

Measure Twice Cuss Once

**The Funny Tales Of A
Tradesman**

**By
Ryan Daniels**

Printed edition:

Also available in multiple e-book formats.

Published by:

The Endless Bookcase Ltd,
Suite 14 STANTA Business Centre, 3 Soothouse Spring,
St Albans, Hertfordshire, AL3 6PF, UK.

More information can be found at:

www.theendlessbookcase.com.

Copyright © 2026 Ryan Daniels

All rights reserved.

Printed ISBN: 978-1-918379-34-1

eBook ISBN: 978-1-918379-33-4

To the hard-working men and women in construction:

Who build the world around us,
who measure meticulously, fix what's broken. For every early
morning, for every long day and for occasionally calling on a
few choice words to get the job done.

This one's for you.

Regards

Ryan

Knowledge

Born and raised in London, the capital of England, Ryan Daniels was surrounded by friends and relatives who were all employed at various levels of the construction industry. Ryan has almost thirty years of experience in the construction industry, having worked as a tradesman, foreman, site manager, material buyer, and merchant, among other roles. When working on the tools, on the site, at the office, in the merchants, or simply having a few drinks at the pub, Ryan has been able to compile and recall more than thirty years of experience and turn it into brief but hilarious stories with amusing illustrations that will make you laugh aloud.

For legal reasons, names, dates, places, events, and details have been changed, invented, and altered for literary effect. The reader should not consider this book anything other than a work of literature.

Sponsors

My sincere thanks go to my book sponsors,
whose generous support made this book possible.



<https://www.jcamerchants.com/>



https://www.youtube.com/@rugabooca_camera



<https://linktr.ee/urbansanitation>

Foreword

Ryan Daniels came as one of a group of tradesmen to help update our heating system in our new home. He became aware that I'd published some books and, unexpectedly, asked me about the writing/publishing process because he wanted to record some of the funny things that he'd experienced working 'on the tools'.

To my surprise, he contacted me again a couple of years afterwards to tell me he'd written the book, spoken to Carl French at the Endless Bookcase, and asked if I would write a foreword!

What you will find here are some hilarious tales of life 'behind the scenes'. Be warned, the air can turn blue at times, but that's all part of the charm of this little book. My late husband was a man of the tools; quiet, polite and very good at what he did – though I now see there was another side to his working environment that I remained blissfully unaware of – until reading Ryan's book!

A great gift for apprentices and 'old hands' alike who will no doubt want to tell their own stories as they occur.

Apart from being a great plumber and a brilliant musician, Ryan now intends to make his mark as a published author and I wish him every success with it.

Gail Hugman

Contents

Foreword

Chapter One Scrap Metal.....	1
Part One Tarmac Danny.....	3
Chapter Two Nicknames for colleagues.....	11
Part One Fat Tony	13
Part Two Rear Naked Chopper.....	19
Part Three The Angry Gnome	24
Chapter Three When You've Got To Go You Got To Go....	33
Part One Chris The Sparks.....	34
Part Two Ruggy and Butternut (Department Head)	39
Chapter Four The Merchants	43
Part One The Two Ronnie's	44
Chapter Five The Joker.....	51
Part One Hilarious Harvey	53
Chapter Six The Lottery	59
Part One Gorgeous George	60
Chapter Seven Crazy Customers	69
Part One Red Stanley Salvage Hunter.....	70
Chapter Eight The Verifiable And The Diabolical.....	77
Part One Colin the Cowboy.....	79
Part Two Mad Micky	85
Part Three The Hounds.....	94

Chapter One

Scrap Metal

“What happens when you eat aluminium foil?”

“You sheet metal.”

In the construction industry, you’re always looking for some kind of opportunity; an occasion to earn some extra cash, a bit on the hip, a sweetener, an incentive, a top-up, an added extra, a PJ (private job), a perk, a Brucie bonus. A moment in time to be able to slip an extra few notes into your pocket, which will allow you to treat the kids, your partner, or maybe just yourself to a nice little well-earned treat.

Scrap metal is undoubtedly one of the ways that you can achieve this; if the haul weighs a reasonable amount and the metal has a high value, then the bonus might be very lucrative indeed.

There are all types of scrap metal waste, and it all has a value. These scrap metal materials come in different shapes and forms, i.e., sheet metal, roofing, rebar, flashings, pipes, window frames, doors, furnaces, ductwork, wires, cables, bathtubs, fencing, bicycle frames, automotive body parts, machinery, garbage cans, metal furniture, tyre rims, the list goes on and on. But, if you had a choice of what scrap metal, then copper, brass, and lead would be it.

Whether it is an old property or a brand-new property, you will find one, if not all, of these metals as part of the building’s construction.

Unbeknownst to the client, this is the secret benefit for the arriving tradesman.

You’ve just got to be lucky, and so it is best to keep your eyes open.



Part One

Tarmac Danny

Tarmac Danny was a roller driver who laid tarmac asphalt on roads, car parks, driveways and other areas. Danny and I had been friends for many years, and I would frequently bump into him at this Irish drinking club in north London.

Danny was a tall, powerful man with broad, stocky shoulders and shovel-like hands. Danny had a seriously powerful grip and could easily out-swear chef Gordon Ramsey.

He resembled a combination of actor Pat Roach, aka “Bomber”, in the 1980s British television series *Auf Wiedersehen Pet*, and the iconic Hollywood legendary actor, Paul Newman.

Danny was part of a small, close-knit, diligent, hard-working asphaltting crew. Like all the other men in the team, Tarmac Danny was rough and tough.

Asphaltting was a demanding, backbreaking game, and it was not as profitable as some of the other trades in construction can be. Tarmac Danny and his crew were constantly on the lookout for ways to increase their pay by earning a few extra quid. This time, a fantastic opportunity presented itself, and Danny, of course, didn’t mess about but took full advantage of it.

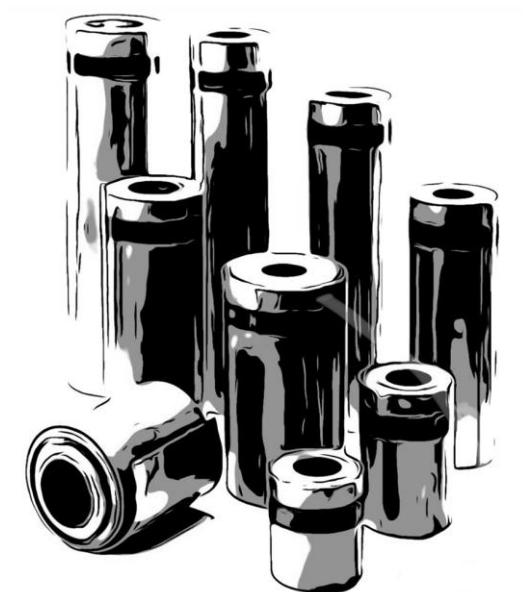
Danny tells the story:

Well, me and the boys were working over the Ruislip area on this large new building site. We were doing the usual, you know, laying all the driveways, bin stores, and roads, right around all these freshly built flats and houses. Me and the boys had just finished having our afternoon tea break when all of a sudden this open-backed truck arrived with a delivery for the roofers.

Guess what was on there...

Roof tiles?

Rolls of lead



Yes, fucking roof tiles! You idiot.

It was a load of gorgeous lead, rolls of the fucking stuff, brand spanking new, just sitting there on the back of the truck, grinning at us, ripe for the picking.

In a short space of time, all the roofers strolled up and the driver got out of his cab. Fat little fucker he was, proper egg on legs. Without a doubt, I would willingly place a bet that he must have visited every roadside cafe from here to Scotland. Well, Porky begins to offload the lead, and the roofers start transferring it into their metal storage shed.

When the roofers had finally finished storing all of the lead away, one of the roofers, a big, long, lanky, lurch-looking tosser, the foreman I assume, pulls out a key from his hi-vis jacket pocket. He then starts securing the door using this big, old, chunky padlock.

We all sat there closely watching him as he tucked the padlock