



Tidy Up

ASHLEY has been ordered to tidy the bedroom by Mum. Left alone to tackle the mess, Ashley decides to deliver an important message to an imaginary audience in the guise of a charity appeal with vacuum cleaner in hand.

ASHLEY: *(Calling)* Don't stress, Mum! It's all in hand, I've used a vacuum cleaner before, you know! *(Holding the vacuum cleaner and studying each part, as if it's an alien being. ASHLEY finds the hose and decides to use it as a microphone)* Today, here in East Sussex, you'll find the bedroom of Ashley Pritchard, a well-respected and highly intelligent member of the Pritchard family. It has been rumoured for some time now that Ashley has not only fallen behind with house work, but has appeared reluctant to tidy said room.

This is not an uncommon problem *(serious)* but there are signs known only to the female of the species i.e. Mother, that this something is starting to smell and smell bad. *(Moves to a point in the room and bends down)*

Take this discarded sock for instance, It has been festering away alone for some weeks now in the hope that its partner would return and bring harmony again to a broken household, and the most important member, Thomas, the cat, who has made it his home.

(Standing, moving towards the bed) Ashley's bed. Yes, ladies and gentlemen. Have you ever seen such a sight? No, not anywhere south of Watford Gap have such appalling conditions ever been witnessed or indeed understood by man or beast. Such shocking conditions can only lead to loneliness, isolation and finally death. But it doesn't need to be like this.

(Sits. In earnest) All it takes is a phone call, If you can spare just five pounds a week you will be helping a loved one by keeping their child's clothes clean, fed regularly, and making sure Ashley gets to school on time. Ashley's parents are at their wits end and let's face it not getting any younger. In return for this generosity you will receive a letter from Ashley's parents showing progression and a picture of said room improving, plus, as long as the payments are regular, Ashley will personally invite you to the family home to see the progress made. Finally, if you can make the

cheques payable to Ashley Pritchard, it's a lot easier, as Ashley's parents are frail and don't wish for publicity. So please, help this particular child now. Thank you. (*Switches vacuum on. Hides behind bed. Calling*) Mum? The vacuum's making a funny noise. I think it's broken.

By Antony Wieland