

**Case Studies in
Modern Life
By
Drew Payne**

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Index

Story	Page
For Five Minutes A Day, Only	5
My Boyfriend's Due Back	7
Keeping It Fresh	11
Choose One Cake Only	15
The Boy from Bootle	18
It's Time	21
A Weekend with Family	23
Those Moments	26
Once More with Feeling	29
Love & Need	32
The Magazines in the Reception Room	35
Over in Sixty Seconds or So	45
In the Next Breath	48
The Men Who Took Their Vows Together In East Ham Registry Office	50
Jonathan Roven is Lost	53
In Sam's Room	79
A Night Out with the Boyz	82
Appetite	85
Easter Witness	88
Praying in the Stock Cupboard	91
Crocuses In Spring	93
A Morning at the Beach, In the Warm Sun	96
Case Studies, An Afterword	99

For Five Minutes a Day, Only

I savour it. Pushing the sweet and full taste around my mouth, feeling the almost velvety texture of it on my tongue. I adore the way it melts in my mouth, the crisp crunch when I first bite into it, then so quickly it melts into that smooth and rich texture, which allows me to savour it for so long. I will carefully move it around with my tongue, savouring it with the different parts of my mouth. The luxury of it.

Today it was cheap milk chocolate from the supermarket, quantity not quality I wanted. I had five minutes to eat it, large chunks of it pushed inside of my mouth as quickly as possible. The sheer volume of its sugary flavour, mixing with the creamy texture. The excitement of it as I ate it all within five minutes.

Some days I would eat small bars of expensive, luxury chocolate, Belgium chocolate with a high coca content. Other days I would choose flavoured chocolate or chocolate with pieces of fruit or mint within it. Other days again I would have cheap chocolate, going simply for volume and a full sugary flavour.

It is my daily five minutes of self-indulgence, to eat one bar of chocolate within those five minutes (no matter what the size, though the higher the quality the smaller the amount of it I will eat; I wanted to fully enjoy its expensive flavour). Otherwise, I eat healthily, I exercise regularly and I keep a close eye on my body.

My diet is careful; I eat a high-vegetable and low-fat diet. Only white meat for me, and I keep a close eye on the dairy products. I prepare most of the food I eat myself, I never eat anything processed, and I only buy from two food outlets. (They are both places I know and trust.)

I am very dedicated to my exercise regime. Monday, Wednesday and Friday I visit the gym. Tuesday, Thursday and Saturday I go for a five to ten k run. Sundays I go for an hour's cycle ride. I would include swimming in my regime, but my local pool closed two years ago.

I take care over my appearance; it's not vanity, it's simply making the most of myself. I'm gay, and if I want to attract a good-looking man I have to look good too. It's as simple as that.

As a child I was fat and plain. No one looked at me twice, or if they did it was to insult me. I didn't have any real friends. Food and television were my companions, and as a child I took full pleasure in their company. I hated my childhood. I was fat and unattractive.

When I eventually came out I knew I had to do something about how I looked. I had started to go to gay bars, but I was only sneered at or ignored. So I decided to make a change. I changed my diet and took up exercise. It was a hard challenge to begin with, so often I simply wanted to give up and return to my old ways, but the more I persevered with it the more I saw the results. Soon I was being noticed, and as the weight fell off me the more men I attracted. Now, with my carefully maintained body, I can attract a man whenever I want to, and I am never frustrated, in the sexual sense, anyway. I am a hit on all those pickup apps.

The problem still remains with chocolate. I loved chocolate so much while I was growing up I would have happily lived off it alone, if I had been allowed to. It was the one thing I missed when I changed my diet. At first I would fantasise about it, reminding myself how it tasted and the texture of it inside my mouth. Soon that grew into an obsession. I would purposefully walk past certain shops so that I could drool at the chocolate displays in their windows. I would actually dream of simply buying bars of chocolate.

Eventually I gave into it and developed, for myself, *my five minutes a day rule*. For five minutes each day I will eat just one full bar. I would carefully choose which bar, to give myself a variety of tastes and textures, so that in those five minutes I will savour all the pleasures that chocolate can offer me.

I then wait another five minutes, just five more minutes to enjoy the remainder of its taste left on my tongue, before I rush to the toilet and vomit that chocolate up again. I've done it so often now that I know exactly the right place to press on the back of my throat. One or two spasms and I've vomited all that chocolate into the toilet bowl. I then use a mint mouthwash to hide that sickly smell of vomit and undigested chocolate, and I walk away for it. My weakness for the day is finished with, until the next day.

I have to purge it from my body, because if I didn't all the calories in it would make me fat again. And I can't be fat again.