

Old Gum

By

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INT. CLASSROOM. DAY.

EDWIN, 10, is sat at the back of his classroom, staring out the window and chewing gum.

TEACHER  
Edwin, are you chewing again?

Edwin shakes his head, his lips tight around the wad.

TEACHER  
Go and spit it out, lad.

GEORGIA  
He can't, sir.

The teacher raises his eyebrows at GEORGIA, also 10.

LOLA  
He's been chewing the same piece of gum for six hours.

TYRESE  
If he stops now, he'll be giving up everything.

The class of children stares at Edwin in awe.

EXT. PLAYGROUND. LUNCHTIME.

Edwin dribbles the football as other boys shout to him. Edwin is cool.

To the side of the pitch, Lola and Georgia are telling a group of Year 6 boys about Edwin's mission.

LOLA  
(staring at Edwin)  
I heard it lost its flavour in the first minute.

Another boy walks up.

OTHER BOY  
Annabel said he swapped it for a different one at break.

The older boys look at Lola, waiting for her response.

LOLA  
That's a lie. He was sat on the wobbly bench all break. Chewing.

The children in the circle are all amazed.

EXT. STREET. DAY.

Edwin is walking home through terraced houses. He passes by the local corner shop, where the owner, HARISH, 35, is standing outside reading a book.

HARISH

Hey, Edwin. You still on the same piece, yeah?

Edwin nods seriously.

Harish tips his cap, and laughs affectionately as Edwin keeps hiking his enormous backpack down the road- chewing.

INT. EDWIN'S DINING ROOM. EVENING.

Edwin's sister, RHONDA, 12, is staring at him disgustedly. Edwin reads a Beano as he chews. The gum is pretty thick, now, and takes some effort.

Edwin and Rhonda's mum wordlessly places their rice and beans on the table.

Edwin sticks his forefinger into his mouth and tucks the gum under his top lip.

RHONDA

Eurgh! Mum!

INT. BATHROOM. NIGHT.

Edwin is in the bath. The gum is quite stiff now. He lies back and ducks his head under the water, still chewing.

INT. EDWIN'S BEDROOM. NIGHT.

Edwin chews in his sleep.

EXT. STREET. MORNING.

HARISH

Still?

Edwin nods and bites into the hardening ball.

INT. CLASSROOM. DAY.

The whole class, including the teacher, is turned towards Edwin- mouths agape.

Edwin still chews, his brow furrowed with the effort of it.

EXT. STREET. AFTERNOON.

HARISH

That's gotta be bad for you, Edwin,  
man.

INT. EDWIN'S DINING ROOM. EVENING.

RHONDA

Nope.

She leaves the table as he clacks the gum stone against his teeth.

INT. BATHROOM. NIGHT.

Edwin looks in the mirror as he uses a lot of force to repeatedly chomp into the rock in his mouth. His cheeks look like a horse's rear end- muscly and round from the work.

Edwin feels something.

Not only is the gum getting harder to chew-is it- it is-  
getting

bigger!

It grows and grows and Edwin keeps chewing but he can't get his teeth around it anymore and he just has to-

-he spits it into the sink.

EDWIN

What the-

- the tiny pink creature unknits itself from its little ball, winding its spindly limbs out.

It crawls out of the sink and leaps onto the windowsill.

It looks about, then makes a jump for it.

Edwin is left to his confusion in the bathroom.

4.

FADE OUT