

## Orange Juice

by Michael Rosen

We get orange juice  
delivered to our door  
with the milk,  
on Mondays, Wednesdays and Fridays.  
We get one pint of milk  
one carton of orange juice.

So,  
one Monday morning  
I go out there  
and there's one pint of milk  
and  
no orange.

So I go,  
'Damn - the milkman's  
forgotten to deliver the orange.  
I love orange juice for breakfast.'

So on Tuesday,  
I got up in time to meet the milkman  
and I say to him,  
'Hey, you forgot to deliver the orange yesterday.'  
'No, I never,' he said.  
'Afraid you did,' I said.  
'I delivered your orange yesterday,' he says.  
'Well it wasn't there when I came  
to collect it.'  
So I got another one off him.

On Wednesday,  
same again,  
one pint of milk  
no orange.

So on Thursday  
I waited for him again.  
'No orange yesterday,' I said.  
'Look I delivered it,' he says.  
'Well it's disappearing,' I say.  
'Someone's nicking it then,' he says  
And off he went.

Suddenly,  
my mind began to think ...  
Who is it creeping up to our doorstep?  
Who's getting our lovely orange  
for their breakfast?

Someone on their way to work?  
Someone walking a dog?  
Someone who nips out and collects it  
and nips back in again  
and then shares it out round the family?

So I made a plan.

On Friday  
I got up  
same time as the milkman,  
picked up the orange carton  
took it indoors  
emptied the orange out into a jug  
poured in some orange squash  
up to about five centimetres from the top  
and then I took some  
hot Jamaica sauce we've got.  
And I don't know whether you know  
what that's like  
but if you just put a little speck of it  
on your tongue  
it feels as if someone's put a match  
in your mouth.  
I love it. I put it on my rice.  
So I took this stuff  
and I shook in half a bottle-load of it.  
shuk shuk shuk shuk  
yeah  
shuk shuk shuk shuk  
yeah.  
Then I sealed up the carton  
and put it back on our doorstep  
in exactly the same place  
and then I went back to bed.

Now I had wanted to stay awake  
but I dozed off by mistake.

Anyway  
when I got up  
I went straight to the front door  
opened it and  
hohoho  
there was one pint of milk  
and NO orange.  
I was so pleased.

And then I thought -  
I made up a little scene in my mind.  
I thought,  
Maybe,  
my orange thief is  
someone who nips out  
nicks the orange,  
nips back in  
and shares it out with the family.  
So this morning,  
this person did just that.  
Gets back indoors,  
opens up the orange  
everyone sitting round the breakfast table  
pours out a glass for everyone  
lifts up the glass

and goes,  
'Here's best wishes to those lovely people  
at number 11  
who give us our fresh orange.'  
Raises it to the lips,  
gulps,  
and  
phoooooor  
It feels like someone's  
jammed a banger in his mouth.  
His mouth's on fire  
And he goes dancing round the house  
for the next hour,  
stuffs his head under the tap  
fills his mouth with water,  
goes off dancing round the house again  
he can't get rid of it.

Maybe that's what happened  
Maybe it didn't  
It could have been a woman  
it could have been a kid.  
All I know is  
we haven't lost any more orange  
since.

Hohohoho.

*This poem was selected as part of the BritLit project. To find out more about BritLit visit our TeachingEnglish website: <http://www.teachingenglish.org.uk/britlit>*