

Our Creative Writing mission this time was to write about a 'Sliding Doors' moment that had changed our lives. Carol took it one step further and took us briefly into a magical world...

TO GO OR NOT TO GO...

By Carol Smalley.

'Should I go or should I stay?' Clifford felt sure that was a song going through his head. 'What do they call it now - an earworm?' He asked himself.

I am not going to change my mind again. I'm definitely leaving The Ring to make my own way in the wide world. The wide world to him was the other meadow that visiting goblins had talked about, usually after supping on buttercup juice. He crept out at 5am the next morning, making his way silently out of the Fairy Ring and across the meadow. An animal with enormous legs and cloven hooves suddenly towered above him, its huge, eye was only an inch away, staring at him. He fled back to the safety of the Fairy Ring, knowing he would never leave again.

Sliding Doors moment: Clifford made his way cautiously out of the Fairy Ring and across the other meadow. The animal towering above him lowered his head and eyed him with interest then mooed and asked "Do you want a lift fairy? If you do, hop onto my nose then clamber onto my back. In fact I should ask why you can't fly — aren't you a fairy?" Clifford had never flown it was frowned upon in the Fairy Ring. He hopped onto the cow's nose, then his back and fluttered his wings. Within seconds he was flying around the cow's head. He realised there was a lot more to life than just staying safely in The Ring and that making the right decision had changed his life.

SPRING FLOWERS

by Carol Smalley

I decided I would shop in Sainsburys for a while after I was propositioned in Morrisons. I was at the fish counter picking out some nice cod when their cleaner sidled up to me and told me there was a cleaning job going there. "Why don't you apply," he suggested, "so we can cosy up in my cleaning cupboard?"

It wasn't a big surprise. Men tend to find me attractive, and I had passed the time of day with him before. The problem was, when I got home, I had forgotten to get milk, so I popped into the local shop. They sold everything at a slightly marked up price, but were brilliant during Covid, when I wouldn't go into supermarkets.

"Hi there, haven't seen you for a while," was Suj's greeting. "Anything else for you love?" I knew what that meant. Just another man finding me irresistible. On my way out he followed me to the door and started chatting about the weather and this and that and eventually got round to asking if I was free sometime. It must be my recently acquired perm, I thought. He was rather good-looking although thirty years my junior. I looked into his big brown eyes and sighed "Yes".

He thrust some flowers in my hand that I'd noticed in a big container by the checkout and asked, "Could you help out in the shop occasionally? Mum can't manage it at the moment. Just a bit of cleaning and filling up the shelves." Do I look like I need a job? I wondered, It was probably just an excuse to get to know me better, as I say, most men find me desirable.

"OK", I replied, as I trundled off with the small bunch of pretty spring flowers.

If he didn't mind the age gap neither would I. When I start helping out tomorrow, I decided, I will wear my tank top and my new M & S shorts.

It's been a few weeks now since I started my afternoon stint at the local shop and Suj still hasn't made any advances towards me. I understand that he is, no doubt, so enamored with my charms he doesn't know how to go about it. In fact, I have noticed that he often has a lot to do in the back room when I arrive. Still there is that rather polite, kindly man with a twinkle in his eye who calls in regularly. He asked me last week if I could help him out with some cleaning, as things were getting a bit much for him since his wife died. It must be an excuse to get me inside his bungalow — he is my age. Things are looking up.