

Author's answers in [[]]

EVERYTHING IS GOING TO BE GREAT An Underfunded and Overexposed European Grand Tour A Memoir—

Rachel Shukert Rachel graduates with an acting degree. She gets a fantastic job in a play. There is no pay, no lines, no time taking off allowed and a couple of other “perks”, but she will get to see Europe with it. Yes, her parents will have to help her, even though they would prefer getting a job as a waitress back home in Omaha. For some reason in Vienna, her passport does not get stamped. This allows her to go to Vienna and Zurich and to Amsterdam. Even with this opportunity, she does end up back in the states a couple of times. The people she meets, what happens with the play, how she survives, where she lives, and her love life is interesting and works for her. I guess you can say, things are meant to be.

I like the lines, My previous literary attempts had been labored little expectorations, painful but necessary, like a visit to the periodontist, but now I found I actually looked forward to spending time in the little world I was creating in the company of my new fictional friends. If necessity is the mother of invention, boredom and loneliness are the obstetricians of literature.”

DARING DENTAL: 1. “My teeth hit the ground first, nearly severing half my upper lip.” 2-“My French “father” from my previous sojourn, for example, fell squarely in the latter category, as did my new friend, apart from Fabrice the dental student, who was easily six foot nine with a face like Andre the Giant. But they were friendly,...” 3.-“Several bottles of wine later, Berthold pressed me against an ancient wall in a cobblestone alley & crushed his mouth onto mine. His breath tasted sour, of cigarettes & liquor, & he forced my jaw open to accept his tongue, which wriggled thick & slightly cold in my mouth, like a slab of reanimated sashimi. It took up a lot of space & uneager to suffer an undignified death by double-lingual asphyxiation, I was forced to store my own tongue in his mouth, pressing it somewhere between his undulating dorsum & the wet inside of his cheek. Berthold took this simple safety precaution for a show of passion & clamped both his hands on the back of my head, smashing his mandible into mine. Our incisors met with a crunch, faint but sickening all the same, like a greasy butter knife scarping against a china plate. 4.-“You bite off an inch, & a piping hot gusher of runny white cheese coats your tongue, singeing the roof of your mouth,...”5.-“...their ventures expelling a frothy blizzard of half-chewed pistachio & sugared prune...6.-“...or the acids in your saliva will eventually render it illegible.” 7. [[“ **I take my teeth very seriously. I have had bad teeth, a common affliction in my family, although honestly, I’m lucky to have teeth. There is a strange errant gene among some of my relatives where they simply do not get adult teeth. It is very, very strange, & you think it would have evolved out of the genome I think one of my cousins has only five or six teeth that are his won, not because of poor dental hygiene or accidents, but because they just never came in”]] 8. [[“**Again, my bad gums, My bad everything, I am preoccupied with teeth in the way someone with a lot of cancer in their family is obsessed with checking for moles & lumps. I even married the son of a dentist.**”]] My previous literary attempts had been labored little expectorations, painful but necessary, like a visit to the periodontist,...” 10.-“Enzo is not doing the writing. Enzo is...how do you say it? Enzo studies to be a dentist” “A dentist?” I was sure I had misunderstood. “Si,” said Ivan. “A dentist. Is for the teeth.” He tapped impatiently with his fingernails on one of his incisors. “Enzo say you have very nice teeth.” ...”This is how people get sex-trafficked, I thought suddenly. They compliment your teeth/breast, they promise you ravioli, & the next thing you know you’re chained to a mattress while a mobster with a picture of Stalin tattooed on his chest shoves a curling iron up your ass & tells you he loves you.” 11.-There is a whole scenario about Rachel swallowing a cap that has been loose. She hasn’t had the money to fix it. She is with Jeroen & Mattijs who explain that in the Netherlands it is expensive to use a private dentist which she would have to do since it would take a couple of months before she could see a public dentist. Mattjis say he had an onion piece stuck in an empty space, & by the time he could see a dentist it had fused with his gum & had to be surgically cut out. She calls her mother who said to put the dental bill on a credit card. Rachel tells her that they don’t except credit cards for that. Jeroen says to her, “I’m afraid you will just have to pay a huge amount of money unless you happen yourself to know a dentist who can help.” She replies, “As a matter of fact, I think I do.” 12-“I screwed up my face & turned my head like a little kid deflecting the unwelcome saliva of an ancient aunt.” “I wanted to make it very clear to him that we were not lovers, that any acts I might feel compelled to engage in for the sake of my infected molar had nothing to do with love,..” “Are you a dentist too?” I asked” 13 - “I jerked away, running the tip of my own tongue over the stump of my tooth.” Turns out Enzo & Fabrizio are twin brothers & there is a big description of them. “...welcoming each other with wine-stained smiles.” 14-Fabrizio & twins mentioned but not in dental capacity. “If I had to sleep with any of them, it would be him (Ivan). He’d read Turgenev. And this had to be an important step on the road back to dental health.” I fuck-a your friend, now fix-a my crown.” 15.-“I wanted my tooth fixed. “NO!” I yelled. “I don’t! I just wanted to see a fucking dentist..” “Look at this,” I said, switching on the lamp beside the bed, & pulling back my lip to reveal the dead stump.” 16. [[“**Well, it’s a good story, and the dental emergency provided the impetus for this whole crazy adventure. And I also could not believe how different things are between the US and Europe in this regard that anything involving private dentistry could be that affordable was truly, truly shocking to me.**”]] . - Enzo grabbed my jaw & forced open my mouth to peer inside. Ivan stepped up to translate. “He say you lose your tooth.” “Mrrmmpphh,” I replied. “Aaaahh nnrhoooo.” “..”Ivan said, “He say you will need to put a new...how do you say it. .like the hat on the head of a king.” “Krrnnwnn,: I said.” “Si, si , crown. On the top.” Ivan pointed to his own magnificent gold-topped molar. “Also,” he continued, “Enzo think around it is a little bit...sick. Contagiato. You will need the medicine.” 17. p. 163 “Enzo tapped the stump with his finger. I wrenched my face away from his grip, my face clenching with pain.” “Can he fix it? I asked.... “He say he has not yet learned to make such a procedure. And he cannot make for you the letter for the medicine. If you want, he will make for you a time to see a true dentist. But he must tell you that it will be very, very expensive.” Jeroen calls her. “I have spoken to my mother, and it seems she has been able to find you an appointment with a dentist.” ---NOW YOU HAVE TO REALIZE THIS ALL TOOK PLACE IN A BEDROOM---18-“It is this afternoon. My mother was very lucky-she is a friend of the dentist’s**

sister-& as it turned out, there was a cancellation, so she was able to book the appointment for you. He is really one of the best dentists in Amsterdam. It will be like you are going to the dentist on Park Avenue. The only thing is that he is going to be—“Very, very expensive. I know.” ...”The appointment is yours if you want it.” :She figures if she doesn’t have enough money, maybe there will let her do a payment plan or work off the debt like cleaning toilets or disposing of biohazardous waste. “That afternoon, I grimly rode my bicycle to the dentist’s office.” “The office was filled with oriental rugs and tasteful artwork. A courteous receptionist checked me in, told me they had been expecting me, & I spent a realizing few minutes watching the koi play in an enormous wall tank & listening to Queen on the hi-fi before the dentist appeared & showed me into the examining room. Back in the States, my childhood dentist plastered his few remaining hairs over his scalp with what appeared to be saliva & wore eyeglasses with tinted ocher shades, like a forest ranger or a child molester, but this dentist dressed in white jeans & snug white Lacoste polo that showed off his tan , appeared to have stepped directly from the pages of a cologne ad. Despite my ordeal of the night before, I couldn’t help but feel a little bit turned on as he gently positioned my head against the foam doughnut at the end of the bench. I was aching & sexually traumatized, but I was still human. Maybe this was why I was paying extra. Maybe ugly dentists cost less.” 19-“The dentist worked quickly & silently, injecting my sore gum with Novocain & expertly fitting a temporary crown over the stump.” He gives her a RX & tells her his fee will be expensive since she doesn’t have national insurance. Evidently her version & the European version of expensive are 2 different things. It was only 82 euros. “The cap in my mouth felt foreign, cool, & smooth. I could have covered the dentist’s face in kisses & called him bellissimo. But that would be creepy.” 20-“..tooth for tooth) 21-Luke was observed to have two visible bite marks on either side of his neck. In Antonio’s forensic opinion, said bite marks could not have been made by the same person.” 22 [“I know that the vast majority of the dental hygienist are gentle, lovely people. But I had a very, very bad, almost Marathon Man-espqu experience with the one once from which I never recovered. I won’t go into details, and obviously it was mostly my fault for going so long without a cleaning (and for being generally predisposed to plaque buildup and bad teeth_ but let’s just say there were tears. And maybe some screaming and begging. And eventually I may or may not have had to be sedated. So it seemed like a good comparison for something I really do not like.”] “Normally I would prefer to be strapped to a dental chair while a meth-addicted HYGIENIST scraped plaque from my teeth with a razor blade than to go out to a nightclub.” 23-“Ben shuddered, “I saw Susan without her teeth in.” 24-“the threesome-aborted by the way-was with the fake Italian dentists,” I snapped.

A SLICE OF MURDER Chris Cavender – Widow Eleanor Swift is the owner of A Slice of Delight in Timber Ridge, N. C, & her sister Maddy helps her. When Eleanor’s delivery guy isn’t there to make a late night delivery, she does it. At the unfamiliar address, she finds a knife in Richard Olsen’s heart. She had just slapped Richard across the face recently, so she is Police chief Hurley’s number 1 suspect. As things heat up in the kitchen, so to speak, Eleanor realizes she has to find the killer so she still has her pizzeria. She opens the restaurant to show people she has nothing to hid, but temporarily stops pizza delivery. She & her restaurant are threatened. Throw in a romance David Quinton would like to have with her, but Eleanor doesn’t think she’s ready to let go of Joe’s memory.

CHEWY TIDBITS: 1. -“I put a disposable toothbrush & a travel-size toothpaste on the vanity.” 2.-“And I’ve got a sweet tooth the size of the Smoky Mountains,” 3.- “I wasn’t sure what I’d been expecting, but the eight customers dining at the time barely even acknowledged my existence. Nancy Taylor, our postmistress, nodded in my direction, and **Emily Haynes, a dental hygienist for Dr Patrick**, smiled at me, but that was it.” 4.-“Thanks, Nancy,” I said as Emily came up with her bill.” 5.-“**Emily** said, “That goes for me, too. I don’t think you did it for one second.”...”At least with a knife.” She pretended to ponder it for a moment, then added, “No, a poisoned mushroom would be more your speed. Or maybe arsenic in his sweet tea.” “I looked at the book tucked into her purse and saw that it was an old favorite written by Charlotte MacLeod.” You have much too vivid an imagination,” I said” “There’s no such thing,” she said as she winked at me.” 6.-“Come on, you know where the clean sheets and towels are, there’s a new toothbrush I haven’t gotten around to opening yet in the bathroom....”

[**Tim exposed this:** I remember that I was thinking of my dentist & hygienist when I wrote those passages, but for some reason I can’t fathom at the moment, I changed their names! I have no idea what I was thinking, but when I wrote the passage, I’d just come from a cleaning and my teeth had that lustrous pearly feel to them. Funny how the mind works, isn’t it]

DELICIOUS AND SUSPICIOUS-Riley Adams-When reporter Rebecca Adrian comes to Memphis in her quest for the best local BBQ, she does not leave, due to the fact she is murdered. Lulu Taylor the now owner of Aunt Pat’s barbeque is determined to find out who did it.

Dental Treat-“I thought the manuscript was as fictional as the tooth fairy.”

IN THE WOODS =Tana French =In Dublin three 12 year-old friends, 2 boys & a girl, go in the woods where they always play. Only 1 came out. Years later Det. Rob Ryan, the boy who survived, is working on a case of a 12 year-old girl who was murdered in almost the same neighborhood

DENTAL SCARES: 1. “Blood was caked on her nose & mouth & the tips of her front teeth.” 2. “Outside my door I could hear the rhythmic invariable sounds of Heather going through her nightly routine determinedly cleansing & toning & moisturizing, brushing her teeth for the dentist-prescribed three minutes, genteelly blowing her nose an inexplicable number of times.” 3. I also found bruising around the mouth & tooth marks on the insides of the lips, consistent with the perpetrator pressing a hand over her mouth.” 4. “It was a constant agony, consuming & debilitating as a toothache.” 5. “I love a nice white scone.” She said. “Them fruit ones get stuck in my falsies.” 6. “She sucked disapprovingly on her dentures.” 7. “I remember her neat little white teeth when she laughed,” 8. “Rosalind’s words—thirty biological clock, can’t afford to wait—rubbed at me like a broken tooth,”

9."I wish I could have asked Jonathan Devlin whether he actually believed in the teeth of all the historical evidence, that this one time public opinion would make a difference, or whether he knew all along, & needed to try anyway."

THE QUEEN OF PATPONG-Tim Hallinan In Bangkok American Poke Rafferty is married to Rose, who used to be a Patpong bar dancer. They adopted Miaow, a former street child. Then a man from Rose's past, whom she thought she killed, comes back into her life, & it isn't good for her or anyone else.

DENTAL MARKS- 1. "Two years from now you'll be black as a boot, & your gums will bleed when you smile." 2. "You could see her teeth through her cheek." 3. "Where Rafferty feels as though the asphalt is jumping up to meet him jamming his joints & making his teeth click like castanets." 4. When she tried to smile, she revealed a chipped front tooth." 5. "Nana put a hand up over her mouth as she talked, probably trying to mask the broken tooth." 6. "The day brightens before his eyes, & his mind is moving so fast he can see the specks of dust floating between him & Homer, so fast it gives him time to plan the move that brings the palm of his free hand up sharply beneath the tip of the leather sheath, driving it up, tearing Horner's lip & maybe breaking an incisor, then smashing it into his nose."

STAR ISLAND =Carl Hiaasen. Cherry Pye is 21 & has been a pop star since she was 14. She's really not bright, can't sing & has been doing drugs, alcohol, & having sex almost since that time. Cherry doesn't know her parents the Buntermans have hired stand-in Ann DeLusia for her to be used when she can't be out in public. Candy likes her body guards a certain way. There seems to be no stopping her. Including her parents, her manager, her twin publicist, & body guards aren't normal. Of course the paparazzi are always around. Paparazzo Bang Abbott thinks Ann is Candy & kidnaps her believing he can shot pictures of her for 24 hours & make a ton of money. There is a murder.

DENTAL DOUBLES: 1."One young woman was almost as famous as she was, owing to a co-starring role on a popular cable sitcom. The woman played the perpetually horny neighbor of a beleaguered single mom who was working her way through dental school." 2. "Why don't junkies ever brush their teeth? she wondered. Guy can afford a \$300-a-day smack habit but he can't afford some freaking floss? 3. "No, your daughter goes for the scrawny no-talent scag freak with rotted teeth." 4. One CD is titled "runaway Tongue." 5. "His stained teeth were tiny & nubbed; it looked like stale rice kernels had been implanted in his gums." 6. "Although Bang Abbott had been blessed with a flaccid conscience, he felt an occasional prick of regret concerning his role in the unfortunate mauling of Terence Hughes, an orthodontist from Montreal who'd come to Florida on a 4 day vacation with his family. Hughes was not an incautious fellow, & he'd done nothing to deserve what happened to him." Hughes get more lines than these due to his butt-cheek reconstruction. He had a shark attack happen to him. 7. "they stood the same height & had the same lupine smile, due to oversized incisors inherited from their father, yet the twins were taken for cousins more often than sisters." 8. "...which he confiscated in the hope of isolating a fingerprint or salivary DNA." 9. "and kept a jar filled with the shark's pointy teeth on his desk..." 10. "Except for his flawless dentition, the man looked like a street person." 11. "His smile was outstanding," said Janet Bunterman. Realizing how that might have sounded, she added quickly, "the dental work, I means, For a homeless person? Off the charts." 12. "Skink, who was picking his teeth with a desiccated mockingbird beak, said nothing." 13. "his thousand-watt smile causing Janet Bunterman to tingle self-consciously." 14. "One of the contestants had been reduced to tears by her buff, toothsome trainer."

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