

11th December, 2007

## BANANA CUSTARD

DEAR DIARY, I had a fruit salad this afternoon and it reminded me of when I first started primary school in the 70's, if you lived close enough to school, you could go home for lunch which is something I used to do.

When my mum returned to work, I had to have school dinners. I was outraged. Initially, I ate like a sparrow. One green pea, one nugget of beef from the stake and kidney pie, a spoon full of jelly and a sip of water but I soon had a fight with hunger pangs and it won so decided to eat and resign from my unofficial hunger strike.

In the end, I soon learned to enjoy school dinners. Let's say it was different to my dinners at home. Both my parents are really good cooks so we always had a tasty meal cooked from scratch. As time went on and my parents became a bit more modern, we were allowed takeaways on Fridays. As for the meals at school, for me it wasn't better, just different. I was fascinated with mushy peas, quiche and canned peaches. But one day, I was served banana custard for dessert. I thought what a stupid idea. Slices of cold banana in warm custard! Nasty. The cook must have been smoking reefers to put together such a munchies-type concoction.

I said to the dinner lady/monitor/helper type woman that I didn't want it. The witch on a broomstick said you've got to eat it love, you're not moving until it's finished dear. I said to myself I wonder if this old bag's going to upset my day? I ain't eating sh\*t. I said this in my head of course. So I sat there watching my friends devour this feast of nastiness. As the minutes ticked by, kids were getting up from their tables. My friends had also finished so we all stood up from the table. The witch on a broomstick said to me, you're not going anywhere until you've finished, you heard what I said love. I said Miss I don't like banana custard. She said you've not even tried it. How d'you know you don't like it unless you try it. You're not getting up from that table until you've had some. I looked at her not sure whether to cry or tell her some ugly words I'd heard my dad say under his breath when my mum was nagging. But I sat there and looked at it and looked at her and thought OK; let me try this thing so that I can get the hell out of here. I looked around me and the dinner hall was completely empty. Very frightening for a six year old child to be left alone in an empty hall with the witch on a broomstick and the banana custard situation. I picked up my spoon

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and put some of the nastiness in my mouth and gulped. It was as awful as I expected. It was like eating sweet vomit. That's when I started to cry. There was no way I was going to eat anymore. At this point I said to her Miss I can't eat that, it's going to make me sick. She said to me through gritted teeth, get up and get out you ungrateful little wretch. I couldn't believe it; did she really call me ungrateful and a wretch? Ungrateful about what? All that cussing and carrying on over the nastiest food ever.

Do you know to this day I can't eat bananas. That witch has left me with an aversion to bananas!

*August Mayfield*