

'The Rise and Fall of Hattie Natterjack'

by Chris Brake

Synopsis

A village bake-off rivalry reaches terrible new extremes.

Age Range

40+

Gender

Female

Length

2 - 3 minutes

THE RIVAL:

That Hattie Natterjack's been up to her usual.

Antagonistic cow.

She bends the rules and tests my patience, but now a line's been crossed.

So I'm shuttering our frenemyship once and for all.

I will not suffer that woman's chicanery for a single minute more.

We started out nice and pally enough.

Both major players in the Nether Compton Bowls Club.

Both willing and eager calendar girls for our chapter of the W.I.

(Points to self) Miss March.

And both of us highly in-demand knitters of alpaca-hair cardis that we flog 'round the town.

On paper we should have been thick as thieves.

Sisters-in-arms.

Bosom buddies, and by George, does Miss August have the lion's share of those.

But it's broken us, this rivalry.

And she's taken it too far.

The first year we did it, enter the bake-off, she very amicably lost.

I, on the other hand, took home a blue ribbon for my Caramac chocolate torte.

The next year, she shot back with a tangy lemon drizzle cake carved in the shape of our Mayor.

Well, since he was judging it was something of a shoe-in, so the ribbon went home with *her*.

The next year, I stepped up my cake aesthetics.

Made a replica in gingerbread of the local village church, complete with Jaffa Cake jelly for stained glass windows, an edible altar embossed in gold leaf, and a chocolate finger crucifix for Jelly Baby Christ.

Well, Miss Natterjack had me ejected from the fête.

Loudly denounced it as "blasphemous goods".

So that did it for me.

Disqualification.

And my entry went straight in the bin.

It was all a ruse though, devious witch.

She doesn't believe in God.

Hattie Natterjack is no more C of E than I am a Roman Pope.

All she wanted was for me to be out, so her coconut loaf would win.

And it did.

This year I decided I was having none of it though.

She went beyond the pale.

The rules clearly state: "no exceeding two layers when submitting a sponge".

But she snuck in a third on a nod and a wink, and I'll not be played for a fool.

So I spiked it.

With arsenic.

Slipped it into her cake.

I'll not be bested by rule-breaking bakers, and I won't come second to *her*.

And the best part is, once the judge tastes it, I can frame her for bumping him off.

She'll be scuppered then.

There's motivation.

A *reason* she'd want him done.

See, since our first bake-off she's harboured a grudge.

This judge, he snubbed her buns.

She never forgave him.

Hated his bones.

So now she's taking his life.

Via me.

It's always griped her I won that year.

That the blue ribbon landed with me.

It's a blemish to her.

A blot on her record.

But after today she's done.

She'll not win another bake-off Miss Natterjack.

She'll be cooking up slop in the clink.

But she has to learn.

You play by the rules.

And you never submit three layers.