

How low can YOU go?

The Daily Mirror



Fuck me, we really, really are turning into a nation of pathetic doormats.

A mum who fed her son on meals costing £10 a week has won a 'lucrative' book deal to publish her recipes.

Give me fucking strength.

I should think it was a lucrative deal. Now the government can justify reducing benefits so as all 'scroungers' can live on £10 a week cheap tinned food pimped up to look posh.

I would like to rant, but I am fast losing the will to live.

If I had a tin of beans a day, with an egg and a slice of toast I could live on a fiver a week. Do I get a lucrative book deal now?

Here is another money saving tip. Go to bed as soon as it gets dark. only wash yourself and your clothes when it rains and dont buy any fresh food. You will save a fucking fortune on utility bills.

Then maybe our Nonce Ponce MP's can get a fifteen grand pay rise instead of a measly Ten.

What a fucking pathetic joke.

You are not put on this earth to scrimp and scrape and have a miserable fucking time. It does not have to be this way... It really, really doesn't.

Get up off of your doorstep and end this misery.

Mum who fed son on £10 a week lands book deal for her headline recipes

[19 May 2013 02:22](#)

She had to sell most of her possessions and survived by turning tins of food costing pennies into posh meals.

 Jack Monroe has landed a lucrative advance
Matt Sprake/MSP

A mum forced to feed her son on £10 a week has landed a £25,000 book deal for her "below the breadline" recipes.

Jack Monroe, 25, had to sell most of her possessions and [survived by turning tins of food costing pennies into posh](#)

[meals](#) fit to be dished up at any upmarket gastro-pub.

In July last year she was forced to quit her £27,000-a-year job as a fire brigade worker because her shift patterns played havoc with childcare – and she simply could not afford the 40-mile round trip to work.

The single mum then failed to land another job despite sending out more than 300 applications.

Instead, she started her own craft business – but it earned her just £250 a month.

And once all the bills were paid, that left her with no more than a tenner a week to feed Johnny, two.

[The Sunday People](#) revealed Jack's plight last December.

But since then Jack, from Southend, has signed deal with publishing giant Penguin for a book of bargain recipes like the seven mouth-watering dishes we reprint here.

She's also launched an online blog that has become an internet sensation with 15,000 hits a month – and been snapped up by a local paper.

She said: "I thought it was ridiculous when I was first - approached because I had people asking me to write a book but no one would give me a job.

"But I was eventually offered a job and given a publishing deal and things happened quite quickly."

Yet only six months ago Jack was being forced to survive on £250 a month earnings and £570 in child and housing benefits.

Out of that she paid £675 in rent plus an average of £83 for power, £15 for water and £20 for toiletries and cleaning products. She would save cash by scrimping on heating in her sparsely-furnished two-bed flat and wrap up son Johnny in hats

and gloves to keep him warm.

And there were nights Jack went hungry to give Johnny extra pasta.

Reflecting on the change in her fortunes, she said: "You can't just forget things like that so I'll stick to my budget because you never know what the future holds."

Jack went on: "I've taken a significant cut in tax-credits because of my book deal, my housing benefit has dried up because of government cuts and my earnings will be too much because of the book and the new job."

Penguin were so impressed by Jack's style and the quality of her food they gave her a £25,000 advance to come up with more than 100 low-budget recipes in a book due to be published next March.

NEWS & FEATURES **NEWS & FEATURES**

The harrowing reality for those battling BELOW breadline

After selling most of her possessions, cutting out heating and paying the bills, this mum has just... **£10 FOR FOOD**

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Le burger!

: Jack hits out in the Sunday People last December

Fight

Although her ingredients come from the “value” range – which means a single veggie-burger of carrot, cumin and kidney-bean can cost as little as 9p – Jack claims her dishes are just as nutritious as those with more extravagant ingredients. She said: “I’ve had my share of people saying, ‘You can’t buy half an onion’ or ‘You can’t get 3p worth of flour’.

“But I try to explain you buy an onion, use half in your risotto tonight and put the rest in a casserole tomorrow.

“The same applies for the flour and everything else I put in my recipes.

“All of this is possible because I’ve been doing it and live by it day to day.”

She went on: “It’s probably unthinkable to someone who stops by a café for breakfast, or another person who buys a coffee every day, or those who get their lunch from Tesco and dinner from a takeaway.

“People complain they have no money then buy a convenience meal for £3.

“But if you buy a convenience meal you need to remember it’s made up of ingredients that are so much cheaper.”

Jack added: “If you plan carefully, you really can save an awful lot of money on food.”

She still vividly remembers having to search the flat for odd coins last summer to scrape together enough cash for a trip to her local Sainsbury’s superstore.

She said: “It came to about £6.20, so I bought one of everything I could see in the basic range until I didn’t have any money left.

“When I arrived home I had pasta, tomatoes and rice and wondered what I could make with all of it.

“When I went back the next week I discovered there were some things almost as cheap – frozen spinach is a pound a bag and will last for ages.” She added: “You start to improvise because you have to and you have a child to think about.”

 Last time: Jack Monroe had just £10 a week for food

Jack said she slowly began to think of her favourite recipes – and would then replace expensive cuts of meat with beans or mushrooms.

Her jardaloo ma murghi (curry with apricots) is a favourite.

But instead of pricey lamb she now uses chick-peas so that it costs an incredible 87p for four portions.

Jack said: “I used to cook that a lot when I had decent job and it’s an adaptation from a lamb curry I made.

“It was a very rich dish and from that I learnt to take some of my favourite recipes and pare them down to knock out ingredients I knew would be too expensive.

“So I started replacing meat with mushrooms and chickpeas or beans.

“You learn to adapt the dishes to what you can afford.”

She added: “It’s definitely possible – in fact, everyone can do it.”

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