

Weird Potato

Dan was peeling spuds whilst watching *Pointless* on the kitchen TV, when the weight of the potato stopped him.

He stared at it. It was too smooth, too round, although Tess would probably tell him it wasn't truly spherical. She was in her study, experimenting. Dan wanted children, but Tess was more interested in baby universes. Her PhD was on cosmogenesis.

The potatoes were a new, pink variety, but the surface of this one was marble streaked. It made him think of Jupiter, or Saturn, one of those swirly, gaseous, inconceivably huge planets. Attacking it with the peeler felt wrong.

He knocked on Tess's door, waited, knocked again.

"Tess! I've discovered a new planet!"

The door opened an inch, and Tess peered out, her uncombed hair twisted into a topknot. Dark, defiant strands had escaped and hung over her eyes. "What?"

He presented the spud.

She frowned. "You interrupted my work to show me a potato?"

"Not just any potato. A special one. Don't tell me you've done it? Is it an escapee baby planet?"

He looked faux-hopefully over her shoulder, unable to stop acting the jester, still pretending everything between them was fine.

Tess snorted. “Creating a universe would involve a machine larger than the Large Hadron Collider and a hypothetical seed particle that could bend spacetime. Success would create a miniscule wormhole tunnel leading to a separate universe. It would not result in a potato-sized planet in our kitchen.”

She slammed the door.

His face pinker than the potato, Dan returned to the sink, switched the TV off. He’d lost enthusiasm for pointless answers to pointless questions.

He tossed the potato in the air, caught it, grabbed the peeler. Something buzzed.

The automatic defence mechanism of the alien vessel in his hand reduced him instantly to glutinous sludge.

#end#

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