughing.

“No, I’m deadly serious. I’m up there once a month or so for it.”

“No way! You’re winding me up! You really give them the snip?”

“Sure. I did loads in the forces. When we was out there in the desert there was always a string of blokes realising that they’d better off without their nozzles, let alone those that got infections –

nasty ones sometimes too. So the docs trained me up so I could do some easier bits and pieces like that to take the pressure off them when they got busy with the serious stuff. I did twenty in a week once – just when I thought I'd done the last one, there'd be another squaddie along who'd been dithering about it, joining the queue once he'd seen his mates go for it and not wanting to be left out. You should have seen the pile of skins I'd got by the time I'd finally done!"

Paul looked uneasy. He'd known of a couple of blokes in his regiment who had needed a circumcision during a tour and he'd joined in the ribaldry when they came back to barracks walking a bit strange, but he'd never heard of anything like that happening.

"Then there was a constant drip of them after that," said Greg, "once the other lads saw how good it looked on their mates, and how easy it was for them to keep fresh when there were no proper showers and stuff."

"Blimey mate," said Paul. "That's news to me. There weren't many roundheads in my crew. I always thought, well, that it was just for the Jews and the Muslims and a few kids that needed it. I mean, why would you..."

"Yeah, most blokes just think they are stuck with what they got," said Greg, "but it's quick and easy, and once it's done you just wish you'd got it done it earlier."

"So were you snipped as a kid then?" asked Paul.

"No, I had a bit of a snout too when I was a lad – not as much as you though. It got rid not long after I signed up. Our Sarge was on about it during initial training. He said he knew so many men who wished they were done when they got sent out on their first tour and found out how hard it was to keep clean - how it got itchy and drove them mad when they couldn't shower every day. He said in the good old days he could just have insisted we all got done, but he wasn't allowed to now, but that that we'd be wise to get done then in a nice army hospital rather than when the problems kicked off, risking a botch job in some field hospital when we got our first infection. He had this story about some poor sod who'd got infected so bad that they ended up having to chop his whole cock off. It turned out that was a pile of bollocks of course but, well, that scared the shit out of a few of us. I mean – I'd just got my first girlfriend and that, and no way did I want to risk not being able to bang for Britain. So, next morning, there was me and five others outside the doc's room signing up. So it was bye-bye foreskin for me, and I never looked back. Best thing I ever did mate, seriously."

"So what did your bird say when you went back on leave and she saw you had half your todger missing then?" said Paul, curious again.

"Well, to be honest, she didn't say much," said Greg.

"Yeah?" said Paul, "She didn't mind then?"

"Well, mate," said Greg, "let's say it was more a case of actions speaking louder than words. As soon as she saw it, she was down on her knees in seconds and flat on her back in minutes! I hadn't thought she'd even notice, but she said later that she reckoned any woman is going to prefer eating candy without the wrapper on, and she sure had no complaints when the train went into the tunnel. She said she'd been with an Arab bloke before and always wished after that that British blokes were done too as it's so much better. I've never had any complaints since, not from any of 'em. They either don't care, or love it – and most love it, believe you me."

"Mate, this feels kind of weird asking you," said Paul. "It's not gay or anything – but I've never really... well, I've not really seen one like yours properly, not close up I mean. I know it means your bell end is always out and that, but..."

"No worries mate – I get you," said Greg. "It's not the kind of thing most blokes know anything about, is it. Well, not us breeders anyway."

As if it was the most normal thing in the world, Greg just undid his zip and took out his cock. Hands by his side, he just let it hang - long, floppy, and very tightly cut. Paul was taken aback. He'd just expected a bit of information, not to be given the visuals. Even so, he couldn't help but take a look as he was genuinely curious.

"Fuck mate. You really are a roundhead, aren't you! There's just nothing there," said Paul. "I just thought, well, that they sort of shortened your skin a bit, like."

"Yup, back to the balls. Nice and neat and sleek. No inessentials, just the bits you need, and no messing around," said Greg, smiling.

"But what's it like? I mean, I can see what it looks like, but...," said Paul.

"Fucking awesome, mate. I can't tell you. When you slide it in, all nice and tight – you really feel it," said Greg.

"But what's it like when you're not on the job, having your bell end out all the time like that?" Paul asked, genuinely intrigued.

"Well, you only notice for a week or so, then you just get used to it. You soon toughen up, then get the bonus of being able to keep going for hours, mate. That's what the ladies like – no early conclusions, if you know what I mean – you can really give them a good long seeing too, and, boy, don't they love that."

"But don't you miss being able to knock one out when you need to?" said Paul, "I mean, sometimes I just..."

Greg threw back his head and laughed out loud. "Oh don't worry mate – you can still do that when you need to! OK, it's a bit harder doing it dry alright, but a squirt of the old KY, or just a bit of gob if you are really desperate, and you're in business – feels just awesome too, way better than doing it with a glove on, like. And of course, it's so easy to keep it clean and fresh. No messing around. I mean, you must get smeggy under that snout of yours, mate?"

"Well," said Paul, blushing, "it can get a bit pongy under there in the summer I suppose. Just sometimes."

"There you are then mate! Stands to reason – there's just no reason to hang on to something you just don't need, especially as it feels so much better without it anyway."

"Well, perhaps," said Paul, not sounding very convinced. "So, the rugby club – there's really blokes up there who go for it? My boy Dan plays for the under 21's there. I know he doesn't tell me the half of what they get up to when they get a drink in 'em, but..."

"Yup – it's a big thing with those types," said Greg. "Loads of them are done. Once they see so many of the older blokes are roundheads, lots of the younger lads want in too. It's kind of a thing for them – being one of the crowd, like a badge of honour. There's always a few who really need it anyway – tight ones and the like – but lots just want it, especially when the older blokes start teasing them for

looking like boys. And the coach up there is all for it too – thinks it leads to “team spirit” and all that. Sets them apart from the football oiks. So, I usually get to do a good round of them every season. They make a big thing of it – the lads getting done in the locker room, like a ritual for them. Couple of the team hold the lad down after training, a couple more pull down his shorts and jock, then coach shaves him then gives him his jock to bite on while good old Greg gets his clamp out and tidies them up proper. Then they all go to the clubhouse after and get totally mulled to celebrate, usually with the bloke’s foreskin sitting on the bar in a jam jar in pride of place!”

“No way!” said Paul, laughing. “Dan’s never told me about the like of that going on.”

“Well, you know what rugby blokes are like with a drink in ‘em! Still, it’s always good to do a few lads a favour. So, what do you think of the rugby bloke look then? said Greg, looking down meaningfully at his cock.

“Well, yours looks good for sure, mate,” said Paul, sounding a bit flustered as he tried to get his thoughts together. “I never really thought about it before. I mean, most blokes just have skins and that’s that, so....”

“I think yours would look ace that way,” Greg interrupted. “I noticed yesterday that you’ve got a good big mushroom hidden away under all that extra skin – shame not to have that out on show.”

“I dunno. I never even thought about it. No reason to,” said Paul, even more flustered as, to his amazement, he felt his cock stir. He’d never given his snout much thought before – it was just “there”, just part of him, and it had never occurred to him that anyone would think that it was something he might be better off without. There was just that one time when, very unusually, it had been his dad who had taken him to the doctors. Of course it never crossed his mind at the time that it was a bit strange that he’d had to drop his pants when he was just there for a routine jab, or that there was any connection between that and the muttered conversation between his parents later that evening that had ended up in a big row – funny that all that long forgotten stuff suddenly came back to him now.

“I promise you, mate – if you got rid of all that extra skin, you’d just wish you’d done it before,” said Greg. “And it’s quick and easy. I can sort a bloke out in not much more time than you’d take to cut his hair. Leave him nice and neat and tidy – and it don’t grow back, not like his crowning glory! That lad I cut this afternoon, he’ll be back on his girlfriend in time for Christmas, and both of them will think it’s the best Christmas present they ever got. You’re not seeing anyone at the moment, are you? So it could be the perfect time for you, if you....”

He left the sentence there. He saw that Paul was red in the face and, as he dropped his eyes, also very erect inside his shorts. Greg smiled, and winked at Paul. “Don’t worry mate – I’m used to seeing that reaction. It gets most of them that way, once they start thinking about it and how good it’s gonna be for them if,.....”

He left that sentence hanging too.

“OK,” said Greg, changing his tone. “I’m gonna go out back and put that kettle on while you finish clearing up. Give you a moment to think if you recon it might be right for you. My kit’s out there in the car, if.... But only if, of course. Your call mate.”

Greg made for the back room. As he filled the kettle, Paul called out to him as he swept the floor.

“That lad you did earlier – why did he want his done, then?”

Paul was curious about why any man would actually choose to be circumcised, but talking about it, even with his best mate, somehow felt weird.

“Well, I think he’d known for a while that he wanted it,” Greg said from the back room, “then he joined the team and saw all the others in the showers, like. Then he was there when I did his mate back in the summer and he asked me a bit about it in the bar afterwards, and I saw talking about it had the same effect on him as it’s just had on you. So I wasn’t too surprised to see it was him on the table when the coach called me in today,” said Greg.

“So he didn’t actually need it then? His wasn’t tight or anything?” said Paul, struggling to get his head round all this strange new stuff.

“Nah,” it was fine, if you like that kind of thing. Real thick snout on him though, quite like yours actually. Nice ‘n’ loose like yours too - went back nice and easy. Nothing wrong with it, but he just wanted rid,” said Greg as he re-appeared in the salon. “You’re out of milk, mate. I’m gonna nip across to the shop for some, and I’ll get my kit from the car on the way back – just in case. That’ll give you a of time to think. Look, get your shorts off and have a bit of a wash if you’re up for it, but if I come back and you haven’t, then we’ll just say no more about it. Least said, soonest mended – like the idea never came up, OK?”

Five minutes later, Greg was back, a pint of milk in one hand and a briefcase in the other. He wasn’t sure what he was going to find when he came back but, a moment after he shut the salon door behind him, he was smiling. Paul’s shorts and boxers were on the bench where the customers waited, and he was sitting, legs wide apart on the barber’s chair, his trainers on the footrest and his face deep red. His cock was hanging long and soft between his legs, the overhang of his foreskin extending a good inch past the end of his glans.

“Handy, that chair,” said Greg, deciding it would be easiest not to refer to Paul’s tacet acceptance of what was going to happen. “Perfect for doing the job – easy for the dog to see the rabbit with you sitting up high like that. Nice you’ve got clippers too– that will speed things up. You’ll need to keep your pubes nice and short whilst it’s settling down, save anything getting snagged up. I never thought before, but a barbers is the perfect place to do one - everything you need at hand. I wonder if they used to do ‘em in the old days -when it was barber-surgeons, like. Two sugars, isn’t it, mate?”

“Yeah, two please,” said Paul. He was a bit unsettled by Greg’s casual reaction. He was glad that nothing had been said about his decision but, even so, Greg was making it sound like getting a circumcision was in the same league as getting a short back and sides, though there was just so much more to it than that. There was much going on inside his head that, perhaps, he might have been glad to talk about. Then again, perhaps it was just easiest just not to go there.

When Greg came back, two mugs in hand, Paul had the clippers plugged in and a number zero fitted.

“Your keen, mate! But let’s have a tea before we crack on though. Best take some of these with it, and don’t worry what it says on the packet – take a good fistful,” said Greg, handing Paul a packet of Panadol and noticing a slightly uneasy look pass across his friend’s face. “I’m not going to lie to you mate, it’s gonna sting like fuck - but just for a second or two, then it’s all over.”

Both men drank their tea in silence for a moment, then Greg picked up the clippers and switched them on. The buzz seemed deafening in the silence of the room.

“Funny, you in the chair, me with the clippers – role reversal,” said Greg.

Paul said nothing, but spread his legs wider on the footrest of the chair. It felt to him as if he was looking down at someone else as Greg carefully started to run the clippers through his thick bush. The wiry hairs that fell on the floor looked very different from the sort of hair he was used to seeing there. This couldn't be happening, he thought. He could still stop it. It would be embarrassing, but Greg would understand. His bush would soon grow back. His snout would still be there. They'd just pretend it was some sort of wind up and laugh about it when they next met for a pint.

"That was quick – I'll have to get some clippers me self," said Greg, as the two men looked down at Paul's neatly trimmed crotch. His penis looked longer with the hair so short around it.

"Right, I'll just get you smooth where you need to be," said Greg, reaching for the soap and razor on the counter. Paul suddenly caught sight of his image, reversed in the big mirror in front of him. He could make out the outline of his mushroom head through his thick foreskin and tried to imagine what it would look like permanently uncovered. For a second, Paul was worried as Greg closed in with the cut-throat. He'd used it himself so many times on the back of his customers' necks, on their faces too sometimes, but it was a different matter when someone else was using it on him, right up close to his cock too. Actually, he was impressed with Greg's skill with it, and he smiled.

"Nice work there, mate," he said. "I should be offering you a job."

"What, you gonna start offering circumcisions here too then?" laughed Greg "I told you I was handy with a blade!"

Then it struck Paul. If he didn't say anything now, then Greg would soon have a different kind of blade in his hand. Not only that, he'd be using it to slice through his foreskin – a foreskin he'd never really thought about before, a foreskin that was just "there" – always had been, just part of him. Was he really about to allow someone to cut it off, leaving his helmet bare and exposed? No more milking it. No more wanking with it. No more rolling it back as he put on a condom. No more snout – as simple as that. Was he mad?

Greg was done in seconds – Paul's crotch smooth around his cock and balls, more naked there than he had been since he was a boy. His genitals already looked so different, but nothing like as different than they would soon if he didn't say something and put a stop to this insanity. But he didn't speak. Greg washed the razor, put it back in the rack and picked up his mug before he spoke.

"Right," said Greg. "All nice and neat. Like your todger will be in a minute. Time for the clamp."

"Clamp?" said Paul, puzzled.

"Yeah," said Greg, putting down his mug and opening his bag. "The trusty gomco. It looks a bit weird, but it does the job quick and easy."

Greg saw the look on Paul's face when he saw the shiny metal, a look he'd seen many times before on other men's faces.

"It looks a bit freaky I know," he said, "but it's a brilliant bit of kit. This bit fits over your helmet and keeps it safe and sound, and the rest – well, the rest makes sure you get a nice neat job. You'll feel it when I tighten up the screw, but an army bloke like you..... well, you'll cope mate!"

Paul looked transfixed, his gaze focused on the clamp as it caught the light.

"So, let's get you all gomco'd up then," said Greg.

He pulled up a stool from behind the till, put it in between the barber's chair and the counter and sat down, one leg on either side of it. With his legs wide apart, Paul noticed his mate's hefty package between them and chose to pretend that he hadn't seen the evidence that, just possibly, Greg might have boned.

Greg picked the largest bell from the set inside the gomco wallet, and Paul noticed how tiny some of the others in there were.

"I reckon we're gonna need the biggest one for that handsome bell end. Skin back for me mate, and we'll see if I'm right," said Greg. "Funny, I haven't had to use this size for ages, then I need it twice in the same day. That lad this afternoon wasn't quite as thick as you, but the next one down wouldn't quite go over."

Paul rolled back his heavy, thick snout, suddenly conscious that it would perhaps be the last time he ever did so. His mushroom glans looked big and proud as it came into view. He felt the cool of the metal as Greg slipped the dome over it.

"Yup, that's the one we need alright," he said. "You know your helmet's gonna leather up? It won't stay smooth and shiny like that after...." The sentence trailed away. "Right," he continued. "Roll forward again."

Paul just let go of his foreskin, knowing he wouldn't have to re-position it himself. Nothing happened for a second, but then it rolled suddenly forward towards its default position until, stopped in its tracks by the bell, it bunched up behind it instead of continuing over his helmet and closing neatly past the end of his glans as it normally did.

"Right," said Greg, "just going to ease it over, then I'll fix the other bit of the clamp on and then we're in business."

He took hold of the foreskin and gently slid it over the top of the metal dome. The skin was loose and covered it with ease. It was, Paul thought, the first time another man had ever touched his cock. His foreskin felt strangely full with something stuffed inside, and the short pole on the top of the bell looked surreal poking out through the bud on the end of his snout. Something about the mix of soft flesh and hard metal somehow seemed very wrong. Greg picked up the yoke of the gomco and, in seconds, had it assembled loosely in place.

"You know you'll end up with a ring round your todger, don't you?" said Greg. The clamp does that – I ain't got that as the doc did me freehand, but it's better with a clamp. Right - I just want to double check you really are good to go, mate. Last chance saloon here. I just want you to be totally sure before I go any further, OK?" said Greg.

"Mate, just get on and bloody circumcise me," said Paul.

As he heard himself speak, he couldn't believe how certain he sounded. He wasn't.

"Good on you mate. OK, time for decision number two, then. How tight do you want to go?" said Greg.

"How do you mean?" said Paul, unable to take his eyes off his crotch. In his mind, not that he'd ever thought about it, a circumcision was just a circumcision and he thought he'd just made the one and only choice he needed to make.

"Well, if I did you with the clamp on like it is now, then you'd lose your snout but your bell end would still be covered. But if I pull some more through like this," said Greg, "easing more skin past

the ring on the clamp, “then you’d end up with just enough left to pull a bit over your rim when you were soft.”

He eased some more skin through.

“Or like this, and you’d always have your mushroom out but with a bit of slack left on your shaft when you throw a boner.”

He pulled yet more skin through.

“Or like this, and you’d be nice and sleek the whole time, soft or boned.”

Apart from the unusual sensation of cold steel over his helmet, with each “like this”, Paul had become more and more aware of a different feeling on his shaft behind the clamp too – an increasing awareness of tension in the skin there that he’d just never experienced before.

“Mate, you’re the expert here. I mean - well, I just don’t know,” said Paul.

“Well, there’s no point in going loose in my book, but fine if that’s what you want. If I do you medium then you’ll have a bit of movement if you want to knock one out. If I go a bit tighter then you’ll have to lube up for one, but when it comes to being on the job with the ladies then – well – it’s just something else when it comes to how awesome it feels. Your call, mate.”

“Tight.” Paul’s voice was almost inaudible, his face bright red.

“Good call, mate,” said Greg, smiling. “I didn’t want to say, but that’s the right answer in my book. Blokes who go loose always wish they’d gone for more off afterwards.”

One of Greg’s hands held the foreskin forward as the other started to take up the slack on the gomco screw. Paul fought off a momentary panic as he saw just how much of his cock seemed to be on the wrong side of the clamp, but somehow, he couldn’t speak, not that he knew what he wanted to say.

“Right,” said Greg. “Here we go then. It’s gonna feel a bit weird when it starts to bite, but you’ll cope, and this baby makes the rest of the job nice and quick and easy.”

Paul’s eyes widened and he tensed as the screw tightened and he felt the clamp start to push down onto his skin.

“Just keep breathing, mate – don’t fight it. Go with the flow and try and relax into it,” said Greg.

For Paul, it didn’t exactly feel like pain, more just an intense, uncomfortable pressure. He concentrated hard on his breathing, trying to put his mind somewhere calm and far away from this madness. Somehow, he couldn’t believe he was doing this – sitting in the chair where his customers sat, his foreskin doomed, opting into something life-changing that he’d never even thought about an hour before, something that he could so easily regret. If anyone had asked him exactly why he was doing it, he wouldn’t have had an answer.

Finally, after what seemed like hours, Greg had the screw turned down to the max.

“Right,” he said, “you’re doing great there, mate. So we just need to give it ten minutes for it to do its job, then it will be “no more snout” in seconds.”

To Paul, the idea of sitting there for ten minutes, his foreskin doomed but the job not complete, felt unbearable. Greg's suggestion a moment later seemed totally surreal, but Paul was glad of it – anything to take his mind of the situation:

“How's about you run the clippers over me while we're waiting then? That's why I'm here after all!” he said, laughing.

Paul stood up, conscious of the sudden sensation as the pound of surgical -grade steel that was clamped to his penis tugged his cock downwards, the pull of it adding to the heavy throb he felt from the plates that were gradually killing his foreskin and the stretch on the shaft on the part of his penis that he was going to keep. He noticed Greg look at the clamp as it swung a little between his legs. As they changed places and Greg sat down in the chair, Paul smiled as he thought of the roles of cutter and cuttee being suddenly swapped, even though the kind of cut he was about to give Greg was nothing in comparison to the one he was soon to have himself. Greg's haircut was only a temporary change, reversable over time and not life changing like the cut he was soon going to get. Almost automatically, Paul fitted a number two into the clippers that had recently trimmed his pubes and switched them on. The gomco clanged loudly as it hit the metal of the chair as Paul reached towards Greg and started work, wads of his thick, brown hair mixing with his own wiry black pubes on the floor.

Minutes later, as he held up the hand mirror for Greg's approval of the neat nape he had shaved with the cut-throat that had earlier removed the last of his bush, Paul looked at the reflection of clock on the wall behind him in mirrored wall in front of the barber's chair. The ten minutes were up. His foreskin ached intensely from the bite of the clamp and he was longing for relief from it, even if what was to come was going to be worse. His hair-cutting tools back on the counter, he took the weight of the gomco in his hand for a moment's relief from its weight.

“Thanks, Nice neat job as ever there, mate,” said Greg, looking at the reflection of the back of his head. “Like I'm going to give you too in a minute, eh!”

Paul smiled weakly. He was mad. He knew that now. He'd made a big mistake, but it was his own fault, and there was no going back. He knew from the colour that his foreskin had turned that he'd already passed the point of admitting his mistake to Greg and calling a halt. As if looking for proof, he couldn't help running a fingernail along the long length of his snout that protruded through the clamp, knowing before he did so that he wouldn't be able to feel it. His foreskin was dead. He knew that. There was no getting it back now. The only way to go was onwards. There was no longer a choice. He'd left it too late for that.

Greg stood up from the chair and dusted himself down. He picked up a towel and brushed the strands of his hair from the seat onto the floor before standing back. Paul sat down again, feeling more vulnerable than he could ever remember. With something approaching resignation, he opened his legs wide on the footrest again and prepared for what he knew had to come. The gomco hung heavily, his cock stretched out by it, the foreskin grey-looking now.

“Right mate,” said Greg, opening a vacuum-sealed pack and taking out a disposable scalpel that Paul had to force himself to look at. “We're ready to go. I'm gonna count down from five. Hold on tight when I get to one. Remember your army training - take a deep breath and let it out as I reach zero, OK mate?” Paul just nodded, ashen faced.

“Five, four,... ” Greg heard Paul breathe in.

“Three...”

As he reached “two”, Greg suddenly pushed the blade down hard into Paul’s foreskin. As soon as he felt it hit the resistance of the metal of the gomco dome, he ran it right round the rim of the gomco plate.

Shock hit Paul first. It was seconds later before the sting from the blade burnt him like fire in an intensity of pain he’d never felt before.

“Fuuuuuck!”

“Sorry mate,” said Greg, smiling as he used the tip of the blade to tease Pauls’ severed skin away from the clamp. “It’s the oldest trick in the book, but it works. I didn’t want you squirming when I got to zero. Well done – all over. I got it off in one go. I told you I was good!”

“Holy shit,” said Paul. “God, that hurts.”

“Just keep deep breathing, mate. Just go with it for a second, that’s the worst over you now. It’s just the shock. You did great, mate.”

Paul couldn’t help looking down as Greg used the scalpel to flick what had once been his foreskin onto the floor. There seemed to be so much of it that it seemed surreal – a puckered bundle of flesh. His snout. Now just another piece of debris amongst the mingled wisps of their hair on the floor, ready to be swept up and thrown in the trash. He looked back at his crotch, his brain somehow struggling to process what he was seeing. Somehow it still looked like his cock, but at the same time like one that belonged to someone else. The big, mushroom with a deep ridge to the glans just “there” – all out on show now. That couldn’t be his cock, could it?

Greg was talking, but Paul didn’t really hear what he was saying. He was fixated on seeing what was to be his new penis, the one he’d now have for the rest of his life. Greg was unfurling the gomco screw, his practised fingers flicking it skilfully open and starting to disassemble it. The feeling from his cock was changing. The shock over now, it was starting to feel more like a heavy, dull ache. Greg was reaching into his kit for surgical glue.

“Right, this bit’s not so bad mate but try and keep still so I can get a good neat job. I’m just going to close things up, then we’re done.

Paul was transfixed again. As Greg worked, he saw just how far up his shaft the place was where Greg was fixing the two raw edges of skin together. He winced at Greg’s touch, but the pain was nothing like the punch in the stomach he’d had from the cut that had done the deed and made him into a circumcised man.

“Circumcised.” That word kept going round in Paul’s mind. A word he didn’t think he’d ever said out loud before. “I’m circumcised.” “I’ve had a circumcision.” He was going to have to get used to thinking that, even if he never voiced it. Now, he was a circumcised man. A man with no foreskin.

“Have some more tea, mate,” said Greg, passing Paul his mug. “Nothing like a cuppa to help you through, is there.”

* * * * *

Paul saw the letter on the mat as he opened the salon door. He assumed it was an early Christmas card, but the envelope seemed unusually heavy as he picked it up, and he froze as he felt something squishy inside it. Instantly, he was back in Derry in 1986, his army instincts screaming "letter bomb" inside his head. Very slowly and carefully, he turned the envelope over in his hand, swearing out loud in relief as he recognised the spidery handwriting on the front. As he ripped it open, two transparent sachets of something clear fell onto the floor, but he ignored them for a moment as he read the greeting inside:

"Compliments of the season! Sorry that I wasn't able to be around for you and hope you've been doing OK. Your month is up, so thought you might welcome the enclosed to get you started. Just make sure you go real easy at first, however blue those balls are! Ring me. Greg"

As he read, Paul heard the door open - his first customer there already. He quickly stuffed the sachets into his shorts pockets without looking at them and turned to greet the man, not quite sure why he was blushing quite so deeply.

It was Paul's first day back at work after the second lockdown and he was as fully booked as the day, exactly a month before, when Greg had been there and each had trimmed the other. Hairdressing was like falling off a log for Paul; he'd done every style so many times that he could do the job in his sleep, but somehow today - his first day at work as a circumcised man - things felt different. As he lent over the first customer to trim his eyebrows, Paul noticed a new sensation as his groin pushed into the side of the barber's chair. He must have done the same thing a thousand times without even noticing, but today it was different. He was acutely aware of the nakedness of his glans as it made contact with the solidity of the chair, then the feeling of the unprotected head brushing across the cloth of his underwear when he moved away again, and he felt himself stir and stiffen slightly. It wasn't so much the physical sensation that caused it as much as the reminder, one he had had so many times over the last week since his penis had been over the worst of the trauma, that his glans was now bare and always would be. Naked, vulnerable exposed. Although no one else would have known that to look at him, Paul knew though - that there was one less layer between his most intimate part and the outside world than there had been on the last day that he had stood by that same chair - one less layer than there "should" be. He wasn't sure exactly why, but just realising that made his cock harden more.

Paul's second customer was a young Muslim guy. As they chatted, somehow all he could think about was that this bloke was going to be like him. Circumcised. He wondered if the bloke ever thought about it, if it mattered to him at all; if he felt sorry for all his non-Muslim mates that they had skins or if he wished that he was like them too and had a complete penis. When the conversation lulled awkwardly, Paul somehow had to fight the urge just to blurt out "I've just got circumcised," but he knew it just wasn't the kind of thing anyone ever talked about. He'd never given the matter more than a moment's thought - not until he was made that way himself; not until he was a circumcised man. But now....

The third customer was getting comfortable in the chair when Paul noticed himself in the mirror. He'd just put his hands into the pockets of his shorts - something instinctive that he always did while he was waiting and not sure what to do with his idle hands. No one else would have realised, but there it was - his own reflection, and it was different. That shape showing through his shorts as his pocketed hands pulled the material tight across his crotch. That different outline - there was just a hint, but Paul instantly knew what it was - the suggestion of the shape of the thick, hefty mushroom head of his penis that, for the last month, had been liberated from the cover that used to soften the outline of its form and prevented its full acknowledgement. Now there was nothing to mask it. Paul

managed to keep talking to the man, making sure not to brush against him as he worked with his penis hard, his mind struggling to make sense of it all.

At the end of the day as he was clearing up, it felt like déjà vu when there was a knock as he put the scissors in the steriliser. When he opened the door, he saw straight away how pale and thin Greg looked - the Covid had clearly knocked a lot out of him. They had exchanged texts and chatted a couple of times in the days after Paul's circumcision - Greg just keeping in touch to see how he was doing, reassuring him that it was perfectly normal for things to look a bit gruesome for a week or so, checking that there was no infection and re-assuring him that it was going to feel a bit uncomfortable when he woke with a morning boner. "Give it time, mate. Give it time – trust me, you'll love it." But then there was the text saying from Greg saying he was feeling rough, and then another the next to say that he'd tested positive. Then the one from his sister to say that he was in hospital, and there had been no more contact after that.

"Greg! Good to see you mate!" said Paul. "How are you? I didn't realise you were out and about again."

"I shouldn't be out really, but I was going stir crazy," said Greg. "God, I wouldn't wish the last couple of weeks on anyone, but I'm more or less back on me feet now. But how's you?"

"All kushti, thanks. Can't complain. Rushed off my feet today of course, but keeping well and..."

"Come on mate, not that kind of stuff. You know what I mean! How is it?"

Paul smiled. He had, of course, known exactly what Greg wanted to know.

"All good, thanks. Now, anyway. But it's been – well, it's been interesting!"

"Tell me all mate."

"Well, to be honest, it's just as well you went off sick when you did, mate. If you'd been around the week after, I'd have given you such a bollocking. God, it looked like something the dog had had a good chew at, and felt even worse. Bloody sore, but that wasn't the half of it. Every time I moved it was at me. It drove me mad. I so knew that I'd made a big mistake, and it was all your fault for talking me into it, and I'd have bloody given it to you with both barrels if you'd been around but..."

"I know, I know, mate. And I'm sorry I wasn't here for you, but I'd have just said the same thing - you have to give it time, simple as that," said Greg. "But now?"

A slow smile moved across Paul's face.

"Well, just last week – it kinda started to settle down a bit. I reckon it's all more or less healed up proper, and....."

"Gis a look mate – best way to check it's all OK."

Paul pulled the blinds down a bit further. He unzipped and hooked out his penis, letting it just hang from the fly of his shorts, rather as Greg had a month before when he had been the only circumcised man in the room. As he looked down, Paul was amazed yet again by sight of the deep rim of his helmet that was now so clear to see. Until exactly one month ago, he'd had no real awareness of it when there was foreskin in the way. He looked at his reflection in the wall of mirrors in front of the barber's chairs, his mind still finding it hard to accept that it was his own snout-free, image that he was looking at. The big, bulbous head was just "there", so prominent on the end of his shaft, a small wrinkle of skin nuzzling up close to it but stopping just short of making contact. If he'd seen it on

someone else a month ago, he would probably have pitied its owner for having lost his skin, but this was his penis. His new penis. His circumcised penis. He mulled the word over in his head.

"Circumcised." "I'm circumcised." Suddenly, he was aware Greg was speaking.

"Well, it's healing up nicely. Looking good to me, mate – I'm proud of my handiwork there. I reckon I judged that one bang on, though I say so myself. That big handsome bell end – I told you it would look good all freed up, like."

"Yeah?" said Paul. "You think it looks OK?"

He really wanted to hear Greg say it. Needed to hear him say it.

"Course mate, they all look better with the wrapper off to me, but 'specially ones like yours. I mean, if you've got it, why not make the most of it? That big helmet – I tell you mate, when your next lady friend's lips are wrapped round that, well then you'll really see!"

"You reckon?" said Paul.

"God, she won't be able to get enough of that, and then... well, when you get something else wrapped around it. Geronimo!"

"Yeah?" said Paul

He had started to stir when Greg had mentioned his bare glans. He looked down again, and the small fold of skin behind his head had now flattened right out on his shaft. The cut line an inch behind his glans was showing clearly, still red and slightly angry looking, the band of inner skin in front of it a subtly different colour to the rest of his penis. He felt again the new sensation of the skin on his shaft pulling taut as he hardened in a way that it had never done when he was a complete man.

"Then in a few weeks when you've toughened up a bit, well, she won't have any complaints about any quick sprint to the finishing line, I can tell you," said Greg.

"Yeah?" said Paul again.

"Looks like you like the idea of that, mate," said Greg, glancing down at Paul's cock and winking.

There was no point in trying to hide it now. Paul was blatantly erect.

"I tell you," said Greg, "once you've had the best, you feel sorry the rest. All those blokes out there with skins getting in the way have got no idea what they're missing, poor sods."

"Yeah?" said Paul, yet again.

It was only in the last week or so that he'd begun to accept that being circumcised wasn't a total disaster. Only in the last couple of days had he begun to think that it might, just, be different but OK. Today, though, he'd started to think differently again, and he really wanted to hear just the kind of thing Greg was telling him.

"So," said Greg, "I hope you've been a good boy and left well alone?"

"God, it's been tough," said Paul. "Four weeks without knocking one out – man! The first couple of weeks there was no way I'd have wanted to touch it anyway, but recently it's been driving me insane – waking up with a stiffy and not be able to sort myself out. I mean, it's just what you do, innit. It's been tough – so wanting to give it a go but knowing I mustn't."

“Well, time’s up now, mate,” said Greg. “It’s all yours now. Just go dead easy on it at first, for a couple of weeks at least. An no sharing it – just hand shandies until Christmas, then anything goes – and it will, I promise you!”

“But,” said Paul, “it’s worrying me. I mean – how do you? There’s nothing to use now, is there. I mean, if you are on the job with a lady I can see how it don’t make that much difference, but....”

“Oh it makes a difference with the ladies, mate – you’ll see! But I remember it’s a bit weird rubbing one out yourself at first,” said Greg. “You’ll soon get used to doing it different and, fuck mate, it’s just so much better once you get the hang of it. I didn’t have anyone around to ask and had to puzzle it out me’self, so that’s why I sent you an early Christmas present to save you from all that.”

“What, this stuff?” said Greg, reaching into his short’s pocket for a sachet.

“Yeah mate – the good old bachelors’ friend. I reckon I’d sub you a couple of rounds’ worth until you get a chance to get down to Boots,” said Greg, winking again. “I tell you, you’ll want to make sure it’s on your shopping list from now on.”

There was silence in the room. Paul was aware of the way that his heart was beating faster than normal, his hard cock twitching slightly with every beat. He looked up to confirm what he already knew – that Greg was looking at his cock. There was more silence before, finally, Greg spoke:

“Mate, go ahead. It’s cool with me. A bloke has needs, and I know it’s been a long month, especially with you banged up at home with nothing else to think about.”

Paul read the unspoken message but didn’t meet Greg’s eye. Even though he was standing there with blatant full-blown erection in front of another man, making eye contact would, somehow, have been too much, even with his best mate – too personal, too intimate. Too dangerous? He used his teeth to open a sachet.

Paul lined up the opening he had made on the sachet with his helmet, but Greg spoke again.

“Actually mate, I’d go a bit further back than that. It might be different for you, but I prefer working a bit further behind the bell end than that. You’ll see.”

“Yeah?” said Paul, puzzled. “I thought it was all about getting at proper go at your helmet, being circumcised I mean.”

Circumcised. It was, he realised, the first time he’d said the word out loud since it had applied to him.

“Well, kind of mate, but there’s so much more to it than that. I reckon its more about getting rid of all that loose skin that you just don’t need rather than getting the head bared up. You’ll see.”

Paul moved the sachet back along his shaft and cautiously squeezed. He couldn’t help a quick upward flick of his eyes towards Greg, but Greg didn’t notice, his gaze still firmly on Pauls’ crotch. Greg spoke again without looking up.

“Gob on your hand to water it down a bit, mate” he said quietly, almost as if he was giving advice to his apprentice about grouting tiles.

Paul spat on his hand. He flinched slightly as he made contact with his shaft, gripping tightly round his head in the way that he had done since he was a schoolboy but feeling this time a completely

new shape under his fingers, the deep ridge of the glans so pronounced and almost sharp edged, the squishy give of his loose foreskin completely gone.

“I’d go back a bit,” said Greg. “On to your stalk, like.”

At the edge of his field of vision, Paul noticed that Greg’s hand had moved, now lying across his crotch. As he moved his hand towards the root of his shaft, Paul felt the contact of his thumb and index finger on the wide band of inner skin that was now laid out flat, exposed as never before. He savoured the feeling for a long moment, almost alarmed by the intensity of the new sensation.

Paul loosened his grip a little and, very slowly, began to slide his hand.

“Fuck.” His head dropped back as he spoke, his eyes closed.

He began stroking, taking it slower and more gently than he thought he’d ever manage to do, his mind overloaded as he struggled to take in and process the full knowledge of what he was feeling. He looked up at Greg and found that he was already looking at him – at his face this time, not his crotch. There was something unreadable in his expression. There was no doubt about it now – Greg’s hand was holding the erection in his jeans. Paul saw him blush.

“Shit, sorry mate,” Greg said. “I lost interest in it when I was ill, like, but...”

“Mate, it’s cool,” said Paul. “It’s been a long while for both of us. I get it.”

He reached again into his shorts’ pocket and threw the second sachet over to Greg.

* * * * *

“Well, we’re a bit late celebrating it, but here’s to a better new year than the last one, eh,” said Greg, clinking glasses with Paul. “I thought the pubs would never reopen, but Tier 2 again – finally!”

“Yeah,” said Paul, “Belated happy new year to you too, mate. I was bloody glad to see the back of the last one, I can tell you.”

“Not all bad though, was it -2020, I mean?” said Greg, smiling. “One good thing about it perhaps?”

“Yeah,” said Paul, smiling back, knowing immediately what Greg meant. “One good thing – though it took me a while to realise it. God, I thought I’d made such a mistake at first. And you not around to re-assure me. No-one to talk to about it, like. That first couple of weeks with a todger like a train had run over it.”

“Well, that’s all over you now, mate – onwards and upwards for the new year,” said Greg.

“One thing, mate,” said Paul. “My boy Dan said he might be in later. He doesn’t know about... aboutwell, you know. So if he comes over to say hello....”

“Sure. Your secret’s safe with me,” said Greg. “It’ll be good to finally get to meet him at last if he turns up.”

“Thanks mate. So if I need to nip to the gents, just keep him talking ‘til I get back, OK? Just in case he decides he needs a pee too, like, so he doesn’t....”

“Message received,” said Greg. “Talking of your loved ones, how’s that new lady of yours then?”

"Yeah, all coming on nicely," said Paul. "We're chatting away online and, now we're allowed to meet up again for real"

"Looking forward to a proper road test then, are we?" said Greg, smiling.

"Shit mate, if it's half as good as you say, I'm just worried that I'll be done and dusted before she's even got going," said Paul.

"Well, you'll already have a bit more staying power now you're in the roundhead team," said Greg.

"Yeah?" Paul replied. "Me bell end's changed a bit already. I still notice it rubbing, but it's damping down a bit for sure."

"Well just wait a couple more months. Then you'll be up and at it for hours, no sweat," said Greg. "If I was you, I'd have a good old go with the bachelors' friend before you meet her for real, just in case she lets you get down to business - just to slow things down a bit, seeing as you're still toughening up."

"OK mate, you're the expert. Right - I just seen Dan come in," said Paul, looking over Greg's shoulder towards the pub door. "Mum's the word, remember?"

Greg smiled to himself as he saw the outline of Paul's stiff cock through his shorts as he stood up to go over to greet Dan.

"Dan, Greg - Greg, Dan" said Paul as he brought his son over and pulled up a stool for him.

"Err, pleased to meet you," said Dan as he sat down.

"Likewise," said Greg. "Well, you're a right chip off the old block for sure. No mistaking you're Paul's lad."

"You reckon?" said Paul, smiling. "People usually say the opposite - that his mum must have been on friendly terms with the milkman."

"Oh, there's a likeness there OK," said Greg, "though not everyone would see it."

Dan laughed strangely. Paul was a puzzled. Somehow, there was a bit of an atmosphere and he just didn't know why. Greg was such a likeable bloke that it was hard to think that Dan could possibly have taken an instant dislike to him. There was a silence for just a little too long for comfort.

"Anyway," said Paul. "The usual, Dan, and same again Greg?"

Paul stood up and headed as if towards the bar but, as soon as he was out of Dan's view, veered instead towards the gents, throwing a wink to Greg as he passed behind his son's back.

"Shit. Awkward," said Dan as soon as he was sure his father was out of the way. "You won't say, will you?"

"Don't worry, fella," said Greg. "Your business. But it's actually all cooler than you think."

"I've been meaning to tell him but....," said Dan.

He tailed off, then spoke again as, clumsily, he stood up.

"Actually, I need a leak too."

“Dan....,” said Greg, then he stopped. Dan was only half way to the gents. He could have called the boy back, but he didn’t. Even before Dan had reached the toilet door, Greg was worrying. He’d only had a moment to think and was rapidly realising that his split-second decision might have been a bad move, that Greg would be furious that he’d not done what he’d promised. But that was a promise made before Dan had arrived. It was all very different now.

Paul hadn’t wasted any time. Even though Greg was going to keep Dan talking, he was wary. He was relieved that no one else was at the urinal, not ready for his new cock be seen yet – not quite, not until it had really settled down, not until he’d really got used to the idea that he no longer had a foreskin. Although he was in a hurry, he was careful. His circumcision scar was still tender and he’d snagged it uncomfortably a few times when he wasn’t thinking when hooking his penis out – something that had actually happened more since he’d started to get a bit more used to being circumcised and begun to forget that he still needed to go carefully. As he freed his penis, he willed himself not to slow things down by getting hard as he looked at it again in its new form, the mushroom head already starting to change subtly in colour and texture hanging impressively big on the end of his shaft. He’d never been one to peel back to pee and, as his flow started, there was still novelty for him in seeing his stream emerge directly from the wide slit that was now so visible with no skin in the way. He thought of how different things were since the last time he’d stood at that same stall – no snout ballooning slightly, no milking needed afterwards, all quick and easy now. In the washroom, the hand drier was going noisily and, lost in his thoughts, he didn’t hear the door bang as someone came in.

Dan didn’t really need to pee, but going to the gents had been the easiest way to get away from the awkwardness of being alone with Greg. As he passed the cubicles and turned to the urinal, he stopped dead in his tracks, shocked to see Paul standing there, head down and lost in contemplation. A second later Dan felt as if he’d been punched hard in the stomach.

Paul was experimenting with just letting his cock hang by itself - his hands by his sides, the stream now so much straighter than when there was a nozzle of skin there complicating the issue. Somehow sensing suddenly that he was no longer alone, he glanced up, alarmed to see his son there, but horrified to register exactly where he was looking.

“Dan....,” said Paul. “I was ...”

Someone had pushed the button on the hand drier again. Dan was speaking but, from across the room, Paul couldn’t make out what he was saying. All he could do was read the confusion and awkwardness written on his son’s face. Suddenly, Paul realised that he was talking with his cock still hanging free and he flinched as, forgetting in his panic to take care, he caught his scar on his zip as he struggled to put it away.

“.....circumcised,” said Dan, almost shouting the word in the deafening silence as the hand drier suddenly cut out, the first part of his sentence lost under its din.

Finally zipped up, Paul managed to get the worst of his fluster under control.

“Dan, mate, I was going to....”

The door banged again and a couple of men came in, talking loudly as they reached the trough and started to unzip.

“Look,” said Paul, “we can’t talk here.”

Greg was anxious as he waited, hoping that he'd done the right thing and helped to move things on for them both. As he wondered what was going on, it seemed to be a long time before, finally, they emerged together from the gents. He struggled to read the look on their faces, trying to guess what might have been said after what he knew would just have happened. Dan was flushed bright red, but Paul's expression was unreadable. As father and son sat down, he decided to get in quick before either of them had a chance to say anything.

"Sorry Paul, I know what I said, but I reckoned it was the easiest way - once I realised," he said.

"Sorry mate, give us a moment, eh?" said Paul, looking from Greg to Dan, concerned to see his son's face still flushed and just how uncomfortable he looked.

"Dad, there's something..." said Dan, but Greg interrupted:

"When I said he was a chip off the old block, it wasn't his looks I was talking about - you're chalk and cheese there. But those snouts - you don't come across ones like those very often. Then having to use that largest bell twice in one day, well"

"Sorry, mate, I've got no idea what you are on about, but Dan and I need ..." said Paul.

Suddenly, realisation dawned for Greg.

"Shit, you don't know, do you. That's why I let Dan go in after you. As you were both in there so long I thought you must have sorted it all out in there but,"

"Mate, if you've got something to say, just say it 'cos you're not making a whole lot of sense and Dan and I really need to talk," said Paul, suddenly irritated.

Paul saw Greg look across at Dan, an unspoken question written in his expression. Dan, still red-faced, said nothing, but nodded.

"Look, just what's going on here, you two?" said Paul. "This is getting weird. Just tell me, eh?"

"Well, mate" said Greg, slowly, choosing his words carefully. "The day I did you, you remember I told you that I'd just done a lad at the rugby club?"

"Yeah," said Paul. "So?"

"Well.....," said Greg,

Dan interrupted him, suddenly vehement: "No Greg. Let me. It's only right."

Greg shrugged. "Your call."

Dan turned and looked his father straight in the face:

"Dad, you've obviously got stuff you need to tell me but.... That lad Greg did up at the club. It was me."

