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The Drife Diaries

Anonymous

Humour

Abstract

As readers will be aware, Teviot Row is alive with rumours that an ex-Edinburgh medical student is threatening to publish the diaries he kept during his undergraduate days in the "Swinging Sixties". His former colleagues, now distinguished medical men, are said to have offered large sums as "hush money" to "Doctor X", and several Edinburgh Publishing Houses have experienced burglaries and arson attacks, as well as telephone calls hinting at complications should the publisher ever need medical treatment. Undaunted, in what must be journalism's coup of the decade, Res Medica has secured exclusive rights to these manuscripts, and after consultation with our lawyers (who advise us that their authorship must remain a closely guarded secret) we now present the final instalment of the first extracts from The Drife Diaries. Previous issues available from the RMS office.

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THE DRIFE DIARIES



Artwork by Donald Davidson

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JUNE 20th

Got up. Had breakfast. The cornflakes last a lot longer now. The Hulk spends so much time in Spottiswoode Road. Also we get to read his *Times* in the morning. Am now big fan of Bernard Levin, the world's greatest newspaper columnist. People say they detect his influence in my final Election Pamphlet.

In the ordinary run of events, though I must confess that for me events seldom if ever run in an ordinary way, and indeed I suppose that when one looks closely at the events in any person's life an ordinary run is probably the exception rather than the rule, all of which has the salutary effect of making my opening phrase a contradiction in terms, I should be reluctant to return to a subject, however fascinating, outrageous, provocative, hilarious or, to use a much-debased word in its original sense, important, that I had already discussed a few days ago. But the matter I wish to lay before you is so fundamental to the well-being of every man, woman and child, nay every dog, cat and monkey in this venerated if not venerable medical school of ours that I make no apology for again attempting to draw my readers' attention to it, for I am referring to an impending event which future generations may come to regard as the fulcrum on which our tired civilisation swung either downwards to everlasting perdition or, and I am not yet so cynical as to dismiss this second possibility without serious consideration, upwards out of the abyss over which our species is suspended. Anyone who has not been entombed in a soundproof vault for the last three months [*Ed - Hmm more like a year - sorry*] will by now have realised that my subject is the Homeric battle being waged over



Nothing upset Mr Paeditrician ... not even when his little patients swung on his tie shouting "Me Tarzan!"

the office of Moderator Ludorum Laetitarumque, a struggle between good and evil; between right and wrong; between light and darkness; between truth and falsehood; between hope and desperation; between me and Andrew Burton.

For there is a small faction within this university which is dedicated to the overthrow of democracy, a grim, hard-faced faction to which the very words "ludorum" and "laetitarum" mean

Unfortunately, the rules of the election give each candidate only 300 words for his final election address, but I reckon that should impress the plebs.

JUNE 25th

Stayed in bed. Didn't feel like breakfast after last night's fiasco. Should have pandered to the masses like that clown Burton. Must practise a style more appropriate to the electorate. What about that very successful chap Hargreaves?

Mr Student was excited. He was so excited he almost missed the ward-round. That made Mr Paediatrician very angry. Usually Mr Paediatrician was calm. Nothing upset Mr Paediatrician. Not even when his little patients made his shirt all wet. Not even when his little patients swung on his tie shouting "Me Tarzan!" Mr Paediatrician loved his little patients. But he did not love Mr Student. Oh, no! When Mr Student arrived halfway through the ward-round Mr Paediatrician looked at him very hard. "How kind of you to turn up," he said. "I'm touched." But he did not look touched. Oh, no! Then Mr Paediatrician started asking Mr Student questions. Very difficult questions. Poor Mr Student! He did not know the answers! He did not know about dysgammaglobulinaemia! He did not know about the Waterhouse-Friedrichson syndrome! He did not know about the cerebral sclerosis of Pelizaeus-Merzbacher! In fact Mr Student did not know anything at all! Mr Paediatrician grew angrier and angrier. "You are a great hairy moron!" he told Mr Student. "Write out one hundred times, 'I must know the difference between glossoptosis and glomerulosclerosis'." And he made Mr Student stand in the corner all day!

By the evening Mr Student was not excited any more. He was sad. He was sadder than he had ever been in his life. Mr Student had missed his supper. He was hungry. As well as sad. And tonight of all nights! Tonight was election night. Mr Student thought to himself, "Nobody will want to elect a sad person like me". And the more he thought this, the sadder he got. So Mr Student decided to try and cheer himself up. He went to Mr McEwan's. For a quick one. And another quick one. And another. And a magical thing happened. Mr Student slowly turned into Mr Happy! Mr Happy smiled a great big smile. He decided to have a quick one too! And another! And then Mr Happy had a thought. "Time for the election!" he thought. And off he went.

The election was held in a big room. With a big chair. Mr President sat in the big chair. Mr President was very important. And he knew it. He banged the table with a bone. A leg bone. Mr Happy thought of the man whose leg bone it was.



*Mr Happy was going to have to nip out for a minute. He stood up.
He fell down. He got up. He fell over again.*

Trying to walk around with no bone in his leg. And Mr Happy began to giggle. He giggled and giggled. He giggled and giggled and giggled. Mr President looked at Mr Happy. Mr Happy tried to stop giggling. He turned red. Then he turned purple. But he managed to stop giggling. Just.

Mr President asked Mr Secretary to read the minutes. They were very long minutes. Mr Happy began to fidget. He was feeling uncomfortable. More and more uncomfortable. Mr Happy crossed his legs. Mr Secretary kept on reading. Mr Andrex raised a point of order. "O God!" said Mr Happy. He crossed his legs

the other way. But it didn't help. Mr Happy was going to have to nip out for a minute. He stood up. He fell over. He got up. He fell over again. His friends were amazed! More magic! Mr Happy had turned into Mr Topsy-Turvy! His friends laughed! His friends whistled! His friends fell off their chairs and drummed their heels on the carpet! What a good time they were having!

Everyone agreed it was the best election they ever had. Everyone except Mr Topsy-turvy. He didn't know anything about it. Mr Topsy-turvy had done a Very Big Wee-Wee and then fallen fast asleep! By the time he woke up the magic had worn off, and he was Mr Student again. And everyone had gone home. Poor Mr Student!

SEPTEMBER 17th

Breakfast in bed! Great things, electives in Kirkcaldy. The natives here speak some strange language and read nothing but ethnic novels.

Sunset o'er the Lang Toun is aye bonnie, with the reek o' the lums gangin' slowly heavenwards frae the corbie-stane gables. But yestreen, on the hill abune the toun, wi' the distant piping o' the whaups and peewits and the laverocks pouring their wee bitty sang o'er the ripening corn, 'twas a true Celtic twilight. The silver firth gleamed in the blude-red sun like a fallen claymore on the green plaid of the fields. As I hied me o'er the heather the memories o' the bygone year swirled around me like October mists. Och, but now I should be looking forward through the gloaming to the future. Was it the second sight I had? Else how was it I kent - and firm as the Aberdeen granite was my kenning - that Nev would one day return to his native heath as a consultant? That braw Tony's destiny was a group practice on the distant South Coast o' England, and that the muckle Hulk would soon become a psychiatrist in Australia? As for yon Andrex, aye, his becoming Moderator Ludorum Laetitiarumque was but the first step in a brilliant medicopolitical career that might yet lead to his achieving the secretaryship of a BMA Division. And what of his glaikit friends, Broncho, Gertrude the Gorilla and Slit-Mouth Charlie? What would become of them? As I sat amid the bracken, gazing o'er the firth at the shadows deepening on the Lammermuirs, and slipping my brawny arm round the yielding waist of Nurse O'Reilly, I thought, "Who cares?" [Ed -we do!]

For reasons of security Dr.Drife has moved to... Having established communication links (pigeon-post) we hope to persuade him to disclose more, though we appreciate that this is at some risk to his livelihood. So watch this space!