

Frankie Boyle - My Shit Life So Far

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INTRODUCTION

I've been careful not to get too nostalgic. It's the most retrograde, reality-denying emotion. How long before you'll be standing at a bus stop hearing someone moan, 'Say what you like about Saddam, but that country's gone to hell without him'? Saddam did at least make the trains run on time. It's just that they were Death Trains to Death Camps. To be honest, they were often late but people were too scared to say anything. (8-11)

'I've been studying Israeli Army Martial Arts. I now know sixteen ways to kick a Palestinian woman in the back.' (55-56)

People say nothing can solve the Middle East problem. Not mediation, not arms, not financial aid. I say there is Something. Atheism. (60-61)

Also, you could eliminate the problem of suicide bombing overnight by making everybody wear spandex. (62-63)

I was horrified last year when some people said the floods were God's judgements on homosexuals. That's an outrageously offensive thing to say, especially when everyone knows that God's actual judgement was AIDS. (64-66)

The first TV advert for the morning-after pill has already been shown. It's just a clip of the Teletubbies and a voice saying, 'If you don't want to watch this shit—take the pill!' (78-79)

Susan claims she has never been kissed. On that evidence alone, Scotland's alcohol problems are not nearly as bad as previously imagined. OK, so she hasn't been kissed, but this is Scotland. I'll bet she's been fingered on a school trip to Largs. (105-7)

CHAPTER ONE

I grew up in a Glasgow. It's a disturbing but strangely loveable place, lurching like any alcoholic from exuberance to unbelievable negativity. I always loved the hilariously downbeat motto, 'Here's the Bird that Never Flew. Here's the Tree that Never Grew. Here's the Bell that Never Rang. Here's the Fish that Never Swam.' It's like the city slogan that got knocked back by Hiroshima. They might as well have a coat of arms where St Mungo hangs himself from a disused crane. (115-19)

When I was just a little kid a Celtic player electrocuted himself by accident in his loft. 'It's My Party and I'll Cry if I Want To' was number one and on the radio, and at that week's football you could hear the Rangers fans singing 'It's My Attic and I'll Fry if I Want To'. A Rangers player called Tom McKean gassed himself in his car and the graffiti was 'Gas 1, McKean 0'. (197-200)

CHAPTER TWO

The great thing about primary education is the positivity and praise the kids get. Probably not the best way to prepare them for the reality of adult life in Scotland, but I like it. (321-23)

At least I was lucky enough not to go to a Jesuit school. The Jesuit saying is 'Give me a boy until he is seven and I will give you the man.' Usually a sexually confused manic depressive. (350-51)

If I was a sexual pervert I would definitely join the priesthood. Although clearly the sexual pervert community is way ahead of me on that one. Earlier this year the Pope met victims of sexual abuse at the hands of Catholic priests. If I'd been fingered by a priest the last person I'd like to meet is the ultra priest 9,000. It's like fighting the end of—level boss in a video game. First confession at the age of seven must be incredibly boring for the priest. Imagine having to listen for hours on end about stealing conkers and farting during school assembly. This is why so many priests like to help out by giving the poor kid something to really confess about next time around. (353-58)

I've always found it weird that people in our community could reconcile the opulence of the Church (even our little church was disgracefully beautiful compared with the houses people lived in) with the generally held socialism that most folk seemed to believe in. (363-65)

I have a theory about the Pope. You know how he fought for the Nazis? Well if Nazi scientists did manage to save Hitler's brain then maybe they kept it alive in a jar for years waiting to implant it into someone with power on the world stage. That someone would need to wear a very big hat to hide all the stitching left by a brain transplant. They probably thought about putting his brain into an NFL quarterback but held out for the Pope. The Pope has said that condoms don't help prevent the spread of AIDS. Someone ought to tell His Holiness that he must be putting them on wrong. You'd have thought the Pope would have been well up for using condoms. It would have scuppered the court cases of many of his priests if there was no DNA evidence. In Africa AIDS has killed 25 million people in three decades. That's a lot of funerals. I can see why the Pope doesn't want to lose the work. (373-79)

CHAPTER THREE

School days are only happy if you have a particular yen to be taught five hours of geography a week by a convicted paedophile. Actually, to be serious, the sex at school was embarrassing. You'd think after 20 years the janitor would know what he's doing. I still can't come unless I'm in a small dark room filled with sports equipment. (478-80)

I found that a big part of surviving was to get yourself a lockable room in which you could sit out lunchtime. Teachers would sometimes give the keys to their classroom to responsible kids, ostensibly to do work. It was actually so these weaker specimens could have a locked door between them and those who wanted to take their money, humiliate them or simply punch them repeatedly in the arms and legs. (491-94)

The idea has been floated that parents of obese children should be fined. Don't people realise that the parents of fat children are simply misguided? What they're trying to do is make their kids less attractive

to paedophiles. What they're forgetting is that they're making it more difficult for them to run away. In Vegas I once saw an incredibly fat man on one of those little mobility scooter things, except he'd driven it onto a moving walkway, so he didn't even have to drive. Now that's lazy. (577-81)

If there's one thing we've learned about fighting famine over the years it is this—big music events don't work. We can tick that off the list. To be honest, you'd have thought that would have been a bit further down the list. It's amazing to think that at some point there was a meeting where someone said, 'People are starving in their millions', and somebody replied, 'We'd better get a hold of Ultravox and Annie Lennox.' (583-86)

Actually, I think the most sensible thing to do to find out how the planet is going is to have a friend who's a scientist. When he takes up smoking it's time to worry. Or when he suddenly goes for a visit to the moon with all of his scientist friends. (701-3)

I'd say my overall outlook for the future is pessimistic. Here's a theory of mine. You know how years ago David Bowie used to always be slightly ahead of the curve? He covered the Velvet Underground just before people heard of them, and seemed to be riding each new wave of the zeitgeist? Even Tin Machine could be seen as him trying to do grunge slightly too early. Well, my theory is the government captured Bowie and replaced him with a lookalike. They keep the real Bowie in a big glass prison room, like Hannibal Lecter, so they can observe him and predict future trends. I reckon everybody is shitting themselves because recently Bowie developed metal skin and turned Chinese. (703-8)

Then of course, there's Australia. It's ironic that Australians are so racist. Kind of hard to defend the proposition that black people don't belong in your country, when the white people keep dying from skin cancer. (750-51)

I've always been pretty broadminded about other cultures. For instance, I'm in favour of the full length burqa as it allows me to masturbate in Tesco's. (756-57)

I've come up with my own British Citizenship Test exam paper that would help make sure the applicant will fit in with the culture. 1. Spot the difference between these two cartoons of Mohammed. 2. Why has your country never voted for us in Eurovision? 3. Have you ever looked at the ingredients on Ready, Steady, Cook and thought 'I could make a bomb out of that'? 4. You've just picked up a newspaper on your way to the Tube. Expecting to be shot? 5. Write down ten well-known British swearwords. On the house of your local paedophile. 6. A TV presenter has been involved in a sex offence. Do you find this (a) horrifying, or (b) a bit of a laugh? 7. Your mother has just died. How long do you spend talking to the doctor about football? 8. If you fail this British Citizenship Test, will you accept a taxi driver's licence? (758-63)

CHAPTER FOUR

Everyone looked forward to house parties. That was where you could use the magic of alcohol to batter down sixteen years of Catholic repression and try to pump your chemistry partner. (829-30)

It's not like girls at school weren't having sex; they just weren't having it with us. (839-40)

CHAPTER FIVE

Lust is a big part of most men's personality. They just tend to make a point of denying it, so they can get more sex. In the summertime that noise you can hear isn't grasshoppers. It's the sound of men's teeth grinding as their rusty libidos crank up through the gears. (844-45)

No wonder Middle Eastern countries get their women to cover up. There was probably a point in history when Iraq was a beautiful orchard before they shagged it into the dust. (849-50)

It's a peculiarity of men that we forget things like anniversaries and birthdays yet remember every flash of leg and glimpse of underwear. (853-54)

Recently, a Polish Catholic priest has published a book which provides married couples with a theological and practical guide to spicing up their sex lives. All 400 pieces of advice involve bringing a Catholic priest into your bedroom. Critics have questioned the competency of a celibate monk to write about sex. But then again, if you've been married more than two years then a celibate monk is probably getting more sex than you are. (883-86)

I've always wondered, if surgeons can get porn actresses' tits to look so great, how come they can't do anything about that dead look in their eyes? (907-8)

CHAPTER SIX

The male sex drive definitely feels like more of a curse than a blessing. I was in Berlin on my holidays this year and went to every museum, a standard middle-class non-drinker's way of pretending that he can enjoy himself. There's one that has the whole entranceway to a Babylonian temple. You can literally walk down a whole corridor that looks exactly as it would when you were coming through the ancient city of Babylon—it's beautiful. Before I walked down it I tried to empty my mind and imagine I was actually an ancient Babylonian, going to make a sacrifice. Every step of the walk I was transfixed by the visible top of a German tourist's knickers, and the washing instructions sticking out of them. I think there is a lot that we don't understand about (935-40)

The summer I left school I got a job as a library assistant, my first opportunity to really bond with homosexual men and women going through the menopause. I was really unbelievably terrible at it, as I have been at every job I've had. The problem is this: all jobs seem to involve receiving a certain amount of oblique sniping or criticism that you are supposed to put up with. I simply can't be fucked, not even a little bit. On the first day in that job an old posh gent had a go at me for some forgotten reason and I told him to fuck off. I think he was so shocked that he literally couldn't process it and just wandered off. (945-49)

It was around this time that I really got into the work of Noam Chomsky. He's good at explaining where we are at and warning us about where we're going. I always remember a thing in one of his books where he says that capitalism can't have everything its own way because it will 'create a hell that no rational person would want to live in'. Noam has never been on ScotRail, so doesn't know that we are already there. (958-61)

Ever since college I've had to work at never really being slim but never quite reaching properly fat. I swim just enough for my weight to hover somewhere between compliments and abuse. (988-89)

They say fat people make better lovers. Who says this? Fat virgins. (992)

At Langside I started hanging around with a guy called Joe who was about 22 and a complete basket-case. He'd been a full-on soccer casual and was a very bad guy. He ran a combat club somewhere in the East End. I went along to watch them one time. Always a bad sign to see everybody unpacking weapons in the changing room. The training seemed to involve them leaping from wall bars onto the ground in a bid to strengthen their legs, followed by punching each other in the stomach while shouting. They had something that most properly trained fighters lack. Madness. (995-99)

Perhaps a side effect of coming into political power is to develop a hatred of ordinary people. Nobody has ever really explained the urge to impose pointless, unworkable policies that dehumanise folk. (1047-49)

CHAPTER SEVEN

Aston University was, and I'll wager still is, full of cunts. Most of the courses were engineering and technical stuff, and the largest society on campus was the Conservative Club. (1095-96)

We'd go and get drunk together and talk pretentious shit. He was a good human being and it was inspiring to know somebody round there who was further off the map than me. (1130-31)

it really gave me some perspective on what I was. An angsty, adolescent dick. (1145)

CHAPTER EIGHT

I enjoyed the first few weeks of being on campus, the attitude of optimism and hope that held together while everybody liked each other. The atmosphere that I helped to destroy. (1197-98)

The whole place was full of the sort of pussies that make me think that cockroaches might take over the earth without a nuclear war. (1221-22)

I've always been drawn to people who live on the fringes of society, probably because there were a lot of points when I looked like I'd be joining them. (1241-42)

The homeless get a bad press. Nobody ever mentions how incredibly friendly they are if you turn up at their hostel with quite a lot of wine. (1245-46)

CHAPTER NINE

I find naturism indefensible. If there's nothing wrong with naturism then how come I'm still banned from Euro Disney? People say the world would be a better place if everyone were naked all the time. A better place for whom? Rapists. Saying there's nothing weird about naturism is like saying there's nothing weird about an 80-year-old man's massive saggy ballbag. (1265-68)

After I graduated, age 22, I got a job working for a mental-health agency. (1358)

There was lino everywhere. Lino not just on the floor but five feet up the walls, saying this institution has some interesting situations involving shit. (1361-62)

The Church of England service is incredibly similar to the Catholic one, with the same fruity robes and hats. I can't understand the Anglican Church being so down on homosexuality. If you don't like gays, stop acting so gay. (1380-82)

There's an interesting theory that madness is part of an evolutionary strategy. Diseases that are harmful are something that we generally evolve a resistance to. Madness has gradually increased, perhaps because the associated creativity is helpful to the species as a whole. Clearly, this is a theory devised by someone who never worked in a care home where they'd have to spend a significant part of an evening persuading an old man in his pants not to eat a family-sized block of cheese. (1384-87)

One day one of my flatmates had a day off at the same time as me. I could hear him downstairs playing music and knew I wouldn't be able to leave the house without having a long, harrowing conversation with him. I did what any reasonable person would do and shinned down the drainpipe. Hats off to the East Sussex police. They got a call about a burglar and had apprehended me before I got to the end of my street. I explained that I'd just been trying to avoid my flatmate and they frogmarched me back there so he could verify my story. He stood in the doorway, apparently unmoved, as I explained that I disliked him so much I had jumped out of a first-floor window. The police shuffled off looking embarrassed enough for all of us. (1405-10)

Have you seen the YouTube video of the protestor being assaulted by police officers? It's like a deleted scene from The Lord of the Rings. (1415-16)

I've always had a real problem with secondary education. It seems to exist to teach conformity and obedience over anything else. For me, it's all in the bell. The bell goes and you move along to the next class. It doesn't matter what you're learning about, it could be Hamlet or dark matter. That bell goes and you trot along because nothing is more important than the system. (1442-45)

I hated it at the time, but I think I'd find teacher training unbearable now, especially as bankers are being encouraged to go into teaching. Can you imagine a banker in the school room? 'OK, so let me demonstrate. I have no apples and you have thirty apples. You give me all your apples. So I have all the apples. HA HA HA LOSERS! I HAVE ALL THE APPLES! SCUM!' Before taking a pension of four million apples. (1528-31)

CHAPTER TEN

I'd been going out with a girl since working in mental health, and after I finished teacher training we got married. Why? I was drunk. I was drunk for the courtship, proposal, wedding and most of the yearlong marriage itself. I know that I should probably em and have a few regrets here but, to be honest, drunkenness is quite a good way to approach marriage. Relationships are largely about blotting out other people's failings, having an idealised version of somebody to relate to. It's so much easier not to

notice those failings when you can't see your own face in a shaving mirror and sleep like a wellfed hamster. Fuck it, I tried. Oh no, wait a minute. I didn't. (1558-63)

People are always chasing new highs; what about new lows? (1617-18)

It says a lot when a town takes pride in being the birthplace of a hugely deformed circus freak. (1643-44)

CHAPTER ELEVEN

There are only two reasons for someone becoming an expat. Either they've failed at life in Britain or they're a paedophile. (1673)

Here's a wee rule of thumb I have (no doubt some people will find it naïvely idealistic): never live in a country that imprisons homosexuals. (1678-79)

Those who tell you there's no such thing as a good way to die are people who have clearly never heard the phrase 'drug-fuelled sex heart attack'. (1687-88)

A recent survey revealed that one in ten Scots are on antidepressants, which begs the question, what have the other nine got to be so happy about? (1703-4)

My marriage fell apart quite quickly. I stopped drinking for about nine months and my wife didn't seem to like me when I was conscious. (1715-16)

At the very end of the trip we went to a Romanian wedding. I challenged everybody at the wedding to a drinking competition. Obviously everybody had a lifetime's experience of drinking the local moonshines and prison-liquors, so it wasn't going to be easy. Still, nobody had approached drinking with quite my level of single-minded dedication so it ended up being between me and a grumpy, alcoholic artist. I remember his last words being 'Let's call this a draw', as he lapsed into unconsciousness and slid off his chair onto the floor. (1767-70)

CHAPTER TWELVE

Incidentally, while on the subject of romance, here is what I have learned from my adventures of the heart. Drugs are better than Love. If there was a drug that had a comedown like Love, you would never take it. Here, pssst, take this. You'll feel fantastic for a while, then after the high has gone you'll feel like someone has plunged a broken shard of window pane repeatedly through your chest while reciting all your failings in a flat monotone. You'll feel like that every day for about four years. Take it! I'm kidding; if you see a chance for love, go for it. Throw everything you've got at it like you're a fool. Life without love is a fucking wilderness. It's only the invention of MDMA that has stopped me throwing myself under a bus. (1877-82)

It was during that period that I started smoking dope to write. It really helped me to think sideways. I can't ever remember sitting down with a load of grass and worrying that I wasn't going to get the job done. (1918-19)

I've not smoked for years, but I was pretty horrified when cannabis was reclassified from Class C to Class B. That's only going to confuse people, especially cannabis users. (1924-25)

If there is a lesson to be learned from Iraq, it must be this. Never invade a country where everyone has guns. These are people who take six guns to a barbeque. Iraqi Antiques Road show is probably an endless parade of 1970s rocket propelled grenade launchers. 'No, I'm not going to get it insured, Hugh. I'm going to fire it into a queue outside a police station.' (2007-9)

CHAPTER THIRTEEN

I've always had a pretty ambivalent attitude to being on TV. It is, after all, just a shiny bauble used to distract morons while they're having their pockets picked. I don't actually own a telly—haven't for maybe seven or eight years. I found it to be brutally addictive and also just a drug I'd take without making a choice. (2034-37)

The fact that such a spectacle gets respectable viewing figures means that people take a lot more hardcore drugs than official statistics suggest. (2043-44)

A lot of these celebrities cry when getting an Oscar. I think it's simply relief, just knowing their place on the Scientology space ark is secure. (2094-95)

role-play is great. There's nothing makes sex better with a chick than spending a couple of years pretending to be her long-lost brother. (2211-12)

I know they can't cure HIV, but how hard would it be to come up with something that meant you could taste it on people's saliva? It'll mean that most people with HIV will never develop AIDS. They'll choke to death on Tic Tacs. (2216-17)

Angelina Jolie is often described as the most beautiful woman in the world. Yet after so many kids she must have vag like a rubbish chute. Susan Boyle's vagina on Angelina's body, now that's what I'm talking about. (2224-25)

I hated being at the birth, having always found hospitals creepy. Luckily my daughter's mum had to have quite a lot of drugs so I nipped out for a couple of hours in the middle and watched a football match without her realising. (2226-27)

Childbirth is many things, but it is not sexy. Even though I once turned the volume down and masturbated to a birth on the Open University. (2227-28)

CHAPTER FOURTEEN

'I have a thought about sexual politics. Why is it that when I find a vibrator in my girlfriend's drawer, she's liberated? Yet when she looks in the chest that I keep under my bed and finds an artificial vagina, I'm a pervert? So what if it is a dog's vagina that I keep alive with batteries.' (2354-56)

I don't understand London's racism toward Eastern Europeans. I don't have a problem with a Polish plumber coming round to do work on my house. They're cheap, arrive on time and it's a lot easier to understand what they're saying than a British workman. I had a Polish worker round at my house last week, and I was more than happy with the service...they knew exactly what they were doing, they were thorough, cleaned up afterwards, and she didn't have that dead look behind her eyes that you normally get from British prostitutes. (2460-64)

CHAPTER FIFTEEN

A lot of prejudice against musical theatre comes from people looking at Andrew Lloyd Webber and going, 'My God, you are so ugly.' But just because a man looks like his face was carved off his skull by a diseased butcher, put in a piñata, beaten for six hours with a hockey stick, and the resulting slop piped back onto his head like icing on the ugliest cake the world has ever seen—sorry, I've forgotten my point. (2547-49)

You're looking for possible Muslim extremists on your flight? I'm looking for guys who look like they used to be in the army but now have cancer. I spent the whole of the flight to Ireland eyeballing a little bald man who had a quite futuristic pen that I felt might double up as some kind of detonator. He was reading the Bible, which didn't help. People say they find prayer reassuring, but if the pilot came on the intercom and told you to put your seatbelts back on, would you really be happy to hear him tailing off into a few verses of the 'Our Father'? Still, not quite as frightening as him bursting into something from the Koran. (2610-14)

Blair was said to be saddened that he hasn't managed to serve for as many years as Thatcher. Instead he will have to content himself with having killed more women and children than Genghis Khan. Ironically, for a man who is so obsessed with legacy, his memory will live on longer than most politicians—as a ghost story that Iraqi mothers use to frighten their children. (2631-33)

CHAPTER SIXTEEN

It's said that he might help bring peace to the Middle East in the same way he helped the peace process in Northern Ireland. Then again, he didn't bomb Belfast with depleted uranium shells and hang Gerry Adams in a shed while someone filmed it on a mobile phone. I think that might have put a bit of a dent in the Good Friday Agreement. (2636-39)

Mock the Week had become inexplicably popular, so I went on a massive tour around Britain. I think it was 135 dates in just over a year. To be honest I lost count, along with my appetite, sex-drive and desire to go on living. (2643-45)

I hate this term and prefer the more politically correct Genocidal Residue. Fuck it, let's go with Red Indian) (2680-81)

I've always thought a standing ovation is a strange thing. 'I'm enjoying what you said so much I'm going to clap, not louder, but higher than before.' The problem is what do you do after the first few standing

ovations if the speaker makes a point that you like even more? Do you jump and clap? Or get on the table? (2760-62)

While in America, Brown also announced that Edward Kennedy would receive an honorary knighthood from Britain. This is a man who fled a car accident in 1969 that led to the death of Mary Jo Kopechne. He doesn't deserve a knighthood. A liar, a coward and a criminal. Sounds more like a Lord to me. (2764-66)

I moved back to Scotland the week that Barry Ferguson and Allan McGregor were thrown out of the Scottish football team as they were deemed unfit to represent our country. I dunno—I think a couple of drunks making obscene gestures at a crowd of strangers represent our country pretty accurately. We've had to put up with drunk or abusive Scots representing our country in the fields of cinema, cuisine and international diplomacy...and football is where they draw the line? (2784-87)

someone really should tell Brown to stop smiling—it just looks like he's trying to shit a sea urchin. Where did Brown learn to smile? Watching *The Shining*? (2860-61)