

GEORGE SHAW

Pissing down as usual. This pub will do as usual. The lovely time-sucking darkness. Pint of Guinness, please. I was going to have something different. Fuck it, I've ordered now. I don't like Strongbow. Nuts? No, too early. Another pint of thin English Guinness. Barman couldn't give a shit. The telly's on isn't it. Can't take his eyes off it. 'Homes Under the Hammer' or something like that. When did it all start? I thought this was the kind of crap people escaped their homes from. Homes under the hammer. Thanks. Cheers. That seat opposite the door will do. I can watch all the comings and goings. No fucking beer mats. Vague smell of the bogs too. Where are they? Over there. Smells closer. Eye-stinging urinal soap wafting out every time the door opens. Hides the smell of piss I suppose. Fags used to do that of course. Everyone's outside standing in the rain, dragging on the stumps of fags with short bitter gasps. Not an ounce of pleasure. That's better. Well, I've had better and it could be worse. I'm a bit like dad, Sip, sip, sip and then a big mouthful to finish it off and another of the same. Sip, sip, sip. I've known others who drink half the pint in the first mouthful. Where's that pen? No beer mat. Pen. Not a fucking beer mat in sight. What's this bit of paper? Cashpoint receipt. Bloody hell. What's the fucking point of putting an advert for the bank on the back? It's a conspiracy against blank paper. Fag smoke drifting in every time the door opens. I wish I'd got some nuts now. Why's this pint making such a mess? The table is wet through. That's what beer mats are for. Who told me that every beer mat costs the landlord 20p and because of that they end up using the same mat over and over again and then it becomes a health and safety thing. I wonder if it's true? Beer mats full of bacteria. Homicidal beer mats. Attack of the killer beer mats. Who told me that? Seems unlikely that a beer mat could cost 20p. They've got adverts on the back anyway so the advertisers should pay the landlord. It's like there's a hole in this glass. Condensation. No sooner are they back inside than they're outside again. A quick couple of slurps and then back outside. A great mess of fag ends and flicked ash by the door. Stale stink lingering there like a ghost waiting for opening time. I wonder how many fags I've smoked in pubs. I've never smoked in my life, but I bet if you opened up my lungs it would look like I'd had a few. I'll have another pint. I could ask the barman if he's got a piece of paper. He must have something. Pint, peanuts, piece of paper please. This table is covered in wet circles like a little drawing of the last ten minutes.