



## Monday 20<sup>th</sup> May 2013

Dear Customer,

I upset a few people last week when I suggested the 17 degrees we had on the 5<sup>th</sup> May might have been our summer! I had to apologise. It's torrential rain here today. If those of you in the south are having an off-day, just type 'DL10' into the BBC weather forecast. "You poor sods", you'll think and go off down the road whistling.

If you think my indecision about the car is bad – imagine how it is when I am organising which vegetables and which fruit should go in which bags. I'll sit with all my availability lists from the farmers, get my spread-sheet up and send the next 12 hours putting the butternut squash in, taking it out again, putting it back in again and then taking it out again..... only to put it back in again. And that repeated 25 times with 25 types of produce. It's important. Produce is very scarce at the moment, it is one hell of a 'hungry gap'. It was hard even finding carrots this week with so much rain in the Mediterranean, where they are all coming from. I'll be very relieved when the English crops resume.

### **Roasted Cauliflower**

1 cauliflower

2 lemons

flaky sea salt and freshly ground black pepper

3 tbsp olive oil

½ tsp paprika

*Heat the oven to 220C/425F/Gas 7. Cut the cauliflower into medium-sized florets, rinse and let some of the water remain clinging to the florets. Put them in a bowl, squeeze over the juice from one of the lemons and season well. Put the florets on a baking sheet and toss them with olive oil and more salt and pepper. Dust on the paprika. Cut the remaining lemon into six segments and scatter these in the tin. Bake for 25-30 minutes, turning once, until slightly caramelised at the edges. Squeeze over the juice from the roasted lemon segments and serve at once, scattered with a little flaky sea salt.*

I still haven't been to collect the flashy car though I may have by the time you read this. Maybe it isn't that flashy but just clean. I'm less concerned by this now as I have remembered that in 10 days time it will just like the other one - full of empty crisp packets and banana skins, there will be an accumulation of assorted crumbs in the folds around the gear stick and melted chocolate in the driver's seat. Myfa will have put a collection of rocks and sticks on the back seat and the windows will be splattered with mud on the inside. Yes, 10 days and any trace of flashiness will be gone - It will be trashed.

I think I learnt my trade of vegetable buying from my dad. He was so careful and frugal with money he used to drive my mother mad. They would have to walk up the half mile of market stalls on Stockton High Street, the largest and cheapest market in the area, then back down the other side. All the while dad would be clocking the products, clocking the prices. Then they would do it all again, this time, going in for the kill – a pound of plums here, a pound of tomatoes there – the best value products on the market. He did this with everything. He became a consumer guru – if dad bought a Volvo car or a Zanussi washing machine so would everyone he knew – so researched was each purchase. He would stand in the aisles of the supermarket inspecting the weights of the flours, the sugar, the washing powder, mentally calculating the prices per ounce. Poor mum, it really did drive her mad but she used to roll about laughing when she told people. She knew he did it for us so that we could have some of life's luxuries - six weeks in the caravan in the Med each summer, her Jaeger suits for best.

Not long after Mum died, I took my dad to Sardinia. He was walking on a stick and I plonked him in a hotel in Porto Cervo to read the paper while I headed off to the designer boutiques. I came back laden and put on the jacket that I'd just bought from Alberta Ferretti to show him, chartreuse green with platinum stitching - fantastic with a tan. It was a stunning jacket. "How much?" he said. "It was eighteen hundred pounds dad" I said proudly. It made us laugh. Of course nothing mattered anymore. The heady days of nineties credit card rampages. I think I might still be paying for it actually, and it still is my favourite jacket

I am absolutely exhausted today, I didn't get to sleep until the early hours. I was revisiting some of my old songs, untouched for 20 years, and started rewriting the lyrics, improving lazy second verses. Why!

A couple of weeks ago I received an email from an actress asking me if I'd been approached 'yet' to do a film on the Izzy Lane story - which I haven't. She said she'd like to come and see me with a screenwriter with a view to doing a film or TV drama. She's coming next Monday.

Well since that afternoon, I can't tell you what I've been going through. I've developed it from TV drama into Hollywood blockbuster. I have every scene visualised, all the lines written in my head. It is absolutely brilliant. Richard Curtis (ex farmaround customer), eat your heart out. No, I take that back "Dear Mr Curtis, I have had an idea for a film which I thought could be of interest to you...."

Then yesterday, it occurred to me that since my song-writing has always been unfinished business, I had to do the soundtrack myself. And then I would release the album. And then I would be able to buy the London pad...and the house in the South of France, and pay off the mortgage on the jacket. I have been sitting on one song which I have always rated very highly. It is about someone losing the love of their life and I actually always imagined it would be perfect on a film soundtrack. I'd go as far as saying it is potentially the best funeral song since Jerusalem. I have had it recorded twice, one with a female vocal and once with a male. Both times, both singers broke down in tears while singing it and so did everyone in the room, which was very satisfying. A result. To be honest, I had recently started to think of Izzy Lane more in terms of it being conceptual art, a living sculpture .....not a business. But now, it's evident to me that all along, I was writing a film.

Mulling over who should play Ernest, Diane came up with John Cleese or Mr Bean. Now if that was Sean Bean, maybe the story would have had a different outcome. I couldn't think of anyone other than Ernest playing Ernest.

All this talk about me. How are you ? Very well I hope,

Kind wishes,

Isobel

**PS** Please remember that next week, with the Bank Holiday, Mondays deliveries will go out on Tuesday, Tuesdays on Wednesday, Wednesdays on Thursday and Thursdays on Friday.