

THE CLASSIC FILM

MOMENTS THAT MAY BE FACT OR FICTION

Only in

IN the movies nothing is impossible, however improbable it may seem.

Chewing gum causes explosions and the draught from a passing tube train can give everyone an eye-fal.

But is Hollywood guilty of hijacking reality, or can what we see on screen actually happen? Film buff Richard Germain, 39, of Aylesbury, Bucks,

decided to find out. Inspired by the comedy *Dumb & Dumber*, in which a criminal suffers death by fiery chilli burger, he spent two years researching 101 memorable movie moments to see if they were fact or fiction.

His findings are revealed in his new book, *Death By Chilli Sauce (Old Street Publishing, £8.99)*. Here, JO RILEY brings you a selection...

GOLDFINGER

Sinister henchman Oddjob decapitates a stone statue with his bowler hat

THE hard-crowned bowler, designed in 1850, was originally used to protect gamekeepers from low-hanging branches as they patrolled on horseback. In America in 1853, the bowler was adopted by a Baltimore gang called The Plug Uglies after the plug - aka bowler - hats they wore and sometimes used as weapons.

In the wrong hands bowler hats could be dangerous, but the likelihood of one being able to decapitate a stone statue - like Oddjob does in the 1964 Bond film *Goldfinger* - even when edged with steel, is very low indeed.

Can it happen? No

IT'S A MAD MAD MAD MAD WORLD

Slipping on banana skins IN 2001 nearly 300 incidents of slipping on a banana skin were recorded in the UK.

But research shows the most slippery bananas are old and brown, while most stunt bananas in films - like the one Ethel slips on in the 1963 comedy, left, are young and yellow.

I tested this out, right - my sons found it hilarious.

Can it happen? Yes

GLADIATOR

Maggots are used to clean a wound

RUSSELL CROWE'S sword wound gets infected with maggots in *Gladiator*, 2000. But he is told not to worry - this will clean the wound. Maggots have been used to get rid of dead flesh throughout history. They secrete their digestive juices into the wound. These liquefy the flesh which is then sucked up by the maggot. The recommended dose is five to eight maggots per cm² of wound area.

I gave this a try when I cut my knee - but felt so squeamish that I resorted to an Elastoplast.

Can it work? Yes

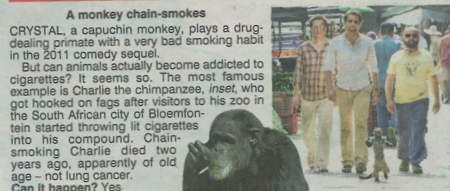
THE HANGOVER PART II

A monkey chain-smokes

CRYSTAL, a capuchin monkey, plays a drug-dealing primate with a very bad smoking habit in the 2011 comedy sequel.

But can animals actually become addicted to cigarettes? It seems so. The most famous example is Charlie the chimpanzee, inset, who got hooked on fags after visitors to his zoo in the South African city of Bloemfontein started throwing lit cigarettes into his compound. Chain-smoking Charlie died two years ago, apparently of old age - not lung cancer.

Can it happen? Yes



BE KIND REWIND

Jack Black becomes magnet man

AFTER Jerry (Jack Black) becomes magnetised every VHS tape in his pal's shop erases itself in the 2008 comedy.

Only a few substances can be subjected to a magnetic field and remain magnetised. Some people claim to be magnetic, but it seems their skin is just sticky, as in the case of Romanian Auril Balleanu, inset.

I tried sticking cutlery to my skin but I was not magnetic.

Can it happen? No



FORREST GUMP

Forrest jogs non-stop for three years, two months

TOM HANKS must have been exhausted playing Forrest Gump in the 1994 movie - at one point he goes for a jog that lasts several years.

But real-life ultra-distance runners DO exist. Dane Jasper Olsen (not to be confused with the former Manchester United player of the same name) was the first person to run from one end of the world to the other.

He completed the 26,000km run between January 1, 2004, and October 23, 2005.

Can it happen? Yes



DUMB AND DUMBER

Fiery chillies kill a criminal

IN this 1994 comedy, Jim Carrey and Jeff Daniels get rid of a thug by loading his burger with extra hot chillis, which proves fatal.

The heat factor of chillis is measured in Scoville Heat Units - one of the top ten hottest chillis, the habanero, has a rating of several hundred thousand. Andrew Lee, a 33-year-old forklift driver from Doncaster, died of heart failure after consuming a plate of hot chilli sauce.

I made my own hot chilli sauce. Fortunately it didn't kill me, but in theory it could have.

Can it happen? Yes



MISSION IMPOSSIBLE

Tom Cruise's explosive chewing gum brings down a helicopter

IN 2009 an unnamed chemistry student in the Ukrainian city of Konotop was found dead with his jaw blown off. Police found the student was partial to dipping his chewing gum in citric acid. In his room they found citric acid packets and also a near-identical substance, believed to be an explosive chemical. It seems the student confused the packets.

He was killed by exploding chewing gum. Tom used explosive gum in the 1996 film.

A subtle but lethal difference.

Can it happen? Yes



CASINO ROYALE

Shaken or stirred?

ASKED how he wants his vodka martini, 007 Daniel Craig, who has just lost big-time at poker in the 2006 film, uncharacteristically snaps: "Do I look like I give a damn?"

When Ian Fleming wrote the Bond books, vodka was made from potatoes, which made it oily, so martini needed to be shaken to disperse the oil. Today vodka is made from grain so it doesn't need to be shaken. In the interests of research, I drank copious martinis made both ways to find out what was best.

Which is best? More, hic, research is needed



STARSKY & HUTCH

'Corky' the iguana regrows its lost tail

IN the 2004 film based on the hit Seventies TV series, Starsky accidentally shoots the tail off the pet iguana belonging to super cool Huggy Bear (Snoop Dogg, right).

But according to Mr Bear, Corky's tail will grow back. The truth is it might do - depending on age, health and how far up the tail the amputation occurred. But if it does grow back it won't look like the original. Re-grown tails are shorter, more club-like and have a different texture and colour from the rest of the body.

Can it happen? Maybe

