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Staying awake while on a blind date with an anaesthetist was the hardest thing Stella had ever had to do. The rugged good looks, the large bank balance the man opposite surely must have, along with the six sugars she had put in her triple espresso were no match for the industrial-strength blandness that gushed out of him in great waves.

Her eyelids faltered again and started to descend, stopped only by a burning desire not to fall asleep face-first in the bowl of apple crumble and custard in front of her. She had not started her dessert yet as he had not picked up his spoon and it would be rude to go ahead without him. She stared at the custard which was beginning to grow a skin. 'Custard's last stand,' she thought and giggled at her own joke. The timing could not have been worse as he suddenly smiled and said, 'Ah, I see you appreciate a good sense of humour.'

What had he just said that was supposedly funny? She had not been listening for the last half hour or so and cursed her bad luck for laughing at the wrong moment. She did not want to encourage ... what was his name again? She gave a faint smile, trying not to give the impression that she was actually agreeing with him. But he was off and running again, his streams of consciousness becoming a river in full flood that could not be stopped.

Stella thought back to the profile she had read, trying to remember his name. Bill? Barry? Bob? She was sure it started with a 'B', but in her mind he was a definite 'F', a fail.

Instead of providing some mild amusement, the 'F' only served to remind her of the pile of unmarked homework that she had abandoned in favour of this date. That now seemed more appealing than sitting here. She picked up her spoon and began to eat the cold crumble, despite his dessert still lying untouched. She was tired of waiting.

'It's true,' she thought, looking at him briefly over her spoon, 'men can't multi-task. He is unable to eat and be incredibly boring at the same time.'

She blamed him for the skin on her custard and spooned it to one