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Tarantino magic

It takes only the first scene in Quentin Tarantino's World War 2 film *Inglourious Basterds* to convince audiences that they're watching the birth of a star.
Robert W Butler reports.

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Quentin Tarantino

How Kat nailed it

MATE
 Mark Wilson



ON WEDNESDAY I was sitting at my desk dredging my way through a very long and tedious architectural specification for a gym fit-out when my flatmate Kat rushed past a looking a little stressed and grabbed at the phone in a panicky fashion.

I wondered what was wrong - had she just found out she was pregnant and needed to confide in her parents, or was it that she had forgotten her physio appointment and needed to call in to apologise?

The preceding melee was entertaining, shocking and educationally enlightening in a very redundant manner. It had me wide-eyed and choking at my words in humorous disbelief. Having gained control of her shaking digits she punched at the keys and, as girls often tend to do, put on her phone voice. The phone voice is this little fairy's voice sounding kind of like a small kitten crossed with Rainbow Bright and a magical little pixie jellybean-type creature.

Despite the fact I couldn't understand a word, apart from Hi Puffin, she managed to obtain her desired recipient to bear witness to whatever troubling news that had thrown her into such disarray. She proclaimed in a slightly more normal and nearly understandable voice she had suffered a major incident, a small pause and then it was revealed that the fate-of-civilisation dilemma requiring this urgent phone call was in fact a broken nail!

An incident is North Korea launching a missile at South Korea, Ben Johnson being stripped of his Olympic gold medal, the Stags losing to Manawatu or Bill Clinton getting an oral favour from his secretary and lying about it to 250 million Americans, not, I would consider, a flaming broken nail - perspective, Kat, perspective!

It gets worse, the conversation skipped from broken nails to a life-or-death decision about how to put in hair extensions for an important Friday night function. Glue or sellotape? It sounded like a preschool child discussing how to construct a car from a cardboard box, play-dough and icecream containers - but apparently you attach someone else's, a horse's or maybe even a gerbil's hair into your own to make it appear longer.

Next there was the dress for the evening, all of this handled with a somewhat political seriousness and the diligent care of disarming a stick-waving man on the banks of the Waikato River. It made my work feel quite insignificant, like a chihuahua trying to hump an elephant's leg. I thought to myself 'surely this stuff isn't that important', but then realised there was an entire industry dedicated to providing these apparently crucial services to our lovely ladies. I'm all for well-maintained ladies, a bit of wax here and there, and showering definitely helps, but I have never looked at nails and jewellery or checked to see if their eyeliner matched the night's outfit. It just seems a massive waste of resources on excessive grooming when there are so many more important things going on.

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