



Sterlington Stairlift Stories for Children

by Philip W Baker

Laura's Lovely Ladies' Laboratory

Part 1. Who is Laura?

In the story about the crocodiles we found out that the famous dentist Les Rice was trained in a school for dentists in London.

Sometimes, when Les wasn't looking after crocodiles' teeth in other countries, he would go back to London and talk to young people who were learning to be dentists and tell them about the things he had done with teeth. The young people who were learning were called dental students.

One day Les was asked if he would be kind enough to talk to some students at a school near a place called Southsea. The school was quite close to the beach and there was a great big tall strange-looking tower not far away.

Les liked the school because it was in a new building and everything was very clean and tidy. After he had talked about teeth and dentists things for a while he asked if anybody had any questions and that was when he found out who Laura was.

She put her hand up to ask a question and Les noticed that she was very, very pretty smiled when she spoke, and spoke in a lovely clear voice. Afterwards Les and the students went to the coffee bar and talked some more before he caught the train back to London.

Les and Laura only ever met on that day and never saw each other again. But they did read about each other in the newspapers and now and then they were mentioned in the radio and television news programmes. It wasn't because they did the same types of things, it was because the things they did were unusual.

In different countries Les carried on helping crocodiles who had tooth problems and also started helping other kinds of creatures.

Laura finished studying at the school near Southsea then worked for a dentists business in the middle of England.

People who met Laura and looked at her carefully knew that she was incredibly pretty and had great big eyes. The whites of her eyes were very clear with no marks or blemishes and her skin was the same.

Some girls and women have spotty faces and wrinkles and moles and pimples, and other things they don't like when they look at themselves in a mirror.

They try all kinds of things to make their skin look nice and are always pleased to hear about new ideas to keep them pretty.

At first Laura didn't notice that she had such a nice face. To herself she was just Laura!

Part 2. What on Earth is Nitrous Oxide?

Her boyfriend was a musician and wanted to be a rock and roll pop star. Laura knew he would be famous one day because he was very keen and kept trying.

He worked away and in the end he made some records and did become very well known. His band was called "Laughing Gas" and they recorded some songs with ordinary sounding names and others with very strange sounding names.

One of the records was an old song called "I Love Candy" which had already been done by a chap called Brian Poole who sang with a group called The Tremeloes. But Laughing Gas changed the music a bit and made it very exciting to listen to and great to sing along to. It was very popular in dance halls and at parties.

They also did new songs called "Bossy Flossie", "The Gravity of my Cavity", "Mud Wrestling", "Drill my Pill", "Root Canal Blues", "Farmer C", "Greasy Lips", "Barcode Boogie", "Hydrogen Ion Concentration Camp", "Doctor Who and the Darlings", "Ginger Vitus", "Blue Tooth" and lots of others.

There was some good news and some more good news. The first bit of good news was that a long time ago a singer called Ricky Valance made a record of a song which had a very sad ending, but the song became very popular, especially with girls.

The other good news was that fifty years after the song was first played on the radio Laughing Gas made a new recording of it to remind people of what romantic songs used to be like.

The song was called "Tell Laura I Love Her" and on the day it was released Laura's boyfriend sent her a great big bouquet of red roses. She didn't know Laughing Gas had recorded the song so that was the first surprise and the roses were the second surprise. (In another story we'll tell you about the third surprise she got that day. See if you can imagine what it was!).

The song was popular all round the world and the Rock and Roll music industry people presented the members of Laughing Gas with their very own plaque.

But the fans wanted another record so Laughing Gas wrote a special new song called "How Could I Ignore A Laura Like You". It was a sensational monster hit and became known as the Nora-Laura song!

A few days after it was released Laura was looking through all the songs Laughing gas had sung and said "As a person who looks after people's teeth I must say that "I Love Candy" may not be a good idea."

“Why?” asked her boyfriend.

“Well”, started Laura, “you know that in some countries like America and Canada sweets are called candy, and you know that too many sweets can make people's teeth go bad, so saying 'I love candy' could mean someone eats too many sweets and may get toothache”.

“But in the song we did, Candy was the name of a girl. I expect her mum and dad call her that because they thought she was sweet enough to eat”, said her boyfriend.

“I know that”, said Laura, “But it does make you wonder if words in songs remind people of other things which are not good for them”. “Perhaps song writers should only write words which remind people of things which are good for them”.

“Good idea!” said her boyfriend. “For now, just think of the title of Ricky's song, my beautiful Flawless Floss” and he kissed her on the nose.

He called her “Flawless Floss” as a nickname because of her lovely clear skin and because she showed people how to use something called dental floss to clean between their teeth. It was a joke just between the two of them.

Whilst they were talking a clever thought flashed through Laura's mind and we'll tell you about that later.

By the way readers and listeners, Nitrous Oxide is something used by doctors and dentists. Another name for it is Laughing Gas.

Part 3. Gungy Gnashers

Even though Laura spent lots of time showing people how to keep their teeth clean, sometimes she felt a little bit guilty because there was something she didn't tell them.

What it was, the thing she didn't talk about much, the thing she just couldn't help herself over, the thing most people would be surprised about, was her secret passion for sticky cakes. Especially treacle tart! Some girls like sweets, most girls and their mums and grannies like chocolate, but nobody liked sweets as much as “Flawless Floss” liked sticky cakes.

There is an old saying “a little of what you fancy does you good”, and Laura, whose skin was as soft as a baby's ear lobe, thought that as long as she didn't eat too much and as long as she cleaned her teeth properly afterwards it would be alright to glop some sweet sticky tart now and then.

She was pleased that shops opened on Sundays, and that some of them opened until late in the evenings, so she could go and look at trays of cakes after work. The most fun was moving her great big eyes along each row, licking her soft warm lips and thinking which cake would be the best one to sink her gleaming white teeth into.

Laura had very nice teeth. They were even, the same shape and length on both sides as you looked away from the centre, no gaps between them, no chips or flecks, shiny and strong, and a very nice pure white colour. They weren't too long and they didn't stick out. They were just the right length and when she smiled her lips showed her teeth perfectly. It was nothing to do with her going to a dental school. She was simply lucky!

One Friday evening one of the other girls from the school near Southsea spotted Laura looking in a cake shop window. She waited whilst Laura looked along all the trays and rows of cakes, then went back to the top and started again. Then she seemed to be saying "eeny meeny miny mo ..." to herself and trying to choose which one to buy.

Then Laura flicked her finger at a big square shaped cake, which was covered in something too sticky to mention in a nice story like this, and the other girl heard her say "YOU!"

The girl who was watching was sure she saw Laura's mouth water as she went into the shop, and when she came out of the shop a few minutes later with something in a bag, she was sure her mouth was watering even more.

Laura walked to a long seat in a nearby shopping mall, sat down, opened the bag and spread it on her lap, then picked up the cake and closed her eyes in ecstasy as she bit into the soft pastry and the taste of the sweet sticky covering flooded her senses. "Absolutely delicious!" she said, slightly out loud. It sounded a bit muffled though, because her lips were stuck together, just a little bit, and the sticky stuff was all over her teeth so she could only open her jaws a small amount.

The other girl very kindly waited until Laura had put the last bit of cake into her mouth before she walked up to her. The other girl had a secret passion of her own and knew it would be horrible if someone disturbed her before she finished, so she waited.

Then she walked up to Laura, looked down at her and said in a soft friendly voice "Hello gungy gnashers!" She paused as Laura looked up, gulped, went a bit red, tried to laugh, almost choked on the last bit of cake, then slapped her own leg as her eyes started to water.

"Caught in flagrante delicto", said the other girl. "So this is what you groupies get up to at weekends is it?" "More like in flagrante delicious, that was so yummy", said Laura.

Some people call teeth "gnashers" and the other girl thought Laura's teeth looked all gungy so that's why she used that word.

"Just a minute", said Laura as she tried to finish off the last dregs of her naughty gungy cake.

"Have a drink" said the other girl, and handed Laura a can of Lemon and Lime Cascade she'd just bought.

"Thanks!", said Laura, "I'll buy you one back soon".

They sat and talked for quite a long time and Laura said she couldn't help buying a cake for herself sometimes, but she told her patients at the school to avoid eating them if they could because they were bad for teeth.

“Don't worry too much”, said the other girl, “I used to like sticky toffees. I knew that all the time my teeth were young and good they may be OK, but if I had to have fillings in them when I'm a bit older the toffees may pull the fillings out, so I stopped eating toffees”.

“Treacle tart can pull out fillings too”, said Laura, “and that's my favourite gungy cake, so perhaps I should give it all up as well!”

They promised each other not to tell anyone else about their favourite sticky secrets.

They talked about children's teeth and Laura said she hadn't treated many children at the school so far. She was a bit worried about children eating too many sweets which made their teeth go bad, and trying to keep children still while they were in the dentist's chair.

“I heard about a book written by someone named Donald Rice”, said the other girl. “I haven't read it yet but someone said he has some ideas about treating children. Perhaps we should both read it”.

Part 4. Donald Rice and Barry Cross

One of the girls went to a place called The Frewen Library and asked the people there to get hold of a book titled “Herkos Odonton” by Donald Rice.

When they got the book they read through it, sometimes they took it in turns to read to each other, sometimes they read bits alone. They both finished about the same time and thought the book was very interesting and full of good ideas. At the back was an e-mail address for the author and it said people who were interested in dental things could contact him.

So, one evening, Laura and the other girl sent an e-mail and a couple of days afterwards Donald Rice sent a reply. He said that he was a vet and looked after animals most of the time but his brother was a dentist who told him a lot of things about crocodile teeth and how to get different types of animals and people to be good when they are having their teeth seen to.

It was then that Laura realised she had met Donald's brother, Les Rice, the famous crocodiles' dentist. Donald and Les has worked together to write books and although Donald had done “Herkos Odonton” in his name, Les had given him lots of ideas for it.

Laura and the other girl wrote some questions they wanted to ask Donald and Les and sent them in another e-mail. They said “... we hope you don't think we are too cheeky asking lots of things in an e-mail but this is important to us and you and Les seem to know so much about how people and animals behave”.

The other girl asked a few questions about complicated things and Laura asked questions about children. Donald replied that it was no trouble and their questions were very sensible so he didn't mind answering them. He answered all the complicated questions the other girl had asked and told her there was more information in some other books he had written and told her where to find even more information.

To answer some of Laura's question about getting children to be good when their teeth are being treated, Donald gave her a hint. He said people need something to take their mind off what is happening and it need to be something they are VERY interested in.

He said that a long time ago he and Les had visited an Australian dentist named Barry Cross who had a surgery in Park Street, in a town called Croydon.

On the ceiling over the dentist's chair was a big photograph of Croydon town taken from an aeroplane. While he was checking people's teeth they were looking at the picture, trying to work out what all the buildings were and where Park Street was.

Looking at the picture took their mind off what the dentist was doing!

Part 5. Laura's Clever Thought

We said in Part 2 that we'd tell you more about the clever thought that flashed through Laura's mind.

The thought came from what she said about words in songs reminding people of other things. She knew that if somebody was doing something and suddenly thought of other things they could forget about what else was going on. She knew that when she thought about those delicious sticky cakes she could forget about teeth, studying, washing her hair, making the bed, cleaning the carpet, having a cold, going out in the rain, and just about anything else.

It was like some of the things Donald wrote to her about as well. Take people's minds off what is happening and give them something else to think about. Thanks to Barry Cross she knew what to try!

When somebody is in a dentist's chair they usually get tilted back a bit so the dentist can shine a light in their mouth. The dentist is usually at one side and there may be a nurse at the other side, so the person in the chair can't see much behind or to the side and they can't look down, but usually they can look upward.

So Laura had a special panel fixed over her dentist's chair and she had some loudspeakers fixed at the sides of the panel. Then she tried the experiment.

She thought about what people didn't like when they went to the dentist. Was it the noise things made, the smell of things, keeping their mouth open for a long time, being hurt, having to sit still, not being able to look around, or something else?

When someone brought a child to have their teeth checked and treated Laura asked the child "What kinds of things do you like best, for instance do you like films, games, videos or something else?" "Would you like to see a video or listen to some music or jokes?"

One boy said "I like Doctor Who, can I see him please miss?"

"Of course you can", said Laura, and the nurse put a Doctor Who video into a machine and it started playing on the panel on the ceiling. The boy gave a delighted chuckle and said "This is good, I like this!"

Laura looked at his teeth and spotted one which needed to be drilled and mended. She put her hand on his shoulder and said "Be brave captain, I've got to use the Xytron Kronos Reactor on you to stop the Dalek stingray penetrating your occipital lobe. Can you stand by for a short zap. It'll be over very quickly, just keep still, OK?"

"OK", said the boy, but his mum started biting her nails and looked a bit worried.

Laura rubbed some jelly on the boy's gum and gave him a small injection. His eyes didn't move much from the screen but he did jump a bit. "Brave soldier", said Laura. "Well done Sir", said the nurse. Mum said nothing but still looked a bit worried.

The nurse turned the sound up a bit and the boy didn't really hear the drill whirring around.

Laura wore white gloves and you couldn't see her pretty fingers underneath them, but her hands and fingers were quite small, even with the gloves on, and she worked quickly to drill the tooth, clean it with her special equipment, then put in a filling.

After some last checks she asked the boy to rinse his mouth and said "All done!"

"But I wanted to watch the end of Doctor Who!" he said.

"That's OK", said Laura, "you can see the end of it in the room over there, if it's OK with your Mum".

Mum agreed so the nurse noted the time on the video and took it over to the room which had a sign on the door saying "Recovery Room".

The boy and his mum watched the Doctor Who video to the end then the boy was happy and they went home. The video wasn't very long because Laura and the nurse had chosen one that was just the right length for them to do the job with a few minutes left over. How clever of them!

Some children weren't so calm and Laura had to try other things to get them to be good whilst she did their teeth. But most of the children liked watching things on the ceiling panel and wanted to go again.

One child was blind and couldn't see the screen so they played some music she liked and gave her some jokes. The jokes were on paper with bumpy writing called braille so she could read the words with her fingers.

One boy had a bad illness called MD. He couldn't move his legs and could only move his hands and head a little bit. But he could bite and could talk a lot. He moved around in an electric wheelchair called a power chair and steered it with a little stick called a joystick which was on a tray in front of him.

Laura did a lovely job cleaning his teeth and asked him to try biting down. "Put your finger in my mouth and I'll try them out", he said.

"Yelp!", said Laura. "That was really hard, you nearly bit my finger off!" He just grinned.

"Try that again and I'll let your tyres down", said the nurse, joking with him.

For all the children Laura saw she tried to find something they really liked to take their mind off some of the things she had to do look after their teeth properly.

Parents started to talk to each other about what Laura and the nurse did. "It's amazing!", they said. "The children go in smiling, have their teeth seen to, and are still smiling when they come out. I've never seen anything like it before!" Even the worried looking mum stopped worrying.

Of course, some adults and some children are just afraid of having their teeth done and there's not much anybody can do about it whilst they are awake.

So what dentists and doctors do is give them something to make them go to sleep whilst the work is done, then when they wake up it's all over.

One of the ways to do that which was used years ago was to let them breathe something called nitrous oxide. That made some people a bit happier about going to the dentist. Nitrous Oxide was also called laughing gas.

But when the rock and roll band called Laughing Gas is playing rock and roll, its music is so loud that nobody goes to sleep!

Part 6. Laura's Lovely Ladies' Laboratory Labels

As well as children, lots of men and women went to see Laura to have their teeth attended to and nearly all of the women said something about her lovely clear skin and beautiful clear eyes.

Most of the women were jealous and wished they looked as fresh and pretty as she did.

Some women asked Laura if she used things called pentapeptides, or yoghurt, or mud, or covered her face with a mask when she went to sleep, or if doctors had helped her, and asked all kinds of other things to try to find out why her skin was so smooth.

Laura told them how to keep their teeth clean and healthy and they agreed with her that eating proper food as well as cleaning their teeth helped them to stay healthy and fit. But she didn't do anything special to make her skin clear and couldn't tell them any "smooth skin" secrets because there weren't any. She was simply lucky enough to be naturally beautiful.

Laura talked to her boyfriend about it and he said "They want something to take or do to make them feel better. You know how it is with the children you see at work,

they want something to watch or listen to, to make them feel better. The little blind girl wants something to do with her fingers. Those ladies want something to take or something to do so they believe they will be more attractive. It doesn't matter too much if things don't work very well, they just need something to believe in”.

Laura talked to her Gran who used to play the piano at concerts and was very clever. Gran said “I think your boyfriend is right. For a scruffy rocker he's quite clever really, isn't he! Women do need something to believe in and most of us need somebody to believe in”.

Laura had started to learn to play the piano when she was quite young but stopped practising when she was at school and had exams to do. She thought that one day her Gran might help her to get started again. Laura had also played the guitar a little bit but nowhere near as well as the boys who played rock and roll in the “Laughing Gas” band.

Laura found that she did some of her best thinking just after she's done something naughty.

One day she had just done something naughty and was thinking about the women who wanted something to make them look or feel more attractive. Other people had done that kind of thing. One of them quite famous and was called Laura too, but had a different family name.

So, Flawless Floss, as her boyfriend called her, decided to help people by selling things they wanted. She got some chemists and other people together and started a firm which invented things to help women with their skin, their teeth and with other things as well.

They wrote some small books which women could carry in their handbags and peek at sometimes if they needed a reminder about what to eat, what not to eat, which soap to use, and so on.

The firm was named Laura's Lovely Ladies' Laboratory. The boxes and jars and bags and packets which had the things in all had a label with Laura's Lovely Ladies' Laboratory printed on it.

After a while women started to talk about all the nice things they could buy to make themselves prettier and they started to recognise the Laura labels.



Because the labels had four words beginning with the letter “L” some women started to say to their friends “Look out for Laura's 4L labels”.

Laura's 4L



Jealous Rage Parfum

After that the things Laura sold were simply known to most people as 4L brand.

Gran did help Laura to learn the piano properly and her boyfriend helped her with the guitar. Sometimes she wanted to forget about teeth and skin care just relax with nothing in particular to think about. So she would play the piano or strum the guitar and let her mind just drift into the rhythm.

A few times she was asked by Laughing Gas to join them on the stage when they played in concerts. So she played a bit of piano and strummed her guitar, not to be famous, just to be happy doing something she loved. Once her little sister joined them on the stage as well and the audience thought it was fantastic.

Laura was very good at school, very good at dental work, very good at business, and super on the stage. When she played with the rock and roll band all the people in the audience knew who she was.

CONCERT TONITE

The World Renowned Rock Group

♪ *Laughing Gas* ♪

singing their famous tribute hit

♥♥♥ *"Tell Laura I Love Her"* ♥♥♥

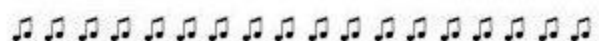
WITH FULL SUPPORTING CAST INCLUDING

Little Freddie Lobo
Melinda Moon glow
Arnold Clench buttock
Jolly Jim Jurnbuck

Xtra backing by

♪ *St Michael Delamare Winfield and the Keynotes* ♪

DON'T BELATE!



Because of her 4L's label and her lovely clear complexion her picture was put on the front of lots of women's magazines. Then all the readers knew who she was too.

Three of the people who saw the pictures were Les Rice, his brother Donald and their niece "Tilly". One magazine even had a picture of Les on one page and Laura on the page opposite.

Les and Laura both kept a copy of the magazine because they remembered meeting each other and were pleased that the other one was doing so well.

Laura was asked to appear on television chat shows and on radio shows to talk about beauty things and became known about by people all over the world.

She was a famous celebrity!

But her fans never knew about her secret passion for sticky cakes. (Shhhh!)

The End

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