

Café Stories

By people of
Bedford with
Ania Bas

co-produced
by Bedford
Creative Arts
and Laura
Trevail

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It was late winter 2010 when Ania arrived to Bedford. It was her first visit. It was Monday. It was cold. Bedford Creative Arts¹ said that they wanted to work beyond the gallery space; to see the town as a venue for art. 'This is ace!', she thought.

'I always wanted to be a waitress-in-residence',² said Ania in her peculiar accent, lost in between Eastern Europe and Scandinavia. 'Make work amid cleaning tables and serving coffee!'³

Dawn⁴ pointed across the road, at the café on the market square,⁵ as the perfect spot! Ania spent a number of afternoons there, drinking coffee and thinking about what could fit in in-between time of cleaning and serving. She was returning home with little stories from the café. Someone was always sharing the table with her, somehow people were always chatty. The idea for Café Stories arrived on a saucer.

During three sunny days Ania gathered a stories in two town cafes.⁶ People were writing them down or telling them to her while she cleaned their tables and delivered lattes.

The stories are the accounts of the time spent over a coffee in sun with a stranger asking you to share what's on your mind, to share why you are here at that very moment. Words left, short narratives, the record of the everyday, with all of its little glories and obscurity and often nostalgia for days lost to the past.

The stories are not forgotten, captured by the artist and presented on 24 & 25 July 2010 in the cafes where Ania worked and at Bedford Creative Arts.

Notes to editor:

For more info please contact Bedford Creative Arts
104 Midlands Road, Bedford MK40 1QE.

t. 01234 818670 e. info@bedfordcreativearts.org.uk

¹ Bedford Creative Arts - arts organisation who invited Ania to the town. For more info on Bedford Creative Arts visit: <http://www.bedfordcreativearts.org.uk/>

² Waitress-in-residence is a play on the concept of artist-in-residence – a popular way of working for contemporary artists, where artists spend an extended period of time in a particular location instead of their studio, often making work in relation to this new location/people who occupy it etc.

³ A romantic vision of 'waitressing' – Bas thought that it actually allows you to do anything in-between constant cleaning and serving!

⁴ Dawn Giles – Bedford Creative Arts' Co-director

⁵ La Piazza, a café in Bedford

<http://maps.google.co.uk/maps/place?cid=7177644880095118076&q=la+piazza+bedford&gl=uk>

⁶ Caffè Amore in Bedford was the second café participating in the project.

http://maps.google.co.uk/maps?f=d&source=s_d&saddr=52.137683,-0.470395&daddr=&hl=en&geocode=&gl=uk&mra=mi&mrsp=0&sz=17&sll=52.137018,-0.469644&sspn=0.003589,0.009785&ie=UTF8&ll=52.136939,-0.469644&spn=0.003754,0.009785&z=17

As the stories have no titles they have been numbered⁷ If the author wanted to be named her/his name appears here

The stories have been gathered from nearly 100 contributors. Some people told collective stories, others were writing or telling them individually. Some people contributed more than one story.

In as many stories as possible the original grammar, wording, style etc - have been kept.

Notes to editor:

I (Ania) have invited artist and writer Laura Trevail to the project in the capacity of editor. English is my second language and I wanted to make sure that there will be a fluent user of English involved to overlook the final version of the stories. Laura being a writer also knows how to put words together.

Laura's presence made me to do more: to share with the editor my thoughts on the stories, information about my smaller or bigger edits (i.e. removing myself from the story), as well as my thoughts on the stories themselves: use of language, the themes that were explored, stories that were told.

The notes to editor allowed me to build a second layer to the stories, a conversation with fellow artists about the process of the project.

Notes from editor:

As a writer with no concern for fluent English and a deep jealousy of the effortless ability of mistakes to communicate far more than craftsmanship, I approach my position as editor with suspicion, disrespect and tremendous curiosity.

It disturbs me to be ruthless with anyone's representation of themselves.

However, working from the text without meeting the people or seeing the handwriting has given me an archaeological sense of combined responsibility and hubris. A creeping increase of clarity and damage. Brushing off the dust to see the find better (nobody is interested in the dust but me)...do I disturb the earth and dig it out (nobody is interested in the earth but me)...do I break the rock to reveal the fossil (nobody is interested in the rock but me)...do I clean it...do I fill in the missing pieces, and if so with what...do I varnish it...display it...start to speculate about what it may have been...reconstruct it in plaster... do I choose a colour...do I present the bright reconstruction as a truth more valuable than an undisturbed piece of land?

The next step is plastic souvenirs in the gift shop. I'll take those, thank you very much, and be on my way.

⁷ Footnotes are providing readers with more information about certain aspects that I hope readers will find interesting, amusing, worth knowing and investigating further.

The footnotes also consist of a number of URLs. Footnotes knowledge is 60% Internet acquired. Although the project took place in real place and time, I am providing context to the stories through Google searches, Google maps etc to link the small town to the vast world out there.

Story 1

...likes to sip... and watch people going about their business... enjoy a nice cup of coffee⁸... and listen to the chatter....

Notes to editor:

Written in a very shaky handwriting – too much coffee?

Notes from editor:

One consistently interesting thing in these pieces of text is the muddling up of who is telling a story about who.

⁸ 'Nice cup of coffee' is more than just 'cup of coffee' – 'nice' is a composition of strong, aromatic liquid combined with a soothing location, accessible price and agreeable company. All these things seem to be rarely present together in the age of chain coffee shops, hectic lives, escalating prices and general lack of time. 'Nice cup of coffee' can be seen as a luxury - having time to stop and experience the present at its full.

Story 2

A very pleasant experience. Sitting and drinking coffee in The Piazza, watching people shopping in the busy market. Watching the Bedfordshire people go about their daily lives.⁹

Notes to editor:

The story has been written by a blue-pen writer and corrected by black-pen writer. Corrected bits: second 'e' added to the word 'coffee' and the name of the café changed from The Piazzo to Piazza. I have changed it from The Piazza to La Piazza as this is the correct form, but should I?

Notes from editor:

No. I changed it back.

Is this person from Bedfordshire? It feels perhaps distant to say 'the Bedfordshire people'. Either acknowledging their distance as a stranger, or building distance from a place and people they know while watching. Or maybe it's pride in the familiarity, and naming it.

⁹ Watching 'daily lives' somehow links in my head with bird watching – the concept of sitting still and calmly experiencing the life of others brushing against our own in a very gentle manner. I must say that I have never met as many keen bird-watchers as well as keen people-watchers outside of the UK.

There seems to be nothing wrong with wanting to watch the daily lives of people, as they are already exposed. This brings to me the question of what must-not-be-watched. 'Nightly lives' - hidden by darkness, private, behind the walls, not on display.

Story 3

Lil Fuccillo

I shook hands with Lil Fuccillo¹⁰. He was finishing a cappuccino. We exchanged a few sentences about the weather. He left me his autograph.

Notes to editor:

I do have the autograph!

Notes from editor:

I take it that the gap between the title and the name is because this story is 'about' Lil Fuccillo, rather than 'by' Lil Fuccillo. A lot of these stories seem to fall somewhere between 'by' and 'about'. That gap and your note to the editor establishes this as your story, without putting your name. Otherwise it could be someone else telling you about meeting Lil Fuccillo – which is what I thought it was when I started reading it. Is this intentional?

¹⁰ Pasquale "Lil" Fuccillo (born May 2, 1956 in Bedford) is a former footballer and is currently chief scout for Swansea City. Fuccillo was born in Bedford to Italian parents and joined Luton Town from school. He established himself in the their starting line-up, and there was even talk of a call-up to the Italian national team. Disaster struck, however, when a tackle by Brighton and Hove Albion's Paul Clark shattered his leg. He broke his leg for a second time during his comeback match for the Luton youth team. He did manage, eventually, to regain his place in the team and played an important part as they won Second Division in 1982.

Story 4
By Ian Pryce

Three café stories
- by Ian Pryce¹¹

*

He brushed her dress with his hand and they smiled, a silent, secret intimacy they hoped would not be witnessed.

**

She waved away the smoke and frowned at the casual discourtesy briefly tainting her pleasure in taking coffee outside.

They laughed at the coffee stain still spreading on his suit trousers. He joined in, already dreading meeting his boss later and the dry cleaning bill he could ill afford.¹²

Notes to editor:

These stories arrived via e-mail – no handwriting = no soul-reading.

Notes from editor:

It doesn't feel right to edit this one. It's interesting that it wasn't written at the café. A slightly different exchange. Makes it seem very final, and that I should leave it alone. Not as a value judgement, just that it is a different texture.

¹¹ Principal & Chief Executive Bedford College

¹² "Ania, I was impressed by the card I saw at the Piazza and so thought I could contribute to your project – here are three café stories based on my regular visits to Libby" – from Ian's e-mail to Ania

Story 5
By David Dodd¹³

The hot sun beats down at the Bedford market café. I talk with A - the sun and her giving me a warm feeling of friendship.

A memory of the mile river swim floods back. Most of the all boys' school, 1000 in total, were told to swim in the river race¹⁴ from Bedford Town Bridge to The Suspension Bridge. Awesome and compulsory. It was cold too!

(66 words)¹⁵

Notes to editor:

A in the story stands for Ania – this is how it is written in the original version. I have decided to keep only A in instead of the full name. It was a mechanical decision – I think I prefer my name not to be there not to place too much emphasis on my presence there, more on the stories.

A instead of Ania can refer to Andrew, Annabel, Alice etc. Is this removal of myself as a story writing initiator a correct decision? Or am I trying to edit out myself a bit too much?

Notes from editor:

It's a decision, but I don't think you've made it yet. Your attempts to remove yourself from the picture throughout are very visible. Personally, I enjoy this.

¹³ David Dodd is a writer based in Bedford

¹⁴ The river race took place in Bedford in 1950s, according to Mr Dodd. I have been informed that these days it is not allowed to jump into the river due to health & safety. Mr Dodd felt that a large part of the mischievous culture of men growing up has been lost because of the arrival of health and safety laws.

¹⁵ David included the word count at the bottom of his story. Being a writer himself I felt he was weighting words in a different manner. He is aware of word counts for newspapers, magazines etc., and as the story has been written on the back of the postcard, that was imposing a word limit too.

Story 6
By Ellie Bailey

I remember when Italy won the World Cup in 2006¹⁶ and we all came to the square. There was a huge celebration parade down the high street. I remember Franco's Ices¹⁷ throwing ice lollies into the crowd - and I caught one!

Notes to editor:

I love the jump from football to ice-cream. And the importance of being the one who caught the essence of the celebrations.

¹⁶ For the large Italian community based in Bedford - strongly connected with La Piazza and the square - the World Cup and Italian football in general is very much the centre of attention. One of La Piazza's café walls is wallpapered with memorabilia of the 2006 World Cup. This is a very vivid memory for a lot of people I talked to – Italians and not-Italians alike who enjoy their cup of coffee at the square. All because of the massive celebrations that took place at the square when Italy won. "The city went mad", said one of the guys I chatted to. "It was mental", added another.

¹⁷ Franco's current owner Domenico Tanzarella operated one of the first soft ice cream vans in Bedford in the 1960s. He bought ice cream from Franco's until, in 1970, he bought the company. Since then it has gone from strength to strength. 13 years ago Franco's moved to state of the art premises on a modern industrial estate to the west of Bedford.

Story 7
By Vanda Bailey

In the year 2000 we moved to Bedford and discovered¹⁸ the market in the square and Libby's¹⁹ – the best coffee and sandwiches in town!

Rain or shine people are meeting for coffee and buying their fruit and veg.

At Libby's - always smiling faces!

Notes to editor:

This reads a bit like advertisement for the café. Oh boy!

Notes from editor:

Go with it...

¹⁸ Discovery on the small scale can be exciting. Bedford town looks like any other town centre – filled with exactly same shops in the almost same arrangement to the one you can be familiar with, from your town centre. The square is different though – it is personal. You are addressed by your first names, and mocked by the café staff in the most English way – one that operates on the very fine line between rude and sweet, lovely and sour.

¹⁹ I did a bit of 'market research' and during one of my visits to the café I asked people how they refer to it. The official name, 'La Piazza' was mentioned only once. The café exists under a number of other names: Libby's, café at the square, the market café, the café at the bottom of the high street, la pizzeria, Italian caf.

Story 8
By Andrew

The young lady kindly offered to help clean up my spilt coffee... but she spilt more and made it worse.²⁰

A brief and fleeting acquaintance led to her return, asking for my story.

Well, this is a small piece of my life story, and she was part of it.

Now it is time for me to leave the coffee shop and continue the story of my life.

Notes to editor:

I think the word 'story' appears too often. What do you propose?

Notes from editor:

Nothing.

²⁰ Efficient waitresses are rare these days.

Story 9
By Kally

The bright colours of the market fruit and veg, sold with cheery shouts from the market stalls.²¹

The sweet smell of fresh fruit...the flowers...a whiff of the fishmonger ...and passing my favorite café, this wonderful aroma of freshly ground coffee and toasted sandwiches!

These are the things that bring me to the Saturday market here in Bedford.

Notes to editor:

“cheery shouts of the market stalls”- love it and would love to preserve it. The second sentence is long and confusing. The experience at the market can be like this – confusing, everything happens at once, all the smells get to you not in intervals but at once. So there is this whirl of smells in the sentence, but maybe there is a way to compose it a bit more graciously?

Notes from editor:

I'll..uh.. I'll give it a go.. [sharpening knife]..

²¹ Bowl of fruit for a pound! Three artichokes for a pound! Freeeeesh strawberries! Fresssh strawberries!
Bowl of fruit for a pound!

Story 10

I think I just saw Gary Glitter²² walk through the café on the way to the market.

Notes to editor:

I did not know who Gary Glitter was, did you? I have actually checked with a friend from Coventry if he knew who Gary Glitter was. His answer was: 'Pop star from years back who got locked up in Thailand for pedophilia'. Celebrity life in just one sentence.

Notes from editor:

Yes I know who Gary Glitter is. And this exceptionally brief story made me laugh out loud because of it.

²² Gary Glitter is the stage name of Paul Francis Gadd (born 8 May 1944) an English glam rock singer and songwriter. Glitter first came to prominence in the glam rock era of the early 1970s. He had a long solo UK chart run during the 1970s, with several hits including "Rock and Roll parts 1 & 2", "I Love You Love Me Love", "I'm the Leader of the Gang (I Am)" and "Hello, Hello, I'm Back Again". In the late 1990s Glitter returned to public attention due to his conviction for possession of child pornography in the United Kingdom, and subsequent conviction in Vietnam for committing obscene acts with minors.

Story 11

This café has the best coffee with a real Italian atmosphere.

Bedford²³ is a small town with a village feel.

Notes to editor:

Again, the story has an ‘advertisement’ feel. It looks like two sentences promoting the place. Oversaturated with sweetness a bit much for my liking – but maybe this is part of small towns?

Notes from editor:

I am unsurprised by that. I like that the ‘advertisement’ also feels quite blunt, understated and factual. I think maybe this kind of voxpop response is a reflex to say the right thing somehow. The ‘socially engaged art’ version of small talk. There is an awkward kindness to it. An impulse not to give too much away, but at the same time to do a loved place a bit of good.

²³ Bedford is the county town of Bedfordshire, in the East of England. It is a large town and the administrative centre for the wider Borough of Bedford. According to Bedfordshire County Council's estimates, the town had a population of 79,190 in mid 2005, with 19,720 in the adjacent town of Kempston. The wider borough, including a rural area, had a population of 153,000. Bedford is twinned with: Bamberg, Germany, Arezzo, Italy, Rovigo, Italy and Włocławek, Poland

Story 12

...big black boots, heavy high-waisted trousers²⁴, red braces and a shock of silver grey hair, sipping a latte and leaning against the counter... a middle aged biker cooling down after bombing²⁵ into town on a huge, powerful bike..

He must be a very careful rider to still be around.

Notes to editor:

'... ' - I would use them once not twice and rather in the middle of the story but not at the end.

Notes from editor:

I always enjoy a bit of '...'

²⁴ Similar to these

<http://www.theironhorseman.com/motorcycle-store/images/Products/D2008.jpg>

²⁵ Bombing / verb

3 I [intrans., with adverbial of direction] Brit., informal move very quickly : *the bus came bombing along*. ORIGIN late 17th cent.: from French *bombe*, from Italian *bomba*, probably from Latin *bombus* 'booming, humming,' from Greek *bombos*, of imitative origin.

Story 13

I like having a relaxing drink in the open on a lovely sunny day.

I don't enjoy having people smoking nearby²⁶.

The market place is a good spot to people-watch.

I'm with her – but I don't mind her smoking.

Notes to editor:

The original ending was 'but I don't mind people smoking'. I have changed it, as I trust this is a typo, as this gentleman arrived with his wife and her smoking was one he was not irritated by.

Notes from editor:

I love this one. I love that it reads like a children's primer, and has this very adult thing of building a completely separate context for the one you love.

²⁶ A smoking ban in England, making it illegal to smoke in all enclosed public places and enclosed work places in England, came into force on 1 July 2007 as a consequence of the Health Act 2006. Similar bans had already been introduced by the rest of the United Kingdom before this — Scotland on 26 March 2006, Wales on 2 April 2007 and Northern Ireland on 30 April 2007. The smoking ban in all enclosed spaces means that enjoying a drink outdoors and not being accompanied by the aroma of the cigarettes at the same time is a rare experience these days.

Story 14

“Marvellous!” – said the woman in red.²⁷

Notes to editor:

²⁷ Some people think that it can refer to only one person – Dawn Gilles, the co-director of Bedford Creative Arts

IF THERE IS
NO GOD²⁸
WHY DO
APE'S²⁹ NOT
SPEAK YET
MAN DOES?

Notes to editor:
The original text is also all in upper case.

²⁸ God is most often conceived of as the supernatural creator and overseer of the universe.

²⁹ An ape is any member of the Hominoidea superfamily of primates, including humans.

Story 16

the smell of coffee permeates the air
a woman sells bread
market traders shout out prices of their produce
and you can hear the old English voice among the Italian chatter
it is not a market square in Rome
no it's raining³⁰

it is Bedford

Notes to editor:

The original text has a few speech marks but all sentences start with lower case, so I have decided to remove all speech marks and only left the capital letters for Rome and English and Bedford etc.

Notes from editor:

It rained when I was there too.

³⁰ Rain – a certain proof that one is England; a distinguishing element between North and South, a component of English soul, a segment of the culture frequently explored by British artist in their works be it paintings (i.e. Turner), writings (i.e. Tennyson)

**The noise of life begins again,
And ghastly through the drizzling rain
On the bald street breaks the blank day.**

(In Memoriam A. H. H. (Fr. VII, l. 10-12). . . Tennyson; a Selected Edition. Christopher Ricks, ed. (1989) University of California Press.)

Story 17

I've come to the market³¹ to buy a salad for a barbeque – it's basically good value and not from a corporation.

The individual friendliness is refreshing.

Notes to editor:

This story reads like an entry from an evaluation form – and I was not campaigning to keep the market open. It is thriving anyway. I am wondering where this sort of use of words is coming from. When have we all been trained to use the language as a tool to preach pro or against?

Notes from editor:

Hmm.. I think maybe it's partly that voxpop smalltalk again. Which I think is a legitimate reaction, particularly given that art is at the moment often publicly used as a research, promotion or campaigning tool linked to specific issues. And is less often as niggly as what you are doing. Also, people do seem to genuinely think like that about markets. There is a battle to live a certain way, and sometimes I feel bad for not wanting to live like that myself. I'm too greedy. I love markets. And I love supermarkets and corporations. I love mountains and forests, and power stations, and gaping quarries. I love clear water and I love smoke.

³¹ Bedford Saturday veg & fruit market is here, just next to the café:
http://maps.google.co.uk/maps?f=q&source=s_q&hl=en&geocode=&q=bedford,+la+piazza&sll=51.518593,-0.129747&sspn=0.007824,0.017209&ie=UTF8&hq=la+piazza&hnear=Bedford,+United+Kingdom&ll=52.135951,-0.467069&spn=0.007718,0.017209&z=16&iwloc=A

Story 18
By MR

I sat in the sun and watched the people take in³² the market. And they watched me.

Very regaling.

Notes to editor:

In the original text 'Very regaling' is in the separate line hence the similar edit above.

Notes from editor:

I had to look up 'regaling' because I've never heard it used like that. I get the impression it's something I should try to 'correct', but I don't want to. I like it better this way. It's clearer, and now I feel a bit silly for looking it up to see if it's 'right' or not.

³² Take in - **4** include or encompass something : *the sweep of his arm took in most of Bedford Road.* • fully understand or absorb something heard or seen : *she took in the market at a glance.* **5** visit or attend a place or event in a casual way or on the way to another : *he'd maybe take in a movie, or just relax.*

Story 19

We are made in God's image, and so many of those images are here today. Every size, colour, age, culture, class.³³ So many differences and yet all beautiful.

Notes to editor:

Notes from editor:

³³ A list of aspects that separates humans, 'class' being a specifically English. One can immediately place this story within an English context based on this remark.

Story 20
By Sarah Oldham

...even in the middle of winter, we take a break from our shopping and sit at the café. Outside³⁴, waiting for our bacon baguettes while our fingers grow numb...

Notes to editor:

There is something very pleasing about this story. I like the baguettes and fingers being in close proximity to each other. And the concept of “a break from the shopping” makes it look like a ‘chore’ or ‘job’ rather than Saturday ‘entertainment’.

³⁴ La Piazza café has no official ‘inside’ for customers. However there is a tiny bit of space at the back of the café that is usually heaving with visitors at noon – this is where Libby’s friends hide for their lunch breaks to enjoy the food in peace.

Story 21

One Mocha³⁵. One Latte.³⁶ Always a friendly welcome, if not always the right name. A hub for meeting friends, relaxing and watching the world go by.

Notes to editor:

Another story from the 'coffee + watching people/world' series. Maybe some coffee stories should be combined on one sheet?

And all these sophisticated coffees we keep drinking these days – black or white is not good enough!

The story also fits in the 'advert for La Piazza' series.

Notes from editor:

They could be, but there's also something nice about people being able to pick and choose - to collect their own series if they are so inclined.

I love that fancy coffees are expected these days, and will soon be seen as plain. My best ever coffee was when I went home to Cornwall after having cappuccino in London when I was a teenager, and asking for one in my local chippy. The lady thought for a minute and rose smiling to the challenge saying "well I've never done one before but I can have a go at whipping the milk up with a fork." I am still in awe.

³⁵ Mocha - A caffè mocha or café mocha is a variant of a caffè latte. Like a latte, it is typically one third espresso and two thirds steamed milk, but a portion of chocolate is added, typically in the form of sweet cocoa powder, although many varieties use chocolate syrup. Mochas can contain dark, milk, and occasionally white chocolate. Like cappuccino, café mochas contain the well-known milk froth on top, although they are sometimes served with whipped cream instead. They are usually topped with a dusting of either cinnamon or cocoa powder. Marshmallows may also be added on top for flavor and decoration.

³⁶ A latte (from the Italian *caffelatte*, meaning "coffee [and] milk") is a coffee drink made with espresso and steamed milk. In Italian *latte* (Italian pronunciation: [ˈlätte], English: /lɑːteɪ/) means milk. What in English-speaking countries is now called a latte is shorthand for "*caffelatte*" or "*caffelatte*" ("*caffè e latte*"). The Italian form means "coffee and milk", similar to the French café au lait, the Spanish café con leche and the Portuguese café com leite. Ordering a "latte" in Italy will get the customer a glass of hot or cold milk.

Story 22
By Michael Taylor

I visit the café for a coffee as an escape from shopping with my wife.

Libby³⁷ makes everyone welcome.

You are not alone for long. You will always meet someone you know.

A place to people-watch or to do the small crossword (I cannot do the big one!)

Notes to editor:

Bedford cafés are definitely places of leisure! It hard to find people here working on their computers, having meetings, even writing! Cafes are for sudoku, newspaper, gossip, rest and cheerful, achievable tasks (i.e. small crosswords). Café is an 'escape', and it is a very appealing one.

³⁷ The charming owner of the café at the market square

Story 23
By Mrs Taylor

We visit the market café every week. I leave my husband sitting with his coffee. I go off and do all my shopping - fruit and vegetables, flowers. Bring it all back for him to carry³⁸ home. He likes it that way.

Notes to editor:

Stories 22-23 are of course connected. Role divide, split of responsibilities, marriage deal – call it what you like. The sure thing is that she likes it that way too.

Notes from editor:

Re shopping carts - I was informed this was 'an Italian thing' without further clarification.

³⁸ Bedford is known for its shopping carts, used by a vast number of the people shopping in the town. No studies took place just yet, but based on observation this is the most popular kind:

http://www.folding-shoppingcart.com/productsimages/shoppingtrolleywithfoldablebagandevahandle_104986.jpg

Story 24

To sit and watch the cosmopolitan³⁹ life of Bedford is quite an experience. Even for an old lady approaching her 80s - and having spent her life in a great market of places and countries.

And the waitress is a delight!

Notes to editor:

Isn't it a very agreeable description? "Market of places and countries" – nearly everything has sellable attributes, price and unique selling point!

Notes from editor:

It is very agreeable.

Are you the waitress in all the stories, or just in some?

³⁹ Bedford is a truly cosmopolitan town and the effects of immigration have been discussed for a number of years.

For a in depth view read The Economic Effects of Immigration: Bedford, UK 1951 - 2001 by Mahmud Henry Rogers <http://homepage.ntlworld.com/manara/mh/Dissertation%20C.pdf>

For a more historic account of first post-war immigration read the article from 1960 http://www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/pathways/citizenship/brave_new_world/transcripts/strange_voices.htm

'TROUBLE IN THE TOWN WHERE ONE PERSON IN 12 IS ITALIAN' could be changed these days to 'one person in 12 is Polish' and some expect in 10 years time this line will read: 'one person in 12 is English'.

Story 25

There is this girl who sometimes works at the café. I suppose she's in her teens – maybe a student. She's very pretty, friendly, great with customers. At some point during the day her girlfriend pops in for coffee to see her. They always kiss, cuddle and hold hands – completely in love! And completely oblivious to what anyone else thinks. I've always admired her for that. I think she is very brave - how times have changed.

Notes to editor:

For some reason I find the narrator more interesting than the girl in the story. The all-knowing voice that expresses sadness, maybe for suppressing his visible expressions of love? For not being so obvious? For not being brave? Or maybe not completely in love?

Story 26

I think they are mother and daughter, but looking like sisters.⁴⁰ Very glamorous in their dark sunglasses. Dressed for a night on the town, even though it is only 10.30 am.

Notes to editor:

The truth is I have never seen father and son in a similar situation.

Notes from editor:

I have.

⁴⁰Mothers and daughters that look like sisters:

http://www.huffingtonpost.com/2009/08/16/sisters-or-mother-and-dau_n_255848.html

Story 27

By Sarah Oldham

It was a summer morning, with a chill in the air. The café regulars had settled down with their lattes, cappuccinos and bacon rolls. When across from the other side of the cobbled square, a haunting tune floated. An aged Italian gent in a timeless jacket and trilby had begun to whistle famous arias from classic Operas. A cliché, to be sure, but what an atmosphere - as his high notes cut through the rumble of traffic, strangers caught each other's eyes and smiled.

Notes to editor:

The story reminded me of Venice by night. San Marco is usually the only really busy place after dark, and still open restaurants have live music outdoors. Poor tourists (like myself) who cannot afford overpriced glass of wine are hanging out at the edges of the outdoor sitting areas and listening to the music for free, standing and thirsty. The band always plays a very well known tune in not the very best way. But everyone stands around and smiles to the strangers.

Story 28
By Olive

Last weekend I was in Venice. I thought about eating a gelato⁴¹ but it didn't happen. Today, here I am back in Bedford enjoying a Cornetto⁴² in La Piazza.

Notes to editor:

The difference between gelato and Cornetto is probably one describing best the difference between Venice and Bedford.

Notes from editor:

This one is my favourite. It is an absolutely perfect thing. Depending on what mood I am in, I read it sometimes that Olive prefers Venice, and sometimes Bedford. I aspire to one day write something with such perfect balance.

⁴¹ Gelato <http://bswd.com/wordpress/wp-content/uploads/2007/06/Gelato-Rome.jpg>

⁴² Cornetto http://www.greo.it/foto/illustrazioni_2/Cornetto_gelato.jpg

Story 29

Just sitting at the café, smoking dynamite and drinking TNT. The waitress comes over and asks if I want a refill. "Are you the devil?" I ask. "No", she says, "But I know where to find him".

Notes to editor:

I like to think waitresses are acquaintances of the devil.

Notes from editor:

I was going to say that I only like this one if the conversation actually happened. Then I realised I still liked the line even if it was made up, and it was the dynamite and TNT that was annoying me, and someone asking such an annoying question. Then I figured that it was a way of talking, and in real life it wouldn't annoy me. I'd enjoy it. Then I felt bad for being annoyed by someone I don't even know, and only if they were fictional. Now I feel pleasantly confused.

Story 30
By Greg
Pilgrims SC

Sunday morning at the café. Scooters⁴³, coffee and my mates.

Good times.

Notes to editor:

Scooter * (coffee + mates) = good times
Sun am at the café

Notes from editor:

Pilgrims SC stands for Pilgrims scooter club.

<http://www.thepilgrimssc.co.uk/about.html>

⁴³ They do look great!

http://4.bp.blogspot.com/_J-OkhO3mgLI/TDw11zIGIAI/AAAAAAAAACEE/e-mUcf9FpCl/s1600/scooters+ania+bas.jpg

Story 31
By Antonia

We biked to the square every Sunday morning for breakfast. There were always mopeds and scooters all gathered together.

Notes to editor:

Sunday at the market square is special. The scooters are all lined up for the exhibition. You bring the machine to display it as part of the group show for the educated audience – fellow scooterists. It is like looking at Van Gogh while surrounded by art historians and painters.

Notes from editor:

<http://www.thepilgrimssc.co.uk/about.html>

Story 32

..long, long time ago, in the nearby village, the post office was baking the bread in the flowerpots...⁴⁴

Notes to editor:
These were times of multitasking!

⁴⁴ If you wish to give it a go! <http://www.cookingwithkids.com/cookbooks/kneadit/pot.html>

Story 33

The retirement task: to cross cherry with nectarine.

Notes to editor:

No pictures of 'chectarine' on internet just yet. Or maybe I did not dig enough?

Notes from editor:

I couldn't find one either. But fruit breeding is a rich area of patience and specialist terminology I previously knew nothing about. My favourite, oddly baffling article -

http://www.davewilson.com/homegrown/gardencompass/gc09_jul_aug_02.html

Story 34

I come here for fruit, bread and river⁴⁵.

Notes to editor:

It reads like an essence of loneliness.

⁴⁵ The River Great Ouse passes through the town centre of Bedford and is lined with gardens known as The Embankment. The River Great Ouse (pronounced /u:z/) is a river in the east of England. It is 143 miles (230 km) long which makes it the major navigable river in East Anglia, and the fourth-longest river in the United Kingdom. The name Ouse is from the Celtic or pre-Celtic *Udso-s, and probably means simply "water" or slow flowing river.

Story 35

There was a man, and he had a fruit shop at 65 High Street. The apple⁴⁶ tree in my garden used to belong to him.

Notes to editor:

There is an apple tree in my grandma's garden, planted by my grandfather. The garden belongs to different people now. Last time I checked, the apple tree was still there. It reminds me more of my grandpa than the house. I can tell it has his fingerprints on it.

Notes from editor:

Did the whole garden belong to the man? What about the house? Or was it just the tree? Did the tree come from somewhere else? Or was it standing in the garden, being owned by someone else? What if the apples fell on the ground? Do they then belong to the man or to you?

⁴⁶ Though the forbidden fruit in the Book of Genesis is not identified, popular Christian tradition has held that it was an apple that Eve coaxed Adam to share with her. This may have been the result of Renaissance painters adding elements of Greek mythology into biblical scenes (alternative interpretations also based on Greek mythology occasionally replace the apple with a pomegranate). In this case the unnamed fruit of Eden became an apple under the influence of story of the golden apples in the Garden of Hesperides. As a result, in the story of Adam and Eve, the apple became a symbol for knowledge, immortality, temptation, the fall of man into sin, and sin itself. In Latin, the words for "apple" and for "evil" are similar in the singular (*malus*—apple, *malum*—evil) and identical in the plural (*mala*). This may also have influenced the apple becoming interpreted as the biblical "forbidden fruit". The larynx in the human throat has been called Adam's apple because of a notion that it was caused by the forbidden fruit sticking in the throat of Adam. The apple as symbol of sexual seduction has been used to imply sexuality between men, possibly in an ironic vein.

Story 36

We were in the café near the square and there was a bomb scare.⁴⁷ My mum insisted we leave the place with our food, crockery, cutlery and drinks. We ate at the square, on our laps.

Notes to editor:

The world before the fear entered, before terrorists arrived, before news was filled with tremble.

Notes from editor:

...never existed.

⁴⁷ <http://www.atomicarchive.com/Reviews/0231135106.shtml>

Story 37

Three Italian brothers sit by their coffees and talk about how difficult it was for their parents in the sixties. When England was⁴⁸ the promised land.⁴⁹

Three Italian brothers sip coffees slowly, and talk about how much they fear these new immigrants who 'settle down with only one leg', and always dream about going back 'home home'.

Notes to editor:

'Home home' is what really stuck with me. The three Italian brothers pronounced 'home home' in a very profound way. Their voice made it real for me. Not a fairy tale.

Notes from editor:

Is 'settle down with only one leg' your phrase or theirs?

⁴⁸ Curious use of past tense. For more follow the link to one of the new promised lands:
http://www.associatedcontent.com/article/605095/why_the_british_are_moving_to_spain.html

⁴⁹ The Promised Land (Hebrew: המובטחת הארץ, translit.: ha-Aretz ha-Muvtachat) is a term used to describe the land promised or given by God, according to the Hebrew Bible, to the Israelites.

Story 38

Vince said: “I will be the next one on the plinth⁵⁰ in the square, with the omelet and coffee in my hands”.

Notes to editor:

Plinths have a very troubled role. Usually support statues commemorating a historical event, or the life of an influential person. Many of the statues are male holding swords, guns, flags. If English words had gender, plinth would be a female. And only one is recently famous.⁵¹

Notes from editor:

The decorations at the base of the plinth are startling. The pattern on the corner is made up of a sort of cherub sinking into a pool (that also looks a bit like a womb or a nose) and holding a large mask with difficulty above its head. Stern older faces are looking down from each of the eye-holes. I didn't actually look at the statue.

⁵⁰ Currently at the square: the Statue of John Howard (1726-1790). Howard was a philanthropist and one of the first prison reformers. Although born in London he spent most of his childhood in Cardington, just south of Bedford, and as an adult owned an estate there. After being appointed High Sheriff of Bedfordshire in 1773, he inspected the county prison, and was shocked by what he saw. From then on he visited prisons throughout the country and campaigned for improvements to them. Vince hopes to replace him with his own statue, potentially erect a new one next to Howard's.

⁵¹ <http://www.london.gov.uk/fourthplinth/>

Story 39

Why would anyone want to drive a huge gas guzzlers into the centre of town? Why? They knew that access to most areas is going to be limited, particularly the multi-storey car parks (ha ha!)⁵². They all queue up at the traffic lights, the lights change to green, and just three cars get through.

I wonder how they're feeling seeing me with my latte in the square.

Notes to editor:

I struggle with word 'accessibility' being present up there. Doesn't feel right among the tale; makes it feel like a report on environmental issues. I chewed on it for a bit and left it – my Thesaurus was useless.

The story was much longer but I cut it short. The handwritten original rubs shoulders with a complaint one would put forward to the council. I was trying to save bits of lightheartedness that was there, among all the serious stuff. Only one bracket where originally there, I have added two more for consistency, to make it more of the statement. But not too sure about it now. Help!

Notes from editor:

Perhaps they mean access, not accessibility. I changed it anyway.

I also took the brackets out – they make this person sound crazy, and I don't know enough about it to know if they are because I haven't read the original.

I was actually quite surprised how much I noticed the traffic while I there. It didn't bother me, it just was another thing to look at, but I don't normally notice traffic, so I'm guessing it's probably quite a thing for some people.

I like the attempt at smugness that also reads kind of sympathetically.

⁵² Also Hi Hi as well as He He.

Story 40

One of those sunny days when I am heading for the market café.

Bustle and energy till 5pm, quiet once the shops close and then the pub-crawling rabble.

There is a special place nearby, full of Asian things - Buddhas in various shapes. Further along the ironmongers emporium 'and' the Debenham sales⁵³ topped up with the charity shops.

And people.

Notes to editor:

This story was again twice as long. I chopped it up from all sides. Removed again quite a lot of 'report' talk. All 'community feel' and 'local networks' are gone with a quick delete. But thinking now that maybe this is what was giving it a unique voice.

I have no idea why 'and' is in inverted commas – am I missing something?

Notes from editor:

I suspect it may have been. But my initial instinct would probably have been to do the same thing. And I feel kind of awkward about that.

I think 'and' is in inverted commas as a dig at Debenhams. Kind of a 'well, its there so I suppose I'd better acknowledge it even though I hate it' feel. I think.

⁵³ The famous blue cross offers; <http://www.debenhams.com/sale>

Story 41

My name is Adela. Some say it is a nice name. I came from Romania to work here. In Romania I was just resting. Some say Romania is full of vampires⁵⁴, resting ones. I can't remember much about how it used to be. I forget quick. Is there a pill to remember?

Notes to editor:

Resting could probably stand for: unemployed, bored, 'perspectiveless' setting. Resting as the reason for uprooting?

Notes from editor:

I love this one.

⁵⁴ Vampires are mythological or folkloric beings who subsist by feeding on the life essence (generally in the form of blood) of living creatures. Although vampiric entities have been recorded in many cultures and according to speculation by literary historian Brian Frost that the "belief in vampires and bloodsucking demons is as old as man himself", and may go back to "prehistoric times", the term vampire was not popularized until the early 18th century, after an influx of vampire superstition into Western Europe from areas where vampire legends were frequent, such as the Balkans and Eastern Europe, although local variants were also known by different names, such as vampir (вампир) in Serbia and Bulgaria, vrykolakas in Greece and strigoi in Romania. This increased level of vampire superstition in Europe led to mass hysteria and in some cases resulted in corpses actually being staked and people being accused of vampirism. Currently we are the witnessing vampires being part of the teenage culture thanks to highly popular Twilight Saga (books and films), for the older crowd there is the True Blood TV series by Alan Ball based on Charlaine Harris' series. All very cool, all very fangtastick.

Story 42

It was a difficult journey and she could already speak one foreign language, but not the one that people speak here. She opened her mouth, but what she said was only good enough to serve coffee.

She wakes up and struggles, struggles with the weather⁵⁵. She still remembers last summer⁵⁶ and shivers. The rain makes her want to go back. But her son, tiny boy, makes her want to stay. So his world is bigger.

Notes to editor:

I know people who say that adjusting to the rain⁵⁷ is what makes you British.

⁵⁵ <http://www.metoffice.gov.uk/climate/uk/anomalygraphs/#>

⁵⁶ <http://www.metoffice.gov.uk/climate/uk/2009/july.html>

Generally it was an unsettled month with frequent rain or showers, often thundery. Very warm at the start. Overall, a very wet month with over twice the 1971-2000 normal rainfall across many western and northern areas and over three times normal over SW England. It was the wettest July on record (in a series from 1914) but only slightly wetter than July 1936 and July 2007. Generally, temperatures and sunshine were close to normal although the wetter western areas were also the dullest with around 80% of normal sunshine.

⁵⁷ <http://locusproject.blogspot.com/2010/03/adjusting-to-rain.html>

Story 43

I love Malta. This is where I fell in love. I was 40 and married with kids.

Naughty bit: it was an affair⁵⁸. A fire. A flame. But those days you stayed together for the kids. It wasn't a happy marriage - it was a happy affair. I cried for months when we were moving out.

Years later my daughter took me for a day out to Heathrow⁵⁹, for a meal. And he joined us. Just like that.

Notes to editor:

I think this story would make a fine film script. I can clearly see the couple against Maltese sunsets. Kids playing on the sandy beaches and seeing this new man making their mother glow.

I can imagine the airport restaurant, him looking still young but somehow distant against the London sky and against the people in transit. She probably said "oh, hello" – just like that.

⁵⁸<http://edition.cnn.com/2007/LIVING/personal/12/03/great.love.affairs/index.html>

⁵⁹<http://www.heathrowairport.com/portal/page/Heathrow%5EGeneral%5EShop.+eat.+relax+and+enjoy%5EEat/>

Story 44

She comes here each week for shopping. Better than Luton⁶⁰. Her first stop is for coffee and cake. Today she sits with a friend. They carefully watch the flower displays. "I must say how beautiful they are."⁶¹

Notes to editor:

I have changed the narration from the first person to the third person. In the first person the text read less as a story. The third person perspective gives it a bit more of the breath. It brings the observer, brings the noisy one who records, overhears – the narrator, the people-spotter.

⁶⁰ Bedford's trouble location is present in many conversations I had. Positioned as one of the triangle points with Luton and Milton Keynes it fights to be the shopping destination. Positioned between Cambridge and Oxford it hopes to be recognised as a town with excellent education system. Being just off London makes Bedford advertise as the best low price but high quality place to live.

⁶¹ <http://www.heartofenglandinbloom.co.uk/>

Story 45
By Kathleen

In Singapore, gingham⁶² is for schoolgirls: blue, yellow, green, red. You see the little girls in beautiful dresses all day long. I always made the ones for my daughters myself.

Notes to editor:

Gingham:
Kitchen
Table cloth
School girls
America
House-wives
Restaurants
Lingerie⁶³
Babies
Mod culture
Vintage
Lolita

Notes from editor:

Our school summer dresses were gingham. They were totally shapeless and buttoned up the front like a housecoat. I used to love them because you only had to bother putting one proper thing on, as opposed to shirts and ties and skirts with stupid clip-fasteners. And they had huge pockets you could fill up with toys, bits of string, plants, food, crayons and things. And you didn't have to wear tights. And if you got grass stains on them, it really showed up good.

⁶² Gingham is a medium-weight balanced plain-woven fabric made from dyed cotton or cotton-blend yarn. The name originates from an adjective in the Malay language, *ging-gang*, meaning striped. When originally imported into Europe in the 17th century it was a striped fabric, though now it is distinguished by its checkered pattern. From the mid 18th century, when it was being produced in the mills of Manchester, England, it started to be woven into checked or plaid patterns (often blue and white). Checked gingham became more common over time, though striped gingham was still available in the late Victorian period.

Gingham is made of carded or combed, medium or fine yarns, where the colouring is on the warp yarns and always along the grain. Gingham has no right or wrong side with respect to colour. Along with muslin, gingham is often used as a test fabric while designing fashion, or used for making an inexpensive fitting shell prior to making the clothing in fashion fabric.

⁶³ <http://partywiththis.com/images/P/countrysweet4884.jpg>

Story 46

By K

As a retired dance teacher I find it obscene that I have to move around with a frame being only 80! After all this exercising, now I need support for my legs and head. All because I was mugged by a young man with no respect for my pleasant moves. Shaky limbs and dizzy dome – not much of the dance teacher left.

Outside.

Only music and beautiful dresses still make me and the frame⁶⁴ jump.

Notes to editor:

I have not heard a single story about the beauty of wrinkles and grey hair, or growing fragile and weak. Nothing about the pleasantries of the eggshell composition of the body.

Notes from editor:

It's not so beautiful when you're in it. If you had more fiction, maybe..

⁶⁴ http://www.50plushealth.co.uk/image_get.aspx?ImageID=18575

Story 47

Her husband was in the army and they traveled far and wide. She moved around willingly. She saw much, she enjoyed more. Now she sits in the café with her tomato soup and toast for lunch. Her world fits on the three nearby streets.

Notes to editor:

I really wanted to re-write it, so I did! :

His wife was in the army and they traveled far and wide. He moved around willingly. He saw much, he enjoyed more. Now he sits in the café with his tomato soup and toast for lunch. His world fits on the three nearby streets.

Story 48
By Carol & Neil

You walk to fill the day. You walk to keep fit, to clear the mind. You do a wide circle⁶⁵ around the town and go by the river. The river is so pleasant to walk by. Today you saw the girls rowing up the river, you watched them, sat on the bench. You walked a big chunk of your life.⁶⁶ You walked Yorkshire, you walked Snowdonia, you walked the Isle of Wight⁶⁷. You breath daily, you walk daily. You just walk. What can be better? You need so little: two legs and a land to walk on. So you walk.

Notes to editor:

I walk too. Walking is free, easy, available, quick, reliable, moving, adventurous, spatial, durable, exercising, stoppable, simple, joinable, separate, fun, functional, relaxing, restful, active, merry, diverting, lasting, deep rooted in feet, secure, exciting, plain, basic, modest, instinctive.

⁶⁵ <http://www.richardlong.org/textworks/41.html>

⁶⁶ <http://www.richardlong.org/>

My first work made by walking, in 1967, was a straight line in a grass field, which was also my own path, going 'nowhere' – Richard Long

⁶⁷ <http://www.iwhospice.org/walk-the-wight.aspx>

Story 49

By Bryan & Pauline

Bryan:

I left the army and felt awful. Army does it all for you: feeds you, tells you what to do and where to be, thinks for you, gives you all the answers. So easy.

I left the army and I had to start again. To imagine myself without the support structure.

I wanted to go back to the army within two weeks.

Pauline:

But then we met.

Bryan:

We did. And that was it.

Notes to editor:

I wasn't sure how else I could express the wickedness of the Bryan and Pauline's stories. I went for tried and tested dialogue formula to preserve the twofold of voices and thoughts. Bryan's lengthy but engaging narratives combined with crisp and short Pauline's remarks.

Story 50
By Bryan & Pauline

Bryan:

I always wanted to learn German⁶⁸. The language of power. Not like French⁶⁹ – wishy-washy. German is the language of strength, the language of leaders - maybe I wanted to speak it as I am only 5 foot tall?

Pauline:

And I am taller than you.

Notes to editor:

:)

Notes from editor:

With you on the :)

⁶⁸ http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/German_language#Words_borrowed_by_English

⁶⁹ http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/French_language#Examples

Story 51
By Bryan & Pauline

Bryan:
We have been married for....

Pauline:
49 years.

Bryan:
And never had children. Worked hard all our lives. And now we live one week in Bedford and one week in Norwich. Splitting it fair between where we come from.

Pauline:
Luxurious.⁷⁰

Bryan:
We do what we like. And we have more than we need.

Pauline:
But we know how to enjoy it.

Notes to editor:

I have been told that luxury is hidden within Annabelle hydrangeas⁷¹ and the Mercedes-Benz S-class cars. Somewhere between white and black.

⁷⁰ luxury l'lək sh (ə)rē; 'ləg zh (ə)-l
noun (pl. -ries)

the state of great comfort and extravagant living : he lived a life of luxury.

• an inessential, desirable item that is expensive or difficult to obtain : luxuries like raspberry vinegar and state-of-the-art CD players

ORIGIN Middle English (denoting lechery): from Old French luxurie, luxure, from Latin luxuria, from luxus 'excess.' The earliest current sense dates from the mid 17th cent.

⁷¹ http://dutchmasternurseriesltd.com/wp-content/uploads/2008/07/hydrangea_arborescens_annabelle-annabelle_hydrangea.jpg

Story 52
By Bryan & Pauline

Bryan:
People are given too much too quickly. Nothing to wait for, nothing to aim at, nothing to want!

Pauline:
We were given nothing.

Bryan:
You are thirty now and have a house, a car, a cat and spend the holidays abroad. This breeds⁷² bored people.

Pauline:
And lazy!

Notes to editor:
Trying to fight boredom!? Loads of help is out there:

Blink wildly and then close your eyes really tight for an interesting light show

(Amusement Potential: 1-5 minutes)
See a variety of blobs, stars and flashes.

Rate passers by

(Amusement Potential: 10-15 minutes)
Secretly award passers by marks out of ten as you go along, offering (unsaid) expert criticism over their clothing, hairstyle and footwear choices.⁷³

⁷² breed lbrēdl

verb (past and past part. **bred** lbredl) [trans.]
cause (an animal) to produce offspring, typically in a controlled and organized way
ORIGIN Old English *brēdan* [produce (offspring), bear (a child),] of Germanic origin; related to German *brüten*, also to **brood**

⁷³ <http://www.urban75.org/useless/bored.html>

Story 53
By Bryan & Pauline

Bryan:

People here think work is a curse.⁷⁴ And I tell you that it is a gift! Work is what makes you human. What makes you deserve your brain, your heart. You contribute therefore you are!⁷⁵

Pauline:

Contribute to the world⁷⁶, not to the taxman.⁷⁷

Notes to editor:

From the word 'work' there is only a short jump to the word 'Poles'. I went for it!

⁷⁴ <http://www.digitalspy.co.uk/forums/showthread.php?t=554776>

The two Poles at my workplace both work like dogs and constantly kiss the boss' ass. Now he's expecting all of us to act likewise or no doubt we'll get sacked and replaced by Poles. All good for business owners but workers' rights are going backwards, it'll not be long before we're all working 12 hour days. - by Paper Doll, 23-03-2007, 13:39

⁷⁵ <http://www.guardian.co.uk/theobserver/2010/jun/13/big-issue-ed-balls-immigration>

⁷⁶ <http://www.argotranslations.com/downloads/translation-articles/poles-in-the-uk/>

⁷⁷ "Taxman" is a song written by George Harrison and released as the opening track on The Beatles' 1966 album Revolver. Its lyrics attack the high levels of progressive tax taken by the British government.

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