

The Tall Man's Secret

by Michael Gillan Maxwell

I turn the corner and come face to face with Ed, who's stark naked at the kitchen sink. He chugs a glass of hot tap water from a measuring cup and belches loudly.

"Good morning," he says, as he pisses in the sink. "I drink 6 cups of hot tap water every morning. It keeps me hydrated and then I have a lovely shit."

He finishes up and shakes off, then swirls water around the basin with his hand.

"It's the *Tall Man's Secret*," he says. "You should try it."

"I'll pass. That may be the perfect height for you, but I'd have to stand up on my tip-toes and flop my balls up over the edge just to reach it. Please tell me you don't wash dishes in that sink."

"Of course I do," he says. "I rinse it out each time. It's cleaner than the bathroom. Someone always misses the toilet and pees all over the floor. It's disgusting."

"Well that someone must be you, because you've lived here alone for the last twelve years."

"Exactly," he says. "That's another reason I pee in the sink. Because I can."

For the next two hours, Ed goes nonchalantly about his business, buck naked the whole time. He putters around the house, writes e mails, waters plants, vacuums the rug and sweeps the porch. I pretend to ignore his nudity. He pauses briefly during a long, rambling monologue about secret underground bases and reptilian extraterrestrials and I seize the opportunity to abruptly change the subject.

"Hey, I need to get some shots of your place," I say, pulling out my iPhone. "How 'bout we start with a nude study of you?"

"Whoops, sorry," he says. "I should have asked if it bothered you. I go au naturale from 6 every evening until noon the following day."

"A man's home is his castle, I always say. Where else can a guy let it all hang out?"

"I'm gonna make a breakfast smoothie," he says. "You want one?"

Ed pulls vegetables out of the fridge and tosses them in the sink to wash them. I'm starting to get queazy. He dumps a full bottle of Guinness into the blender.

"You start with a beer. It's full of B vitamins. Throw in raw beets, celery, bok choy, spinach and liquid amino acids. This stuff's an antioxidant bomb. You'll be levitating, and your shit will be a lovely shade of red."

"Good to know. I can hardly wait," I say.

He crams the chopped vegetables into the mix and pushes a button. The blender churns the concoction into a dark red, dank smelling, foamy sludge.

"I need to relieve myself first," I say. "Not to worry. I have flawless technique and never miss. It's the *Short Man's Secret*."

