

The Terrible Taco Tragedy

By Will McNeice

Hot on the heels of the homemade pasta success, my girlfriend and I decided to make tacos. We do a lot of cooking. During [the harsh Polish winter](#), there isn't a lot to do except eat, sleep, cook and, well, the other thing boys and girls do to keep warm.

So we decided to make tacos, but we didn't have all the ingredients. At the supermarket, we had a difficult decision to make: do we buy the silver tequila or the gold tequila? In the end we

bought no tequila, only copious amounts of beer and wine, reasoning that we both had to work the next day and an evening which begins with tequila usually ends sometime in the early afternoon of the next day with a few uncomfortable memory gaps.

I had no idea how to begin making taco shells and I suppose I could have looked it up on the Internet...I just [looked it up](#), and it's surprisingly easy. I wish we'd done that, instead of doing what we did.



At the supermarket we bought soy cutlets and taco shells. If you don't know what soy cutlets are, they are small lumps of hard soy protein that you have to boil to make them edible. When you boil them, however, like all soy-based substances, they are flavourless to the point where you can eat a whole bunch of them and your stomach will be full, but you won't have any recollection of having eaten at all. To make them delicious, you have to do several things. First, you have to boil them in water with stock. Then, when they absorb the water, they tend to have too much water, so you have to squeeze some of the water out with a fork, or other implement of your choice. I prefer a fork because I can watch the water come out through the spines of the fork. For some reason, this

makes me happy. You could remove the soy cutlets from the water earlier and have less water in them to begin with, but I've never tried it that way, so I'm going to recommend my method as the superior method. Once you've boiled them and squeezed out the excess water, you need to fry them in a pan of oil and dump a whole load of barbecue spice on top of them. I did all of that.



I also sliced an onion and fried it, and chopped some cherry tomatoes and fried them too. Then I place the taco shells into the oven to heat them up and grated some cheese and ripped up some lettuce. When the taco shells were ready, my girlfriend laid the table and I brought out the food.

Before I continue, I should point out that I am a good cook. I have made pasta from scratch, sushi, french onion soup, gnocchi, and many other delicious and fattening things. What happened was not my fault.

Into the first taco shell I placed the lettuce, the soy cutlets with the onion and tomatoes, some sliced jalapeno peppers, and I covered the whole thing with the grated cheese and salsa dip.



The taco shell was barely edible. It tasted like it had been made with a mixture of corn flour and blended cardboard, and then used as a nest lining for a chicken coop before being processed into taco shells, packaged and sold to consumers.

We each ate one taco, slowly and with determination. I looked at the remaining taco, thought about the other six still in the packaging, and shuddered. My girlfriend, however, came up with another idea: the filling was salvageable, the taco shells were not. Why didn't we replace the taco shells with the flour tortilla shells and just have burritos instead? So we did that, and managed to have a nice meal in the end. Then we got drunk on beer and wine. After all, it was minus 15 degrees Celsius outside, and not much warmer inside.

Copyright © 2012 Will McNeice.

All Rights Reserved. To reprint any or all of this article, you must obtain my permission. To speak to me about this article or anything else, email me at williammcneice@gmail.com