

Egg-sposed!

1

Confession

‘Welcome back to *Confessions*, a podcast by Yushan McHowell.

‘In last week’s episode, we interviewed my English tutor, Reuben, who confessed to cheating on nearly all his university assessments. As a result, my parents fired him. Sorry, Reuben, I feel horrible about your loss of employment. Now that I think about it, that episode only had two listeners... Hi, Mum... Hi, Dad.

‘Anyway, I guess I’ve learnt my lesson about revealing the identities of my subjects. From now on, they will remain incognito and their secrets will be safe. Just as well, because today’s confession is earth-shattering! I promise you’ve never heard anything like this before. This episode is going to go viral (if anyone bothers to listen).

‘As no one must discover or even suspect who my courageous guest speaker is, I’ll be using sophisticated voice-changing software for this interview. Whenever you hear my guest speaker, he or she will sound like a robot.

‘You might be tempted to think I’m making the entire confession up, but trust me, this is as real as it gets. This



episode is going to be egg-stra egg-citing. And no, I'm not interviewing a chicken.'

Yushan stops recording and leans back in his chair. Pushing his thick black hair away from his face, he takes a deep breath before fiddling with the voice-altering software he downloaded for the interview. 'Testing, testing,' he says into the microphone. The voice that plays back is tinny and toneless, and Yushan is certain nobody could identify who the speaker is. Clearing his throat, he leans close to the microphone and presses record.

'So, tell us a little about yourself,' he begins in his normal voice.

After a natural pause he activates the robot effect and responds, 'Well, I'm a complete freak. I always have been and probably always will be.'

Yushan flicks the effect off and pretends to be excited. 'And that's why you are my feature guest on *Confessions!*' He activates a drum roll. 'Thanks for sharing your secret with my listeners. Why don't you start at the beginning?'

Satisfied with his introduction, Yushan turns the robot effect back on and lets his own story tumble from his lips. 'Ever since I was a baby, I have had an ability to lay eggs. That's right, eggs. Big, brown ones. It's not something I *want* to do – it's just a thing my body does. It is very uncomfortable (especially when one breaks in your pants) and extremely embarrassing. Of course, this egg-laying problem stresses me out, and that only makes things worse. You see, I lay an egg when I get upset, nervous, excited or scared. Just talking about laying one makes it start to happen. Oops, I'm starting to feel one coming now. Sorry, Yushan, I have to take a break to deal with this.'

Yushan presses pause, leaps from his chair and does a few deep squats. The movement helps to ease his egg quickly out of his bottom and into his specially designed underwear. He pushes his hand into his pocket and retrieves the warm egg. He still finds it frustrating that he can't control them. Even in the safety and comfort of his own home, he's laying.

'Stupid egg,' he growls, placing it in the basket next to his computer, taking care not to crack it. He's cleaned up too many broken eggs in his lifetime.

Maybe this is a bad idea, Yushan thinks as he settles back in front of the microphone. He feels jittery. Still, it's a relief to talk about his secret – that's why he started the *Confessions* podcast in the first place. He knows speaking about his story will help get out all his frustrations trapped inside. Adults always say you should talk about things and not keep them bottled up.

Convinced to continue, Yushan presses record and activates the robot voice effect. 'My family has kept my egg-laying problem a complete secret. Scientists would probably take me away and do weird tests on me if we told anyone. My parents don't want me treated like a freak. They want me to have a normal childhood. I get it, but it's almost impossible to hide my condition. As I grow, my eggs have increased in size. It's only by a tiny bit, but I'm concerned that by the time I'm an old person, I'll be laying eggs the size of bowling balls... ouch!'

Yushan turns off the robot effect. 'Wow, this is some confession! If what you say is true and you actually do lay eggs, how have you managed to keep from being discovered?'

He reactivates the vocal effect. ‘My dad designed and sewed special underpants for me. These super undies help deal with any eggs I lay in public. Usually, they work great. The egg pops out and falls into a little tunnel that runs diagonally into my side pocket. All my pants have holes cut on the inside of the pockets so the tunnel can fit into them. When I lay an egg, it rolls down the tunnel and straight into my pocket. It’s genius. After an accident, all I have to do is go to the toilet, take the egg from my pocket, smash it and flush the evidence away. At times, an egg sometimes takes a while to jiggle into the tunnel, and it could appear to be a... well, you know... a poop.’

Yushan stops recording and leans back in his chair to stare at the long line of continuous sound waves showing on his screen. Now that he’s started talking, he doesn’t want to stop, but he can’t give too much away. He’s glad he didn’t mention the baggy shorts he always wears to help hide any egg bulges. Baggy shorts and long pants are his trademark. They are not only handy for hiding eggs, but the other large pocket in his baggy pants is useful for carting hand sanitiser and tissues.

Yushan has never had an x-ray or anything like that, so no one in his family is sure of what’s going inside his bottom, but his eggs don’t seem to come into contact with any gross stuff on the way out. This is a big relief to Yushan, but he is always ready, just in case.

Yushan slips back into character as the show’s presenter. ‘How embarrassing!’ he exclaims. ‘But I suppose this condition could have its benefits? At least you and your family could never starve to death.’

He flicks on the vocal effect. ‘I never eat my own eggs. That would be like cannibalism.’

This is a perfect time to cue his dramatic ending music, so Yushan lets the grab play for ten seconds and then presses stop. He jumps up to stretch his legs.

‘Whatcha doing?’ Yushan’s older sister Sara wanders into the room, her mouth full of potato chips.

‘Podcasting,’ he replies proudly.

Sara groans. ‘Didn’t you learn your lesson? I’m already missing Reuben.’

‘Only because you thought he was cute,’ Yushan teases. ‘I’m the one that needed help with my schoolwork, not you.’

‘Yeah, true. What’s this week’s episode about?’

Yushan’s face begins to burn, but Sara is a good sister and he shouldn’t feel ashamed in front of her. ‘It’s about me,’ he says bravely.

Sara’s mouth falls open, and a clump of soggy potato chips falls to the floor. ‘Oh no. Big, big mistake,’ she mutters, shaking her head and marching over to the computer. ‘Delete it now!’

Yushan stands in Sara’s way so she can’t get to his keyboard. ‘No! Don’t you think I’m smart enough to be careful? I’ve changed my voice with special effects, and I’ve held back on the details. No one listens to my podcasts, anyway,’ Yushan states matter-of-factly. ‘It’s more like a form of self-therapy.’

Sara relaxes as she accepts his logic. ‘You know, if you made a YouTube video laying an egg, you’d go viral.’ She smirks.

‘That’s a horrible idea.’

Sara looks at her little brother in pity. ‘Yeah, it would bring shame on all of us.’

As she leaves his room, Yushan feels tears gather in his eyes. He hates it how even his own sister is ashamed of him.