

# 16 Tonnes Of Ham

There was something that happened not that long ago that got me to thinking. And that, as we all know, is a dangerous thing.

You see, there was a report, just prior to last Christmas that 16 tonnes of ham had been stolen from a local butcher. 16 tonnes!

My immediate thought was that it shouldn't be too hard to track down the man who now had this 16 tonnes of ham. It should really be quite simple – the police should put out a statement asking that any member of the public who has or is invited to a Christmas lunch in the back of a Primo van – to contact them immediately. Could just see Aunt Ida sitting in there amongst the meat hooks and blood and guts walls, her party hat on, popping a bon bon with Uncle Wayne.

Then I started thinking, where on earth do you hide 16 tonnes of ham? I mean this food is a perishable. It's not like you can hide it under the bed or put it in the back shed. It needs to be moved – fast. 16 tonnes.

You can't just go home to the wife and say "Hello love, it seems I've had a bit of luck in the raffles down at the RSL... and well, I've won 16 tonnes of ham. We're going to need some more refrigerator's."

No that won't work, because that would make the job unprofitable. You can't plan the robbery of 16 tonnes of ham, pull it off, only to then have to turn around and purchase Harvey Normans entire electric whitegoods department. No, you can't do that – that simply isn't profitable ... plus you'd never be able to look the League Of Extraordinary Theft club gentlemen in the eye again.

It's at about this point you start thinking why on earth did they rob the local butchers ... or *Purveyor of Fine Meats* stash? If you're going to perform a robbery at Christmas time, wouldn't you do a bank, or a hotel or god forbid, a petrol station? Hell, a toy shop would even do.

Don't fall for that 'No Cash Kept On Premises' thing. Especially at service stations. I've seen those signs and I'll let you in on a little something – they're all a load of codswallop.

And how do I know this?

I know, believe it or not, because I have on occasion had the pleasure of frequenting service centres, purchasing mints. Not meat mince, but breath freshening mints. And I know they keep cash on the premises? How?

I know because when I have paid for these mints, with cold hard cash in the form of \$2 coins, the attendant doesn't suddenly jump up from behind the counter, dash

outside and find somewhere to hide my money, oh noooooo ... he puts it in a till *ON THE PREMISES*.

Anyhoo, so , here you have 16 tonnes of ham, and you need to move it fast. But the cops are smart. They have put the scandal all over the radio, TV, internet ... everyone knows about the missing 16 tonnes of ham. And right now, after all the good work has been done, you have nothing but 16 tonnes of hot hams in your hot little hands, which makes it nigh near on impossible to move them before they start stinking up the neighbourhood like a pig cemetery.

It's not like drugs. Like smack. Or coke. Or ice. Oh no. This is ham. You can't find some seedy alley way, hide in the shadows, waiting for someone to wobble past before going "Psst ... you want to buy some ham."

No, to my knowledge there aren't any ham junkies out there. No one standing there scratching the scabs on their arms asking if you've got any "Honey Leg Spesh". Then again their might be some weirdo's out there who are indeed hooked on the ham. Maybe they smoke it. "Yeah man ... I love smoked ham man."

You've planned the gig, pulled it off, but the hams are hotter than Easters Cross buns, so what are ye gonna do?

Well... you're going to have to use them as presents.

Imagine, Christmas morning, and there he is – Dad – managing the gift giving as he does every year.

"Get in under that there tree Johnny and see what present you've got."

So little Johnny digs in under the Christmas tree, which by the way is the size of a small mountain right there in the lounge room. A mountain of garish gift wrapping and gold stars. In fact, the pile of presents under the tree this year is so big , and the tree so high and far away that some guy called Hilary has turned up wearing climbing gear asking if he can mount your tree. Which of course you have politely declined and asked him to leave. His little friend as well.

So Johnny digs in under the tree, all agog with excitement, and brings out a present with his name written on the little tag. He's got a lot of Christmas presents this year he's noticed and is very excited.

After two or three attempts Little Johnny has finally lugged the present over to the sofa and although a little puffed, he vigorously tears at the wrapping, sending it flying.

"My god!" little Johnny yelps. "It's a ham. Just what I've always wanted"

Dad sits back in his couch chair, contented smile on his face. Meanwhile Little Johnny is thinking “What the hock am I going to do with a ham?”

‘Get in their Johnny... see what your next present is.’ His father says.

So Little Johnny dives in again, heaves another *very heavy* present out, rips the paper off, and shouts a little less enthusiastically “It’s another ham!”

His Dad is still smiling knowingly, reclining and nodding away as Little Johnny’s thinking to himself again “ What the double hock am I going to do with a pair of hams? “

And so it goes, until all the kids have opened all the presents, and after all the wrapping paper is tossed away and into the rubbish can, they are left with about a tonne and a half of hams each. Little Johnny in particular is knackered by this stage, needing a wee sleep from all the hard work, thinking to himself “What the hock am I gonna do with 311 hams?”

Meanwhile, all the neighbourhood kids are out in the street, riding new bikes, skateboards, driving remote controlled cars, playing with new puppies and various other pets ... and here’s Little Johnny in the driveway, sitting on a ham trying to ride it like a horse. Or standing on a ham with one foot trying to skate it, or holding out a hand full of seed trying to get the pet ham to come to him.

All because the old man’s sublime heist went pear shaped and he couldn’t move the merchandise.

So, this Christmas, when you are tucking into your Christmas ham with family and loved ones nearby, spare a thought for Little Johnny and his sisters this Christmas, out the front of their house with their “ham me downs !”