

The Deepest Cut

by Matt Potter

Smoke is pouring outta my ears! (And outta my mouth and nostrils, but that's normal.)

The Fast-o-matic Supermart has changed their coupons. Now you can't swap them for plastic surgery. So all those tubes of New Orleans-style Cottil-i-Lard dog sausage were bought for nothing.

And New Orleans-style Cottil-i-Lard flavour is not my favourite.

"Next election is gonna be real interesting," I said, wearing army fatigues as I stood in the check-out line swapping coupons for rubber sheeting.

"Why's that, Maureen?" said LaVern, patting her hair.

"The little people have had enough and there's gonna be a revolution."

"All 'cos you can't get discount face smoothing anymore?"

Where that LaVern leaves her brain, I got no idea.

"It's more than just my face, LaVern," I said, handing her the coupons. "Even my thighs have crow's feet."

"It's a free country," she said, popping the coupons in the cash drawer and pushing the rubber sheeting towards me. "No one ever made you smoke."

"If the government wants us to smoke so they can take our taxes, they should give us free plastic surgery so we can get rid of our smokers' wrinkles."

LaVern leaned over the conveyor belt and said under her breath, "Sounds like socialism, Maureen."

Ever since LaVern went to that community college last summer she uses these big words.

"Have fun looking *socialism* up in the dictionary," LaVern said, as I stuffed the rubber sheeting in my titanium-dipped carry-all.

I love this country but it's going to the dogs.

