

Middle-class spread - Part 1 of 2

By Halrion

Lynette smiled as she gazed through the window. Much as she loved visiting her family, she secretly enjoyed the train journey home even more: watching the tower blocks gradually shrink into Toblerone rows of terraces and then spread into neat green-gardened suburbs. And then, almost a blink later, there they were: the Yorkshire Dales, rising and falling into the misty distance. So beautiful. So calming. So-

'CALLIPERS?!'

The word burst into Lynette's bubble of tranquillity, not to mention her eardrums, like a giant smashing a cottage door to splinters.

'Oh my God Zoe this is classic! I am never letting her live this down!'

Lynette sighed. She knew young ladies these days were being encouraged to assert themselves - to 'take up more space' as someone had put it on the radio the other day. And this was of course a good thing. An excellent thing.

And yet, as Lynette looked across the carriage... well, she couldn't help wondering if perhaps *some* young ladies hadn't taken the advice just a tad too literally.

Sprawled over a seat and a half, with one bulging hip jammed under the armrest and a thick leg stretched out lazily into the aisle, the glamorous young businesswoman had been jawing away at full volume from the moment she'd swept into first-class, completely ignoring the "This is a quiet zone" notices plastered above all the windows. At first Lynette had been shocked to see someone apparently talking to herself. Then she'd spotted the little black plugs in the ears - like the ones her granddaughter wore - when the woman brushed back her hair.

And what lovely hair it is, Lynette thought, unable to suppress a twinge of envy. A beautifully dark shade of chestnut, flowing with an almost oily sleekness over those smooth olive shoulders.

From there downwards, however, Lynette felt... less envious. Oh, she knew fashions had changed, that there was a trend towards much tighter fits and more revealing styles these days. Even so, it was impossible to believe that the designers of the young businesswoman's smart, sleeveless black blazer dress had intended it to be quite *that* tight and revealing. The four eye-catching gold buttons around the waist were holding on for dear life, splayed out at obtuse angles by an assertive paunch that was pulling in so much material from other areas of the dress that the young lady's meaty upper thighs were exposed almost to the crotch and her puffed-up bosom looked ready to pop free with each breath - although with so much flesh

packed into so little fabric, Lynette thought it a miracle she could breathe at all, let alone jabber away at such a pace and volume.

‘I told you her cheeks were looking fatter on that Zoom. Yeah I know they’ve always been quite chunky but still... Callipers though Zoe, seriously? *Actual* callipers!’

Enough, Lynette decided, was enough. She cleared her throat.

‘Excuse me.’

‘I just *wish* I could've seen the look on her face when-’

‘*Ex-cuse* me!’

A brief silence was broken by a long shoulder-slumping sigh.

‘Hold on a sec, Zoe.’

Tapping her right earbud, the blazer-dressed businesswoman un-jammed her hip from beneath the armrest and twisted slowly in her seat, bosom sloping across the aisle. Lynette found herself confronted by an attractive oval face, across which there passed the briefest of grimaces as the young woman’s twisting paunch was bisected by the armrest, the upper portion sagging podgily over the top.

Long-nailed fingers plucked out the earbuds and held them barely an inch away from the ears, with the clear implication that they were not going to be left out for long.

‘Can I help you?’ The businesswoman smiled sarcastically. And for all her overblown, glamorous softness, there was an edge to her tone and a sharpness in her gaze. Lynette was put in mind of a once-feral cat, grown fat and sleek lazing by the fireside, but still vicious in its heart.

Still, Lynette was too old to be easily cowed. Folding her hands in her lap, she smiled softly.

‘I’m sorry dear, but this *is* a quiet carriage.’

The look Lynette received ought to have stuck several inches out of the back of her head.

‘Well I’m sorry too *dear*,’ the big businesswoman sneered, ‘but this *is* a very important call.’

‘It certainly sounds important.’ But Lynette’s sarcasm was wasted, for the earbuds had been reinserted, and the beautiful face was turning away, resuming its nattering at an even louder volume. And before Lynette could decide what to do next, the connecting door between carriages sucked open.

‘Any snacks or drinks?’ droned the tired-eyed attendant, pushing in the catering trolley. It was rather depleted, having gone through one first class carriage already, yet as it squeaked slowly down the aisle, Lynette spotted something that made her sit up a little.

Sitting on the top deck next to a small pack of Jaffa Cakes, bronze-glazed and covered in gooey icing, was a large and quite delicious-looking Danish pastry.

Lynette moistened her lips. It was ages since she’d had a Danish pastry. She gave the attendant her best sweet-old-lady smile. ‘Good morning, dear,’ she said, reaching for her handbag. ‘Yes, please could I have-’

‘A sausage and egg muffin,’ the businesswoman’s loud bossy voice seemed to fill the entire carriage, ‘a caramel latte, a pack of jaffa cakes and a Danish pastry.’

Lynette could only gape in disbelief as the skinny young attendant, apparently oblivious to her existence, began to unload the food.

‘You know you shouldn’t leave your mouth hanging open like that,’ the businesswoman said airily, egg yolk oozing as she squeezed her overstuffed muffin with both hands. ‘You’ll catch flies.’

Lynette watched half the enormous muffin disappear between greedily parting lips.

‘Well there’s not much chance of me getting anything else to eat, is there?’ she muttered.

The businesswoman shrugged. ‘Sorry love,’ she mumbled, cheeks bulging with sausage and egg muffin. ‘It’s dog-eat-dog, isn’t it?’ She took another bite.

Lynette sat back in her seat, folding her arms across her handbag. ‘So selfish!’ she huffed.

‘Mmmm, *so good*,’ the businesswoman purred mockingly, loudly chewing a huge sticky chunk of Danish pastry. She gulped it down and, one by one, popped her well-manicured fingers into her mouth, pulling each one out with an exaggerated sucking noise.

Feeling thoroughly defeated, Lynette turned towards the window in disgust.

‘I hope you get indigestion,’ she muttered quietly.

*

The train doors sucked open and a Gucci heel crunched onto crisp morning frost as Lauren Miller descended from her cosy first-class carriage. The sun was rising on what promised to be a bright cold day, and an icy breeze whipped through the old station, whisking up Lauren’s sleek dark hair as she pulled her Samsonite travel case along the platform. Chemically whitened teeth chattering, she hooked her middle finger into the buttonhole and tugged her coat across her torso, grasping the button expertly between thumb and forefinger.

If there was one skill Lauren had mastered in her fourteen years as a corporate account manager, it was the ability to button a coat one-handed. This morning, however, there was a problem...

However hard Lauren tugged, button and buttonhole simply wouldn’t come together.

Even when she stopped and used both hands.

‘Ugh, I should never have finished those jaffa cakes,’ she muttered, shivering against the cold. ‘I’m freezing my tits off.’

This was more than just a figure of speech. Squeezed into a smart but low-cut blazer dress, the glamorous brunette was showing far more cleavage than would be considered decent for most business meetings. But Lauren was under no illusions about why she, out of the company’s five accounts managers, had been given the honour of presenting to Cyril Trent. They had to give the lecherous old prick something nice to look at.

Because the profit figures she was going to show him certainly weren’t.

Although whether he'll be any more impressed by my figure remains to be seen, Lauren thought grimly. Cyril had certainly taken a shine to her when they'd first met. Indeed, Lauren flattered herself that her looks were the main reason he'd signed the contract. But that had been almost two years ago. Two Covid-stricken years in which Cyril had lost hundreds of thousands of pounds. As for Lauren...

Well, she felt like she'd gained roughly the same number.

Crunching across the frosty platform, the glamorous businesswoman was all too conscious of the four and a half stone she'd piled on during lockdown. Her once-peachy bubble butt had grown so big and wide that she could feel it weighing and swaying behind her, as if it were something strapped to her body rather than a part of it. Her inner thighs chafed with each step, and her plump belly was bobbling around like a blancmange within its spanx prison. The combination of these three factors led Lauren to a horrifying realisation.

I'm waddling!

Flushing with embarrassment, the overweight businesswoman glared irritably at the two workmen in high-vis jackets who had just tipped their hard hats at her as they strolled past in the opposite direction. To think that it had come to this! Lauren Miller, star netballer and official sexiest sixth-former at St Michael's High School (whatever hoity toity Sarah might think) grown too fat to walk properly! How on earth had this happened?

Yet if she was honest with herself, Lauren knew exactly how it had happened. Clinging to the party-girl lifestyle well into her thirties, the corporate beauty had paid the price in a steady accumulation of squishy pudge around her thighs, hips and middle. It had been easy to brush off at first. Funny, even. After all, most of her friends were in the same steadily sinking boat. Pre-drinking at Sarah's house every Friday evening - just as they had when they were eighteen - Lauren, Zoe and Vicky would joke about how they 'needed to hit the gym' as they stripped to their underwear to dress for another big night out, puffing their cheeks and pushing out their 'party paunches' with a giggle, fondly patting each other's tummies and gripping handfuls of flesh to see who was getting the podgiest. Only Sarah remained aloof. She'd stand there in the doorway sipping a gin and slim, shaking her head with a condescending smile as her tipsy, giggling girlfriends helped each other wriggle widening hips into deluxe shapewear and smacked each other's wobbling bottoms as they tugged down expensive sheath-like dresses. Then, clothed, perfumed, glossed and glammed up, the quartet of hotties would head out to the trendiest bars to guzzle sugary cocktails and pull the best looking boys, who certainly never complained about the extra sway and squishiness.

Yes, life had been good... And then the pandemic hit, turning everything upside down. Thirty-four, single, furloughed, and living alone during lockdown, with all her beloved bars all shut and no house parties to attend, Lauren had binged and boozed her way through the boredom, rarely leaving her couch.

Even so, the number on the scale this morning had been a shock.

‘At least my tits have finally gotten bigger,’ Lauren sighed, pausing to admire the reflection of her abundant bosom in the window of the run-down old waiting area - and trying to ignore the equally abundant gut that swelled out just beneath, stretching the gold buttons of her blazer dress. As if in protest at being ignored, it let out a deep gurgle of discontent.

Lauren winced, pressing a hand to her meaty middle. Unnerved by that number on the scale this morning, she’d taken immediate and desperate measures: cutting her usual breakfast of four slices of jam on toast down to two. The result had been pretty predictable. Unaccustomed to such scarcity, and already displeased about being squashed into high-waist control briefs for the first time in eight months, Lauren’s pampered belly had griped and grumbled throughout the train journey. The squeaky wheels of that catering trolley had been music to her ears. Stomach rumbling eagerly, she’d spluttered out an embarrassingly greedy order.

She hadn’t meant to eat it all, but that stupid old woman would’ve made some snarky comment if she hadn’t. Besides, it had all tasted *so* good.

And now her treacherous tummy, the same tummy that had greedily demanded all that food, was complaining about being overfed! Lauren sighed. She just couldn’t win. Scratching her troublesome gut, she scanned the station, looking for a Boots or Tesco Express where she could get some Gaviscon.

Instead, her eyes settled on a familiar green sign just beyond the ticket barriers.

Lauren licked her upper lip. A hot cappuccino and a little sit down. That was just what she needed to warm her up and settle her digestion. Tilting her travel case, the plump brunette started towards Starbucks with a purpose.

*

The young man rubbed a grimy thumb across his forehead and whistled softly over his flat white.

‘Look ert tits on that.’

Rod followed his apprentice’s gaze through the window, his eyes settling on the glamorous brunette striding along the platform. He sipped his tea and two sugars with a knowing smile. Big city corporate types often passed through the station, and here was a classic example. Stressed, overdressed and swollen with excess. Even at a distance Rod could make out the hefty bosom bouncing in the corporate porker’s low-cut top as she wiggle-waddled towards the ticket barrier. Shiny buttons strained around a belly that bulged wide from many heavy business lunches, and her juicy thighs - thick and suety from too much sitting - quivered faintly with each step.

Rod set his cup down in its saucer. ‘Now that, young David,’ he said, tilting his hard hat back to reveal an almost entirely bald forehead, ‘is ay severe case of middle-class spread.’

Young David continued to stare at the woman in a kind of awed trance.

‘Travelled first class, didn't she,’ Rod continued, for he was not a man to be deterred from his theme by a lack of outside interest. ‘That's t' first clue. Coat looks 'sensive. Fancy shoes, fancy 'airstyle. Image conscious, but ca-reer focused. Gave us a right snotty look too, eh?’ Rod let out a long, easy sigh, folding his arms slowly. ‘Stress,’ he explained. ‘That's what that is. Stress from an 'igh paid job. Sits on 'er arse all day in't office, more n'likely. Stressin 'bout numbers and... and wot not.’ Rod leaned forward. ‘See, if she were upper class, she'd av time fer gym. If she were lower... well she wouldn't be able to eat so well.’ With a smile of satisfaction, he leaned back and concluded his peroration: ‘Middle-class spread.’

Young David’s eyes stayed on the woman, but his brow wrinkled into a frown.

‘Sounds like an advert fer’t margarine, that. Middle-class spread.’

Rod sighed. This was the problem with the youth of today. No literary appreciation. He began to lift his tea again, only to pause with the mug just below his lips.

His unkempt eyebrows bristled. ‘Now then. What's goin' on 'ere?’

The object of their attention had reached the barriers and inserted her ticket to no effect. David and Rod watched as she frowned, withdrew the ticket and inserted it again.

The barrier remained closed.

Visibly frustrated, the woman shoved the ticket into the slot so violently that it bent. This having yielded the same result, she glared at the closed barrier flaps for a few seconds, and then made a half-hearted attempt to shoulder-barge her way through.

Now, as far as Rod was concerned, life was like a football match. You had broadly two types of people: players and spectators. Young David, like most young men, fancied himself a player, but really he was your classic spectator. Rod, however, was a rarer beast altogether.

Rod was a commentator.

‘Can't go through it,’ he said, folding his arms matter-of-factly. ‘Can't go around it, neither,’ he added as the businesswoman stomped over to the glass door beside the barriers, only to find it locked. ‘And definitely,’ Rod chuckled as the woman took a step back and glanced down at the narrow gap beneath the barrier flaps, ‘can’t go under it. Not with an arse that size.’ Grinning broadly, he leaned forward and tilted his hard hat back even further.

‘The question is, young David’ - here Rod paused for effect - ‘Can she get over it?’

This question, in fact, was not the one Lauren was currently asking herself. Currently the question she was asking herself was: who on earth was stupid enough to leave a station unmanned with a broken ticket barrier?! What did she pay her taxes for?! An angry email to the council was already forming in Lauren’s head as she glared around, looking for some sort of official. But the station was practically deserted. Boiling with fury, she glanced down at her Gucci watch. This was ridiculous! She had to get to her hotel, unpack, and then prepare for her meeting. If she didn’t get through the barrier soon, she’d be late.

Through the barrier? a small voice spoke up at the back of her mind. *Or over it?*

Lauren took a step back, sizing up the obstacle. In her netballing days she could've hurdled clean over it, no problem. But now... the corporate beauty bit her lower lip. She knew she was out of shape. And with her spanx squeezing her hips and with a belly full of Jaffa Cakes and Danish pastry, she really wasn't feeling very nimble. Besides, her blazer buttons had been straining just from the walk along the platform, and she didn't have a spare outfit. If this one ripped... Lauren pictured herself standing in Cyril Trent's conference room in her spanx and bra, chubby tits wobbling as she tried to justify her firm's colossal fees in light of his collapsing profits. The image was dispelled by a small, calm voice somewhere near her left elbow..

'Oh dear, is the barrier broken?'

Lauren looked down, and immediately rolled her eyes. Great. The rude old bint from the train was standing beside her. Could this day get any worse? Not only did she have to deal with a broken barrier. Now she some stupid old lady making senile remarks about it.

'Obviously it's broken,' Lauren huffed, flicking out a hand. 'And there's no way around.'

Lynette eyed the barrier thoughtfully. 'Hmm.' She took a step forward and placed a palm on the metal block between two sets of barrier flaps, as if testing its temperature.

And then, to Lauren's gaping astonishment, the frail old woman bent one knee, swung her legs up effortlessly and slid across the metal block, landing on the other side on both feet.

'Don't stand there with your mouth hanging open, dear,' Lynette said, dusting off her coat. She reached under the barrier to pull her bag through. 'You'll catch flies.'

Lauren's mouth opened and closed like a fish out of water. 'How-' She stopped and shook her head. Then realisation dawned. 'The door!' she said, pointing at it excitedly. 'See if it opens from that side. You can let me through!'

Lynette's eyebrows rose slowly. 'Oh, can I?'

Lauren bent at her knees imploringly, making her fat tummy bulge forwards.

'Please,' she whined, 'I've got an important meeting!'

'Like your important phone call?'

'Ugh, *fine!*' Glaring angrily at the old woman, Lauren kicked off her Gucci heels. *Fuck it*, she thought. *There's no way I'm being upstaged by some geriatric gymnast.* She approached the barrier. *It must be easier than it looks...* Shucking off her expensive coat, Lauren placed her palm on the metal block between two sets of barrier flaps, just as the old woman had done. Then, with a haughty toss of her hair, she bent her left knee, pushed down on the barrier and sprung up, raising her right leg horizontally like a hurdler.

Watching from Starbucks, David's arousal rose right along with it. He could hardly believe what he was seeing. An admirer of full-figured women, especially the glamorous porked-up corporate look this one was sporting, the young workman found the whole scene unbelievably sexy. Even at a distance, he could make out the droop and quiver of inner thigh as the fat businesswoman's meaty leg rose - only to fall down again long before it reached a sufficient hurdling angle. He watched her try again with the same result. *She's too big*, he

thought. *She'd be better off trying to roll herself over.* David remembered a video he'd seen on Curvage of a plump lass rolling her dripping bulk over the edge of a swimming pool to get out.

Lauren's bulk wasn't dripping, but she could feel sweat greasing her forehead as she tried - and failed - to vault the barrier for a third time. Now burning with embarrassment and fury, she gritted her teeth and tried again and again and again, bouncing up and down on her leg as if it were a faulty pogo stick. David was put in mind of a dog with tourettes trying to cock its leg against a lamppost.

Lynette, however, had a different analogy.

'Is that some sort of Dick Van Dyke impression?' she shook her head with a chuckle. 'Bet you're regretting that Danish pastry now, hmm?'

Lauren's face flushed crimson. She slammed both palms down on the metal block, bosom swelling with each laboured breath. 'Just open the fucking door!'

Lynette sighed. Slowly, she began walking over to the door. 'You know, you should be ashamed of yourself, unable to do that at your age.' She tried the handle. 'No, it's locked from this side too, sorry.' Lynette nodded back down the platform. 'There's an information booth at the far end, next to the toilets. You could try that.'

Lauren threw her hands up in the air, eyes rolling back. 'Why didn't you say that before?!'

Grabbing her coat and travel case and slamming her feet back into her Guccis, she stormed off down the platform. David watched her arse bulge and sway as she went. Rod was right, it was absolutely massive, swinging from side-to-side like a wrecking ball.

'P'raps I'll go and 'elp her,' he murmured dreamily.

A palm, landing on his shoulder like a slab of meat, pressed him back into his seat.

Rod shook his head solemnly. 'T'way she sneered at us? I don't think so, my son.' He leaned back and checked his watch. 'Anyroad. It'll be time fer our break in't minute. Fancy another brew?'

To be concluded...

©Halrion

<http://www.deviantart.com/halrion> | <http://www.patreon.com/halrion>

Thank you so much for reading!

Part 2 coming next week!

...No, really! :-)