

Hospital Admission

Dear Son,

According to the Oxford Dictionary, there are around two-hundred-thousand English words in current usage, but I'll admit that all failed me when I received your 'letter'.

Your mother was also unusually speechless, and not because your communiqué came on paper rather than electronically, but because its content rendered her normally remarkable eloquence to mere saliva before one could say waste-of-space. Indeed, so acute was her verbal failure, that I had to advise a week of selective mutism so that she be recovered enough to conjure up a credible story before her next coffee morning. For, as I'm sure you'll appreciate, she won't be bringing her friends "up to speed" on your hospital admission.

You are right in your assumption that I am all in favour of young people engaging in political debate. I myself carried a placard (complete with correct punctuation), to a march against the Poll Tax in 1990. However, I did not decide to use said placard as a means of ensuring a police officer would not be able to sit down for a week. Perhaps you should have used it to cover your face, instead of the Palestinian-style bandanna that leapt out from the televised reporting of your "little run-in". This might have saved your mother from fretting about whether you had a sore throat, or a toothache, or facial herpes. Still, as I remarked to her, at least it wasn't a balaclava. We are of an age to be thankful for these small mercies.

You say the police officer stationed outside your hospital room "offends" you. To which I suggest you ponder on the latest definition of the word snowflake.

As to your not inconsiderable injuries, Yes, I can quite see that sliding down a monument, after having scaled it to urinate on “The Plod” would be painful. Might I suggest that tucking yourself in and zipping yourself up *before* attempting to abseil down Lord Nelson would have been a more prudent strategy? I’m afraid our finances really won’t stretch (no pun intended) to private skin-graft surgery. And yes, your mother did shed a tear at the likely absence of future grandchildren resulting from this injury, but I soon made her see the sense in you being the last of the line. I think I might have bandied the word PLONKER, which is apt in an ironic way, don’t you think? Besides, your sister might step into the breach in the reproductive respect. She, your sister, sends her regards by the way, but says that no, she won’t post bail for you when the time comes. Now, if my name was Bryan Ferry, I might just stump up, but my name is Dad, *your* dad, plain Brian Jones, Brian with an i not a y, therefore my sensibilities (and wallet) are leaning more towards prison visiting and whether the train timetable will accommodate.

And no, I won’t write to your university and appeal the expulsion. Your letter to us clearly demonstrated that you need more practice when it comes to arguing a compelling case with impeccable grammar and the correct use of apostrophes. Given that you *were* studying English, might I suggest you instead ask for a refund? You’ll be needing the money to engage a lawyer.

I shan’t get into the rights and wrongs of the Brexit debate with you as you made your position known when you called that innocent passer-by a Racist Nazi Scumbag. It’s amazing how clear the sound was on the news bulletin! I’m sure you didn’t know at the time that this unfortunately-placed lady was of Polish extraction and only carried the Union Jack tote bag because it was handy to transport her fruit and veg. Still, as you said, you got it off your chest, and there’s much to be said for “venting” - it’s one of the great traditions of democracy. Indeed, your mother and I vent every few years by marking our crosses on the

ballot paper. But, call us old-fashioned, we tend to abstain from imbibing large quantities of alcohol before tootling off to the polling station to register our views.

I'm sorry you feel you can't "survive" without a mobile telephone device. As I understand it, these smartphones are not smart enough to withstand a prolonged dip in a public fountain. However, you've already proved the postal service is working well despite the country being run by "fascist dictators". So, no, we shan't be replacing your not-so-smart survival apparatus.

As to you being unable to "exist" without a social media presence, your mother and I have thought long and hard about this. Hence, we have enclosed some time-honoured social media paraphernalia. . . in the form of a book of second-class stamps.

Do give my regards to the officer seated outside your room.

Get well soon.

I remain,

Your incredulous ~~sperm donor~~ dad.