

14 Up ©

By Michael Casey

This will be my 14th book in English, no 16 altogether. Twice as good as 7Up, you will have to let me know. Its 30th March 2017 and I begin again, with chest and back and hip pains ebbing away, don't have Arthritis and a Quadruple Heart Bypass as it hurts. cKd Kidney problems aren't fun either. I tell you all this so you know why I might mention Pain in this book.

Otherwise I'll try and make you Laugh and Think, can you feel the Pretention rising already?

Voice for Voice ©

By Michael Casey

I had some time to think about this piece as my pain levels got in the way of my productivity, I did not want to say what I've said before, so I check my files for any titles with similar words in. In this case Voice, and then I had a quick scan before thinking about today's talk. I am after all the poor man's Letter from America, I am the Postcard from Birmingham.

I have recorded 200 or so of my shorts, about 11 hours of material, perfect for Radio or Teaching English as a 2nd Language, Angel Investors do get in touch, or I'll be too old and clapped out to enjoy any money should any money materialise. Now we all have a Voice, one we use when we are Teaching or in Court, my sister in law is a Lawyer after all and she does have 2 voices, the Formal and the Michael wait and I'll give you your third portion of pudding.

I myself have a Teacher's voice which I use on occasion, such as when children are about to have an accident because their lazy parents are on the phone and not looking after them. If you have kids you must look after them, but maybe I am old fashioned or just an older parent.

The Voice or the tone of voice you use can make a difference, my girls tell me that I talk to Totoro our cat as if she were a small child, even though

she is a cat on a hot tin roof doing unspeakable things all night long, without the benefit of disco music.

People, some people talk down to kids, and what do you want to be when you grow up? As if the children are morons, my own girls just laugh inwardly, most people talking down to them are only half as intelligent as they are. And when I grow up and am a Proctologist I'll put you, you idiot, down first on my list for an enema. Please do not talk down to kids, I have never treated my girls as babies, so put that tone of voice in the dustbin, along with the rubber gloves used to give you 2 enemas.

I hope I don't sound like Kenny Everett's Angry of Mayfair, you can find his videos he was very very funny and sadly died of an AIDs related illness. He had many silly silly voices, but I'm sure he would have agreed with me it's when you switch your loud voice off and listen that is when you give the humble their voice.

The meek and mild you may meet in the street or at a bus stop, by listening to them you allow them to have their voice. They will go home happy because they have had some human contact, they will tell their cat about the nice man or girl they met on the bus and the words that they exchanged. Sometimes life is like in The Boxer the S&G song, everybody needs somebody, we all need to talk, to hear a comforting human voice.

Writing Comedy an Idiots Guide That Fails ©

By Michael Casey

Well first of all a big thank you to the Polish readers out there, 20,500 was the score when I checked a minute or two ago. Why? I have no idea and a famous British comedian Eric Morcambe once said if it works it works, don't analyse the Joke. So am I tempting Fate this April Fool's Day 2017? Or Poisson d'Avril if you are French, and I also get French readers, not unless its Roman Polanski in Paris and the fashion guy with the fingerless gloves. They read my stories avidly you know, they even ring each other up and compare notes on my latest story. He, that's me, is total rubbish says Polanski, yes total rubbish says the fingerless gloves Fashion designer, Lagerfeld, I just remembered his name, anyway Lagerfeld thinks I'm total tosh too, see a 3word alliteration just for you.

When you come over for cheese fondue just bring 2 more packs of TUC biscuits, it's my monthly treat says Lagerfeld. And what film shall I bring

from Blockbuster Video asks Polanski, who has a gold membership card and can now get 30% discount. Oh I heard that Paddington is a gem, if you can get Paddington 2 as well then we can make a night of it, my VHS video recorder has been fixed now replies Lagerfeld as a model parades a new 500,000 design in front of him. More buttons is all he says, it is for the Korean market and they just love buttons after all. And thanks Roman I just got 10 crates of Chinese champagne from a grateful Shanghai client so we may as well try it with all my staff, actually it's not too bad with cheese fondue.

As Lagerfeld uncorks all the Chinese Champagne the 1st Paddington is placed in the VHS video recorder, as Polanski is here they watch on a small 15inch tv with a little table laden with cheese fondu and Chinese champagne. They had a debate for 6 months before they upgraded the tv to colour, they are real Film People after all. In a corner covered with a sheet is a Mark Kermode, you don't want to miss any of the film after all, once started you can never interrupt a film, this is not Sky Q after all.

The loyal staff are facing the opposite direction, they have a 102inch UHD tv screen with a sound bar that could keep the North Atlantic out, or an over eager boyfriend, they have the latest blue ray versions. Carl really does look after his staff, his family. So merrily Roman and Carl enjoy their film on VHS, the TUC biscuits go down well too. Tears are shed when Paddington is in peril, Polanski and Lagerfeld have to console each other, but are so happy when all is well at the end, now they shed tears of happiness.

Then Lagerfeld and Polanski discuss the film craft in Paddington, and Lagerfeld scribbles down an idea for a duffle coat, his billionaires client will go mad with desire for it. Almost as much they'd want to breed with Michael Casey to have pretty half half children just like his own. Roman and Carl laugh till they cry just at the thought of that idea.

Then they play poker, Lagerfeld changes his gloves for this, Polanski thought he'd fleece Lagerfeld for the 10 dollars they play for, but Lagerfeld treats the poker as seriously as he treats everything, apart from Michael Casey, he is the fool from Birmingham who gives him so much joy, well in Michael Casey's imagination anyway.

Just as they are finishing their epic game of poker and Paddington has been replaced by the Kardashians on the mega tv Polanski and Lagerfeld laugh till they cry at the serious antics of the Ks. I couldn't make a film to parody the Ks they do it so well themselves, says Polanski. I could make

dresses for all of them, they would be made of paper bags, Walmart paper bags, or maybe Prix Unique bags to be a little more chic. Then Roman and Carl collapse into each other's arms laughing.

So that explains just how I have French readers, it a Polish reader and a German in France, making dresses for Chinese Billionaires, who all want to breed with me to have beautiful children, who may or may not have silver hair. Just one thing Carl, if I may call you by your Christian name, can you remove the covers from Mark Kermode, he has to get back to the BBC in time for the Film review.

Happy April Fools' Day everybody from the Birmingham Fool on a Hill.

What's on Tv tonight? ©

By Michael Casey

Well we were all watching tv tonight and we ended up with a very good selection. We saw a hour documentary on the Singapore hotel, it was 10 times bigger than the one I used to work at, 2500 rooms in Singapore and yes I think we all should visit it. You can google and find its name in seconds. It has 3 towers with a surf board and infinity pool on top. As a former hotel worker it was very interesting for me, my daughter could see the kind of work I used to do 10 years ago. My Shanghai wife lived and worked in Singapore 20 years ago, before she met me, and we changed our lives together.

Next we watched a programme on Mammoths in Russia, this was very interesting, this was another hour, my small daughter is thinking of being the next David Attenborough so this interested her a lot. I told her she'd have to get a PhD if she really wanted to do serious study in these subjects.

Now they are watching Chocolat a film set in France, I've seen it before so I'm talking to you all instead. So why am I sharing our family viewing habits? Simple, just as the family that prays together stays together, so the family that watches tv together stays together. The family unit is better if it has something in common and is not a collection of strangers with the same name living in the same house.

Your best friend and his brothers may come around to watch the Manchester United game as you have the biggest tv, they bring Polish lager and sausages to keep them going while they watch, they say hello to their little sister in the kitchen as they steal a few bananas. She calls them all monkeys and they all make noises like monkeys before they go back to the tv room. But this is family, they build the house you and their and little sister are living in. Now till the end of time they will come around to watch the Manchester United game, wasn't it a great idea to put a huge satellite dish on the roof.

All over the world families of all kinds gather to watch their favourite shows together, this is family. Nowadays more families gather to watch Karaoke shows together than go to church together. Perhaps priests of all sorts should practice singing like Sinatra, then there would be more bums on seats. Though I would not advise that the congregation hold up score cards after each sermon.

With modern technology we can time shift our viewing, record and watch later on, even days later on, but I contend that the family viewing is a good thing, it bonds families together, when we are all spread all over the place all over the time a central time to watch tv bonds families. If you add food, either formal or informal then you a FAMILY.

My mother used to say when we watched a film and the ending of the film was rubbish or of beyond belief that the ending was "far fetched like shit from China", I had to explain that one to my Shanghai relatives, it means beyond belief only, would a Shanghai person bring bicycles from Birmingham? No that would be far fetched, like bollocks from Birmingham if I reversed the phrase.

So in a way was the way I met my Shanghai wife far fetched? And was my mother a gypsy and predicted it without even realising it? Though she never met my wife, and it was only because my brother saved my dad's life and I spent 3 years of constant daily visits to the old people's home that something far fetched happened. Something that could come from a tv show, all the way from China. I'm sure I can hear my mother laughing in Heaven.

By Michael Casey

Lech was an altar boy in Cracow, this writer was an altar boy too but that was in Birmingham in the 1960s and 1970s, they do have one thing in common and that was Ghosts. Lech was big and strong and he'd punch anybody who said serving Mass was for mothers' boys, he had a Faith as strong as he was. And besides he liked dressing up and carrying candles, it was fun and was very theatrical, especially the orb thing that you put charcoal in and the priest adds incense to, they you get to shake it all about. It was a kind of very smelly high, smoke everywhere.

Lech was always the last boy to finish after the Mass or Benediction or the Funeral or whatever it was, because Fr. Thomas also shared a cigarette with him when nobody was looking. Fr. Thomas had been in the Missions and had come home to Cracow to die, he had picked up a few diseases while abroad and as Cracow had a good hospital the Bishop brought him home to serve in a small church so Fr. Thomas could be close to a hospital. The Bishop also happened to be Fr. Thomas's friend from 50 years before when they were at school together. Fr. Thomas had beaten a bully, in fact he had knocked seven shades of, well you know the next word, so no need to say it. So Fr. Thomas had saved the future Bishop and that's why they became friends.

Lech reminded Fr. Thomas of himself, a big strong lad who was afraid of nothing, so that's why they shared a cigarette when both should not. Fr. Thomas knew Lech would never be a priest, he'd be a father sure, but not a Fr. more like a father of 10. Lech was a magnet for girls, girls of all ages, 16 to 160 years old, they all thought he was so pretty, he'd tempt anybody even some of the statues of the saints scattered around the church.

It was just after Lech and Fr. Thomas had finished their cigarette one Thursday evening that Fr. Thomas collapsed, Lech caught him in his arms and saw the life slip away from him. Fr. Thomas gasped for breath but as he was dying he said "if I was a father a real father, you would have been the perfect son for me, just promise me you'll give up smoking" Lech promised he'd give up the cigarettes and Fr. Thomas died with a smile on his lips. Fr. Thomas had died a "father", with a son called Lech who was as big as and as strong as an Ox.

Fr. Thomas's funeral stopped Cracow, everybody came, priests galore, and everybody had a good time, Lech was the chief altar boy and he was given the honour of reading the passage from the Bible about Lazarus being raised from the dead and Jesus cried for his friend.

After the burial all the were gathered around chatting, and having a crafty smoke, priest and nurses are devils for a cigarette, but you know that already. Lech was going to join in, but he could hear a voice in his head, promise me you'll never smoke, it was almost as if Fr. Thomas was standing behind him. He had the cigarette lit in his hand, so instead he stubbed it out and put it in his pocket.

At times of stress or sadness, we may all hear or see voices or shadows, or echoes or reflections, its normal when your mum dies, or when your favourite dog dies, you may hear it bark and so on. In Lech's case whenever he reached for a cigarette he could hear Fr. Thomas's voice, he could hear him asking him to promise not to smoke.

Once he looked up from the cigarette in his hand and he thought he could see Fr. Thomas's, reflection in the presbytery's kitchen window, he spun around only nobody was there. If it was cannabis he could have explained it, but since Fr. Thomas's death he had kept his promise not to smoke, he had always heard Fr. Thomas's voice in his head just as he was about to put any cigarette of any kind to his lips.

This went on for 2 years, he could light a cigarette but as soon as he was about to put it to his lips the Voice the Advice from a Dead Priest was in his head. Finally he threw his cigarette lighter into the river that ran through Cracow, only as he was so angry at the dead priest he miss-threw it and it hit a girl on the side of her head and she fell in the street.

Karolina was her name and she was a nurse who smoked like the devil, or she did till Lech picked her up from the gutter in the street. She was so angry, yet so beautiful, wouldn't you be if an oaf, an ox had hit you with a cigarette lighter. Lech took out his dirty snotty handkerchief and held it against her head to stop the bleeding. As he apologised he looked into Karolina's eyes and she looked into his, what would you do if you were a Polish girl from Cracow and a huge hunk was looking into your eyes. Well tell me, tell me right now, or I'll stop the story. STOP.

Ok, I stopped the story while I had a drink of water, Girls have you made up YOUR mind, what would you do to Lech? She battered him, but all the time he held his dirty snotty handkerchief to her wound, he had to stop the bleeding after all. Then she laughed and laughed, then she kissed him more and more. Only a fool would behave in such a fashion taking everything she threw at him, be it blows or kisses but all the time holding a filthy rag at her face to stop the bleeding.

The church was still open so Lech suggested they go back and she could wash her face. He also said she could go to confession to ask for forgiveness for beating him, then they started laughing again. It turned out she was single and that her boyfriend had dumped her when he found out just before getting engaged that she could not have children. Lech was angry and cursed him whoever he was, he even offered to beat the living daylights out of him. Karolina lost her heart to him at that very second.

In church one of the confessionals had a light on so Karolina went inside to have Confession while Lech went to find the first aid kit. Cracow confessions are very quick, to the point and quick. Inside the priest said all you have to do is give up smoking, and then you'll find a husband. Lech is a nice boy Karolina. I absolve you, and for your penance you must promise never to beat your husband Lech again. Karolina was dumbfounded, how did the priest know all about it.

Lech came back with the first aid kit and tended to Karolina's wounds, she said you have to go to confession now I've just been, so after putting a final plaster on her head Lech went to Confession. Lech was about to confess when he heard the familiar voice of Fr. Thomas telling him he should marry Karolina, but he should stop throwing cigarette lighters about or he could really hurt somebody. As for having children, Michael Casey the Birmingham writer who translates into Polish, well he asked Padre Pio for a wife and children, but he left it all up to God. So Lech just leave it all up to God.

Lech left the confessional as white as a sheet, as if he had seen a ghost. He looked at Karolina, I will marry you and we will leave it up to God to see if we have children. Karolina got up from her seat and pointed, Lech spun around and there was Fr. Thomas was walking into the sacristy, he was arm in arm with another Cracow priest, Karol was his name in life.

Lech and Karolina got married as soon as her wound was healed on her head. She only ever had two pregnancies, triplets, three girls, then quads four boys, making 7 children in all. Because when asked in the Bible how many times you should forgive, 7 times? NO 77x 7 times. Karolina forgave him 7 times, and that was enough for both of them.

Let's have a Chat

Well its Thursday 6th April, Easter will arrive next week. I've been having more severe pain days recently, I've put the scar photos online so you've seen them. Its taken 2 years for all the chest hair to grow back and I now have my Panda like look again.

My big daughter will be hitting the books, even though the Easter hols begin today, she has her exams coming up, and they are the springboard to A levels and then University and studying Medicine. My other daughter has not decided exactly what to do, either be the next Julie Walters or some kind of PhD.

My job is to stay out the way and give the chocolate, Cadburys is just up the road from us after all. And yes I've told them my estimate is 10 more years so enjoy me while I'm here, I could be wrong and I hope I'm wrong, but the way my Health has been. So I write and I email it to them so its safe in cyberspace, I may be gone in the future but my Shakespearean words will linger, just as my smelly farts do.

You never know the power of your words, sometimes a single word can cause a war, in a family or in a world. If somebody took a different path he could have been a dentist instead he is poisoning his own people with Sarin.

A kind gesture can make all the difference, you will be remembered and rewarded 1,000 times over for what you did, and you did it instinctively as any member of your family would. Words have power on a page too. Our electrician friend is also in a band, and yes he looks like a rocker too, he says he'll write a song and think its average but the reaction he gets when he plays it amazes him.

The same is true for some of the stuff I write and post. I sometimes bring back some old pieces and I'm amazed at the Google Blogger viewing figures. Recently POLAND exploded on my site. 21,000 readers in under 3 weeks. Why I do not know. Now its gone quiet maybe because they are on their Easter holiday and are busy getting drunk with their friends. Read Michael Casey the fat silver haired guy with shades from Birmingham, or drink Polish lager, which would you chose?

Amazon Kindle does not support Polish so I am told by Amazon, though other languages such as Welsh are supported, so my Polish readers will

have to wait for a chance to buy 3 cheap ebooks I've prepared, once Amazon catches up.

So last night when I had to get up because of pain, I decided annoy any Japanese readers out there by uploading a book in Japanese. It only takes a few minutes while the pain killer dissolves in my belly, though my belly is big so does that make it take longer?

When you have so many ideas, and such a back list, mine is well over 1,000,000 WORDS after all, you don't know what will work, it is trial and error. And yes I did think of several metaphors to add there, but you've all thought of them for yourselves and I can see you smiling or is it smirking?

That's all for now, I may write something new later on.

don't forget

<https://www.amazon.com/MichaelCasey/e/B00571GoYC>

I'd love a bigger house and bedroom and maybe a study this will only happen when somebody unexpectedly buys some books. Not unless you are a Chinese Billionairess who has other ideas as to what to do with me. Stop it all of you, you I'll put you in detention.

Organising Your Kids ©

By Michael Casey

Well its Easter hols 2017, one daughter is about to enter Purdah, she's hitting the books prior to her GCSEs which are the big exams kids take at 16 here in England. She was worried about her Physics as they did a big test and she came home saying she thought she failed, she explained she did not revise. We had spoken before about sacrificing a subject so long as she got the top grades in the subjects she really liked and needed. So I wasn't bothered, I am not Chinese after all, though she is half Shanghai Chinese. She came home with the school report today and she got an A.

The younger daughter is a comedian, that's why I say she'll be the next Julie Walters, the mad Irish lady in some films you see may have seen. She is also very smart, it's my seeds as I say to my wife, though she says it's the Shanghai in her not the Kerry Irish background.

Then I say somebody said they'd like to breed with me when I was working at the hotel all those years ago, because our daughters are so pretty too. My final comment is that Japanese and Chinese and even Korean billionairesses would love to have my children. My wife just goes away laughing and goes back to chopping fish heads off on her chopping board.

So you can picture the scene in our house, me the lone male, even the male cat I picked from a cat litter photo turned out to be a female. So Totoro is our bilingual cat, and she does what she likes. In a family you need to organise the family, or rather attempt to. Can you tidy up is met with I'm studying, I'm too busy to put my own cup and plate in the sink and as for wiping our coffee table, not a chance. Then they debate it for 20 mins, when 50 seconds would have done the job.

Yes we have a small table just like in Japanese homes, we are a Shanghai family after all. As for me I stand and eat in the kitchen leaving a trail of breadcrumbs everywhere, something for Totoro to eat, and if I am accused of making a mess I just blame the cat. Just in case anybody in the family is reading this, I am speaking artistically, would I every leave crumbs and blame the cat, not me, not moi, never.

Children have this ability to untidy anything, it's as if it's a bomb, an untidy bomb. Samantha in Bewitched, and I can remember when it first came out on tv when I was in Primary school, I can even remember who the kid was who told me to watch it, I think I was in class 10, maybe 6 years old. I just opened that memory from nowhere, Total Recall for rubbish ask me what I had for breakfast I don't have a clue. Does this mean I write Nostalgia? Anyways Samantha could wriggle her nose and tidy up things, kids are just the opposite, it's as if Samantha has had her nose broken by a thug, and everything is in reverse, all is untidy.

I can reveal now that the years are past that I spent years coming in on the nightshift and tidying up before I could get my night shift started. You all know who you are, you all owe me a pint of Stella Artois, though I did get the angel picture on the wall when I left the company after 21years.

One trainer we had said she got fed up of her daughter's strops and door slamming, so she really did take her bedroom door off the hinges. There are ways of asking and then there is telling, and finally there are forceful ways of making kids do the chores. Hiding the chocolate is the nuclear option, and it works rather well, even the cat can be controlled. Totoro will come running at the sound of plastic wrapping paper being opened as she thinks she'll get some chicken, and as she is a writer's cat the sound of scrunched up paper makes her wild, as she will fetch it like a dog does.

Hiding the remote used to be a way of controlling the kids but with SkyQ if they press the Q it makes the remote beep so they can find it. Though as you all no doubt experience Utube is more their thing than tv, not unless it's the K family. So instead the other nuclear option is switching off the broadband, this gets any child's attention. They will stand and sit and roll over like a performing animal in a circus. Kids will scatter to the four winds to bring the washing in or take the washing out or vacuum their room, or even do the washing up. Chores teach kids the value of work, and keep the house tidy, otherwise it would become like an archaeological dig. Especially if mum goes to work, it is not a hotel after all.

Speaking of hotels I always remind them of my time at CPNEC, if something needed doing you do it, you do not walk over or past it. I was Employee of the Year, a very close runner up, a lot of the guests thought I was the General Manager, I was too fat for a uniform so I wore a kind of suit of my own, and I was 20 years older than the reception crew. Then as I was standing around the front desk when I was not cleaning rooms with Vicky, or doing security patrols for the security crew, or even working in the laundry, or doing reception or switchboard duties, so I must be the General Manager, this was me in my absolute prime.

Now those days are gone, when I lie down I get pain, arthritis and the bypass scars come out to play. So that's my motive in getting the girls to do their fair share of chores, it is character building as is hotel working. Everybody should work in a hotel for at least 6 months, it's very hard work but again such fun too.

A story I wrote called "I'm glad to be fertilizer" drew on these experiences. So I have something in common with Donald Trump, he will never live it down, Michael Casey and me have something in

common, somebody fetch me that bottle of vodka Putin sent me, just throw away the cork.

Chores have to be done, they need to be done, but after they are done the chocolate can be eaten. That's if they can find where you hid it, and that's if I can remember where I hid it, I also show my kids the photo of the stone building, a one room shack where my mum was born and raised, where she lived with her parents and siblings, 9 people in a small shack. No bathroom, just pick your spot and a blade of grass to wipe your ass.

If we look back to 1920s Kerry Ireland and the Cromane peninsula or look back to Shanghai in the 1950s we can see just how far we have come, so what's a few chores compared to that?

How do you die?

By

Michael Casey

I read an article tonight in the DT, it really got me thinking. I was interrupted by my 7 year old daughter coming down to say goodnight again and to pull faces in the mirror behind me. So I gave her a drink of milk and she gave me a kiss goodnight and then she went to bed again, happy with her thirst gone. I was happy too, for every goodnight kiss is a priceless thing. I stop to mention this because the article was about Ovarian Cancer and it talked about the lack of tact doctors have when telling somebody they are to die, the doctors cannot do anything for the patient.

Now back in 1996 my mum died peacefully in her sleep, my brother had ran around and climbed into the bed and held her in his arms and tried the kiss of life. But her time was up, she had died in the bed he was born in. 8 bare weeks later my brother, the same brother hear a noise, our dad had fallen out of bed, again my brother tried CPR, this time he laid our dad down on the bedroom floor. He saved our dad.

Now dad was given one week to live and we even picked hymns for his funeral, however I believe Padre Pio saved him. In total our dad lived 5 and half years more. And I met a Shanghai girl and now have 2 children.

Now there a a couple of things we all need to think about, does faith change outcome? In America that had teams praying for sick folks and there seemed to be reason to believe that those who were prayed for got better faster. Positive people seem to get better faster, or live longer if they are living a death sentence. If you are negative and a depressive, say your name is Victor Meldrew then you will take longer to get better and if you are facing a death sentence you will reach your grave sooner.

We all remember the lady who did all the sports and was determined to make a difference before she died. Motivation can make all the difference to a situation. If you are scared stiff of dying then you will suffer horrors. My own dad was in hospital at Dudley Rd for 12 weeks, when he "recovered" he said he really suffered. When you're on diamorphine and all manner of stuff I imagine you get horror movie level of dreams until the veil is parted and you return to the light. Being trapped in your mind must be like being in Hell itself.

Something in your mind leads you out of your sickness. I believe the prayers of family and priests DO help too. When the final curtain beacons attitude does make a difference. I know somebody who says "I hate death, or I'm afraid of death." Me I don't have that fear, when my mother died I did not even cry because my mum always said "Don't cry" so I followed her instructions. I did whelp like a puppy dog 5.5years later when my dad finally died. But to my point, I am lucky I inherited my mum's Faith when she died, not because I'm in any way pious, rather because it was the thing that I needed most. So don't be afraid of death, just don't even think about it. Death is not worth listening too, sure we will all die, but a life lived well is what we should be concentrating on. Even if we are racked with pain and on diamorphine, we can all enjoy the flowers. Yes you will all condemn me, but I reply if we can add a little sunshine to our own lives and to those who are on the final stretch then that will be a good thing.

My other daughter just came down for a goodnight kiss and to remind/nag me to tuck her in and give her another goodnight kiss. These simple things are tokens of love and I pray everybody who reads this will agree with me, a family united in love is the best way to live life until this life ends.

Donald Loves Me Best NOT you (c)

By

Michael Casey

I'm sitting there not you, Donald said I could have the window seat.

I hope you catch a cold that window never closes properly.

I bet you broke it just so I'd catch a cold.

I hope you get double pneumonia or better still triple.

Animal.

Pig.

Hairy animal with pooh stuck to your bum.

I'm telling Donald what you said to me.

Don't care its true, Donald always holds his nose when he talks to you.

You are just jealous I have the window seat.

Don't care I'm near the heater and the toilets.

You didn't tell me you were near the toilets, you know my problem.

Let's swap back again.

No.

I'll give you my nice chair with the six wheels on and the back rest.

And your Yankees baseball cap.

You know I love my baseball cap.

Is it a trade or is it a trade?

Ok lets swap back, you can be near the window and I can be near the toilets.

Did I tell you the heater was broken, and the toilets are for transgender only.

You are a sneaky little D.

Don't you dare finish that word or I'll tell Donald you used it.

What sandwiches did you bring?

I'm not sharing with you, you are just a pig, you'll eat everything.

Go on, I thought you wanted to bury the hatchet.

I do, right in your skull.
I'm not going to talk to you any more.
I bet you do.
No I won't.
Don't you want to know where the non transgender toilets are?
Where are they then?
I cannot remember, but if you give me your sandwiches I might be able to remember.
So the sandwiches were handed over.
Where are they then I cannot keep my legs crossed forever.
There are no non transgender toilets.
What am I supposed to do?
If you were sitting by the window you could pee out the window.
Let's swap back again then.
What will you give me if I swap back with you.
I'll tell Donald if you don't.
Stop Donald is here.
The guy by the window was about to pee but its too late, he messes on the floor.

Now I'm talking about Donald Duck and Pluto and Minnie Mouse, who did you think I was talking about? Things can become foul if an office has too much Politics in it.

Hot Start to Easter Holidays ©

By Michael Casey

So hot in fact that I just typed the title in and stopped to enjoy the sunshine outside while I sat on the garden wall. I would have blown some bubbles but my mixture has gone flat and bubbleless. I have found that women's shampoo makes the best bubbles so tomorrow maybe I'll steal some from the bathroom and make a fresh mixture. Then I can blow bubbles to my heart's content for Totoro our cat to chase. Speaking of whom, the girls in the house steal my shampoo to wash the cat in, so its balance that I should steal their shampoo so that me and Totoro can have some fun.

Easter is the time for eggs, I always thought the egg represented the stone in front of the tomb, but you need to ask your own priest, or maybe the man in the chocolate shop, Mr Cadbury. My mum used to say if they

got an orange at Easter or Christmas they considered themselves lucky. I also seem to remember that she hid things at the back of the pantry.

Tomorrow would have been her Birthday, 97 if she were still alive. So all high days and holidays bring memories of her flooding back. As well as the threat "I'll give a slap in the puss, or hit you with the wet mop" She never did it I just seem to remember she did say it, even if it was only once, but aimed in my direction, the golden child.

Easter has lots of Masses and so forth, I never missed all my life, until these past couple of years, Arthritis and post quadruple chest pain is an "excuse" for not attending so often. Though if I offer my pain as prayer, then I think I should be Pope now, or at least a Bishop. It was 6am yesterday/today before I was comfortable enough to sleep, my neighbours think I'm a shift worker judging by the times the light goes on in the kitchen.

Hols are times to avoid doing school work and slinging your school bag to the back of the pantry. Then mum would wonder had Jean our black cat done something at the back of the pantry, and if she had mum would rub her nose in it. Only on this occasion it was just my smelly rugby kit festering for 2 weeks.

Mum had made me a kit bag out of an old pair of bathroom curtains, the curtains may have originally been the cloak that Irish dancers wear when they jig up and down. Recycling at its best, my sisters had been Irish dancers, Ann King was their teacher, so when my sisters stopped the Irish dancing their cloaks became curtains, curtains for the dancing but a new beginning in the bathroom as curtains.

It's funny what you remember, the man who did the music for the Irish dancing was actually a teacher, he later left teaching to do music full time, he used to live just down the road from where I am now. How you make your daily bread is best if you can enjoy what you are doing, and if it hurts your spirit then change.

A guy I was at grammar school with ended up as an accountant and hated it, I believe he retrained and became a History teacher, if I'm wrong I'm sure he'll correct me. He remembers me because I made a Whitty Comment, he called it a S**tty Comment and Mr Ealy the woodwork and PE teacher hit him with the pump for using bad language, about 47 years ago. I'm listening to Bread right now hence the segway into our daily bread.

Easter is food and family, in our case the feeding of the 5,000 all the Caseys and the dog and cat, and at Xmas we fed the lodgers too. I don't remember feeding lodgers at Easter maybe just a couple of cans of Guinness. What more can I say just enjoy your holidays and time with your kids, soon you will be as old as me, hopefully not as illness prone, and then you'll see if all the time invested in them is rewarded.

Love and Parentage is all about sacrifice, looking back at the alternative, a life of loneliness and quiet is ok if you like books or records, but the noise and spirit of family cannot be bettered, even if they steal your shampoo to wash the cat in.

An Ordinary Day in the Casey Household ©

By Michael Casey

I was having some Green Tea at 5am, no I'm not an early riser, more like pain was annoying me, so I decided I may as well get up. I was enjoying my tea in the kitchen when I caught a blur of white in my peripheral vision, a bit frightening at first. It was just Totoro our cat, she had slunk out at Midnight and was now returning at 5am, the dirty dirty bitch, though I may be misjudging her morals. But a pretty girl who cannot get pregnant may be tempted to be a cat on a hot tin roof.

So I let Totoro in and went on the computer to read Press, then after an hour with the pain lessening I went to bed, though I did get the wife up first, I am an alarm clock. Writing stories and being an alarm clock is my role now.

My small daughter got some new clothes in the post, our street must be the biggest supporter of White Van Man in Birmingham, the amount of transits dropping off parcels and so on is very high. Its less boring for dads too, you just look at a screen and together you pick what you want, then you ring in your order. Clothes Takeaway, the modern way to shop.

My other daughter managed to break the family laptop so I spent hours trying to fix it. My conclusion was that Totoro the cat had walked or sat on the keyboard and managed to delete something, no wonder she goes out at night to drown her sorrows. I get blamed for everything, calling me a dirty bitch, I'm a cat a cat with a Japanese name what do those humans think I should do? Totoro then curses in Chinese, just so I

cannot understand her. She comes in the door and then lets herself out of an open window. She's just like a teenager.

The girls eat all the Italian pasta I got them especially, I don't even get the slops. So I have scrambled eggs made in the microwave, they are Polish eggs with toast made from Polish bread. The yolk is so yellow in Polish eggs, just like a yellow from a Yellow Submarine.

I'm getting tired now, in the story and now 3 hours later, 2 days of pain has worn me out, but the end must be near, Q a fat ugly woman to say The End is Nigh just like in Up Pompeii. My daughter reminds me she has an eye test, so we have to go up the road for her to have her eyes tested. Why can't a courier take her eyes up to the Optician for her, or why can't we do it over the Internet?

I sit and wait while the eyes are tested, I resist the temptation to eat the Chocolate Easter Bunny in the corner of the shop. Finally my big daughter returns, she has to change her lens, why can't she borrow the cat's eyes instead? Then I have to watch as my 15year old tries on all manner of frames, some are just too horrid to mention. Some designer frames only have one design, fleecing you and taking your money. Others are not so bad. Finally to much relief the frames she likes are the lower price range. So I get her to say, Hello I'm Dr. Annie as she tries her new frames. If all goes to plan that's what she'll be in less than 10 years' time.

I pay for 2 new frames, wear and spare as they say. Her current frames are black, just like Michael Caine in Harry Palmer mode, or Joe 90 if you can remember that show. Luckily my bladder has survived the wait so now the highlight of my day, a trip to Aldi. I tell the staff she is my Carer, and obviously they believe me, due to my silver hair and because the Arthritis is making me limp today, I hadn't shaved either. Then as a treat we go to the Coop as well, that's where the donuts are, why do girls love donuts?

Once home 4 donuts sink faster than the Titanic, the other 4 I manage to make them save till after Choir Practice. Meanwhile the wife returns laughing, a new employee turns out to be the mother of one of my big daughter's best friend. Small World as they say. People deny me 3 times, as they order another round of drinks, no cocks crowing. Which reminds me once home I am bursting for the toilet, we have been out an hour.

Now as the gentle rain falls I ring my sister to touch base, she says our brother has had another small win, I laugh and say if I won the lottery I

would buy that house around the corner from the one we should have bought. Me too says my sister, we laugh and say our goodbyes.

So this is my ordinary life, today no surreal moments, but it's not yet 7pm and I do have an imagination, so you better watch out wherever you are. And Mexico I see you reading, if you are Carlos Slim, read more of my words and you will soon get fat. In 1920s Ireland the Priest Banned the song Down Mexico Way for being Immoral. But welcome to you anyway, I do know a little Spanish, so I'll finish in Spanish, yo hablo espagnol como un burro hablando frances.

Hasta Luego. Michael

Glasses a new Vision ©

By Michael Casey

Yesterday my big daughter had her eyes tested, and it would have been easy to take that as a theme, or even sing a song about it. I decided not to then but today I'll see what's in the soup on that topic. As you know all Life started in the Soup, so all our experiences are a soup, it's what makes us, and that's where my stories come from.

So what do I know about glasses? Well my eldest brother used to have gold framed octagonal glasses and a kind of afro with flared trousers or maybe jeans. It was the end of the 1960s and he was a queen, sorry I mean at Queens, Oxford. Yes, there is even a photo of him somewhere, maybe it'll come to light when his kids marry, here's the father of the brides etc.

Then when I started to read, out of fear of Mr Gallagher, who was a fierce man and used to drink with my father, I was discovered to have a lazy eye, at first they waited and then finally I had to have glasses. I can remember my mother mentioned the Queen, or rather Queens and Oxford to the optician while I was having my eyes tested in Newhall Street in Birmingham city centre. This was before optical stores as they call themselves littered the high street, it was 50 years ago after all.

There was a thing called the Miracle Dot, a plastic circle, like a wheel clamp with cleaning lotion inside, you put the lens, and nobody used that word back then, in the centre and squeezed from both sides. Then you used your handkerchief to clean your glasses, and everybody called them glasses, only an optician said spectacles.

A few years later I upgraded to gold framed glasses, but not octagonal, I was not a hippy after all, I was a grammar school boy, Casey Minimus, though my size was maximus. God Bless Mr Hanney our Latin and Spanish teacher, he could really roll his Rs. 5 feet tall and always in his gown, just like Little Caesar, which was his nickname.

Girls wear glasses too, but they must be nice, or removed if any decent boy is within 100yards. Then you have long sighted and short sighted. So if we are looking at something my sister or daughter will hold it against their nose whereas I will hold it at arms' length at the end of a selfie stick. So it is funny to watch if you are a casual observer.

Which brings me back to story-telling it's all about observation and seeing things close up and far away, and telling the difference and mixing and matching too. You must have seen that metaphor coming, or have you forgotten to put your contacts in? People are generally switched off, or only have eyes for you, the you being their mobile or tablet. You have to lift your eyes from the gutter and aim for the stars, if I can misquote Oscar Wilde.

Seeing is more than looking in the direction of, or looking without listening, Listening is part of seeing, though Seeing without Listening makes for lack of clarity if I can try your patience. It's all about being switched on, and really turned on. I'll disappoint you by not following the path of the metaphor you now have in your head. But I have got your attention, and that's what seeing is all about. So I'll finish now leaving you begging for more, as any writer or exotic dancer would.

Readers Far and Wide ©

By Michael Casey

As you all know I have readers in many places, some Far Flung. Today I have readers in USA and Russia with Germany in the middle, I have readers in over 20 countries. Poland exploded in March when I added Polish translations to my site, Poland had 21,700 readers all told, they are on Easter holidays now so their numbers have dropped off.

So what am I to do, add Translations all the time which will no doubt irritate the English only speakers? It's very nice to discover people all over the place are reading my stuff, Canada returned and Mexico popped

up the other day. We are an International family after all as we all married foreigners, so perhaps it is in the DNA and that's why everybody everywhere likes my stories.

According to the counter I have gone through the 1100 stories mark, this includes the recent translations and a few back to "impress" pieces. Sadly all this has NOT translated into a publishing deal and a radio deal nor a Learn English via Humour deal, nor any money, well not yet.

The irony is that your Life leads you to where you are, Padre Pio and Me will explain a lot as will the other 1100 pieces, which can be read if you buy my very cheap ebooks

<https://www.amazon.com/MichaelCasey/e/B00571GoYC>

I used to listen to Short Wave Radio, lots of foreign broadcasts in English, teaching Esol English, having a Shanghai wife and so being assimilated into the Chinese community, coming up to 20 years now. Having an interest in International News, all these things give you a wider view on life. As does decades of lodgers, mainly alcoholic. Years spent talking to your dad, before and after his major heart attack.

I could do on, but basically a rolling stone may not gather any moss but it will travel and you will pick up things. Only a dullard will stay the same. Having said that I do know of one person who went travelling around the world and did come back unchanged. So what was the point?

It's nice to check on Blogger or on my Wordpress site and see that the numbers are good in all points of the compass, though I never know why this piece or that piece is more liked than others. In Search of an Indian Princess is the climax of The Butcher The Baker and The Undertaker my comedy/drama novel, I got thousands of viewers for that alone in just a couple of weeks all by word of mouth, so publishers out there should read it. I did have a film pitch for it a few years ago, sadly close but no cigar.

It's like a transport café that had Michelin star cooks working for it, this is in fact one idea that is in the book, maybe my writing is like that, rough on the outside but exquisite on the inside. A badly wrapped Faberge egg, it is Good Friday today after all.

I'll finish for now and Thank You all for reading my stuff, I'd love you more if you actually bought a few ebooks, but it's the curse of the Internet, everything is Free, so why should we pay Michael Casey, he is just the fat silver haired writer from Birmingham in the shades.

Surreal Conversations ©

By Michael Casey

I've just had a surreal conversation, I have them all the time, they are fun, it's a bonding thing that me and one of my brothers have. If you were listening it would sound very Left of Field, so Left of Field you'd be scratching your head. But between brothers, it's just normal, we start at A and go to B and then C or even D, then he'll throw in a curve ball, or even a letter from the Cyrillic alphabet, so I reply with a Chemical equation, so he'll answer with an Undertaker's reference, we have Undertaker friends after all.

There are over 50 years of references and connotations and then there is the plain daft, and a memory about dad looking like a Russian soldier wearing the old coat my brother gave him, and how he frightened the Black Lady to death when he let loose with an almighty fart one winter's night as he came home from work. She thought it was a bomb and could have died on the steps of the undertakers' such was her fright.

Normal family memories, doesn't every family have them. We may reference something from 20 years ago and sub-reference something on Star Trek. Dennis has such fancy phones, I'm sure he stole them from Captain Kirk, yeah, but Dennis would have to visit Dr. McCoy, he always has Klingons on his starboard bow, his "girlfriend" is such a dirty dirty girl.

So on it goes backward and forward, we'll mention a Carry On film or something from a Classic Radio 4 Comedy, Hello I'm Julian, and I'm Sandy, WE are Bona Hairdressers, I'd love to do your highlights, just let me throw my dust sheet over you. Filth absolute Filth but at the time the BBC just hadn't got a clue, I'm Sorry I haven't Got a Clue is another BBC show but I never watch or listen to it, so I cannot possibly comment. You would say that wouldn't you, are you a Politician? Take that back, call me an amoral animal, or even an Estate Agent, but calling me a Politician, you take that back or I'll TRUMP you.

We both start laughing, Nurse, Nurse, where's his injection, SLAP, I give the injections not you, what kind of Nurse do you think I am? Not the kind I want. SLAP. In actual fact a BBC Radio show got into trouble for

Sexist Behaviour towards Samantha, who was the butt of innuendo and all manner of laddish behaviour. The only trouble being Samantha did not even exist, she was a device, not working in Vice, she was not a bad girl like that. It, or She was a comic Device, a tool for fools to make us all laugh.

I should at this point mention Battered Husband a short play of mine was called sexist by a small theatre company about 30 years ago. They missed the point, I was sending the whole thing up. And as for the BBC they banned piece of mine from a website of their because the tag line was “And just send me 10 dollars”, it was from Internet Story which is on my website somewhere. And why did Auntie BBC ban it? Because it solicited money.

So if you feel my Surreal Conversations are Left of Field just think of the BBC’s own logic and despair. Though if anybody wants to buy me a house then.

<http://www.rightmove.co.uk/property-for-sale/property-59043865.html>

I would of course sign a deal to publish all my books and put my stories on the Radio, once terms were finalised. But maybe this piece will be banned too.

I may just emigrate to North Korea, but that would drive their Mr Kim to Suicide. How surreal would that be?

Getting Ready for a Wedding ©

By Michael Casey

They say that Marriage is marriage to a person and marriage to his or her people, well that’s what they say here in Old Forge and Singing Anvil. My friend Tina is getting ready for her “marriage” so I’m having to give her a bit of advice and pep her up. Big Dave who’s big in the community is also giving a bit of help too, what he doesn’t know about Fashion isn’t worth knowing, yes he always wear a Kaftan himself, but that’s because he broke 5 gastric bands.

Crunchie bars were his downfall, and living right next door to the best chip shop in Old Forge and Singing Anvil. He did in fact marry the girl

from the chip shop, she was always frying and he was always looking across the counter waiting to be served. In the end she served herself and he was well and truly salted and vinegared and wrapped up in grease proof paper. It was a perfect relationship.

But I'm getting off the subject, we have to dress Tina ready for her wedding night and explain what is expected once she is all alone with her intended. We've got some nice shoes lined up, we managed to hide her beloved wellies, she's always going on walks and wellies and her old blue anorak were her favourites. But for her wedding she's borrowed a pair of red high heels, Derek the cross dresser said she could have them for the night. Then Mary from the Dairy said she could have a garter, never been used, though she had high hopes, but Gordon ran off to the Highlands, and it turned out not to be just a fling. So the Garter was just gathering dust.

Now Tina needs a bit of conversation before they go at it hammer and tongs. It may hurt a little at first but once you get into the swing of things you'll enjoy it and time will fly and you'll leave him exhausted in a heap. He'll look like a broken old man with a dazed expression on his face.

Now I should explain what I'm really taking about. Today the Election Starting Gun was Fired here in England and the UK. So Tina, or There IS No Alternative, who sounded like Mrs Thatcher in 1979 if you remember then, Theresa May is getting ready for the forthcoming fight. It's a bit like getting ready for a wedding, you have to make a good impression, not just on your intended, but on the whole congregation and everybody at the reception afterwards. Then there are speeches, and finally you are all alone in the bedroom.

You may want to open all the presents before you undress each other, then love grows where my Rosemary goes so to speak. Or in Politics she will call him a tramp and a Worzel Gummidge and he will call her a Vicar's Daughter which is not an insult or a metaphor, though it does sound extremely rude, because she really is a vicar's daughter. She'll give him a Hymn to sing, and that may even be a Carol, which really is a really filthy thing to say if you are a Vicar's daughter. She will give him chapter and verse from the Old Testament, and finish him off with a bit of Vespers, her dad taught her well after all. Tina, I won't always be here to defend my little baby, so he had her do a course of bell ringing, and if any man ever tried anything, she would really sort him and his ding a ling, he could go and chuck his berry.

As for Jezza in the bedroom, which really is a metaphor for the tv studio where Dimbleby and that really is a nasty nasty thing to meet, you have a course of ointment and 3 injections after you have a Dimbleby, anyway Jezza may be first but Tina will be second to be grilled. Grilling is nothing to do with cooking so Jezza will have to be ready. I hear talk that Gillette will donate millions if Jezza shaves and Moss Bros will donate millions if he wears a suit. Only Jezza got the wrong end of the stick, Gillette will donate Minions to GOSH for Children if he shaves. And Moss Bros would match Gillette Minions for Minions if he wore their suit.

Tina, or Mrs May, though she prefers being called Tina in Cabinet is ready for anybody, she's going to wear Big Dave's Kaftan even if it smells a bit of fish, and she's borrowed some steel toe-capped shoes from her personal protection officer. Dimbleby is in for a kicking, and as for Paxo she'll stuff him too, and he better watch his canticles, vicar's daughters are dangerous.

I could go on but I have to shave Jeza before the election campaign starts, he was in Birmingham today after all. If he remembers to change bus at the Locomotion Engine and then again at the Cock Inn, then he may have a Hope, but he has to change buses at the Cape of Good Hope too. Then if he's remember to bring his Brut shaving cream I can shave him ready for the Election.

And what do I think of all this election stuff, well in Chapter 9 of my novel The Butcher The Baker and The Undertaker I have a version of an election Marriage to a Person, Marriage to a People. This is far funnier than the real thing, other than that Elections are a Load of Old Ballots.

The Final Hurdle?

By Michael Casey

Well I hear there is space on Fox News, so why not have a Post Card from Birmingham? Letter from America ran for 50 years, so why not a Postcard from Birmingham, a 10year contract would be enough. A 15min

programme once a week, or even once a month, the 15min show would actually last 30 mins if you add on the adverts. Just so long as I finish a sentence before the ads cut it, then they could put the Ad free version on the company website.

What would I talk about? Well after 1,047,497 words so far over 30 years I'm sure I'd think of something, or I could just sit in a chair and read some of my 1000 stories out. I remember John Hurt in Frank Oz's The Storyteller over 30 years ago, perhaps I could be him, no need for makeup I'm ugly enough already.

Would a Posh Birmingham England accent be good enough for an American audience, you can listen to my voice at www.michaelgcasey.typepad.com and there is a snippet of video on my Amazon writers page along with my 13 books. Yes this is me being Shameless, it is in effect my audition, I just hope I pass.

Strange things do happen though, such as today somebody in Singapore reading a piece I translated into Korean on my alterative Wordpress site. Though it could be somebody from the North Korean embassy. I did get 21,000 Polish readers previously too, so my Comedy or shall I say Humour writing does transcend Borders. Though if the Scottish get their way The Borders will be Independent.

All this is side-tracking me away from what I was going to talk about. The Final Hurdle, which can be death, or it can be the thing that swings it for you when you buy a house, or get that dream job, or get the girl of your dreams. So what exactly is a final hurdle, it's the final straw that breaks a camel's back.

You put up with so much then one day when you've been on the pop, that means been out drinking heavily, and you really do need to brush your teeth in the morning you stagger to the bathroom only to discover that bastard boyfriend or girlfriend or mistress has squeezed the toothpaste in the middle AGAIN.

This irritates you so much, you storm back into the bedroom and say, my boyfriend never does that, you let the cat out of the bag because you are so angry. So all is revealed, well you are naked already, but now your girlfriend knows you are cheating on her and with a man. So she kicks you out and you have to go live with your boyfriend in a flat above a taxi booking office. Which means you are never late for work again as you get

free taxis, but really your girlfriend's 5 bedroomed house was so much better, if only you bit your lip about the toothpaste.

When you are looking for a house a home, a 5 bedroomed detached house would be great but Rupert Murdoch himself would have to be your new boss at Fox for that to happen. So instead you have to compromise, and for some it was because you compromised your girlfriend that you need a place of your own. If you use superglue as contraception none of this would happen. You superglue your bedroom door shut, or superglue the zip on his jeans. Then you'll only have babies when you are ready.

As you look for a house there are so many things that must be on your tick list, price or the bank of mum and dad is the first one. You want to live close to your family but not so close they can hear your passion, or screams when you are watching Manchester United. We actually stumbled over a house for sale right next door to my brother's last week.

Sadly Timing is important. Our daughter needs to attend her current school for 3 more years, it is in the top 1% in the entire country. Just by coincidence we happen to live near it. So as nice as the house next door to my brother's is, today it's just too far away from the school. A home has to be near a corner shop too, if you live near a corner shop even though country living is great, a long walk to a shop is too much, especially for me post quadruple heart bypass and with add on side order of Arthur my arthritis.

There are hurdles galore when you are house hunting, such as size of rooms and kitchen size. You will never guess what's the biggest hurdle for us in our house hunting quest. Can you guess? You all owe me a pint of Stella Artois if you cannot. It's the SUN. No I'm not a Page 3 photographer who takes pictures of naked girls, no it's not that. Nor has Rupert Murdoch given me column in the paper either, it's the top seller in England by the way, he'd only give me a one inch column anyway, just enough room for my hyperlink in his papers.

No, when I mean sun I mean SUN, the thing in the sky, we get loads of sun where we live, so when we look at houses we switch off any lamps in any houses we are looking at. If we are not drenched in loads of natural sunshine then the house is rubbish. We've seen some really nice houses but if they are dark we just could not live ether. That is the final hurdle for us, THE LIGHT. In China South Facing apartments sell for much more, and remember my wife is Chinese too, so the Light is a major selling point.

So that's all the hurdles I want to talk about tonight, though I'll end on some philosophy, the greatest hurdle we all have in life is ourselves, and it's when we have a good rhythm and don't knock those hurdles down that's when we have a smoother life. But speaking from my own life experience it's when you get up from the floor with all the hurdles scattered all around you, that is when you find your inner strength, and if you are lucky you have friends and family who cheer you on, but truly the answer my friends is not blowing in the wind, its within you.

Food Bargains ©

By Michael Casey

It's been a busy day for me today, I took a peek at another house, I think it'll be a No, not unless they drop the price bigtime, and then the wife decides she likes it. I also had to take my big daughter to the Optician to pick up her new glasses, pair plus spare. So I was out a couple of times, and did a fair bit of walking. Sadly the days when I could walk 5 miles at the drop of a hat are over, if you are metric 5 miles equals 8 kilometres. I used to walk up to 20 miles and more a week when I was working in the hotel. Sadly these past few years have slowed me down. I am still alive thanks to the surgeons but I am not as good as I used to be prior to surgery, Don Camillo my local priest said that at our age its 3 years not 3 months before you get back to normal. That's without Arthur my arthritis and my cKd adding to my tiredness.

Apart from that I can sit and write and read the Press to my heart's content, the ability to write is my saviour. I still feel 20 in my head and in my outlook though my birth certificate says I'm older and my pain says I'm older still. But pain does not rule me, I am a bridegroom eager for the night ahead, on a page, on my bed of words.

Now what I really want to talk to you about tonight is Food Bargains, and how did this idea come to the fore today? Because after me and my daughter picked up her new glasses, she now looks like a female John Denver, I asked her what she fancied for food today. Which led us to the Coop and its buy 5 items for a fiver, instead a tenner. I don't always go to Aldi, though it is my spiritual home. Part of my therapy as I joked to the checkout boy today.

Now Politicians say offers in supermarkets can be bad, but speaking as somebody who lives on a tight budget I say all offers are good. When I

finally get my major media deal I'll shop in Sainsbury's and Waitrose, but until then I'm an Aldi boy, yes boy, I am so young in spirit. You are so cruel laughing at me through your computer screens, if I could reach out and spill your energy drinks then I would.

Offers allow us poor people to survive or have a few special treats at low cost. Rising prices for social policy reasons penalises the poor. So leave we the poor alone.

Now you wouldn't expect me just to make that point without seeing the flip side, so I'll continue with the flip side.

Well you are having Creamy Creamy Ice Cream tonight. Why what do you want? I just love you so much. Did you scratch the car again, I told you to watch the neighbour's garden fence, it's more like something from the Somme. No I just love you, have a double helping. What are you after? Do you want my body again, it's been 4 times this week already. Yes eat your ice cream then take your clothes off. Why can't you get another model for your Medical Textbook photographer work. They need somebody your age, besides if you are really good, I may, I may... Put the central heating on.

You are getting sausages and peas tonight, you know you love to pee, or rather eat peas. It was on special offer. Then you can have some onion rings too, you know how you like them. Then you can get your clothes off, I need a few more photos for the Medical Textbook. If you are good I have some funny fish faces too. What you don't like the funny fish faces, because they upset your faeces. Have a double portion of peas instead, then get your kit off.

This Young's fish is really nice, especially if you grill it, and the peas are nice too, with a dab of low calorie marg melted in them. I don't know what the marg is made of, but it must be good, its 60% less saturated fat than butter. What does saturated fat mean, I don't know either. These bargains really are so good. Why do we always get peas and ice cream with every offer. It's like school Christmas school dinners. Have a cuppa to warm you up, in fact have too. This PG tips was on offer too, and you get a free monkey carrier bag, made from plastic something or another. Have you finished your tea? Good now get your kit off, I have 10 more close ups to take for the urinary care project, it's so good I married you, it would be embarrassing to photo a naked man I wasn't married to.

I've got you some Pasta today, yes there will be peas too. I have some apple strudel too, and a new mug to drink your tea from. I bought it the charity shop, its new, but it was in the charity shop. Yes two mugs of tea then can you get naked. I have to take photos for the colon examination feature, and I may take photos for the circumcision. No stop crossing your legs, see I've put the knife down. I was only going to butter my crumpet. Come here have a nibble of my crumpet, then stand on the kitchen table while I take the photos for the Birmingham Medical Report.

I got a nice joint for us tonight, a joint of meat. I don't take photos of the misuse of substances, that's my twin sister Jane. Yes we'll be having peas and onion rings with it, and sweet corn. We never got around to finished all the onion rings and peas and sweet corns that come with the offers so I thought we finish them off tonight before the reach the Use By date.

No you can keep your clothes on tonight, I thought you could have a night off. What you want me to take all my clothes off, why. Just for fun, a striptease as a reward for all the male medical model work you have done for me. Ok, that's fair. Then afterwards you want me to lie naked on the kitchen table. Why? Because we still have to finish all the ice creams that came with the offers. Forget Samantha and Sex and the City, this will be Ice Cream Delights on a Birmingham Kitchen table, you can all do this at home, just make sure you take advantage of supermarket offers first.

The Newspaper That is Your Life ©

By Michael Casey

Ok, it really does sound the most pretentious of all titles, I was waiting for the Sky Press preview to start and I hadn't thought of a topic to talk about to you tonight, then it came to me 5 mins ago. The Newspaper That is Your Life came to me, so this is what I'll try and talk about, I've just realised this is the Just a Minute school of writing. If you Google Just a Minute and find some to listen to then you really are in for a treat. Whether or not what I write tonight is a treat you can tell me at the end.

So what are your headlines? Michael is seen partying the night away, here he is looking drunk and dishevelled, in fact some might say that is my normal look till I've had my breakfast and morning heart meds. Stop press we can announce that Michael hung out all the washing yesterday, only he forgot to bring it in before Storm David struck. So his neighbours

have a large collection of saggy bottomed drawers and faded clothes, too worn out even for the Charity Shop. In the old days you dried your washing on the bushes, now Michael Casey's washing is on the roofs and sheds not to mention the dirt of flower beds.

What would be your biggest headlines? Meeting the girl of your dreams, or getting the prettiest girl in the office to go out with you. Was it because you both got drunk at the office party, and she got pregnant, so she ended up marrying you. Or was it because you really were a nice guy, despite your dandruff and bad breath. You were there to listen to her when her mum died, you were that shoulder to cry on. And no you didn't take advantage of her, quite the reverse, and that made her love you all the more. She did insist that you used Head and Shoulders shampoo, and you always had 2 boxes of tic-tacs in your pocket. But then you really fell in love and on the anniversary of her mum's death you got engaged.

Simple Silly things are the Headlines of our lives. Like finally getting the right medication that will change your life, or getting contacts and a decent haircut. There are turning points in our lives, which we will mark with banner headlines in the Newspaper That is Our Life. Hearing from your wife that she is pregnant when you both thought she could not have a child. Crying with joy in the computer room where you were working when she told you the news. Your workmates being embarrassed but you were so happy, you wanted to look to the very stars and SCREAM. You can imagine the photo and the Caption Michael Casey will be a DAD.

There are sad times too, where you want to screw the Newspaper that is Your Life into a ball and throw it into the fire, or tear it into a thousand pieces. When you cry and all the ink runs off the pages and turns your hands black. You just wish Newspapers did not exist. I've been down that road several times, and that explains when I try and stick to Comedy to Humour, because it hides the pain, and deflects the sadness away. Then the Newspaper that is my life is turned into a cartoon, into a stupidity, into a joke, till even I cannot remember what made me cry before.

And on it goes, little things and silly things, big images and small images, and the images that matter, until finally our grave, the final image, the final headline. But if you ever come to my grave in the far distant future, if you do bend down and listen then you may hear me laughing. What a fool coming to my grave, he should have gone to the pub, not unless I get my final wish, to be buried in a pub. A place of merriment and laughter.

A Sunny Saturday Day ©

By Michael Casey

Well both the girls are out, one with friends in town and then back to visit her friend's dog, a sappy Rottweiler, while the other went to town to have her makeup done by a gay friend of the wife's. He works in one of the top department stores I believe, so my big daughter had her face done.

Now she has gone out with one of her friends to another's Birthday party, like any dad I advised them to stay safe. It's ok I do kick boxing said the friend instantly growing in my estimation. Though my big daughter has started reading up on all things medical, so she probably knows the places to really hurt anybody.

A dad has to be reassured when his girls go out, ask any dad the world over if you don't believe me. I'll be really relaxed when she gets a gay ex-navy seal as a best friend, she does have a great gay friend already, perhaps I should give him the Complete Bruce Lee video collection as a Christmas present.

We went to see another house today, I thought it would be a NO, but once we had a look around, it became a YES, and I told the wife to put in an offer. So we did and went home happy, the Polish builder will be back in Birmingham after his Easter holidays tomorrow. So he'd give it the once over for us. The specs and the online info was not very good, once we had a look around and decided who would have which room we decided to put an offer in.

An hour later even though it was only 4% less than asking price, it was rejected. It was the vendor's first offer. So being Chinese we say, if you get better then take it, what we offer is what we offer. If you don't get better then get back to us. Our attitude is if it is ours then it is ours, very ying and wang if I get my metaphors right. If Ying and Wang put a better offer in they can have it.

There has only been one place that we really loved. All other properties were just possibilities. Today's was nice and to be honest the brother of the owner is sound you could have a pint with him, they are a family of a former publican after all. But buying a house is a serious business you have to stay on budget, or if you are Chinese under budget. So not unless the lottery gives me the 4% we'll continue our quest for a home. Though today was great because we even had a spot for the dog and his basket,

but God is good, so with God's help and two Policemen our new home will turn up. Or I might die and then the wife gets to spent the insurance money too. See a Silver Lining in every situation.

I've been having a look at the newspapers and spotted Chelsea Clinton, she's going to run for Office in USA. God help us is all I say, family dynasties are a bad thing in politics, it's like the Kings in England, and the Droit du seigneur though I mean in regard to Kings knowing best as opposed to Kings knowing in the Biblical sense. No name, no family has the right to take over a country, if your politics descend that low you are back to gangsters and bootleggers, or wasn't that how one famous family started in USA? Ouch.

Well I may read more of the Press later on, now I'm being hunted out to buy eggs from the Polish shop. Then I may catch up with Dr. Who but the spell has been broken as the Christmas edition was so bad, which is sad as the present Dr. Who wanted the part since his childhood. However some of the scripts were just pants, as in bad.

Ok, I'm finished for today, cross those fingers for tonight's lottery or buy 10,000 ebooks then I'd give your money towards buying today's house, and I may even get a free pint from the nice son of a publican.

Bits and Pieces ©

By Michael Casey

My daughter was polishing her school shoes ready for school tomorrow, Easter is over and tomorrow and the next 7 weeks are the most important of her life. She takes her GCSEs, they were called O Levels in my day 40 years ago, these exams will allow her to study for her A Levels and that she hopes will lead to Medical School. Everything in life is connected even if we don't know it at the time, so by doing this it leads to that.

I know where all my bits and pieces are, I save odd shoelaces just in case I need them, I even know where I have left them. Which is good as my daughter broke a shoelace after she polished he school shoes, 7 weeks and she won't need them any more school will be out for Summer. And I

did tell you I did meet Alice Cooper when he stayed at our hotel when I was working at CPNEC Birmingham.

Knowing where your bits and pieces are is a very useful thing. Wait till you have kids of your own and they break things or lose this or that. My mother used to say of my brother “he’d lose his arse if it was not tied onto him” so by saving your bits and pieces you can save the day.

Washers for taps and bits of string are very useful, as are plastic bags, and fuse wire and paper bags. These can be saved in a plastic bag hanging from a nail at the back of the pantry door. All these magic items are ready and waiting until they are needed. Once you get married though your Shanghai wife will throw them away as they are just rubbish, so you have to hide them somewhere else only you forget where that somewhere else is.

I do in fact have our old green metal breadbin, it’s under our kitchen sink, like a treasure chest, full of laces and string and not to mention a spare shower hose, it must be 60 years old now. If I told my wife it was an antique she’d probably try and sell it, but as it also holds the shoe shine kit then she’ll keep it.

Children’s clothes get kept too, we even have some of my wife’s original clothing from when she was a baby in Shanghai, though now as Fashion is a Circle it would be classed as very very Classy. These clothes as kept for years, especially as our girls love Zara, then when the cupboards are groaning we have to clear them out. Children’s clothes never have any wear on them cos kids grow so fast.

Then the girls are forced to prove the clothes are too small, each item held up against their body before being put on the Throw pile. Some could be saved for our grandchildren my wife says. Only that could be 20years away, or never. So reluctantly the Throw pile is taken downstairs, now usually I’d take them to the Charity shop so some lucky child can have our old nearly new clothes, some sent by Grandma in Shanghai to the girls here in Birmingham. However the nearest Charity shop has closed down.

I can improvise though, so the garden wall becomes a clothes rack and passing parents and kids can help themselves. Or I watch like a hawk and any parent with children is accosted in the street and I hand them a bag of girls' clothes. Before returning triumphant to my perch inside our front room. So all the girls bits and pieces get a second chance, a second life.

Everything can have second life, even me, I've produced 5 more books these past couple of years, since my unplanned quadruple heart bypass. And after I see 2 more consultants maybe my Kidneys can be rescued, all they have to do is play with my bits and pieces, there is even a song by that title you can find it on Utube, fadeout to that Music.

Relief and Hope ©

By Michael Casey

Well I've just come back from hospital and the Doctor I saw was very nice, so that was a relief. Had some bloods and I see another Doctor next month. All in all a good day out, maybe my Kidneys will be sorted soon. So on the bus home I realised I was so happy and relieved, so the girls will get some nice treats today to celebrate this good news. Any excuse and I'm off to the sweet shop, yes I've been told before I'm just a big kid.

So what gives you relief? Stop, I write for all not just Ivanoff in Saint Petersburg, I write for everybody. So can you all raise your eyes from the gutter and to the stars, Petroff can you put that magazine away, I'm trying to be entertaining, yes I know not as entertaining as your magazine.

When you run for the last bus and you get there all hot and sweaty and breathing heavily, only for a girl in front of the queue to spin around and mace you, she wondered what the racing footsteps were, and all the heavy breathing. So naturally she did what her little brother always advised, she maced you.

She was so apologetic when she realised, so apologetic that you both missed the bus. She used her bottle of Evian water to wash the mace

from your eyes. She decided to take you home with her. You were just a big oaf so you walked hope together. Once you got to her place she explained to her family how she had maced you. They all laughed, Katarina had finally got a boyfriend by macing him at the bus stop.

Her brothers were all bodybuilders and doormen, the two seem to go together. As the oaf was big they had an instant affinity to him, Uri was his name. Uri and Katarina became a couple, and Uri turned out to be a whiz with books, the ones with sums and accounts in. So his relief at catching the bus led to marriage into a family of bodybuilders.

Now I also want to talk about Hope, Hope Springs Eternal so they say. I Hope that as a result of today and next month's trip to the hospital I'd avoid any more damage to my Kidneys. When you buy a car or a house you Hope that you can afford it, that the Polish builder who'll give it the once over won't say it's not worth buying, that he can knock it into shape within 6 weeks. And best of all the total cost will be within the budget.

Hope is based on the best evidence, and Luck multiplied by the Help of God and 2 policemen, or maybe I'm mixing that up with Prayer. Anyway as my mum used to say Hope, or should I say Pray, Hope and Don't Worry, that's what Padre Pio says and he's worked miracles in the past.

We all hope that the bus comes and that we don't freeze to death in the cold, this is April in Birmingham after all. Speaking of which I need to put another jumper on, so have a hope while I go and fetch my jumper. Found my jumper with the tooth paste stains down the front, it could be worse, if I didn't brush my teeth. Talkers always have bad breath, stand anywhere near a Politician and you'll know I'm telling the truth, even if the Politician isn't.

So we all have Hopes and Dreams and you never know when your Hope becomes a reality. Today we received a letter addressed to my wife, when she opens it, it could say that the people who own the house we looked at on Saturday have changed their mind and will accept our offer of 96% of the asking price. But then again that could just be an example of an unreal Hope. Though I did stand by the fridge and ask for a wife and perhaps a family, and look what happened to that Hope...

The Phantom Writer ©

By Michael Casey

Peter loved Theresa but she did not know this, she had never even met him, so how could she love him back if she had not even met him. Peter had seen her in the staff canteen, and he was smitten. Yes she wore braces and had horrid glasses, but her smile framed by her red hair was what won Peter's heart, her twinkle was enough for him.

But how could he win the heart of this fair maiden? Peter's problem was that he was shy, he'd stammer when he spoke to a girl he fancied. So how could he win the heart of this fair maiden. Peter was sitting in the cinema alone watching Roxanne when he spotted Theresa in the cinema too. She loved the film as did he, and the plot inspired Peter. Roxanne is based on Cyrano de Bergerac, the ugly man with the poet's heart, rather like the writer Michael Casey perhaps.

So Peter found Theresa's email address in the company register and sent her a poem, attached at the bottom was a cartoon of Cyrano de Bergerac. He had a friend in the IT department called Trevor so he persuaded Trevor to give him an extra email. His nom de plume was Cyrano and the poem was headed to My Lady Theresa de Roxanne. Theresa clicked and was thinking what more rubbish the company were sending when she saw the poem and the senders name. She blushed and sighed at the same time, nobody had ever sent her poetry before.

Theresa knew the email address was fake and was not going to reply, but she was moved by what she read so she clicked and replied 8/10. Peter was thrilled with the reply, so he replied with another poem, from 8/10 he began his 2nd poem. Theresa was even more thrilled by this, so she replied with 10/8 just to see what reaction she'd get. Peter laughed and was still laughing when he replied with a third poem. You made me laugh he started with before adding I'm neither 10/8 or 8/10 in fact I am 7of9. Then he proceeded with the third poem.

Theresa happened to be a SciFi fan so she knew what 7of9 meant, she loved the Borg, and just wished she was as beautiful as that girl in Star Trek. So she cut and pasted a photo of 7of9 onto the end of the 3rd poem put her own face on the Borg body. Peter was a little upset by the image, because he loved Theresa as she was, warts and all if you like. So with the next poem he added I prefer you as you are, not as a Borg. This thrilled Theresa, a man who loved her for herself. So she added a photo of herself just as she was sat at her desk. She also asked Cyrano what did he really look like.

Peter sent a photo of himself but with a Clingon head, Theresa was pleased, Cyrano was quiet hunky, but the head was horrid. However Theresa had now decided she liked him, who got poetry from their boyfriend, nobody but her. But he was not her boyfriend. So the poems flowed and just a line or two of conversation, Theresa liked him more and more. So she replied with you are a 10, to which Peter replied with a picture of Bo Derek from the film 10, with his head on top.

Now Theresa laughed when she got the photo, so what should she do in reply. She was tempted to send a swimsuit picture of herself, but she decided that would be too tarty, so she did not, remembering what Sister Cecelia in Saint Pauls had warned all the girls. Give a man nothing, not even temptation. So she replied with a Kim Kardashian photo with her head attached to a donkey's bum. Sister Cecelia would have been proud of her.

Peter's heart was won over by that, he knew he just had to marry her, once he got around to asking her out and dating her. Life isn't a straight line though. Peter's secret came out when the company did an audit of the email activity, big companies can be right bastards sometimes. Now the sands of time ran out. The company called everybody to a meeting in the dining hall. Peter was called forward and David the boss a small runt of a man began to dress him down. Peter was all muscles in his bright pink shirt and his sprayed-on jeans. He'd been working out in anticipation of finally asking Theresa out.

Peter wanted so much to tell David to go and and and, but he began to stutter and David mocked him for his stutter. The staff began to murmur, this was not right, this was not right. Theresa had made some changes too, she was going to track her Cyrano down. She would be ready, she'd ditched the horrid glasses, and her teeth were now straight and the braces were gone, she was even wearing blue the same blue as 7of9 because her Cyrano liked that blue.

Peter was stuttering more and more, and David was goading him imitating the stutter. Theresa knew her was her Cyrano, and she was going to marry him, now that she knew who he was and once they got the dating started. As for Sister Cecilla she could go to Hell, her man was gonna get everything, once she had 2 rings on her fingers. And as for that little bastard David, hey you, you little runt leave my man alone, I bet the only time you got any poetry was when somebody threw a book at you.

With that she pushed him into the water dispenser and it broke sending 20 gallons of water spurting all over him. Peter was amazed, for in blue Theresa looked exactly like 70f9 but with red hair instead of blonde. The whole workforce cheered as she gave Peter mouth to mouth resuscitation, as for David, he was expelled from the office for criminal damage to a water dispenser. You see a visiting top boss from France had witnessed everything and he was a big Cyrano de Bergerac fan, as well as being nuts about SciFi, so he took the only way out, he sacked David. And the name of the visiting French boss was Edmond Rostand.

Structure and Scaffolding ©

By Michael Casey

I just caught up with Elementary on the Sky Q box and I was wondering should I try and write another piece today, its only ten to five in the afternoon, I've just looked up at the clock, so I have plenty of time. I have a structure in my day, I get up and have breakfast and heart meds then I go on the computer and see who in the world is reading my stuff. Today Antigua and Barbuda, I had to double check on the map to see where it was exactly. Then I go shopping and take some exercise, before returning and going back on the computer to read the Press, then the girls arrive from school and I give them some food.

So I have an ordered life, a structured life, and I feel confident that my self-prediction of only 10 years left can be extended to who knows but more, thanks to yesterday's doctors intervention, and next month's doctor's intervention. I'll still be boring you all about my pain, but thank God for Movelat and Paracetamol.

So I was thinking about Elementary and the plot structure and that made me ask myself about structure in life. My daughter is thinking of doing Philosophy at A level, as well as Maths, Biology and Chemistry. Yes, the hard stuff, well she wants to be a Doctor after all. So I told her that Philosophy was just Religion, but without the Religion. Then I added that Philosophy was the mental structure or scaffolding that held our minds in place in our heads. Go write your essay now I finished with.

Which makes us all wonder what is so important in any structure. Well in a house the walls hold up the building and make the inside warm, and subdivide it into our private little spaces. Mom's room, dad's study, our

room, the boys' room, or the rubbish room, and the space under the kitchen table where the Rottweiler lives.

When you look at a house, and I've looked at 100s online and in real life, you are looking at the weaknesses, when you are house hunting you are looking for weaknesses, because they are the thing that'll cost you money. So the Structure is very important, and that's why you'll have a structural survey especially if it has been altered dramatically, because its buyer beware and you don't want the thing to fall down, or for you to run out of money after you have bought it as a doer upper.

In our lives we have structures and safety nets. You might ring a friend or have facetime with a friend where you just curse each other, you might even be priests and this is your routine, but in Latin, so nobody can understand, except Lech the altar boy. This curseathon is so important as it's a safety valve to let the tensions of life escape.

You may ring your sister and have 2 simultaneous conversations at cross purposes, like hair being platted, but the net result is beautiful hair, or rather more brother/sister bonding, and yes that sums up 30 years of talking to my own sister.

You may go to a bar and sit all alone in a corner, or next to another lone drinker, you never speak to each other. But without him being there it would be horrible, he is your drinking buddy even though you are strangers sitting next to each other. If one day somebody wants to sit in the spare chair they will be told its not vacant your buddy will be here soon.

And it will go for years even, until one day your drinking buddy will ask for your name. Then a couple of weeks will go by and then one week a man in a suit will arrive and sit beside you and buy you a pint and a whisky chaser. It's a lawyer, your drinking buddy has died and left you 1,000,000 dollars, you were the only soul he knew for ten years, so now he's left you his money. And a house and his old Mustang.

This kind of thing is rare, but it has happened, without knowing it you became part of this man's life. Your loneliness buttressed his loneliness, so he didn't feel so alone, he felt he had a buddy. The psychology of collectiveness even though there was no real connection, go ask your own PhD student. Or the Tribal Collectiveness of team sport supporters, when you feel part of a group you feel less alone, and you feel stronger, or so they will tell you.

Having a routine makes you stronger, randomness makes you weaker, because just as muscles get stronger through repeated use and exercise then Structure in Life brings order and health and wellbeing. For me writing is part of my structure, if I didn't write what else would I do? Watch Soaps on tv, teach table manners, me with tooth paste stains down the front of my jumper. Be a Political Commentator, or a writing coach. I could never be a writing coach, I can talk about my own stuff and how I write my own stuff, but reading other peoples' stuff is the most boring idea in the world, being a mental proof reader for others would just be horrible.

If anybody really wants me to teach them to write the price would be too high for them, that way I'd never have to do it. Though I could prepare a one hour chat I could deliver as an after-dinner speech, Obama gets 400,000 for a speech I'd charge 1,000,000. Just as Elizabeth Taylor asked for a million, as a way of not doing it, but they paid her. If there is anybody out there with more money that sense, just get in touch.

That's all I have to say on Structure for today, I have to eat and have a banana, it's part of my dietary structure, as is reading all the labels on food these past 2 years and forevermore. Food without phones is my final "advice" because a Family should be able to talk to each other when they are eating and not playing with toys. Family conversations with food build and strengthen a family just as much as the food itself. And even if you have double and triple conversations simultaneously while you eat this is great, just ask me and my sister.

ExPats (c)

By

Michael Casey

I just looked at the Stats and it gave me an idea straight away, so it's your own fault for what I'm writing right now. 8.30pm let's see when I finish. So you are all ExPats reading my stuff, Russians in USA reading my Russian Translations, Koreans reading my Korean Translations still in the USA. And on it goes, even some reading English in England or English in the USA.

What makes ExPats so different, so Special, well in their own mind anyway. ExPats are the True Believers, they are better than the originals,

Greek Americans are better than Greeks, and Italian Americans are better than the real Italians in downtown Rome. That's what I mean by True Believers, nothing to do with any Religion, that's the thing about English you can use words to mean what you want to mean.

They are ingredients, just as an egg is. It's when idiots deliberately misunderstand to promulgate, their own ideas and not the facts on the page, that's when you get trouble. See I used a big word then, PROMULGATE, I hope it translates well into Russian or any other language I may post it in.

But I nearly side-tracked myself, you can have a beer and a sandwich with Uri and the boys down the weightlifting gym and discuss it. As for me I'll get back to ExPats, can you tell Lech to stop picking his nose, I'm talking, yes I know he has a big nose, but we haven't got half an hour.

Now I'll get complains from Nose Surgeons about teasing Lech, you just cannot win, everybody has an agenda, I'd love to have an agenda myself, it's a kind of fast car like a Ferrari, go look it up in a dictionary, page 789 of the Oxford English Dictionary for Misspellers, 7.99 on Amazon.

Where was I, yes ExPats, the ExPat left their country for a better life abroad, whether it was the sun, the sea or the sex in some foreign place. Whether it is Spain or USA or Australia, or any other place you can think of. In Lethal Weapon Danny Glover wanted to emigrate to South Africa, nowadays some may want to emigrate to North Korea, if you have a thing for Parades. But I'm side-tracking myself again, the point is you are living the Vida Loca someplace else, so you are very happy, but you long for or even pine for your Homeland.

So how do you compensate for being in a Foreign Land, easy you pretend to be in your homeland, so you paint your house in the National Colours of your Homeland, even if it is 3 or 4 or even more generations ago. If you are in the USA naturally you'll have a flag post outside with the largest possible flag of the USA too, just to prove you are a USA citizen. You'll also have 10 guns of military grade too, you are a true American after all.

Though you live as if you are still in little Italy/Greece/Korea and any other 10 countries you can possibly think of. You keep the Language pure and slap your cousin if he speaks Japanese or English or whatever the native language is of where you are now living. He must speak the language of your mum or grandfather or whatever generation it was

when you first came to this foreign language. So You keep Japanese/English or whatever, pick your own group of languages. You speak the original mother tongue and not the language of your adopted country.

Language is the mother's milk that keeps you Special, it makes you proud, so you may have Shamrock all over your bedclothes or shirts that you wear. They could be Welsh dragons, or Heather on everything. Or you wear Bruce Lee emblems on everything. Whatever it is, it represents to Image you have of your homeland.

It could be a Tee shirt with a man falling over holding a bottle of Vodka, now would that be Polish or Russian or Ukrainian? Now immediately those 3 Nationalities hate me Until I remind them, a REAL Polish/Russian or Ukrainian would not fall over, they are real men who can hold their Liquor. So it must be a fake Tee shirt from the Czech Republic. Ok that was just an Example.

Some people are so touchy about the Homeland, they don't live there, they chose to move away, they haven't been there for 4 or more Generations, so why are they so touchy? Now that is the big question. It's like Christmas, people want to pretend they are nice and want goodwill to all men, but they'll kill that SOB if their neighbour parks one inch over their parking space outside their house.

So really Expats are living a dream, they want all the benefits of their new country, the sun, the sea, the welfare, the food, the education system etc, or the decent football teams, or even the best violent Ice Hockey, now that's why the emigrated to Russia/Czech/USA, or Canada, you kidding me Canada, though the film Goon about ice hockey was very funny.

Whatever reason it was/is people are living somewhere else, but they want to pretend they are still at home, so they don't get homesick. A little bit of home stops the homesickness. I can remember in the 1970s my mother was so utterly homesick, I can remember it so well, I could cry if I gave you all the details. So in 1973 she went back Home to Kerry with her sister and my sisters. Me and dad went too, 6 months later at Xmas, instead of revising for my mock exams, I did pass them, and a year early.

The pretence, or rather the treasuring of the old ways stops them from being forgotten and being neglected in the new world. However when you go back to the old country, you soon discover that you have been

living in a bubble. The memory you have been treasuring is not the reality, you have created a relic and are living in it.

Now I'm throwing these ideas at you so you can look in the mirror and see if I'm right or have I just been a Devil's Advocate. Time and Tide waits for no man, remember I am the son of Kerry Immigrants, my parents came in 1944, the war was still on, D Day had not begun. My own wife is from Shanghai, so I hear Chinese every day, and my 2 daughters are bilingual, even Totoro our cat is bilingual. So I live a two culture life and I can see how my multi-national neighbours live, I taught English as a 2nd language to 3 different Nationalities too, so I hope you'll see I'm not just Pontificating, see I slipped in another big word too.

In the end it's not the flag you wrap yourself in, be it an old flag or a new flag. It's how you love your neighbour as yourself, will your neighbours bring you food and look out for you because they see you as being like themselves though culture and language are so very different. You the Native are being loved by the Samaritan newcomers.

In Gran Torino you have a film about "love" across Cultural divide, it's a good film and Clint Eastwood's highest grossing believe it or not. So to all my Russian, Polish, Ukrainian and even Czech readers, the Tee shirt I mentioned with the man falling over drinking your vodka, it was Clint Eastwood, because as we all know he's just a girl who can't handle his vodka. Luckily I'm in Birmingham or he may just pee all over me.

30 years Slaving Over a Typewriter ©

By Michael Casey

Hello from Birmingham the Centre of The Universe, just up the road from Stratford and Shakespeare, I've been writing 30 years now. Mainly Comedy or Humour, you don't expect as many laughs if it is Humour. I even have 13 books on Amazon Kindle plus 2 Translations.

So how do I get noticed and get a small column in the Press online? I would offer to sleep with Editors but I'm 110kilos and very hairy, with 2 metres of scars, up and down both legs and a fabulous Pirate scar where the heart surgeon did a quadruple. It sounds a bit like figure skating but with masks and lots of blood. Thankfully I was fast asleep in the land on nod.

I would send you my Elevator Advert, but only the other day a Chinese Elevator fabrication company sent me beautiful pictures of their Elevators. They had obviously stumbled over my Elevator Ad somewhere in cyberspace. I should add that I have a Chinese connection already, I met and married the Shanghai cleaner in the old people's home. It was love over a vacuum cleaner nearly 20 years ago. Now we have bilingual daughters, one of whom wants to be a Doctor, she said Pathologist, I said at least you won't kill anybody. The other younger daughter may become the next Julie Walters, we actually live just a few hundred metres from where she used to live.

I have been annoying Russian publications with my elevator advert earlier in the day, I should have mentioned my ballet connection. When I first met my wife I was positively vetted, I instinctively want to cross my legs when I say that, positively vetted by my wife's then best friend. A Chinese ballerina from the Birmingham Royal Ballet, I was vetted by her in the Queens Tavern the only straight bar in the Gay/Chinese Quarter in Birmingham. Somehow I forgot to mention it to the Russians, as I was rushin to finish. I did send them a translation in Russian of an entire book.

So I hope I have grabbed your attention, I should say that I got 21,000 readers in Polish when I uploaded some stories to my website in the Polish language. And that was in just 3 weeks by word of mouth. It may just be that only foreigners like me, I did marry a foreigner after all.....

thanks for your patience you can google "michaelgcasey" and look for the fat guy in shades with the silver hair and then you'll find even more worth ignoring.

Cheers

Michael Casey

Redemption ©

By Michael Casey

The neighbours are noisy again dad. I know they are just like children showing off, or having a party while mum and dad are out. Why are they like that though? Because their parents are modern, and don't want to put them over their knee and pull down their pants and slap their bare

arse. Didn't that happen to Michael Casey when he was four for ringing Mrs Patrick's doorbell and running away. Yes, and even though he hid in the Pantry his mother meted out the penalty. And he still remembers it 50 plus later.

Why don't you go next door and do the same to our neighbours dad? I am tempted, but it would be such a shock for them, you know me in my position, lowering myself to their level. But they are so noisy dad, and all the neighbours on the block would thank you. I am not the bully on the block, people don't even know that you and me exist, we are so quiet after all, you could almost say we are undercover.

Dad, the neighbours are at it again, even the Wembley crowd for the boxing last night weren't as noisy, I really think you should go around and say a few words. But even if I did they'd be at it again as soon as my back was turned. You could say you are a very important person and that you have friends in high places. They may shut up then, they really are making so much noise and upsetting the whole neighbourhood.

Thanks dad, they're not making so much noise now I can get on with my homework, I want to be a Doctor after all. A Doctor or What? I haven't decided yet, I may even become a Professor just like you dad. Dad glows with pride. I have made them quieten down, I was naughty I messed with their power supply. Like you did before? Yes, but don't tell your mum or she'll kill me.

The noise drops, but it soon returns. Dad looks at his child working hard at his books, he looks skyward and mutters, give me strength. Son, I have to do something now, forgive me, but the noisy kid on the block really does have to realise now he is just a nothing, less than nothing. Please forgive me Son, I'll make it up to you.

So like a Navy Seal the Alien ascends from the ocean floor, he has been observing planet Earth for millions of years. Now North Korea has been behaving like a bully on the block with the noisy disco party. All the neighbours are upset and afraid. Only an Alien has the power to shut him down. Standing by Kim's bed the Alien whispers in his ear. Disarm and go live in Switzerland again and eat Camembert again. Korea should reunite, and as for all your toys, your noisy toys that fly in the night sky. Who do you think has been switching them off? Or do you want a massive earthquake to destroy North Korea? The choice is yours, my patience is over, and no this is not a dream thanks to too much cheese.

The Alien enters Kim's mind and puts the fear of God into him, frozen with fear that lasts forever, there is no end to time in your mind. The Alien walks away, as he does every missile Kim has in his toy cupboard explodes.

Dad does this mean we have to leave now? Yes, I'm afraid it does, I did promise Jesus never to reveal myself as humans would not be able to grasp the idea of Aliens as they call us. And how did you meet Jesus, dad? I helped him carry his cross to Calvary.

Picking Winners ©

By Michael Casey

Just a footnote before I begin, and yes it's at the beginning just to annoy the purists, I write for the ears, I did listen to BBC Radio 4 for 20 plus years before I began writing 30 years ago, that's 50 years in total, so layout and punctuation is not perfect if you are just a Reader. It's what is said not the perfect perfection of layout that matters. You may be lain in bed being fed grapes, either by your lover, or by your mum because you are in a hospital bed as you drove too fast on your way to your lover's bed. So try and get somebody to read this to you whether you are in bed or in a classroom. And if you are in a classroom your Teacher could become your Lover, and you could become President, of France, on verra.

Now where was I? Yes I'm here on the page, my words all naked before you, don't try and imagine me like that, as you'll be very sick, not unless you like Orangutans. And yes I throw in the odd word just to see if you are listening, you may be in a school dormitory somewhere, or in your dad's new garden shed ready to right your new memoir.

Shall I begin? Are you sitting comfortably, ok I know Lech is as drunk as a skunk in a corner, you can wake him up later and tell him the best bits. By the way Lech doesn't really exist he is just a figment of my imagination as are you my Readers, Pakistan and Spain joined my crew today, have you got nothing better to do, or are you a former English student of mine trying to track me down?

Ok, I'll begin, I just need to rearrange my cushions, when you are 100kilos this is important, or 17.5stones if you want my real weight, about as much as the new Heavy Weight Boxing Champ. So how do you pick winners such as the new boxing champ? He's good to his mum I

want him to beat the Ukrainian guy, or he looks taller so I want him to win.

The Inland Revenue were on their knees praying he'd win, the tax take is enormous. If he were to keep on winning then they'd get millions. The Chancellor and Mrs May were watching together in Downing Street, knock his block off, uppercut, body blow, left hook, right hook, combination, give him everything you've got, knock him out the ring.

Mrs May isn't a natural boxing fan but with this Election and Brexit on her hands she has to get the anger out her system before she has to go into the Ring with the EU. It helps her when she is talking about Jezza too, the mental strength she needs, watching a bit of boxing gets her juices flowing. She has her line ready too, Geography is History, she learnt that when she was at Oxford.

She was only the Vicar's Daughter but just wait till Christmas, that's when she'll dump the Brexit because she's got her super majority. And the EU will be left holding the baby. The EU nationals' rights is a red herring, reciprocity was always the plan, but you don't tell everybody everything like a 5 year old.

See I've picked a winner, or a loser, but the winner does take it all just ask Abba.

How do you pick winners? Oh he is just so handsome, and he likes older women, so I might stand a chance with him too, I'm 87, I WAS A TEACHER TOO. If I wave more do you think he'll come over here and give me a French kiss. Mais Oui Madame, non je suis Mademoiselle.

I love his ties, they always tangle so low like a pendulum covering his flies, and his tan, he looks so Healthy, and Orange. He looks so nice, like a Born Again Minister, his teeth are good too, does it say on the flyer who his dentist is? If we wave a lot do you think he will come over here and talk about his Policies. Forget the policies, just get his dentist's number.

She looks so serious, like a head teacher who's caught you behind the bike shed with the head girl. I don't know if I like her or not, she is reliable, but I fancy a change. Maybe if we give her the address of your dressmaker, Carl Lagerfeld? No Dummkopf, I really must return those gloves, the fingertips were missing. No HansKneesandBumpserDaisy, they could make her a nice new orange dress, just like Mrs May's.

What about Putin, do you think he lose? No, my friend [Mickhail](#) has the contract to print the results for the next 15 years and he says there is no change due. But Putin does have a nice smile, and he is an action man, he can do so many things so well. I heard he was going to drive a nuclear submarine next, North Korea sea and so on.

Who do you think will be the next Pope? God Knows.

In the Shower ©

By Michael Casey

Well its May and the Bank Holiday is over, and so is Thank God my night with Arthur, my arthritis. So I was in the shower and I thought what would I talk to you about today. I had learnt about Resumation in the night while I ws wrestling with Arthur. Resumation is cremation with water, basically a large container with superheated steam that strips the body away and leaves the bones.

Then the bones are put in a washing machine and the resulting powder/ash remains are put in an urn as in a normal cremation, the water from the body is purified before going down the sewer. Its more ecological and uses 1/7 of the fuel/power compared to normal cremation. Burial uses all the trees so this new third option pleases the Greens. This is what I learnt from the BBC World Service.

The original design was to used to destroy disease, Mad Cow Disease in cattle and save us all from the spread of any stuff that could become airborne when cattle were burnt. The French call the disease la JCB, because you use a JCB. Anyway the Scottish inventor then decided to scale it down and apply it to the ecological “disposal” of human remains, he intends to have one in England soon.

Having listened to this with just my Arthur for company all I'll say is that I'll stick with burial, but a cardboard coffin and having a sapling tree planted on top of me would be nice, my great great grandchildren can come visit the tree, I personally think visiting graves is useless, go down the pub and raise a glass to those you loved instead. But visiting a forest, even a forest planted on the dead is fine by me.

I was going to talk about being in the shower, when you are all alone and vulnerable, when your kids stab the shower curtain with rolled up newspaper, pretending to be just like Psycho. Or turn off the mains and pretend it's a power cut until they have finished laughing. Or knock the door and use the toilet while you are in the shower.

And yes they are so so very very smelly, leaving you gasping for breath as they wash their hands in the sink, which makes the water in the shower go cold. So you scream as freezing cold water hits your privates. And you rush for the bathroom window to tear it open so you can breath after your beautiful daughter's smellathon, Olympic Gold Medal smellathon, no hidden substances needed, all her and her arse's own work.

Down below your neighbour can see you screaming with your head out the bathroom window and your privates pushed against the bathroom window. She does not mind, her husband died a few years ago, so it's the closest she's been to having male company in 20 years. She hurries to fetch her binoculars, she is a bird watcher after all, only by the time she returns, only your fat hairy bum is against the bathroom window.

You return to your shower, promising yourself you'll put a lock on the bathroom door, or have at least 2 bathrooms if ever you win the lottery. In the shower you flex your muscles and say to yourself you have as many muscles as Stallone, in fact you have as many bellies as Stallone has muscles. If you really really hold in your stomach you can actually see your toes in the shower, but looking at your toes you don't like your toe nails so you let your stomach flop down again.

You look for your tea tree shampoo, only the girls have used it to wash the cat in, as it will help the cat climb trees so you use their shampoo instead. Only its conditioner and doesn't seem right, so you reach for anther container and that seems to work only there isn't enough to do your hairy back and torso too. So you reach for a third container while you still have suds in your eyes, only it's not shampoo.

It's Flash cream bathroom cleanser, and you have just put some on your naughty bits. In a flash you spin around in pain, your body against the bathroom window. Your neighbour has her binoculars ready, so she enjoyed the show, the embers glow in her memory. It was only a flash, but after 20 years it was enough for now.

You hose your bits down and sigh, relief as the pain goes, but you are now perfectly perfectly clean. Your neighbour can testify to that, she may come over to borrow some flash, just to keep her lens clean.

Life Lessons ©

By Michael Casey

I was talking to my dad yesterday, yes I talk to my dad, doesn't every 16 year old girl? He was telling me about his struggles, he doesn't call them struggles as that would sound Pretentious and he despises Pretentiousness as much as We hate double Latin last thing on a Friday afternoon, after a hard week at school. My dad actually did have double Latin on a Friday afternoon when he was in 5th Year, he hates all this Year Whatsit stuff as well, if it's so Modern then why does it suddenly become 6th Form after all the years of Struggle. But at least We don't have double Latin on a Friday afternoon.

I said it would be inspirational if he went into schools gave a speech, dad just laughed and said only if the English teacher wore stockings and suspenders and a short skirt and was 25 years younger than him. Or was that the French teacher marrying the student, and then becoming the President. Or am I mixing something up that I half heard on the news, I never pay attention to the news, does any 16 year old girl? The bit about the stockings and suspenders is true though, as dad has such a booming voice you always hear him clearly. He showed me a picture of mum once and said that's why you are here, but that's another story so I'll draw a veil over that.

Dad stopped picking his nose, but at least he doesn't wipe it on the wall as my little sister over there used to do, when she was in Year8, sorry I mean when she was eight months to 88 months old. Anyway I said Life Lessons, so dad just raised his leg and farted, he said it was a family tradition as his dad my granddad used to do that. Then he asked how long, how many pages, how long if it was read out. I suggested 3 pages worth. He ignored me and went hunting for the remote control but I knew he might rattle something off in the morning. It's his mental exercise, writing, 1,060,000 Words so far he told me, so that makes him very mentally exercised, with a brain as big as, Kim Kardasian's ARSE.

He didn't say any more, but he wants a change from Translating into Polish for his 21,700 in just 3 weeks Polish fan base. So I just crossed my

fingers and hoped Dad would come up with something. Dad being dad was suspicious that I wanted him to write an essay I could memorise for my GCSEs. His ESol English students had tried to pull that trick years ago, they were only learning English as a foreign Language, so when they wrote something that was too good, it was obvious not all their own work.

But that I suppose is the 1st Life Lesson, don't try and memorise the perfect essay and pass it off as your own, Like a Politician's speech, as cut and paste or memory cut and paste STANDS OUT, and you will be caught. Your teacher knows you, so if it doesn't seem to be like your work then it isn't. Though I did think of getting my little sister to write an essay, when she's not wiping snot on walls she really is a good writer, better than dad she always tells him. But he always tells her, that's the way he wants it to be, then he lifts his leg and farts, and sings Nobody Does it Better, from the James Bond film.

And that's the 2nd life lesson, don't cheek your dad, or he will turn the other cheek and fart, leaving you gasping for breath. The 2nd Life lesson is always have enough toilet paper in the bathroom, and when you finish wipe both sides of the seat and flush. If you finish a roll then replace it properly. Dad cleaned bathrooms in a 4 star deluxe hotel, CPNEC Birmingham, when he wasn't talking to millionaires in the foyer. So a fully ready toilet is always a must.

Things will go wrong, and in dad's life they did. In everybody's life they do, the question is what are you going to do about it? What if you were in that toilet and there was toilet paper, what would you do? Text a friend? Though text is a good word, as this is in fact the 3rd copy of this text I have in my hand. What happened to the 1st 2 copies? Well I didn't have a phone with me to text anybody, so I improvised.

So that is the 3rd Life Lesson, always print on super absorbent paper, and remember paper can really really cut, a paper cut is the worst thing, ever, so if you do have to improvise at least you'll always have some paper, some text with you, should you not be able to text a friend. But if people remember Life lesson 2 then YOU won't need life lesson 3.

Life Lesson 4 is follows on from Life Lesson3, always but always have copies. Physical copies can be destroyed, or put to other uses as we've already discussed, such as mopping up spills, coffee spills on the English teacher's desk. If she insists on wearing stockings and suspenders to school what dos she expect, a marriage proposal from the French kid hoping to be President?

Dad backs everything up in cyberspace to multiple accounts, they are free so get 17 of them and get all the free hard drives in space. Then email everything to yourself and your 17 free email accounts. Files and CUT and PASTE in FULL. So that when you set fire to the house because you were on the phone and not watching the chip fan. By the way this is not enough either, so buy a pack of usb sticks and make copies galore. By copies galore at least 7. 7 being the number of times you, well use your own imagination, dad wrote this for me not you. 7 times you....

Why is dad so strict about this. He was a Computer Operator when he was still a teenager 40 years ago. Then computers were as big as wardrobes and a disk drive was not a usb stick, it was as big as a washing machine, with 0.1 of a gig or less on it. And if something went wrong you really really really knew about it. So Lesson4 BACKUP, especially now that A levels and degrees and PhDs beckon. YOU HAVE BEEN WARNED.

Lesson 5, you will get you degree and be the best of the best. But now you will be even more unemployable. As you know I am 1/2 Chinese, but say I went back to Shanghai and said I have a degree in this or that. They would laugh and say look out the window, and as you look the will say, we have 200million people just as qualified and 150million better qualified.

So Life Lesson 5 is stand out. And I'm not talking about the English teacher in her stockings and suspenders. A repeated thing is called a Chorus by the way, so the English teacher in stockings and suspenders is the Chorus. Or the Amen at the end of a prayer, that A MAN, may be the answer to the English teacher in stockings and suspenders PRAYERS.

If you are pretty you stand out and you are remembered, so subliminally you get a head start. People judge you in 20 seconds, when my dad worked in a hotel he must have met 100,000 people and spoke to that many, lots of micro-conversations. In his prime he could sum somebody up in 30 seconds, just as a good policeman or bouncer can.

What can you do to get an edge, well you could dress like the English teacher, repeat Chorus everybody. Or you could have style? Style may be just one item of clothes, like Theresa May's shoes. Or a colourful scarf, or a scarf with unique broach on it. Something that makes people look twice. Yes un-brushed teeth with last nights' kebab stuck to it makes people look twice and remember you too.

Do you know you colours, have you done a Swatch, Gold and Black is not a good selection by the way. And yes if you are wondering, my dad is Gay Dad. No, stop laughing, he has a Shanghai wife, you've all seen my mum, and 2 bilingual daughters and a bilingual cat called Totoro. This means he knows about FASHION. He wrote the script for Zoolander.

So ask yourself, if a fat farting silver haired dad in shades can know about Fashion, why can't you? Fashion is a tool so use it.

Life Lesson6 is Personality, this is the most important thing of all, people look at you first that's why the Fashion, is 5 and Personality is 6, if you look like a dog's dinner then you won't get a chance to show your personality. Personality is the most important thing. If you can make somebody laugh then they will like you.

They will say where is Mandy, Brandy or Barry Manilow? If you can hold an intelligent conversation then people will want to listen to you. The looks will fade, but the twinkle in your eye or the laughter and light will not. If you look great that'll last for 10 years, or 30 if you have Chinese blood, or if you are a fat silver haired dad in shades, then Forever, Fame I want to Live Forever Fame. Chorus again please.

OK, I didn't write this dad did, he puts stuff down to embarrass me.

Life Lesson 7 is never be embarrassed, what would you do if a naked man suddenly appeared. The English teacher would just lap his bare arse and say, Kindly Go to the Art Studio, the Still Life Class does not start till after assembly. You will have kids, even Sarah, and they will pooh and puke everywhere, so you have to cope with it. I live with dad, he does not pooh and puke everywhere yet. **BUT I DO KNOW HOW TO COPE WITH BEING CONSTANTLY EMBARRASSED.** So have a catchphrase and use it on all these occasions. Such as I used to work in a 4 star deluxe hotel, and smile.

Dads make you take the rubbish out, to do this to do that. And they are a right pain in the PIGU, this is a Chinese word you can look it up, I'll spell it for you. P I G U But what I never realised was its his way, their way of saying I LOVE YOU. It's to teach me, to teach you, all of us of the value of work, real work, physical work.

Dad has cleaned toilets, he's swept floors, he's ran computer rooms, worked in a major law firm, he's taught English as foreign language. He's even written over a million words, please buy the books, he says he'll buy me a Range Rover if you do, and try saying that if you are Chinese.

The point though is that Dads try and protect us.

STEP AWAY FROM LECTERN

AND DO TAI CHI DISPLAY.

Dad taught me that Tai Chi too, he had to visit 99 Chinese takeaways, visiting all the food and relatives we have, just so he could pass on that Tai Chi. He put on 10 kilos in 3 weeks. But he said he did it because he loved me.

So the 8th and Final Life Lesson, and 8 is lucky in China be HUMBLE enough to realise that you don't know all the answers, the old sack of farts in the corner, the fat man with silver hair and shades has lived a life and many many things were sad, too sad to mention, that's why dad, my dad only writes comedy. A Comedy of his many Errors, but if you do buy all his books, he really will buy me a Range Rover, for my dad keeps his words, all 1,060,000 of them safe in cyber space and on 17 usb sticks.

The Pearl Of Great Price (c)

By

Michael Casey

I was hunting around on the computer and the Internet today and it reminded me of several things. The Pearl Of Great Price, The Widow's Mite, and the story of the search for the lost one dinare coin.

You can ask your own Priest to explain it to you.

Remember I was a Reader for 5 years and an altar boy for 8 and I've attended Mass all my life, I have slipped a bit these past 2 years, Pain and so on makes it difficult to attend. But if To Work is to Pray, then maybe To Be in Pain is another kind of Prayer. You can Discuss that with the bloke in the queue at the chip shop.

So I was wondering should I be a Sermon Reviewer, or just hold up a score card like in Strictly Come Dancing. Or should we all have a button in the benches and press it when we'd had enough of a boring sermon.

A sermon, can meander and end up confusing folks. Its not a change for the priest to bore the flock, who may head for the mint sauce, or even the wolf. Nor to show he went to seminary for six years, he is a Dr or PhD, or something, a BORE. Yes a BORE, a Sermon is for one thing only, to Share and Explain the Word of God.

Not bore us with his personal life, we know he lives alone, apart from the his housekeeper. Who would marry him anyway, people mutter outside when they have a post Mass fag.

Now if any of this hits a cord with you, then you have to tell your Priest to his face. Some priests are like Marmite, people either Love or Hate it, ditto the priest.

So what can we do to help them, maybe all get up and light a candle simultaneously. The extra money from the candles can buy Stella Artois for the priest and his housekeeper. So after dinner the whole congregation in church and start ringing the church bells. The priest comes running out to see what is happening.

i was having my dinner, and the Stella Artois was nice too.

Glad you liked it, but WE would like to have OUR dinner on time, so keep those sermons short!

So there you have it, a humble priest who keeps his sermons short is indeed like a PEARL OF GREAT PRICE.

The Washing Line ©

By

Michael Casey

Ok, are you ready? I've had a shower, ok a sheep dip, I am big and hairy with lots of nooks and crannies, crannies, not Grannies, are you all deaf, DEAF. If I could hang my body hair on a line to dry then I would, like a Golden Fleece, ok a silvery old man's hairpiece, no I don't have a wig, its all soft and silvery. If ever you get me in your bed you can stroke it, MY HAIR.

See you all think one thing when I am saying the other, Gill was right, you are all going up the garden path on your own. I hope Gill is well I've

not seen her in maybe 10 years. Now did you all take the one hour challenge? Did you write a story called The Washing Line in just one hour. If you did not then STOP, don't even look at the screen, just walk away, walk away from the keyboard, SECURITY I have an idle journo here, can you come and collect him.

Yes female journalists exist, and without the spacing you have journalistsexist which gives you SEXIST, but I stumbled over that so I put it in, which if you mistype is PUTIN. Ok I'll stop with the discoveries in mistyping, a guide for dislectics, yes I left it there mistyped just for the clever dicks to bitch about.

There is thought behind these pieces, or do you think I just sit here and rattle them off. And yes Rattlethemoff, is a Russian Nudist and Concert pianist and part time ballet dancer. Which reminds me there is a real ballet dancer in my next novel Tears for a Butcher, but I may never write that as it would take a year. Not unless I can get Nick from the today programme to take dictation, he got plenty from Alex Salmond after all.

Where was I, being hung out to dry on the washing line, Ronnie Corbett on acid, you are so cruel, he only ever had pear drops, and I am a pineapple chunk kind of guy. See 356 words already, that Editor can go and take a flying leap, after I finish the test piece, write 1000 words on The Washing Line, and he's making me do it on a typewriter. The one Rupert Murdoch left in The Sun's safe roof where all the naughty files are kept. So how did our leader at the Daily Sploge find this Michael Casey anyway, the SOB.

So here's my piece for the editor, and if he doesn't like it he can give Michael Casey my job and my one inch column.

The Washing Line is a very ordinary thing, its in every back garden, but what is on the washing line is evidence to who we are and what we do. On my washing line there are lots of girls knickers in a multitude of colours, then besides them are my flags, so big in contrast to the girls' knickers. I do live with 3 girls after all, the wife and our two daughters.

My pants decorated the washing line in Shanghai when I first went there nearly 20 years ago. We used them to navigate our way back to the mother in laws house. In fact in Shanghai you have a giant bamboo pole with you bright blue acre size pants hanging from them. Rather like a national flag.

So that is my memory from Shanghai. Looking up and seeing my pants on a pole on the ten floor of the tower block where they lived.

In the olden days people hung their washing on hedges, maybe that's how the first laundry begun, a farmer's wife with a steam and a stone, and her husband busy planting hedges as business expanded. They got a bigger stone when the village got bigger. And when the farmer's own family got bigger they bought a windmill, to make flour but also to hang the washing from the sails on the windmill. Yes Don Quixote was a pain, tilting at the windmills and stealing the washing as his lazy servant Sancho Panza never did the laundry. But Fr.Brain, now Bishop Brain did used to call me Sancho Panza maybe 45 years ago. So I have a soft spot for Sancho Panza, the laundry thief, and now me wishing to be 1% as good as the Author of that book, the book thief not the laundry thief, I got missed up.

Don't tell the Editor that I sneaked off to the kitchen for a tea, don't tell Nick on Today either, he's such a gossip, he'll tell anybody who cares to listen, why does he always wear ear warmers all the time? Did Alex Salmond buy them for him, it can be cold in Scotland.

I can remember looking out the back bedroom window and see birds on the washing line, watching not part of it, just observing, is the sentence that came to me back then 30 years or so ago. On a washing line you can be a sentry while the other birds have their dinner of words, or is it worms in Michael Casey's back garden.

Then when the coast is safe you can drop down and eat some words or worms whichever taste the better. As for Totoro she is asleep in/on or under a selection of 4 beds, she's had dinner with at least 4 different owners. She has two bells and the Best Bitch medal around her neck, the

birds would hear her so they are off the menu. Besides our gay neighbours at the bottom of the garden have recently installed fairy lights, so Totoro is intrigued by them, the lights that is.

Close pegs are very dangerous things that hold your clothes to the washing line. The quality of pegs is not strained, that surfeiting they break and a spring goes in your face and gives you a scratch.

You've been scratched by your cat, or is it the wife, your friends all ask as you are down the pub, they examine your face and take photos and put them on FB and Twitter. In an hour it trends, washing line injury, or problems with the washer woman?

Somebody even rings up local radio. BollocksTalkFM the new radio station for the Islington Crew. Several Sky and BBC Press Preview listen laughing as they listen, drinking green tea in the green room before the Press Preview starts. Thankfully a bottle of Polish Vodka has infused the green tea.

First item on the Press preview, in the Daily Express, front page picture of a washing line. Are clothes pegs dangerous, new EU regulations, are they trying to tie us up with red tape before Brexit, or should we hang them out to dry. The anchor just looks at his watch and says, I use a hair dryer myself.

Well Mr Editor I broke my best finger nail writing this for you and its well over 1000 words. So can I have my one inch column back or are your giving it to this new Napoleon, Michael Casey from Birmingham, the centre of the washing line universe.

In the Shade ©

By

Michael Casey

Today was a sad day for me, I had to buy a new pair of shades, or sunglasses as some still call them. My last pair lasted 4 years, since my last holiday 4 years ago, we were in Malta. I'd go again, if I could afford the Health Insurance on top. Otherwise I'd go back like a shot, we were in San Juliana, which is near the giant Hilton.

I had some RayBans, real ones, they were unclaimed lost property at CPNEC. If you find something then if its still unclaimed after 3 months so they become yours. So all the photos on my book covers have those RayBans in them. In Malta my Arthritis started to attack me, and I did my best limping around.

At the end of our week there I gave my RayBans to the black hotel worker who was carrying really heavy stuff around for days. Obviously as I'd worked in hotels I appreciated all his hard work. The sun was beating down on him and it was a spontaneous thing to do. So now he had shades while he did his hard work and we drove away in a taxi to the airport. He looked a bit like Denbay the bodyguard to Red from the Blacklist tv show.

Having no sunglasses meant that I could treat myself to some new ones after all the years of RayBans. They are the best for my face, so now while waiting for the plane home I mouched around the Duty Free and decided again half on impulse to buy replacement Shades. Again because the new ones actually fitted my fat face they were the design I bought. I never knew proper shades cost that much, but as I was technically on holiday I bought them.

Those shades are the ones you see me wearing on some of the silly photos I post with writing. I hate posed photos that's why you get the silly ones to match my silly words. My daughter does not approve, she is developing her strict doctor persona already. By the way for her pure maths mock GCSE I mentioned yesterday, she got an A, she knows she can aim higher and get the Astar. She is taking normal maths too. So cross those fingers and light those candles for her.

Now the obvious question what did I buy today to replace the lost ones bought in Malta? I had a look in a couple of shops and in the end bought a cheap pair of women's sunglasses from Boots the major pharmacy chain here in Birmingham and the UK. So why am I such a masculine man, who makes women quiver now wearing women's shades?

My girls just looked over my shoulder and are all laughing hysterically, I hate being interrupted in mid stream while I'm writing/talking to you all. As I was saying why is such a hunk as me now wearing women's shades? Get lost, go away, right now. Not you the readers, I'm talking to Totoro the cat, she was wondering what the 3 human women were laughing at. Totoro may be bilingual but she cannot read English yet, otherwise she'd be laughing too. A cat as a Literary Critic, God help me.

The shades nowadays are weak and for people with narrow faces that have been trapped between lift doors. I did ask one guy in a shop could he squeeze my face, not my spots, my face. Then the shades in his shop may have fitted my face. He just laughed at me, but he did manage to squeeze a troublesome blackhead at the back of my head. STOP. You all believed that bit, either I'm a good liar, or an even better storyteller. Black HEAD, have you not looked at any of my photos? If you can see one, just one black head I'll give you a pound, a pound of flesh, its the only way anybody will take some, and I'll lose any weight. Do you think Shylock was really the first Weight Watchers coordinator in Shakespeare's time?

Where was I, in the kitchen making coffee, but I'm back, yes, I remember so I ended up in Boots, not a shoe shop, I have to say that for any of my international readers. I just spotted Russia looking at my stuff, so hello to them, and I did repost a couple of Russian translations for them. I'm conceited enough to think even the Russians will love me stories, because I'm simple. And if you drink enough Vodka anything is interesting, even Politics.

So there I was in Boots and I looked at the prices and I knew what was in my pocket, so I then looked at the designs. The one that grabbed me the most was the Theresa May's husband style of glasses but in shades form. It was actually in men's column on the display, I tried them on and they fitted my fat face, so it was all decided. I even looked in the lipstick mirror above and pouted my best pout, with my women's shades on. I liked them, they are not really like Mrs' May's husband's glasses, but if we stood besides each other you would say is that Michael Casey's older anorexic brother, well compared to me. And who is the women in the background, with the great legs wearing the hippy coloured shoes, if she clicks them together will she be in Kansas or back in Downing Street?

So I paid my tenner and removed my spare sunglasses and put the new ones on. The spare pair makes me look as if I've lost my Labrador. The I walked back down the high street, just concentrating on trucking right, with just the right wriggle to my bum. Only my shoe got caught in wriggly spearmint, so I kind of did a moonwalk as I tried to rub it from my shoe. Some black school kids observing my moves came over to teach me how to moonwalk, so I thanked them and continued trucking down the street.

As I walked I was looking at my own reflection in all the shop windows, over the road I'm sure I saw a man in tweed doing the exact same thing, or maybe it was just my imagination. I did tell you Mr Bean was a Queen, yes really was at Queens Oxford, where one of my brothers went. But I digress, so of course I went into Aldi, as I do every day, its part of my exercise and sociology experience. I got my stuff, not as much today because I'd ruptured the budget to buy my shades.

At the checkout I asked the new pretty girl cashier what did she think of my shades, she said she liked them. I said that's because they are women's but obviously I am liberated and wear anything for a woman. She laughed, if she knew about my collection of women's clothing in my cellar, and how I dress up at weekends and cruise down Broad Street with David Walliams also in drag, then perhaps she would have had a different opinion. I told her they cost a tenner at Boots, so she'll be paying them a visit.

So back home I ran for the mirror and did all my best looks, Zoolander has got a lot to answer for. I was still wearing my new shades when my girls came home from school. Do you notice any difference I asked with my best look from Zoolander. You shaved, oh that nasty blackhead from the back of your head is gone. You combed your hair. So they did not notice anything. They can get an A in pure maths, which is like as hard as a A level 2 years early. But they cannot notice what is right in front of them. They'll never be writers that's for sure.

And why do I wear shades? Because 40 years ago I started while still a teenager in a computer room, with smoked glass to keep the heat from attacking the computers, for years we were in the same room as printers and their ink and dust. But at least we had smoked glass to protect the computers from over heating. So if you are in that environment for 21 years, then when you leave the room the daylight hits you. Hence the shades, so now you know, I am no poser. However if anybody provides me with some real RayBans for fat faces then I am willing to pose as a center fold in SunGlasses Weekly, the mag for film fans.

The Nature of TV ©

By

Michael Casey

Well we watched the last ever episode of Grimm last night and I did say I may write about it or the Nature of TV this morning, in fact its evening and I'll write this before bedtime. The Nature of Tv has beaten Grimm so where shall I begin? Well Grimm was great and it was a little off beat too, so perfect for all the family. The humour was just below the surface and the action and fantasy was real fun. The timid ok, the coward repair man was one of our favourites. And last week when Hank died my small daughter had to go upstairs so she would not cry in front of us all. So Hank if evr you read this that is the Ultimate accolade, a fan loves you so much she cries.

Which is one of the most important things about good tv, you must like the actors and the story they are sharing with us all. We are told here in the UK that we have the best tv in the world, and we only get the top 10% of USA telly, not the rubbish. There is nowadays far too much Reality TV which they say is natural, but obviously so very badly scripted. I am so old I can remember watching the first reality tv show on British TV many decades ago, it was called The Family, you can Google it for yourself. Decades later when I was working at CPNEC Birmingham doing everything, yes really. I met Sharon Osborne who had her own reality tv show. I was actually in her bedroom, just trying to set up the wifi. She is so very very small too.

Obviously I detest reality tv, I know of it but I would never watch it, not unless it was the final show and it would be replaced by The Test Card. Vacuous People shouting too loudly wearing the latest worst fashion ever should not be watched. They should be, they should be, well use your own imagination. Its just the worst common denominator tv, wannabes, God Help Us.

They should let me sit in an armchair and tell stories straight to camera, I do have 1100 of them over 1,065,000Words. But that'll only ever happen if I am stark naked and covered in ice cream, then it might become a Format Hit. People would have to phone in and guess the size of my toppings, or phone it and decide where the wafer should be shoved, or if another 1000 pounds of ice cream should be poured over me as I tell a story about the North Pole.

Camera angles are important, in fact my wife was showing me some snaps they took for the fashion company she works for, a slightly different angle can help sell the product. She was modeling some hats today, so I do know a little about the subject via her.

Which brings me to MTV and their ilk, if you are interviewing why are the irritating angles, and merge to Black and White. I grew up with black and white and 2, yes only 2 tv channels on a square box of a tv, yes like what you see in a museum. So please can we just have nice angles, and

not jerky angles as if somebody had just Tazered the cameraman, or they ran out of money to process the film.

Good tv angles do make a difference, the look down from above at the murder scene, and then the pull back to reveal more. These and lots of others really do help tell the story. In our house we'll comment on the camera direction, as well as the timing of the acting. In comedy they say the secret is all in the timing, or as Frank Carson used to say, you've heard them all before, but its the way I tell them. He was right, Roger drove him back to the airport one morning after he stopped at CPNEC, he was so funny Roger cried with laughter and nearly drove into a ditch.

So timing makes all the difference, or if you are reading my stuff where I put the commas in makes the difference. There is one famous person who has a tv show but I don't find it funny because the timing is out by a second or so. Everybody else laughs but because of the bad timing I cannot. Which is sad because the material is good. I talked about this one Christmas when at my lawyer sister-in-laws house, and she agrees with me. Or maybe I'm just a grumpy old comedy writer, who'll never be famous like them.

In tv drama, less can be more, the phrasing can make all the difference. However as a student of radio plays, 20 years worth. Sometimes the three times repeat method is tiresome in the end. I hate you, I hate you, I hate you. In real life its I'll kill you you bastard, as the wife or girlfriend reaches for the carving knife. But I am a quick runner and the wife cannot throw for toffee.

If you have watched as many films as we have in our family you will comment on the nature of the film during the 3 minute breaks for the adverts. That's why we record films and skip the adverts or watch on BBC which has no adverts anyway. The 3 mins of ad breaks are perfect for tea making and toilet breaks. Music is a big big deal, as it heightens emotions and when done properly really adds to the drama.

Nudity and kissing in drama does make a difference, but if the man goes into the post office and takes his clothes off and takes his passport photo in the booth before putting his clothes back on, that is funny when he explains that he's going on a Nudist Holiday.

Alternatively a man, it could be a women but we all have equal opportunities nowadays, so the naked man arrives at the post office and then puts clothes on before having a clothed photo graph in the booth. He explains he was a nudist, but he has been expelled, so he has have a fully clothed so people can spot him as an ex-nudist, the clothed photo is the mark of shame.

Speaking of shame I have to finish now but you can all talk amongst yourself. Its a shame when people talk over your favourite programme, but the reverse is when people are totally totally quiet and gasping or holding their breath. Or even laughing till they cry. Or even silent silent tears. This is proof that tv has worked. I have to go and pick an armchair tomorrow, I'm going to be on tv talking directly to camera, Michael Casey Storyteller will be on Sky.

And if you believe that then you have a lot of Hope or Alcohol in your bloodstream. Nite Nite.

Funny Who You Meet in the Street ©

By

Michael Casey

Well morning broke with a screech, the wife had found my glasses under the fruit bowl, where I keep my bananas. She found them not me. I had looked behind the microwave and did not see them. Next to the microwave is our fruit bowl, but as it was full my shades were hidden in plain sight. So if you have looked at the previous post of me looking almost slim, for a 245pounds man that is, this is the correction. But the bit about bananas is still funny as far as I am concerned.

After I'd done my chores I was going to take a peek at a house, but on the way there I stumbled over an old neighbour, he was bending down planting flowers outside a church. A dead relative of his used to attend that church, so not that her house had been sold he was transplanting her potted garden to the church she used to attend.

This is a very nice thing to do, and reminded me of my own mother, this week marks the 21st anniversary of her death which led to me ultimately finding a wife in my 40s, it's all in Padre Pio on Me on the Internet. The thing about my mother was that after her funeral my sister was going into her own house a few weeks later and was struck by the sight and smell of daisies. Our mum had sneaked up and planted them in my sister's front garden, so if you like it was a final kiss goodnight to my sister.

Back to the phantom gardener in the street he is in fact a carpenter and odd job man. He tarted up my bathroom ready for my Shanghai wife ready to return to me and he installed a one metre square mirror on the bedroom wall, actually 1.5 metres square. I didn't have many mirrors, but wives need mirrors.

I was talking to the odd job man and it turns out his daughter is a doctor in Sheffield, I suppose she could become a surgeon, as that's where all the knives used to be made. She is 20 years older than my own daughter, who wants to follow the same path to be a doctor. He mentioned the Sheffield pathway which isn't a nice scenic walk but a thing doctors do in Sheffield. I mentioned it to my daughter and to her Indian friend who wants to be a doctor too, so I could end up visiting there if I live that long. The irony being my own dad was a blacksmith and steelworker.

I mentioned I did a bit of writing, he half assumed I wrote poems and songs, I told him I wrote all kinds of everything without Dana though. 13 books or 1,000,000 plus words which is over 3000 pages. I said I wrote mainly short stories, such as meeting a carpenter in the street planting

flowers, and the I'd go home and write about it. So here he is planted in a story, as I water it with words.

He has moved over 5 times he tells me, his advice is move to an empty place and don't stay in a chain as it will drive you mad. A friend of his was in a chain waiting to move on for 11 months. Personally I'd put a sunset clause into any house purchase agreement. I was talking to our girls and if one of the houses we recently seen doesn't sell perhaps if they come back to us then our quest would finally be over. With the help of God and Two Policemen as my mother used to say, or perhaps my mother will use her influence in Heaven soon, I'll let you all know.

I carried on up the road after I'd bored him enough, and went looking for the house which I was going to scout out today. Scout out is now a Police phrase, where the Police scream, come on out all you scouts and no tying knots or playing with your toggles. No, its where you physically walk the area where you want to buy a house. Just driving there and not walking the area is bad practice, you will be living there so always walk an area before you put an offer in. You could end up living next door to a fat man in shades with silver hair who writes stories, whoever that might be.

So I looked at today's house and I did not like the outside, the roof needed attention, even though internally it had all been done up. One outside wall looked perished, the gutter was half falling off, and the door handle was all scratched, and this was supposed to be a new front door. The front room looked smaller that our own front room.

The price differential between a non-done up house and a done up house is 33% on top. So is a house worth 33% on top for a bit of paint and a new bathroom and kitchen. You have to see the specification and work out what could you get from your Polish builder if you bought a cheaper house and had him do it for you.

I'll tell you, the Polish guy and his mates would do it for 15 to 20% on top, so you save 10 to 15%. Or in money terms you could then buy a new car instead of paying for the ready to move in at inflated price house.

I've been looking at the housing market seriously for a year now, and as a hobby for several years, so I've learnt a few things, yes not enough you always learn more. While I was looking at today's house I spoke to a lady with long grey hair who was walking two dangerous dogs. For her they were her little puppies, but I stayed on the other side of the street just to be on the safe side. If you talk to the neighbours and people using the street then you can get a flavour of a place. The lady said I should stop by for coffee if I decided to move into the area, number Z was her house number, I won't reveal it, but the two dogs barking might.

When I was house hunting myself years and years ago, when we did not have Google maps etc, 50% of the houses I scouted I did not like. So nowadays we are all so fortunate to have rightmove and so forth. Well my belly is rumbling and I must see if Corbyn has run over any more BBC cameramen, electioneering is a blood sport now, just like fox hunting. But at least you all know just how I get my stories.

One last thing they are painting the local pub, and I mentioned to the foreman that it would show the dirt as it was a light colour and its a main road. He told me it was a special paint, almost self cleaning if I understood him correctly. I did ask could he paint me in it, he just laughed, he was too kind, as he could have said they didn't have enough paint to cover my size.

Why do I have Total Recall? ©

By

Michael Casey

Why do I have Total Recall to remember the Pain

Why do I have Total Recall to remember the Happiness Before

Why do I have Total Recall to Never Lose my Parents

Why do I have Total Recall to Remember Every Single Laugh

Why do I have Total Recall to Forgive the Lies

Why do I have Total Recall to Dry the Tears
Why do I have Total Recall to Share the Future
Why do I have Total Recall to Learn from the Past
Why do I have Total Recall to Slow Life Down
Why do I have Total Recall to Give me Courage
Why do I have Total Recall to Never be Alone
Why do I have Total Recall to Keep the Dead Alive
Why do I have Total Recall to be a Historian of Life
Why do I have Total Recall to be remember how Love was
Why do I have Total Recall because sometimes the Past is Better
Sometimes it's better to Forget and Let the Past Go
Sometimes the Past is like a Shadow or Cloud over the Present
Sometimes we wish we could Wipe our Minds
Sometimes we wish we could Rewind our Words
Sometimes we wish we were Deaf
Sometimes we wish we were Blind
Sometimes we wish we had no Taste
Sometimes we wish we had no Touch
Sometimes Sometimes Sometimes
But if we have no Past
But if we have no Feelings
But this or But that
Finally in the End without Feelings
Finally in the End without Touch
Finally in the End with Love
Finally we would be Nothing just Dead
So we Must try
So we Must have Pain

So we must Scream in the Night
So we must Lie Awake swearing at the Stars
So we must Lie Awake swearing at God
So we must Lie Awake Fighting our Devils and Demons
So we must do to the Edge Of Our Fears
So we must Learn to Pray Again
So we must Learn to Love Again
So we should not be Afraid of Our Total Recall
Its a Gift Few Have
Its a Gift Few Have
Each Moment of Our Lives and Those we Remember is Precious
Our memories Give Them extra Life Past their Death
In Our Memory Life is Immortal
In Our Memory Life is Immortal
And that's Why I have Total Recall
For in my Life I am sharing God's Immortality

Singing as Pain Relief ©

By

Michael Casey

Well the pain was a bit of a Sledge Hammer this morning, though I am no Peter Gabriel, but I would like a bit of Steam. There's this house for sale on Rightmove and it has a steam room, so I'd love to live there. Though I'd have to sell my body to be able to afford it, and only Birmingham Medical School would be interested. Ok, maybe the rag and bone man could sell it for glue.

So where was I, yes I was Singing, I sing badly, but deliberately so, I have a variety of voices. I have my attempting to sing properly voice. My

Russian Basso Profundo voice, my Barry White voice, I've trapped my nuts in the mangle Bee Gees voice and a few others in various fake accents, British and International. Its nice to sing along, we all do it, even if its only in the bath.

My body takes a while to warm up some days, then I become a purring machine or animal. You are all making up your own stories now, listen there is only one Storyteller here, so kindly leave the page. Where was I, if your hips hurt and your shoulders have joined in and your nipple or just above it is so sensitive, then you have either had a hot night of passion. Or you are me and you have just had a night in bed alone, awaking every 2 hours like a vampire rising. Though...

When you get to the kitchen you spill the beans, because you've tripped over Totoro the cat, or whatever you call your pussie. So you scrape the coffee back into the jar and make yourself a mug of instant coffee. The flavour is always nice, though this morning it will have the added flavour of whatever the wife was chopping on the breakfast bar the night before. Kenco Rapor with added giblets or kiwi fruit or any other exotic Chinese vegetable you can possible imagine, it certainly gives a certain je ne sais quoi to the taste.

I put them radio on and sing along, some songs I know others I bastardize, rhythms added and subtracted and divided too, sometimes a bit of calculus used on the lyrics. And yes as a writer sometimes I think these lyrics are so bad, or so easily constructed, I am just so JEALOUS. One song can set you up for life. So any musicians DO get in touch.

Let's write a Swimming Pool as John Lennon was alleged to have said once. And if you are Andrew Lloyd Webber my comedy Play Shoplife could easily become a musical I have ideas but I cannot sing. Lets get together and write me a HOUSE with a sauna, there's one on righmove right now.

If I were a Rich Man I'm starting to sing right now, between my tears, if I were a rich man, I'd be a poor man as I have daughters, I have daughters.

I have audio of this too. But where was I, I was singing along to the radio in the morning, as my body warmed up and the pain lessened. I can hear a distant banging that gets louder. Its my next door neighbour, she's banging away, she must like this song too, or does she appreciate my singing. Or is she being her meat, no she's a vegetarian. She's banging on the wall, she must really hate Boys2Men, or could it be my singing? No, can't be that.

I'm all warmed up now, I stumbled over Lilly in the shops, I tell her I'm her stalker, and she says no its my turn this week. I have odd numbers and she has even numbers of the week to stalk each other. Then we laugh like drains by the baguettes, or was it the yoghurts, anyway something nice to eat. Lilly and me have a laugh and a joke sharing and caring, blocking the aisle. 15 minutes later I have to go I tell her, my brown loaf has gone limp while I've been holding it like a rugby player holding his balls.

I tell her she's given me an idea for a new story in 14UP which is the name for this collection of stories I'm writing. 14UP because its twice as good a 7Up, which is Snow White's favourite drink. All I need is a title and then I can write 1000words. She raises an eyebrow so I tell her she looks more and more like the Fortune Teller down the road, she says everybody says that. So I told her to stop selling clothes pegs in the street then. She threatens to squeeze my brown loaf, so I back off laughing while she goes in search of tinned peas.

At the checkout a body building and gym coach is telling the checkout lady how to lose weight and keep it off. I know is a gym coach because, because he looks so fit, just like me. Don't laugh or I'll squeeze your brown loaf, and I can make it really hurt. So now I'm home and I'm Singing for Pain Relief, you can hear me singing along to Celine Dion, I have to practice my French somehow. It makes a change from all Chinese I hear.

As I speak to you I've switched to Jean-Michel Jarre I cannot sing along to him but I can put his music to my words, or rather my stories, he'd be

great soundtrack music to The Butcher The Baker and The Undertaker, do you think if I gave him a brown loaf, a bit crushed, he'd agree to do the music. It is wholemeal after all, perfect for all his movements, the musical kind.

So you can see that Music is my diet, the best part of my diet, it fills me with Hope and Joy, no they are not Oriental girlfriends, you are making up your own stories again. Serge can you stop doing that or Putin will make you polish his shoes, and when I say his shoes, I mean Putin down the street, Putin the shoe shop. Any other name is purely coincidental.

To sing is to doubly praise, and it lifts our souls up when pain is a right pain, by singing we allow Love and Grace to enter our heart. And yes Love and Grace are two Oriental girls I met at the butchers.

What do Words Mean?

By

Michael Casey

Well I said I'd write something comic so here it is. Tonight we discover that Trump asked the FBI to stop investigating Flynn, I'm not going to write about that but as stated in an earlier piece I do think Trump will resign, to spend more time with Barron, in fact I recommended he should.

So tonight I'm going to explain the Meaning of Words, for the Meaning of Life you should go ask Monty Python, or maybe my daughter as she is going her Religion exam tomorrow. No I've decided to talk about this just a few minutes ago, after I slapped on the Movelat pain killer.

I have readers all over the world and I did put a load of Translations on this site <https://butcherbakerundertaker.blogspot.co.uk/> but anybody who uses a computer knows how to get a translation, Google is good. For others my backup site Translates if you just click on the Square

<https://michaelgcaseyfrombirminghamengland.wordpress.com/> I hope that's simple for any of you who have English as a 2nd Language.

To my theme though, What do Words Mean?

I Love You. Means I Love You.

I Love You? Means a Question, I love you ?

ARE YOU KIDDING ME?

I Love You. Was also used by Judas, so it means something else.

So how things are SAID makes a difference, as does context. That's why actors get confused by just 3 simple words, for us the writers its simple. I love you, I love you, I love you, means three different things, if only actors could just read what's on the page.

I Love You can actually mean I HATE you.

And I hate You, can actually mean I LOVE YOU. You might say this over your own mother's grave, you hate her because she has left you all alone in this world. But obviously you LOVE HER.

I love you may just mean you want sex with a girl, but you say I love you because the use of that word gets her in your bed. If you just said can I sleep with you, then she is affronted, and slaps your face and thinks you are a bastard, and may go to bed with your best friend instead.

So the use of language can win or lose the girl. Conversely by saying I really want to eat your biscuit, which is a metaphor, that can be a very rude thing to say, but the girl likes the honest and so you eat her biscuit with a cup of tea on the side, or several.

So language and even extreme rude language can win the day, because people get fed up with all the pretentious language, and the girl likes honesty. We have convention and years of conditioning that controls or language in the mating game. Can you just come to bed before I get wrinkles, you are my duvet.

Now I could use extreme language and coarse language, repeatedly, repeatedly and repeatedly till I fall over exhausted after an hour. But that would be the cheap option, or even a metaphor, so I won't do it I'll just leave it to to you imagination. Less is more, more or less, depending on how many cups of tea and biscuit you are having. I hope I have made myself clear, if I have not then maybe my language is not up to the challenge, if that's another metaphor you'll have to decide for yourselves.

See words are weapons and the pen is mightier than the sword, I know I have used my pen as a sword in the past, and no that is definitely not a metaphor. Ask a few CEOs and they will recognise my name. But what of you in Portugal or France or Poland or Germany or any other far flung place that reads my words, do you realise that words are also tokens of love and by using them right you can win the fair maiden and you can both grow old and fat with your 10 children.

I have 1,068,000 words on the page, in my books on Amazon as you read them you'll see how my themes have grown and changed over years. The one thing that remains the same is that I want to make you all smile wherever you are in the world. I don't want to shock you, I just want to be a cartoon and cartoons don't use bad words, they are there to make their point via laughter.

Anybody can swear, and I do on occasions, but on the page that I'm sharing with people all over the world I want to make you laugh. If I'm using a metaphor or Pantomime humour I hope it doesn't shock you to the core. I want readers from 10 to 110 to enjoy my words. And if you divide 10 into 110 you get the 11 ways to eat your biscuits, and yes that is a metaphor you can explain to your boyfriend. So be careful of all the crumbs that's all I'll say, I just hope that now you really do understand what words mean.

Tuck Shop Takeover ©

By

Michael Casey

Doreen Hunt had won the Election, she was the new girl at the United School Tuck Shop. A private school for the well top do, ok, for those who had lied and cheated on their taxes and could afford the fees at such a fancy establishment. In fact the parents were all big people, the staff called them the “wobblearses” because they were so fat and their arses did wobble so much. Their kids were just as big, gastric bands were needed, battle of the bands would be nothing to do with School of Rock, but the size of everybody’s gut, and their need for gastric bands.

Doreen watched to head of tuck, it was a cherished position, and for her to come in and take over after just arriving at the school was a major cause for concern amongst the rival candidates. Doreen Hunt is a _____ was written on the bathroom walls, such was the level of animosity. The janitor who was 90 years old if a day, soon had it cleaned off, though he did admire the rhyming couplets, he was the English teacher but stayed on as janitor when he was over 70 because his wife had ran away with his 401K, and he had nowhere to go so he stayed on in a cottage in the school grounds, and acted as janitor and toilet paper replacement person.

Being in charge of Tuck was a position of honour, and it was all about how to run a business and not just helping fat arses to stay fat and wobbly. The other girls resented the newcomer with a vengeance, they said she was not a real blonde, and her hair style was a fake too, she was just copying some guy on tv, they had all seen him once on tv, but they never watched tv news, that was for morons, they were Kardasian fans.

Then the girls noticed that the stocks were going doing too fast, the boxes in tuck store were going down too fast. There was an online database showing how the Tuck shop was doing, it was available so that business studies students could see profit and loss. If they looked out from their dorms they could just watch the wobblearses that would have been just as accurate though not as scientific.

Every day Doreen Hunt walked to the edge of the grounds to the cottage where the old janitor lived. She wore a large Russian hat, it was rather cold and her dad visited Russia often so it had been a present. She had formed a friendship with the janitor as he was always cleaning up the vile graffiti that was left against her.

She brought him the out of date chocolate bars, and Gerry the janitor loved them, in fact they were keeping him alive, his funds were low and the school didn't really pay him, so out of date chocolate bars kept him alive. Now this friendship went unnoticed until one girl whose dad was in the FBI was on the roof trying out some binoculars her dad had given her.

So the cat was out of the bag, and now for sport and spite the school spied on Doreen Hunt and 90 year old janitor. There was even a website for the spies, though only 20 in the school had access to it. They watched and sniggered at Doreen behind her back, they even said she was his lover. They soon worked out that the Russian hat hid the chocolate bars.

Still the vile graffiti appeared and still the janitor removed it, with Doreen Hunt sitting in a cubicle gently crying. Gerry would recite Shakespeare's sonnets as he cleaned. Doreen Hunt was soon top in English, the best English student ever in the entire history of the school, and the school went back to the civil war. But that was another reason for the girls to hate her. Girls can be cruel.

More graffiti appeared and Gerry didn't come to remove it, the girls just laughed. But then self interest kicked in, the toilet paper had not been changed in the entire school. So Doreen Hunt was sent to investigate, her Russian hat on her head. They teased her openly, we know about the out of date chocolate bars you hide in your Russian hat. Doreen stormed off tears falling down her face.

Doreen called his name Gerry Gerry, watched from afar from the roof of the school by the FBI daughter. Only Gerry did not reply, he was lying on his back inside the cottage, he had tripped over his chocolate eating cat

Babushka . Doreen pushed the door open and screamed, her screams so loud that the FBI daughter nearly fell off the roof. The girls came running, the Kardashians were not on tv for a week so they were all so very bored, but a scream was interesting.

Is he alive? I've twisted my ankle came the pained reply. I tripped over Babushka my cat. The girls all crowded in, the cottage was immaculate, as it should be, he was a janitor after all. The walls were piled high with toilet paper and Shakespeare and other books. He was an English teacher too.

Doreen has been a good friend to me, but you lot have been a load of, and he let them have it with both barrels, and as he was both an English teacher and a janitor, he knew how to swear and ever so eloquently. On the floor in front of them was a man old enough to be their grandfather, who had only survived a week on the floor with a twisted ankle because Babushka his cat had brought him Cadburys' chocolate bars just as a dog would. Doreen has insisted that Cadburys was best so she had caused a stir of resentment at the Tuck shop.

The girls were shocked, Gerry smelt terrible as anybody would who'd been soiling his pants for a week. Doreen looked around her, Gerry had been her only friend at the school. The girls felt the Tsunami of guilt descend on them. Sorry they all whispered one by one, we need to get you to a hospital. But Gerry wouldn't leave his cat, his saviour Babushka.

The FBI girl knew what to do, she'd called her dad and he arrived wearing a Russian hat, in fact a whole fleet of cars carrying parents wearing Russian hats arrived. A nurse and a doctor also arrived wearing Russian hats. The FBI daughter had lied and said they were holding a fancy dress party so her dad should turn up in a Russian hat.

Gerry was looked after, janitors are very hard to find, even 90 year old ones. The other parents didn't want the school to close down, where else could they dump their horrid little daughters. If Gerry sued the bad press

would close the school forever. When Red had told the other parents this they believed him.

Doreen Hunt continued having English lessons from the janitor and Babushka got fatter and fatter. As for the wobblearses, they were still wobblearses but at least they were not horrid any more. Everybody wanted to dress like Russians and learn to play chess and speak Russian while eating the best chocolate in the world, Cadburys, which is from Birmingham where the writer Michael Casey is from.

Catering to an Audience ©

By

Michael Casey

Well its been as active day, and thank God my pain levels from Arthur my arthritis have gone down after a few really bad nights. So today we went to have a peek at another house, on the internet it looked oh so good, but as soon as we arrived it looked worn out, and as soon as I looked inside it was way too small. In less that 5 mins I knew it was rubbish. We have to satisfy the needs of the girls, it must not be too far from their school, so this limits our choice, we have to cater for their needs.

Catering for others needs really is a pain in the a, the a, well you get my meaning. If you organise a Prom as my daughter has you get criticised for the menu or the decorations. At least this will educate my daughter, you NEVER volunteer for anything, just ask anybody in the Army. I suppose its a way of learning, the hard way, which some may say is the best way.

In my own life everything has been the hard way, so you'll have to forgive me if any cynicism shows through my Altruism, that's the only ism I profess, Altruism. Did you spot it through my 1,000,000 words? No. Ok, please yourselves as Frankie Howerd would say.

When I write do I say this will please that audience or this audience. No I don't. I have put in a few references and whether they have worked or not you'll have to ask my Polish readers. Otherwise I tell the tale and hope its simplicity crosses all barriers, judging by the readership all over the world in over 25 places on the Map.

There is a difference between Simplicity and Simplistic go look it up in the dictionary, there's something for the Philosophy students. When I write I want as many people as possible to understand the tale, without the use of cheap alliteration, or sentences that are so long that you forget what was said at the start.

I also use small paragraphs, so blame Elaine Polin a NY Poet I once had fun with on FB many years ago, God Bless her for that advice, I also did a piece to camera on video on my Author page on Amazon, that was directed to her by way of thanks. I hope she forgives me all my trespasses, or she may just call me a Brummie.

I do not cater for my audience, I am not a chip shop, I create my delights and then pass them out to my audience like an old grandfather who has just discovered his dead wife's cook book or dictionary. I rely on my own vocabulary, if its not in my head I won't struggle or cheat to find more words. It would be like a mechanic walking down the road to borrow a jack, if I don't have my own jack then I'll use brute force.

Its more fun for me as a writer to mine my mind for stories and memories, and trigger history within and then put it on the page. Now I hope that doesn't sound too pretentious, that's the way I write, if I follow the path of words and it comes to a stile then my style of writing reflects it. What? Just think about it, shall I give you an example to explain?

If you climb over that wall to go scrumping and get caught, what do you do? You pretend you are looking for your cat Totoro or you have lost your kite, so you change your behaviour. You change your story or you lie. Rather like Politicians at election time, if plan A does not work then plan B is brought into action. Or if you are Cameron you have no plan A nor B,

so you resign and head for Las Vegas and the lecture circuit. I am available at 1/10 of his rates, so do get in touch.

As I meander through my field of words I give you references, Cameron has just emailed one to me, I'll have to get a dictionary to understand what it means. So I give you references back and forth, and I hope they will spark memories in your own minds.

If you like I am a bright spark, in the best possible way, you have all the kindling within you, all the wood and all the coal. I just rearrange it in your fireplace and use my spark to bring it to life. Which could be a really really filthy metaphor.

But like all things I write they are always better when I've finished, and there are just the warm embers glowing in the dark. Which may or may not be another metaphor. When I have finished writing I read back the piece after I've done my security, NHS please follow my example, then and only then when I read it back fully to myself do I know have I catered for my audience.

And What Did You Do in Life?

By

Michael Casey

I've just been looking at the newspapers on the Internet this Sunday morning, and it makes for some very sober reading. Apart from Pippa's wedding, they all had a great time, so good luck to them all. However parallels from History scream out. Harry is dating a divorcee while North Korea is playing with its toys, and Russia is quietly and not so quietly stirring the pot and punching above its weight. Trump has signed a 110,000,000,000 dollar arms deal. A casual remembrance of History will remind you of WWI and WWII.

People are starving and we, as in us Humans are playing with toys that could destroy or pollute the world. So it reminds me of a piece I wrote recently called Redemption, where aliens minding their own business decide to intervene to save us. The line from that story is, and how did you know Jesus, dad. I helped him carry his cross to Calvary the alien replied to his son. I also wrote a piece in July 2009 called Nobel and Me. Nobel as you know read his own obituary, and then changed, Nobel by the way invented dynamite.

Back in 2009 I was leaving Pinsent Masons, and indirectly it gave me time for writing, though all I wanted at the time was a new job. Arthritis and Unplanned Quadruple Heart bypass, as well as CkD, kidney problems were not even thought of.

So with this in mind I was thinking how would the powers that be fare as they had their Exit Interview, exit from this life into the next.

So what did you do in Life? I was a Politician. Next. Give me a chance to speak. You had enough time already. Give him a job cleaning the chewing gum off the pavements. I don't like the look of him, make that 10,000 years of chewing gum cleaning. But that's not fair. Are you going to argue with Me?

And what did you do in Life? Silence. You refuse to confess?
SCREAMING. I WAS THE LEADER. On your knees, on your belly like a worm. Now whisper to me, just exactly what did you do in Life. I was a leader. No, you were a Butcher, while the people lacked a Baker, and you led them to the Undertaker. I was a leader hissed the Snake. This one is for you Saint Patrick, get him out of my sight. A zillion years at least crawling like a worm in the dirt.

And what did you do in Life? I did nothing, I was afraid to do anything, I hoped it would all go away if I did nothing. I was the head of the UN. Reincarnation for you. But I thought this was the Final Judgement? God loved that film Groundhog Day, so UN, you get a zillion chances to see if you can finally get it right. And a zillion more chances until you do.

And what did you do in Life? I was a thief, a liar and a fraud, I stole and I cheated on my wife and my girlfriend simultaneously. I had a heart attack while cheating with my lover. Are you Casanova? No I just wished I was. Why should you be allowed in? I should not. I deserve nothing but pain, and Hell's fire. Casanova was hugged and embraced like a long lost brother, like the Prodigal Son himself. There is more rejoicing in Heaven for a repentant sinner than for many many good men after all.

And what of you? I destroyed the world in fire storm of Nuclear War. I had to, my country was under attack, so I had to. My beautiful Earth, my Eden floating in space destroyed by you. What is your name? What is your name? We are many, we are ignorance, we are war, we are Leaders without a soul. We are arrogant, we do not care, we kiss babies that are our bastards, we are Leaders of a planet dying and burning in the wreckage of Nuclear war.

God has they last Word , just as he had the first. This is a dream, a warning to you all. Love God Love him a Lot, and never hide behind the fences of faith and ignorance. This really is your last chance. Time has been rewound so you get a chance to save my Eden, I created Time so I can rewind it, use it well, don't Love Money so much that Evil is allowed to flourish, burn down bridges that promote Money not Love.

Michael Casey what are you doing hiding there? I was afraid, I did not know what to say in answer to your question. And what did you do in Life? And what did you do Michael? I broke my parents heart while they were alive. And now its too late. Look can you see though the clouds. Hold my hand Michael, can you see your mother pouring the for everybody. And your dad too.

They were so proud and still are, my son is a storyteller just as I told him stories when I was alive, can you hear your dad boasting to everybody.

I can hear my dad, but I'm so weak now, all bugged up as my dad might say, with arthritis pain and surgery pain and so on. Yes, but from this well of weakness stories surge and pour out onto the page. Yes, but

nobody knows me. Do you want fame? No, just a nice house and something to leave for my daughters. I could do with less pain though, but I'll accept the pain for a long life.

Are you haggling with God, the Almighty? No but my friend Padre Pio said always ask for the Big Grace. And its because of him I have a family in the first place, its in Padre Pio and Me. I am the Almighty I KNOW EVERYTHING ALREADY. Sorry, I just feel so helpless sometimes. But you keep your sense of humour.

Well yes, eventually I might make some money for my daughters' future. I am nothing, my Future is dust.

That's what they said about Jesus as he hung on the cross...

All Quiet on the Western Front

By

Michael Casey

Well my viewing figures have dropped off from USA, I think it may just be because the West Wing are all in Holy Lands, Muslim, Jewish and soon to visit Rome. So they cannot get to their desk to see what I'm saying today. I bet Theresa May would have liked a consoling word from Donald Trump. The policy of pay for your own social care has gone down like a lead balloon.

I have to declare an interest, nearly 20 years ago our dad went into a home after his near fatal heart attack, I was in the bed right next to his on the very same ward 20 years later. As for the home, the family paid for it, it cost 6 years salary in today's money. The price of a house. Obviously we all thought it was unfair that he had worked hard all his life paying tax, but if you pissed your life up a wall you would have got it free.

That is the reality, who is going to pay for all the care? Two million extra over 75s who may need care. So who pays. Obviously we'd all love for the State, the Taxpayers to pay, but when the elderly are in the millions, what should happen. In the old days University was free, my brother bought my little sister a tricycle with his grant, a fiver I think. He went to Queens Oxford and my little sister got a tricycle, 50 years ago.

No SEVEN times as many go to University, or Uni as its called. Everybody thinks its a right. SEVEN times as many, if you have a child you could afford to buy the child an ice cream, but if you had SEVEN children what do you do?

This is simple Maths, and we says Maths in England not Math, we are not Americans. I won't make the obvious Diane Abbott jokes. So what do you want for your Society? Education and Care, yes we all do, but who pays for it with all the high numbers? Perhaps Nicola Sturgeon in Scotland will lend us some money from all the Oil she still thinks she has. In fact that has all but gone. Scotland will become an Oil Rig scrapyards centre as a means of making money, according to a news report I saw.

There is a money tree being planted the length and breadth of UK, right next to the wind farms, the wind from the turbines helps the £50 notes grow faster, in Scotland they have £100 notes, but I'm not jealous, good luck to them. Before I forget I stumbled over this picture of the Heather and Bonnie Scotland, it was GREAT, so do go visit Scotland, it looks amazing. And for the record when I was working in a hotel at CPNEC, the Scots guests were truly nice folk.

With all the lack of money the Political Parties have to explain who will pay, who will pay. Only they won't they'll just try and trash the rest. Our Liberal party seems to have dissolved at the moment, and Labour now has a stick to beat the Tories with namely Social care. Before Labour would have said soak the rich now they will defend the Grey vote, because it could help them win after an amazing fightback, or rather Tory own goal.

Boris has been leashed and tethered so far in this Election Campaign so I fully expect him to be let loose to attack Labour. If 80% of the Labour team said their own Leader was rubbish before, why is that not being repeated Ad Infinitum? If his own team have no faith in him, why should you. It seems as if the arrogance of being an expected runaway winner has come home to roost.

At the start of the Election I said it would NOT be a landslide and I predict 45 seats win for Mrs May, if she can character assassinate Corbyn then she will win, but now she will have to work really hard. The irony is that Labour will be defending the Rich and their Greed, and that way they can beat Mrs May, Politics really is that Topsy Turvy.

Terms are all relative, and I'd not bothering to put everything in speech marks, punctuation gets in the way of thought. I write for your ears after all. I am glad of one thing though. Tribal voting seems to be ending, Tactical Voting is coming to the Fore. It always should be like that. No Party deserves our loyalty, just as no petrol station nor grocery store deserves our undying custom.

They have to work for us and not the other way around.

One final thought, my mother was born in a shack on the shores of Cromane Lower opposite Dingle where Ryan's Daughter was filmed. See photo below. My dad was a blacksmith in Kerry too, they came to England in 1944 with just the clothes on their back. Dad spent 40 years sweating in a steel works in Smethwick. Their children studied hard, in what is now called inner city Birmingham, my bothers went to Queens Oxford, and Downing Cambridge.

I'm the writer in the family. My children, the grandchildren of Irish peasants if you like, and the grandchildren of a very poor Shanghai people, and a Shanghai mum, these girls will be a Doctor and maybe a PhD in English. So if this can happen in 1 and then 2 generations why should anybody vote Tribally for any Politician.

We did it for ourselves

Tracking the Cat ©

By

Michael Casey

Well Summer is here and we think of sex, sea and holidays. But what if you are a cat, what if you are Totoro our cat? Totoro as you know pleases herself she is a cat after all. So what does she get up to. You've seen those programmes on the telly where they track cats, we don't need any programme on tv, we have Totoro.

Totoro is named after the cat from the Studio Ghibli films if you haven't heard the name before. My daughter's Godfather thought it was a silly name but he is just a church organist so what does he know about cat names? He knows more about riding his bike than he does about Studio Ghibli, but I digress.

We are lucky because there are 20 or so gardens backing onto each other, which means Totoro can stretch her legs and pooh in other people's gardens, no more litter tray in our house. When I speak of other people's gardens, she, Totoro is spoilt for choice. She does not jump from our garden wall more like launches herself as if from a circus cannon from the garden wall to the neighbour's fence.

That is why a cat's hind quarters are so big. Then like a grappling iron her front paws haul her up and over the fence, then with a jingling of her two bells and her Best Bitch medallion she is away, up and over other fences. A Lesbian friend of my wife gave out the medallions one Christmas, so Totoro ended up wearing it along with her two bells. By doing this we can hear her coming, as can any birds, or the families of magpies that nest nearby.

When Totoro goes walkabout she has a choice, a choice of owners, who think they own her, by they don't know her. Like the song in the First Wives Club, you don't know me. Totoro has to decide will she have:- Polish, Japanese, French, Spanish, or even English food, should she be bored with Ocado delivered Whiskas. Or Chinese leftovers from our house. Then there is the Indian Curry house over a few more fences.

We know she visits the curry house because she comes home smelling of curry. She may just be sitting near the chimney, a chimney is full of heat and flavour. Sometimes she comes home smelling of Chanel, if only she were a dog she could bring some home in her mouth like a retriever.

Totoro likes to go out late at night, so like any parent I am concerned and tell her to avoid anybody called Tom. When I lock up at night I wonder what she is up to, but I have done my best, besides she is neutered. Sometime I call her name adding a few words in Japanese or Chinese, she is bilingual after all, we are a Birmingham/Shanghai family after all. Sometimes she will return other times she will not.

I might get up in the night for green tea, so I squish plastic and suddenly she'll appear thundering over fences six feet high, plastic means that Aldi Cajun chicken is being opened, and she'll sell her soul, or one of nine souls for a treat of Cajun chicken from Aldi. Once she's back in the house at 3 am or 4 am I give her a stern lecture as any dad would to his daughter, 2 equals 14 in cat years somebody told me. Then I'll give her a stroke and tell her to go upstairs to bed. With the sounds of her bells jingling I smile as I finish my green tea before returning to my own bed.

However some nights she stays out all night or most of the night, so what am I to do? Like any concerned parent, I cross my fingers, and may even bless myself and ask Saint Martin de Porres to keep an eye out. I'll leave an upstairs window open and a night light on to guide her home.

All in all being a parent to a cat, to Totoro is very rewarding though I do feel like Quasimodo waiting for the bells, the bells. The bells signify

Totoro is home and safe. For a cat in the house turns a house into a home.
The Bells, The Bells jingling away its like Christmas every day.

Numbers and your Life ©

By

Michael Casey

I was looking at a house online, we are viewing it soon, and I thought about the house number. It does not matter a damn or does it. Would you live in a house numbered 13? Or would you rename it Thirteen, just to be on the safe side? In the next street there was a house number 13, a man died in it and his body was not discovered for a while. Would the present happy family living there recoil if they knew. It was over 20 years ago, his name was Brian, life of Brian or death of Brian if you like. He had a goatee and a very fat dog. So that's number 13 for you, not forgetting Judas being the 13th man.

In Chinese the number 4 sounds like the word for Death, go to your local Chinese takeaway tonight and ask them to say 4 and Death and see if you can spot the difference. And get me some prawn crackers while you are there. I bring this up because along time ago a house numbered 4 came up but my wife immediately said NO. In Chinese there are 5 accents or tones, so Ma can mean Mum/Ma or Horse. So be very careful with your pronunciation. Or you could be very unlucky and get a clip around your ear, no matter what number house you live in.

I've just had a look at the Numerology site on the Internet its amusing and makes you think too. Numbers and their combinations matter to people, such as Birthdays and Anniversaries. So Numerology has much to say about numbers though I could say much to say about nothing if I bastardise Shakespeare. I will be meeting Will down the Trader in Old Forge and Singing Anvil tonight so I'll apologise to him then, he owes me

a drink for saving his life. But that's not in any of his plays as Anne can be quiet a bitch at times, his words not mine.

So 11th Nov 1977 , or 111177 is a magic number in my own life. My dad's Birthday, he was 56 then. I was 19 had changed, I had a door slammed and locked in my face. Though it turned out to be a turning point in my life as it led to me turning a corner and ending up as a computer operator 6 months later. I can remember my dad shaving in the kitchen sink, the bathroom was so cold after all, and he said something would turn up. My eldest brother said try computers and that led to secure employment for 21 years, the angel on my wall is the leaving present from that job.

So that date is burnt into my brain, the other thing my brother said years later was look at the negatives when buying a house. So estate agents already know to their cost what I want, thanks to my brother's advice.

Are there any other special numbers, yes of course there are. The day I get my first Royalty check, the day my play Shoplife is on the stage maybe with Julian Cleary and Lilly Savage as my Angels. My mother used to say with the Help of God and two Policemen. Perhaps God does finally help with my Artistic side, and its 2 Gay men instead of two Policemen. I have no idea what either of them knows about handcuffs and truncheons, maybe they'll taser me for my cheek, should I turn the other one?

I should say though that would be Futurology, not Numerology, apart from when the money comes in, though round the back of where I live there is an accountant, we used to be altar boys together. Fact is stranger than Fiction always, I just hope I have a talent to amuse people. That's not about numbers, lucky or otherwise, its about sweat and hard work. Though the Help of God and Two Policemen would be greatly appreciated, whether or not they are Gay is unimportant, just a sense of humour required.

Don't Abandon Your Future, There are many Futures ©

By

Michael Casey

I begin with irony and pain, my hips are getting better as I listen to the Beatles' Sgt Pepper album, and I've got to admit its getting better. Only for my left shoulder pain to appear and descend to my heart, you think you'll have a heart attack but actually its "just" Arthur my arthritis in another position. Hence the irony, don't abandon your future, as I reach for the Movelat gel, and I smile through the pain, don't abandon my future etc.

So that's not where I wanted to start but I suppose it highlights the fact that you never know what might happen, you never know just how your Future, you wanted to be a world famous writer and make lots of money for your kids' Future. Though I don't want the Fame, the money would be enough, or just enough money to pass on, providing my Care does not cost too much. Don't show Theresa this piece or she'll cry, again.

So instead you are found dead on the floor and the cat Totoro hits the keyboard and deletes your masterpiece, so your family stay in poverty eating fish finger finger sandwiches on Hovis. Actually cats do sit on keyboards so close the lid or push the keyboard away. Or Just don't let the cat in the room while you take a leak.

I've digressed as usual, my Joyce Grenfell and Ronnie Corbett on Speed style of writing, it wasn't planned it just emerged, you can Google them and let them entertain you if you don't like my stuff.

My daughter is having chill time during the half term, and as she is so super industrious as a student I just asked her had she changed her mind about being a doctor. I then added that there are Many Futures, so if you don't get one there is always another, so all of the students out there should bear that in mind when the Results arrive in two months time.

Look at my path just by way of example. Tax Office, March Assessor, Computer Operator with interlude at paint factory, otherwise 21 years at the same place, City Hall Computer room, Trainee Betting Shop Manager, 3 years at CPNEC Birmingham at the Hotel where I did everything, 10 roles on a regular basis, Life Insurance Underwriter Non Medical, 3 years Pinsent Masons Law Firm, Esol English Teacher, House Husband or Hausfrau, being there for the girls while the wife went to work.

We want somebody to be home to feed and water the girls when they come home from school. As well as spells of unemployment before becoming full time Hausfrau. Not to mention 2013 when my Arthritis arrived, then 2015 when I went in as a 999, with Arthritis pain, my heart was not too bad, the but once they saw the results of Heart tests I had started to have weeks previously they decided to keep me in, and after more tests, 10 days later 13 Jan 2015 I had what turned out to be a Quadruple Heart Bypass.

So there you go, that's why there is a Bucket and me on the cover of Still Alive 2015. I've also written 4 other books since then, you can count them <https://www.amazon.co.uk/Michael-Casey/e/Boo571GoYC>

Nobody can predict what will or won't be, nobody knows. You may have a Golden Life, rich family and live in a mansion and a beautiful wife. Then one day you'll wake up and realise its just a bucket, like the one on the front cover of Still Alive 2015. That's why you have Hippies having a Quest for meaning, and experiencing altered realities via dope and drugs.

Really, and I'm speaking from my own life experience, not some book, or cult. The true journey is Within, its your Interior Life, you can Google that if you don't know the concept. Its your Family, they are what makes

the difference. Money sticks to Money, but when the money goes what's left? Will Money like you? Money isn't Bad, its the Love of Money which is. There is a difference and you don't have to be a Bible scholar to know that.

Family is the boat we sail in, when the storm comes, and it will, and there may be many, many many. It depends on many many things, life is a weather forecast after all. So what are you going to do? Who are you going to call? Ghostbusters? Or curse three times like Hugh Grant in Four Weddings and a Funeral. F-, F-, F-

Or the 3 Fs, Family, Friends, Faith. We all have uncertain futures, me I just hope to live to see my girls grow up into strong women. I don't know God's plan for me, or even if he has one, that's philosophy by the way, so I may touch on that in my next piece. I had one future, the door was slammed in my face. So I had another path, then another then another. Not forgetting stumbling into writing and marriage with children.

If you have a setback you start again, you never never surrender, I did not learn that from Churchill either. His bar bill was equal to 3 people's salary, there was a programme on tv about it, hence the quote. Old Boris Johnson wrote a book about him recently. Go read that if you won't buy any of my books. You make your own Future. You live with and through your disasters in life, whatever they are. A Golden marriage turned to dust as she ran away with the milkman or her personal trainer, not that Theresa may or may not do that. She could run away with Jezza and live on his allotment, living on his potatoes and onions.

Whatever happens you have to deal with it. But Never ever ever have a Keep Calm And sign in your home or the Devil himself will come for your Soul. A sign is rubbish, its what's in you that makes you you. Its that that determines your Future, everybody's Future.

I've given you the tip of iceberg by sharing, ok boring you with some of my life in just over a 1000 words. You have to move on and do the best with what you've got. If you wanted a better house, job, car or life, then you have to work for it. And if you don't get the Sun be satisfied with the Moon, but always look to the Stars even if you are in the Gutter.

One final thing when you go to bed and you turn out the lights, you are making love to, anybody you like, in reality or in your dreams. The Beatles are singing All You Need is Love as I finish. So you are making love to your husband/lover/boyfriend/toyboy or the female equivalents. It's all in your imagination. Am I Shakespeare and the product of my loins are 1,070,000 words on a page, or am I just a figment of your imagination or a REALLY BAD DREAM.

Philosopher in Pyjamas ©

By

Michael Casey

Clever people don't wear pyjamas, they are nude in bed. As I am, because my bum is just too big for pyjamas, and so when I got my own house 30 years ago I ditched pyjamas. Ok, you can all reach for the sick bucket, 30 years not a prude.

So why are we more relaxed in our PJs and not in our office attire? And why are we so cool when we are in the nude, obviously because we have no warmth from our clothes. Its ideas that keep us warm, its in our PJs that preconceptions are lost, and yes you can see it coming, when nude preconceptions can end and conceptions begin. Its 22.45pm here in Birmingham so you'll have to forgive my opening.

When you are chilled, again through lack of clothes you are more inventive, that's why companies have dress down days. These days make us all equal, or so is the theory. I find wearing comfy shoes makes me more relaxed, ask any woman when she comes home from work and

throws her heels off. As she pours herself a glass of wine. Me a bottle of Dr. Pepper and my brown suede shoes does the trick.

Ditto with soft furnishings, if you are sat on a nice sofa and not on your hard office chair then you are more relaxed and creative. Google and such places are like a Wacky Warehouse such is the level of low key and dress down. Perhaps a toilet made out of soft furnishings would end constipation as well.

I try and have a comfy chair as I sit here talking to you all, with a bit of Gerry Rafferty playing in the background. As I am heavy and sit in the chair a lot they only last a year on average. I may replace the one in the photo soon, perhaps I should ask for a chair sponsorship from an office furniture company such as Staples. This story is brought to you by Staples printed at the bottom of my story. Or try and get a computer company to offer a free PC and printer, and not forgetting free unlimited Broadband. Sadly nobody anywhere would be so kind.

Its hard to know what anybody will like about a story, some people won't get the joke, like one I tried to make about Scholes and Scholls tonight when I spotted somebody wearing a football shirt. All I can do is put my words out, on the page or live to people I meet and hope they get it.

You have to be philosophical about it. If you get laughs 90% plus of the time then you are doing well. Some people will always think I'm an idiot, and not like what I say. I don't like the Harry Potter books but a billion people do. Who is right on that one? Me or the billion readers?

Have you got the strength to stick to your guns against a billion to one others? Again it depends on your self confidence, and your self belief. Yes things are not always Black and White, and modern writers say White and Black to be trendy and thereby become a herd animal with words.

There are many shades of grey which is a Monkees' song, and you have seen my hair after all. But you must always be true to yourself. But never say I'm Sorry But, say this is My Opinion, never say sorry but for having an opinion, you'll be apologising for the colour of your eyes next. Though you do know I have nice eyes, its just everything else about me that stinks, especially my writing. See I stole the words from your mouth, perhaps I should go into Politics.

I have to watch the Press Preview on Sky now before bed, so I'll leave you all pondering on tonights words. If you are as old as me you will remember Two Tribes by Frankie Goes to Hollywood, if I remember right there was a video of Reagan and Gorbachev wrestling. Perhaps politicians should mud wrestle naked, then we can see all their shortcomings. And then laugh as we vote, it would be great reality tv.

Or am I just too far ahead of my time? Tick Tock the clock stops for no man. And when it does we argue with God that we just want a bit more time with our family. We feel exposed as God see us all naked, without any Philosophy. So if you are reading this God, I really did want to live till I was 100, but can I share my pain with a few sinners. I'll let you chose who. Or am I trying to be too much like a god.

Tidying Yourself Up ©

By

Michael Casey

If you saw the photo I posted earlier today then you will know that I've tidied myself up today, just by having a £5 haircut at my local Pakistani barbers. We also have Russian and Italian barbers, not to mention the other 10 hairdressers and barbers we have up the road.

A man can have the 3 S , Sh_, Shower and Shave. Then hey presto you look 20 years younger, in my case at any rate. Or you go out looking like

a wreck but 15 mins in the shower and having a shave and using the toilet first does make a difference. By going to the toilet you lose enough weight for your trousers to fit.

Then by shaving the white stubble disappears and you look 20 years younger. Its a pity about the silver hair that goes down your neck and all along your back. So you are a werewolf man, a real actual werewolf, hope its not a full moon tonight man, or I'm going to get some silver bullets ready.

If you actually polish your shoes, both shoes, and with the same polish on each shoe, then you have immediately smarten up your act. Shoelaces are a good idea too, if they match and are the same length that is even better. Socks are good too, especially if they are the same colour and you have not been wearing them for a month.

Nothing is worse than stinky feet especially if you are having an interview. You could of course sprinkle talc in your shocks before you put your shoes on. This is good, but the seal on the shoes and the socks is never perfect, so you leave a trail of white talc everywhere you go, rather like a snails trail. But at least no bad smell.

Trousers are always a good idea, especially clean trousers, but if you do wear a kilt then don't forget to wear some woolly knickers underneath. But if you are Scotsman all you need is a kilt and a big big smile, but don't spin around too fast, or the whole world will soon know if you are a true Scotsman or not.

Now a clean shirt, without toothpaste stains all the way down the front is a great idea too. Maybe a tie as well, if you are going to a very formal interview, or trying to impress on your first date with the local Mortician Mandy. You don't want to appear too stiff on your first date after all.

Depending on the weather you may have a jumper on as well, just make sure the knot of your tie is exposed, and you have no toothpaste stains on

your jumper either. Speaking of exposed, check that your zipper is closed too, you don't want to make a wrong impression on the interview panel after all. But if you are having an interview at the local Naturist store then maybe an open zipper would be in order, a kind of visual handshake if you like.

All in all clothes do maketh the man, as does a wash and brush up, Dan Dan was a desperate man who combed his hair with the leg of the chair, after washing his face in a frying pan. But that does not mean you should follow his example, not unless your girlfriend is into grunge. Or maybe a Jezza Corbyn fan if I can be Political.

Yes do tidy yourself up, but remember real people like to hear what you have to say, and they can close their eyes as they listen to you. Or maybe you didn't realise you were being interviewed by the Blind school, so all your efforts though laudable were in fact in vain. If you can make a blind man laugh, without giving his dog a bone, then you really do deserve that job teaching English at the blind school.

There is one thing you could say to make a blind man laugh or any man who loves his dog. Tell him Michael Casey's dog peed on a house and as he led the dog away hurriedly he noticed that the house was for sale. So by hitting the spot Michael Casey found his new home. A house blessed by dog pee.

Lazy Friday Morning ©

By

Michael Casey

I'm having a lazy Friday morning, I was up for 2 hours in the middle of the night with my Mistress, PAIN, no not that kind of Mistress either. The real thing, and no we didn't pour Cola all over each other either. That's disgusting, Ben and Jerry's ice cream or nothing I say. STOP you

are so disgusting, so despicable. Are you Clinton supporters or what? I can't keep up with all this Political stuff.

Disappointing. That's not good enough, you should have said very disappointing. No, you should have said disappointing with a cherry on the top, spoken in a sexy French accent. And on it goes.

Where was I, I am here you are there, right over there, in USA land, somebody has returned to read my stuff hot off the presses. Who in the USA reads my stuff almost as soon as it is posted? Maybe Rupert Murdoch has it printed off for him to read in his toilet, then he scores my writing by whether he throws it through the hoop at the back of his toilet door. Or just uses it still warm from the printer to give his editorial opinion on it, emphasis on, on it, before he flushes it away.

I'll ask him next time I meet him down the Trader in Old Forge and Singing Anvil. Speaking of which in chapter Nine of The Butcher The Baker and The Undertaker I have my views on Politics, called Marriage to a Person, Marriage to a People. A Liberal actually wins in a Rock Hard labour seat, but he does have the help of Percy the Undertaker and Poet who writes all his speeches, and literally gets the Grey vote out, before he puts them in the ground.

So if it's not Rupert reading my words, and try saying that if you are Chinese, maybe it's the Russian embassy in USA, trying to improve their English. The Spaceman and the Archangel is posted in Russian on my site after all. Blame Google translate not me, the Senate will investigate me next, and then maybe I'll get a book deal and appear on Fox. Maybe the Five will argue about me and talk over each other as they do so.

Or it could be Chelsea Manning, my words could have been a punishment for her while she was in jail all those years. But now out and free, maybe I am her addiction, I am her guilty secret, she reads Michael Casey the fat Birmingham England Writer, the one with silver hair and shades. The utter and total sadness of it all, reading HIM. Mad Magazine yes, but Michael Casey, I think I'll puke.

I might just be a moderator's delight, he has to clean up all the trash on FaceBook but at least he has an oasis of calm, my writing. No sniggering at the back, or I'll slap the backs of your legs with wet lettuce. Google Larry Grayson for details. Mark Zee could employ the 75,000 miners as moderators, he does need that many after all. And then he'd kill two birds with one stone, he'd end Global warming and restore Paris.

I've digressed, who is my USA reader, my quick one, fast one, I must have Michael Casey, his words only. Maybe its a Rapper with a hood, an Augustinian Monk in sandals who has a hood and a really great voice. A kind of Barry White as a Monk, though Barry was a Man, a father of six. Don't go changing, I want you just the way you are. And that's what I'd say to any Editor, don't do changing, I want my words just the way they are.

It may just be one of the Press pack at the White House, the Gem, the chosen one, as Trump called him at a Press Conference. Or it could be the embattled Press secretary, he needs an escape from his boss and the Press, he's stuck in the middle with Michael Casey.

No wonder he's in the naval reserve and longs for the ocean, to be alone in the rigging with just the wind beating on his chest. Sean Spicer splash the Old Spice and feel the breeze. Ok just put your head in front of the broken hand drier that blows cold air, and dream you are on the 7 seas with just the wind blowing through your hair.

I could go on but I need a shower and then I have to shop for silver foil and hand wash, being a HausFrau has its responsibilities. So stay pure whoever you are in the USA, even if you were Born in the USA, and Bruce move your bike from my front lawn. Or I'll throw it in a dump, riding a tricycle at your age. You know you have a free Seniors Bus Pass now, so use it.

By

Michael Casey

I was at Mass last night, Saturday night counts for Sunday, if you are not up to speed with all things Catholic. Don't hold my Faith against me, I'm more of an Altruist than anything. As I listened to the sermon and I've missed a few, my scar tissue throbbed and I gasped then I had a few more spasms of pain. So I was speaking in tongues myself, tongues of pain, at least I did not swear in church, our priest is a barrel of a man and very strong, he could have hauled me out.

He had a couple of Christenings to do as well, this can prolong the length of the Mass, I say prolong because when the seats are hard wood and you have your Arthur with you, your arthritis then. Ok, I won't bore you about pain, though if you look on the NHS direct website your eyes may be opened.

When I was up for 2 hours in the middle of the night I discovered the term Frozen Shoulder, so when I was so exhausted that I'd sleep through any pain I went to bed with another piece of knowledge to add to the Soup, the soup being my life experience. When I talk to you I am ladling out my words from the soup, and that's why you get bits in my words, that get stuck between your teeth, or trapped in your mind.

So what has all this got to do with Pentecost, when the Holy Spirit arrived and suddenly common men, fishermen were able to speak in tongues. To be able to talk across the nationalities, these guys are from around here but we can all understand them. Imagine a tourist bus gets lost in Birmingham and they meet me, and I can speak Japanese, or Russian and Polish and German and French or Spanish and so on. But not only speak these languages one by one but as I speak they simultaneously hear my words in their own language.

Its almost a science fiction concept, in a previous piece, called Redemption there is such an idea. Why did Pentecost happen, if you like

it was like Twitter suddenly emerging, or a Crowd Funding page on Facebook. The word got out because the crew had the tools to spread that word, just as they had spread their nets when a crew on the fishing boat.

So the gift of tongues of words enable Christianity to get out into the world. It went viral so to speak, the news was transmitted all over the Roman empire. It would be like an MTV explosion in today's world, wall to wall exposure via the gift of tongues. Saul had to be zapped on the road to Damascus, before he saw the light, a bit like a Hard Rocker being electrocuted at a gig and then changing his ways. Saul became Paul and then travelling more than any Rock Band every has.

I've given you all examples so bring it to life, just like the Evanescence song. It was an explosion, like a music download becoming available. It was a Wrecking Ball to what had happened previously. Yes I know my choice of cartoons to put in your minds is not Orthodox, but has it enabled you to understand what it must have been like after the Holy Spirit did his stuff.

Penecost is for everybody though, not just Christians, and no I'm not trying to convert you. Somebody once asked me about Christianity and I said don't bother. Not by way a negative, but rather to get him, or Mark as his name was, to think more deeply about it. If its too easy, like getting a Music download, then the faith whatever faith it is will not take root, Parable of the Sower for all you Bible students out there.

I'm fortunate because whatever faith I have comes from 1920s Kerry Ireland and goes back 100s of years. If you read To The Very Gates Of Hell, you'll understand a little more. I'm writing a piece of fiction there that mixes faith and fiction and pathos and even comedy all together, like a girl with badly plaited hair. See I'm almost getting intellectual in my explanations.

While writing that piece it segwayed into another about the Spaceman and the Archangel, which is again comedy and pathos. Do I try and hide

the pathos under the comedy? Or do I just stir the soup and ladle the words out on the page? In actual fact I do not really know, I'm not intelligent enough to forward plan everything I do or say. I write the piece with my fingers, as it streams down from the soup in my brain. It would be so boring to plan in advance, I just have the title in my head then I begin.

When I finish as I read it back to myself or my girls, I'll realise did I hit the nail on the head or did the ideas drift. Most times I'm pleased that it's even better than it felt as I wrote it. As I'm writing its one sentence at a time. When I read it back its a whole entity. If you like when a tapestry is revealed, when I write I'm seeing the underside, when I finish writing I flip it over and all is revealed.

Does all this sound so pretentious? This would be classed as one of my serious pieces, that's why I stick to the straight comedy if that is not a contradiction in terms, because any readers I have prefer the straight comedy.

I've talked about my own experience with words. The trouble is that words can be lost on people, that's why we all need a Pentecost of our own. When I talk to my nephew we are on the same wavelength and sometimes his sister who has a first in English cannot keep up. Its about wavelengths not intelligence.

If you are kindred spirits then the hum between you is very high, the ping and the pong, if you think of people playing that game. To some onlookers it is unbelievable. Watching footballers do tricks with balls, or watching a game and the shot is just unbelievable is another example.

There are many examples in sport and in art and theatre how the skill is truly amazing. That's when the audience gives a standing ovation. I saw *Candide* on a sloping stage at the Rep maybe 30 years ago that was GREAT. As was Jason Donovan's bum when he did the *Rocky Horror* show on the same stage.

A personal Pentecost gives us not just the gift of tongues, but the ability to connect with all sorts of people on all sorts of levels. Like a politician in the days when we thought they really were men of the people. There are still a few good ones out there, you can vote for yours on Thursday, even if you need a microscope to find them, but there are some good ones in all parties, I won't name names as it might lose them their seats, let your conscience be your guide as Jiminy Cricket might say.

A personal Pentecost may take a lifetime to achieve, but just like the Long March in China or the One Small Step on the moon but it is worth it. Being able to connect is a great gift and great fun, like being a concierge at a busy hotel. You won't always please everybody all of the time, they may not want to listen, or may be only half listening, they may even totally misunderstand you.

But when it works then it really works. Like Angels the song by Robbie Williams, or one of my poems, when people look at me in disbelief and say "what you wrote that?". Yes, even a fat silver haired writer in shades from Birmingham with tooth paste down the front of his jumper half of the time can write the odd great piece.

I'll leave it there for now my girls have just come home from their church, their Pentecost service. And that in the end is what its all about, Service. A personal pentecost allows us all to be of service to each other, to cut through all the rubbish in life and to be of service to each other whatever our mother tongue is.

Vote for the best Owner ©

By

Michael Casey

Well the Election is on, again, don't these Humans have nothing better to do? I was born after that other Election 2 years ago. My owner had said

his daughters could have a dog If he died or a cat if he had a heart attack. He had an unplanned quadruple heart attack, whatever that is, I think its when 4 cats attack a dog and he knows who the boss is.

So I was born around the corner from my owner's house, around the time the Feet Showing PM was PM, before he resigned to spend time in his shed, its a very nice shed, its perfect for cats. If it wasn't so far away I'd go and spray all over it. I did spray all over my owner's big daughter, twice, so she is doubly blessed as my owner's mother would say.

He wanted a Tom cat, the owner did, but he got me, Totoro instead. Silly name said David the Godfather, no he isn't Italian he's a church organist, but he does like cats, so I'll forgive him. If he didn't live so far away I'd spray on him too.

I was kidnapped at 6 weeks old and taken around the corner in a plastic cage. But at least I did not have to share any more, I got my own basket and food bowl. They did not like my poohing in the corner behind the tv, so they scooped me out and put me in the litter tray. Ok, a small new washing up bowl. I did try hiding and poohing under the kitchen sink. But they blocked it off with old Clarks shoe boxes. It was fun trying to pooh everywhere, but I got fed up of that game and used the blue plastic washing up bowl.

It was strange at first hearing 2 languages, English and Chinese, but I know what Dinner means, so I made the effort and leant the 2 hardest languages in the world. And I got no student grant for doing so. I did get boxes and boxes of Whiskas though, its the best cat food there is, his daughters said it would make me last forever. They said as long as the cat lived then the owner would live, reverse Psychology or something. How would I know, I'm a cat, understanding English and Chinese is enough for me, miaow.

So I was a house cat for months and months but I escaped, trees and gardens and fences are such great fun, better than any Wacky Warehouse, whatever that is. Finally my owner persuaded then that I should go

outside. However I had to have 2 bells and a Best Bitch badge hung around my neck on the collar. I think the badge means they love me so much. Though they did say a Lesbian friend had handed them out one Christmas, whatever that means, I'm a cat not a dictionary.

So now its two years on and another Election, why don't Humans just use flea powder, to stop Elections and Referendums, though a referendum does sound like something the vet does with his finger up your, your, well you know what I mean. I did have a visit to the vet myself, once they discovered I was not a Tom. They shaved me and took my something away, don't ask me what I was asleep, besides long vet words are totally incomprehensible, why can't they just stick to English or Chinese.

Now the moggie next door, I really hate her by the way, stealing my spot on the fence, yes it's her owner's fence, but its still my spot, do you wanna fight about it? Well she said as there is another Election perhaps the local cats should vote for best owner. I nearly choked on my Whiskas, does she watch too much telly or what, get a life, get nine in fact. Her owner is a Journalist she said, I said is that why he can barely move the recycle bin as its so full of beer bottles.

So she spat at me, so I swiped her and she fell off the fence into the water butt, I watch tv too, Muhammed Ali is my favourite. Float like a butterfly sting like a bee, and swipe that cat. Ding Ding my bells go as I laugh at a floating cat in a water butt.

So Nasty as I call the neighbour's cat, goes around canvassing for the Best Owner award. What do they get I ask trying not to be interested, nothing. Then why do it, because that's what my owner does, asking annoying silly questions to people about the Election. You are definitely like your owner then, Nasty swells with pride so I swipe her again and she falls into the water butt again, Ali called it Rope a Dope, I like Ali, he would have been a great cat owner.

Finally after a week of canvassing Nasty asks me for my vote, she is not standing anywhere the water butt. So I just say I have many owners. My real owner, the little Polish boy down the road, the Gay couple at the bottom of the garden, the Curry house people over 5 fences away, the Japanese boy, the little old lady in 98. I go though the list of 12 or even 20 places where I visit and get food.

But how do you manage to fit it all in? Nasty asks moving closer to me. I eat Whiskas, and I enjoy eating out and people like me, because I am not you. I'm a posh cat. Besides I have nine lives so I have plenty of time to fit it all in. With that I swipe Nasty and she falls into the water butt yet again. She must be very holy now, being baptised in the water butt so often.

As for me, I may pay a visit to London after the election to see my cousin. Have you never seen the PM's cat? It looks exactly like me, that's because we are related, so I vote for the cat.

The Blind Man and the Model ©

By

Michael Casey

Barry loved walking his dog around Queens Park it was near the Blind school, he taught there, helping other blind people find their feet. In fact he walked a variety of dogs around the Queens Park, there is a type of dog usually used by the blind, but there are a variety. So it happened that one day as he was walking an Alsation around the park he heard a damsel in distress, so putting on his best Policeman voice he shouted "leave her alone or the dog will have you" As it was an Alsation and Barry was not wearing any shades the lads raced off.

Mandy was mightily relieved, thanks they were going to steal my handbag she gushed. Barry just smiled, he had been a knight in shining armour. Mandy kissed him on the cheek, it was only then that she noticed that Barry was blind. They sat on a bench and Mandy blurted out,

but you are blind. Yes, I am replied Barry with a smile. But so were they, all they saw were Tony's teeth. Mandy looked confused but Barry did not see it. Yes, so thanks to Tony's teeth too.

What brings you to Queens Park asked Barry? I just do a bit of jogging to keep in trim, I have to look good for my work. I am a model. Barry reached into his pocket and put his shades on, so you are I did not realise without my shades on. He put the shades back into his pocket and Mandy looked into his unseeing eyes, she bit her lip and a silent tear fell.

Let me buy you a coffee Mandy offered, so they went to Simon's Spoon the local cafe. Inside they sat in a corner and a chorus of whispers erupted, she's so pretty, so absolutely pretty. So Mandy and Barry had their coffee. Barry swelled with pride, he had pulled a model, him and his dog Tony had pulled a model. Not that he said it, but it was very good for his ego though.

Well maybe I'll see you again some time said Barry, as he headed back to the blind school. I'll walk you back said Mandy impulsively. There was something about Barry that she liked, he had saved her and her Roco handbag after all. Most of all though she felt calm and at peace when she talked to him. Hard to explain but that was the truth of it.

Cheers, and yes I often jog in the park, so we may see each other again. When they both asked impulsively? Something had clicked between them, some say Love is a Surprise. A little old lady once told this Writer that, and it is true, always trust little old ladies, especially if they make the sandwiches at the Waterworks Jazz Club.

So Barry and Mandy started meeting in the park, Barry would have a different dog with him and she wore different coloured lycra and he sat on the bench and watched her jog, or so it appeared. Afterwards it was coffee at Simon's spoon. Everybody in the cafe was amazed, she must be his sister or something. After coffee she linked arms with him and walked him back to the blind school before kissing him on the cheek.

The local policeman Nick smiled as he saw this, if only the blind man could see, Mandy was not just a model she was about to break into the big time as a model. Nick knew this because his boyfriend Dave who was a forensics officer had a major interest in fashion. Their flat above Baker's Dough was full of fashion magazines as well as the aroma of fresh baked bread. It's an aphrodisiac you know, that's why the pair were known as the Laughing Policemen in the force. But I digress.

Mandy unburdened her soul, and she loved Barry the more, he was such a good listener, she loved dogs too. It was such a perfect match, but he was blind, he would always be blind. She was in the Waterworks Jazz Club one night and got talking to the little old lady. Love is Blind, is more than a phrase you know. Mandy ran from the Jazz club tears streaming down her face. Just like Cinderella.

They carried on meeting in the park for six months, then after coffee at Simon's Spoon she walked him home again. This time she held him tight in her arms and kissed him full on the mouth. The blind dog barked and wagged its tail. Barry may be blind, but he was still a man, so he responded as only a blind man can. Mandy had never ever been kissed like that, such tenderness, she wanted him even more now.

This process continued for weeks, then she had to go away for Paris fashion. Her heart ached, she had never felt like this before. The other models asked what was wrong, she explained. We have to meet this Barry they all said. It was London fashion week next, they could make a dash to Birmingham to meet him. So it was 35 models in lycra running around Queens park, Nick the policeman radioed for his boyfriend to attend. It really was an arresting sight. Dave collected all the evidence and took 100s of photos for his collection and FB page. The models were more than happy to assist a gay policeman to expand his collection.

Afterwards everybody went to Simon's Spoon, for water and coffee, old Simon nearly had a heart attack, all those A list models in his back street cafe. And yes they let him take selfies with them. Simon cried. Barry was

calm in the mists of it all. The models decided there could only be one solution.

In fact there were multiple solutions, and Barry enjoyed all of them. They were married 3 months later. As you see, Love Conquers All, for a model loves to feel wanted as a person, and that's what Barry did, he wanted her as a person.

Fancy Food ©

By

Michael Casey

Well I said I'd write about fancy food, so here I am, though I try and make you hear my words not just read them. I've been having a rest for a few days, now I'm back with another story. You see my big daughter is doing her first set of exams in her life, the ones you have at age 16, then you can legally leave school. Though in her case she'll do 2 years of A levels, advance level schooling.

Then she'll try and get into Cambridge, where one of her uncles went, the other went to Oxford. Yes really, I'm the stupid writer brother in the family. My daughter hopes to study Medicine, so that would be 6 years if she can get into Cambridge. So it'll be 8 more years at least of study, before becoming a doctor. I told her to tell the interview panel that her Irish grandfather was a blacksmith. My brother says he got into Downing Cambridge because of inverse snobbery. He was a coal miner for a year before he applied for Cambridge. Though having four straight As at A level does help too.

Yes I do love to name drop, me and Andrew from the Daily Mail do have that in common, nothing else other than that. So now that I've done the prologue as Frankie Howerd used to then I'll begin. My daughter wants to be pampered by food as she studies hard, and she is studying as hard as I can remember my other brother studied 50 years ago to get into Queens Oxford. He used to lock himself into the front room to study with

a reel to reel tape recorder with a tape of Cream blaring out of a speaker. I still have that speaker by the way its in a corner of the living room behind me.

So I've been experimenting with Coop and fancy food, their food is more expensive but always nice, same goes for Sainsburys. So I've changed my shopping habits to please her and to encourage her with her studies. So what makes foods immediately better. Bread. Bread is the answer, French baguettes and a different brand of brown bread is always nice. Though my small daughter does hanker after Warburtons white sliced loaf.

Butter, spreads, margarine they too can alter and lift humble bread up. If you are a rice person, as is my Shanghai wife she'll know at 100 paces the difference between this rice and that rice and all 50 shades of rice, grey does not have the monopoly on shades after all, now its up to you to consider have I thrown in a metaphor there, or am I just messing with you.

Simple additions of this and that can expand your taste buds. Cheese on toast is just boring cheese on toast, no it is not. It depends on whether or not you toast one side or both. If you have a bit of ham or chorizo or Polish ham lying about, then you can add it to the bread and have the cheese on toast with that as an addition under the cheese. So the cheese melts into the bread and the topping. Then as you eat it the juices melt and the best fun is licking the juices off from your fingers as you wash it down with an ice cold can of Stella Artois or anything cold you like.

Ok not very fancy food, but its nice, add to the mix the loads of different cheeses there are then you are in heaven. The angels go to the very gates of Hell to melt the cheese on their toast before fluttering home to Heaven to wash it down with wine. There is always wine in Heaven, what was the very 1st miracle after all?

Eggs are always nice, and even if you cannot cook you can put 2 or 3 eggs in a bowl in the microwave and hey presto you have scrambled egg. Just still every 30 seconds or so, while the microwave is on for 3 minutes you toast some bread or split a baguette. The eggs the top the bread, Polish eggs are great so gloriously yellow inside, or free range eggs if you can afford them.

You can add pickles to the scrambled eggs to give it bite, or any combination of meat. Food is a jigsaw puzzle, so please yourself how you put it together. If it tastes nice to you, then you have put the puzzle together correctly.

Different brands of supermarket fish fingers have different tastes, some are dire and you should feed them to the cat while you eat the cardboard packaging, yes really. Ditto if you eat salmon for the Omega 3, some supermarkets have very nice salmon which is good for you, remember post quadruple heart bypass I read all the labels now and check the traffic lights on packaging. Other brands are so bad you would not even give them to the cat, nor eat the plastic packaging yourself.

Cereals are good for you, Sex and the City for example, but the eating kind are good because they help you pooh on time in your very busy life. Though if you have Ckd then you and your bathroom are very close friends already, no need of cereals. Try different brands and see what you like. The copy ones can taste almost as good as the real thing. Cheerios are very nice, but twice the price of the copy called Hoops. A copy bran cereal is great too, but never as good as the real thing, though it can be 1/2 the price.

I used to work shifts all my life, including 14 years of night shifts, so throwing a package meal into the oven was my way of life when I came home. Sadly I'm told that all the MSG in them may have helped clog my arteries and lead to my unplanned quadruple heart bypass. I never used to eat vegetables either, meat, milk, bread was my staple along with the packaged frozen meals which I always oven baked. I never used any oil to

cook so I thought I was ok. My Pharmacist said I should write about this so here is a paragraph on it.

Perhaps I should have called this Simple Food instead of Fancy Food, in the end though whatever makes you happy is best. Obviously fruit and vegetables are a good idea. Though I never smoked in my life, just ink and printer dust from my computer rooms. And growing up with alcoholic lodgers means that I am practically a none drinker, 24 pints a years maybe. Fizzy pop has always been more interesting to me.

Yes, do try different things, variety is the spice of life after all. I can remember having French toast for the first time ever when I was in Boston USA in 1980. We are reintroducing our family to it now, as well as the rice with everything that you have in a Birmingham to Shanghai family. If you have 2eggs you can turn all your leftovers in the fridge into an omelet, add a slice of whatever that is in the back of the fridge, basically everything goes in the wok.

The clock is about to strike midnight so I need to go to bed so that I can wake my daughter up for her last 4 exams, Pure Maths and Physics. If she oversleeps I can always give her a bowl of cereal and some fruit to fire her up for the last lap of exams as she dashes up the road to school and exams.

And how will she celebrate when the exams finish? I'll probably take her to Subway, let somebody else be the chef for a change.

An Idiots Guide to Writing, by an Idiot ©

By

Michael Casey

Well its a bit after 3am I had to get up because of the pain, so after I had a hot drink and Totoro our cat following me downstairs, I let her out into the dark of the night. So while I'm waiting for the pain to ebb away, like

the tide going out as I am a Canute with wet feet I have decided to write this piece for you.

Immediately I can relate a story about 1st year in grammar school and how I mispronounced Canute in class with Mr Reading our teacher. Need I say any more. That's how I write, I get an idea or just a title then I go with the flow. Like a Cunute disappearing under the waves. Ok I'll stop with the Canute references, but because I chose ebb and tide going out that led to him in the first place and me getting wet feet.

So if you are a draughtsman everything is planned and finally you have the end result. For us Wordsmiths things are a bit different. Now I chose Wordsmith not because I'm pretentious but because I could then mention the fact that my dad was a Blacksmith. I could talk about the Smiths the band or the film Mr and Mrs Smith. Which would then lead to marriage and love and marriage, horse and carriage and the old song from an old film. Or just go down the Brad and Angelina route.

See it really is that simple, well if you are this idiot writing then that's how I do it. If you remember trivia too then you can slip in alliteration always, no matter if you think its pooh. See a bit of doggerel as well, what more do you want. And on it goes, even if the reader wishes you would stop. At which point my shoulder hurts so much from sleeping in just one position for 2 years since my unplanned quadruple heart bypass, that I nearly have to stop.

But like Canute I command the pain to stop so I can finish what I've started.

See or is it Sea? Its like rolling that cheese down that very steep hill, it was on tv recently, hence the reference, anything in peripheral vision gets drafted into the web of words. Spiderman Spiderman you are a writer if you can, see I didn't say it was pretty just a witty ditty. Which brings me back to 1st year at grammar, maybe 46 years ago, I made a witty comment and Terry O'Callaghan said it was a S**tty comment, so HE got the pump from Mr Ely our gym and woodwork teacher.

And that may have been the start of my career as a wit and then writer, though my sister sagely says, people don't understand my jokes, they think I'm serious. So do I need to telegraph my jokes as Americans do in their tv humour?

All in all words are like water, they flow, I am just a beaver who blocks the way and sends words this way and that a way. The moral of the story is, if a fat silver haired writer in shades from bloody Birmingham can do it, then ANYBODY can be a writer, just like this idiot talking to you.

I have to stop now and take a pain killer, I wait till I cannot stand the pain before I take them. With my internal organs the way they are I don't want them poisoned any more. I have kidney scans next week, they could scan me to try and find my personality, but a rectal scanner would just disappear into a black hole. Always finish with a smile, and then go to bed with somebody to cuddle up with, flesh is a great hot water bottle after all.

A Good Stumbler ©

By Michael Casey

Well its 2am on 18/6/2017 and I'm up with pain, tooth ache this time, I chipped a tooth at the upper back of my mouth, makes a change from my arthritis I suppose. I have a mouth full of toothpaste in my mouth as I talk to you all. The theory is that it will protect me from the pain by washing over where the chip is. Ok Its stupid but do YOU have any better ideas at this time of the morning?

I could rub my Movelat on my face but that would be a stupider idea, its for my joints when my arthritis kicks in. What has all this got to do with being a Good Stumbler? Well Mark Harris, who H though had Charisma, was the one who said I was a Good Stumbler. He wasn't on about me tripping over Barry's long legs while we had a pint in the Queen's Tavern either. Just giving them two a name check should they stumble over this.

So what exactly is a Good Stumbler? Well I suppose its me, its my whole life. In Slumdog Millionaire the guy's life gives him all the answers so he can win the quiz. My own life has been just like that, one thing has led to another even if at the time it was a painful or even very painful interlude. I must go and spit out this toothpaste now. It is a trick to whiten your teeth as well, provided that you can stand the taste for so long. Ok, in USA you bleach your teeth but that is not natural at all.

I just stumbled over the cat she is participating in a blood sport, no not fox hunting, though we did have 3 foxes simultaneously in our garden one night, the are just up the road after all and dustbins are foxes takeaways. No, she, Totoro was chasing and eating flies and moths attracted to our yard light. I did offer to let her in but the blood sport was a bigger attraction than sneaking in at 2.20am, like a dirty stopout of a cat.

As you can see I stumbled over that last paragraph, and we both have benefited from it. So pray for my pain, this Sunday morning. I could mention that our local priest also does a bit of Editing on the side. Though I would never let anybody touch my words, priest or no priest. What is writ is writ as somebody once said to a load of priests.

One take or nothing is my motto, how Jeffery Archer goes through up to 13 rewrites with his Editor I could never know. It was be so soul destroying, and boring, it would kill the story for me. A stranger forcing you to have an English Literature class on your own creative spirit, yuck. Mind you he has a Monet on his wall, which is worth 100 times the value of my house, but no not even for a Monet would I led people touch my words.

So I stumble along writing my stories, stumbling into ideas here and there, such as have all my books at 2.99 USD in a vain effort to get you all to buy them. I stumbled into that idea 2 days ago after I read a piece in the DT about a KDP writer. He's rich now, I am not, so I thought about lowering my prices to entice you all to buy my 13 books and 4 translations. A Stumble has led to that.

The cat is still out and I'm wondering what other stumbles I can mention, such as the dog Peeing on a house and I looked up and noticed it was for sale. And this is where I've been living these past 30 years. Marriage was a stumble too and having 2 daughters when we thought we might not have any children is not a stumble but more of a Blessing.

Though I did used to work the Graveyard shift at SMBC council computer room. So I got home at 3am or so. And one thing led to another, ok IF you are having trouble conceiving then try 3am to 4am and see if it works for you. Or I could just be very fertile, or together we have stumbled on peak fertility time. I can picture it now thousands of Michaels and Michaelas named in my honour, in Ireland it was thousands of John-Pauls instead of Patricks.

Its both strange and humorous how things happen, turning that corner at the right time, or God intervening, the only place he goes is the Old People's Home to see his dad. He only goes to the fishing tackle shop, he'll never meet anybody,he'll be a sad old bachelor. So he goes in and knocks all the poles over, this does not mean Polish people, a pole is what a professional angler calls his rod. As he stoops to pick up all the poles the owner's daughter appears and its love at first bite. Without any bait, and the scruffy man gets the shop as a dowry. They have found each other, and she uses a white fish net as veil and train.

Well its nearly 3am now and Totoro our cat is still out, she is worse than a teenager,and I have 2 already. I hope if you have stumbled over this piece you decide to come back and read some more stories from me. I have now written 1100 to 1200 stories, or 1250 if you count the ones I reloaded to my blog here. I'm going to try and go back to bed now despite the heat and pain. If I'm tired enough I can sleep through anything.

Wait. I hear a noise I though the cat wanted to come back in. No just something else, not unless it was the moths banging on the windows. Turn that bloody light off, that cat of yours is eating us alive. Stay happy wherever you are, and if you can't sleep then make love, don't waste your time reading my stuff.

A Moment Of Silence in a Busy World ©

By Michael Casey

I was going to write this in 2016, I just put the title down but never wrote the actual piece, I found it last night when I wanted to put something on my site without writing a new piece as I was too tired. I have to pace myself nowadays, I am at my best when I am striding up the road to the shops, just like John Travolta, though obviously looking much much better. But I have my computer and I can still write and sometimes delight you all.

That's the context, I also have a German invasion of my site at the moment so thanks to them ist serh Gutt, if they forgive my bad German. Maybe I'll be a Cult in Germany too. Now to today's chat, A Moment of Silence in a Busy World. This is exactly what we need in UK at the moment, Silence in a Busy World. Ask Theresa May, I'm sure she will agree.

When you've had a busy day at work, or just taken the dogs for a walk, we have a couple who are dog walkers in my street, then shoes off and feet up is really really appreciated. After the arguing is over, in Politics or in the home, a period of silence or reflection is always good. You hide in your bedroom and maybe listen to music, or just curl up into a ball, and let the silence wash over you and absolve your anger/sins/hate.

Later on, maybe in the middle of the night you sneak down stairs to the fridge, there you meet your sister, no words are exchanged. But you hand her a bottle of Stella Artois and you toast your sisterhood. Hoping dad won't be angry that his student daughters have had the Stella Artois he was saving for the MU match.

Then you put the telly on and watch the Kardashians together. Silently watching the telly, all sins are forgotten and the love levels return to maximum. If anybody says a bad word about my sister I'll knock their block off, I am a judo black belt after all. My last boyfriend left a black mark in my heart, it was he who taught me judo, Putin was his nickname, as he was always Putin everybody on the floor, on the mat. It was my sister, my best friend sat beside me who put me together again.

So here sat in the silence together, we are one, united, we are sisters. I did return the favour when that bastard Barry broke her heart. I broke his nose and arm in fact. I threw him as hard as I could straight into a letter box, his

blood adding to the colour of the letter box. I did call an ambulance, I am not an animal, but he took his punishment like a man, he'd never live it down that a girl had beaten him up. So he said he tripped.

I'm happy now, content, me and my sister united as one, this Stella Artois is not very nice, we prefer Baileys, we would pour it down the sink, but its a sin to waste food or Stella Artois, so we'll have to finish it, even if it takes two whole episodes of the Kardashians. Hick

Peace after the storm, make up and chill with a beer and the Kardashians, or just sit together doing nothing, just being together alone and in love. Love has its many many forms, but after the Noise whatever form that Noise takes a Moment of Silence in a Busy World is always the medicine. Failing that watch the MU match on tv with your daughters, and what's left of your Stella Artois from the fridge.

Spots and Connecting the Dots ©

By Michael Casey

Spots appear before your eyes and you squint, different patterns have different effects on us. ZigZags and thin stripes and thick stripes, straight down or across all sorts of patterns and designs. This is fashion, and knowing what suits you makes all the difference.

Knowing what colours suit you best is the greatest knowledge of all, and having a swatch done can really change your life. A bit of orange lipstick can make all the difference too, power make-up that suits your skin tone and personality really does work. I speak as a make-up artist now. You think bright red all over your lips makes you so sexy, in fact it can just make you look stupid, or just cheap.

Style in make-up is everything. Watch the tv and see some of the female reporters, who looks best, the less is more, or throw as much make-up on as possible as if its going out of style. If you are going up Broad St and you are after a night of passion in a city centre hotel after you pick up some bloke then you dress and behave like Geordie Shore.

But if you hope you might just meet somebody nice, then you'll dress differently, and use more subtle make-up. Think how a man's brain works, yes it's a contradiction in terms, a man having a brain when they just think from their trousers. All Men Are Bastards after all, apart from your own dad.

So you may choose a little bit of lipstick, or even a bit of eye-liner, and earrings to highlight your very kissable neck. And depending on your bust a tight top or a loose one, it also depends on the level of your shyness. Ditto with your bum, a tight skirt or jeans or maybe loose clothes. Same goes for legs, to show or not to show, but definitely wax or shave, no man wants a woman with more hair on her legs than him.

This is up to you. If you've got it flaunt it, whatever your best feature is, use it. Not everybody can be a 10 like me, I was in that film after all, Dudley Moore was incorrigible you know. The rogue

Perfume should be light and nice, you are not hiding your smelly feet after all. Then you are ready to allow a man to sweep you off your feet, are you up for it?

Having said what I've just said, I need to remind you all, it's Conversation that makes the difference. After you have caught your man either for a night in a Broad Street hotel, or for life and if it's for life he'll remind you of your dad, smelly feet and all. But you'll forgive him all his weaknesses and even ex-wives because he makes you laugh.

Looks fade, clothes are discarded, and beds make break either in shared lust, or he just trips over your discarded knickers, so what is left after the passion is gone. Conversation endures and when the lights are out and the passion is spent you still can talk as you curl into each other. Until one of you farts and you laugh together, and if you can laugh when he farts in your

bed, then he's the one. Take it from me, my name is Tootsie, you did see my film didn't you?

Broadband Fast ©

By

Michael Casey

No it's not a mistake, it is Broadband Fast, not Fast Broadband. Why? Because we are changing our broadband and tv provider, so it's a fast, a break, as far as the family is concerned. We may or may not be moving house soon, but one thing led to another, and so we have lost our tv and will lose the broadband in the morning. Getting the company to actually talk to you is another matter, they have send me 2 sorry to hear you are leaving surveys but after 5 emails to them they have not actually talked to me about the matter I want to talk about. I won't name and shame them, they know who they are!

I gave the family fair warning a week ago about the broadband, but now with a day to go they are in denial, it couldn't happen to us, it shouldn't happen to us, why is this happening to us? What will we do without broadband? Try talking to each other I suggested. One daughter is hurrying to do all her homework, the Internet and Broadband was not even invented when I last did my homework. How they'd manage without it I just cannot imagine. We used to have a set of encyclopaedia on the top shelf of the school library, which happened to be right next to my desk in Class One.

I've updated my software just in case it's more than a few days before any transfer takes over. I've backed up my stories for the zillionth time too, so Now all I can do is write a couple of new stories to upload once the broadband returns. I have fed my website, mainly for my Polish readers who did love my stuff in the past, so Polish Translations are there for them all. If only they email en masse Polish Media then I could finally get a book and radio deal in Poland. Then maybe I'd be a celebrity at the Polish deli at the corner of my street.

My eldest daughter is chilling then she hopes to hit the books gently during her 2 months of Summer holidays before she starts her A levels and that she hopes will lead her to studying Medicine at Cambridge. That's the plan anyway. Who knows she may sneak off to the Library at the bottom of the road where her sister's Godmother works. Maybe not to read any books but to use the wifi there. Kids are addicted to wifi. As for me, I use it to upload my stories and read all the newspapers. And watch BBC news, while the family tv is being used to watch Kardashians or other junk tv.

Conversation may return to our house while the wifi has a rest, though there is something called Reading, this may re-emerged from the undergrowth. In my case reading will stop, as I read off the screen, all the newspapers, that's another reason I wear shades, it stops screen glare.

People will think of other reasons why they have computers, or then again they will not. Computer and wifi go together, like milk in your tea, or man and woman, though I should say other forms or relationship are available. You can play games on your computer, though I have never done that. Years ago I actually bought an Atari 1040 not for the games features but so I could use it to write stories on.

Yes I am that boring, but nowadays games are fantastic and the UK has a great gaming industry, my friends at work actually wrote a game and sold it for 10K years ago. However afterwards they never did any more, they did advise me to buy the Atari, so blame Dave Eaton and Pad Webb for my writing, I don't know where they live now so you can't go around to congratulate them or hurl abuse at them.

Broadband speed tests let you know just how fast or slow your wifi connection is, and should it slow to a crawl then if after tests they still can't fix it then its time to leave one and try another. There are lots of offers out there. So as this has happened to us, and then there is potential to change house, we have deserted our broadband and tv provider. The new provider is promising great things, so I'll let you know are they any good.

What will I be doing during the wifi fast, well I'll be writing about the wifi fast, and about just how hard my computer chair is now that I've thrown out the big old black chair you see me sitting in in the photos.

Though it may make me write faster as the chair, a wooden one, is hard, and my behind is so sensitive as is the rest of me. Don't mock or I'll translate this into your Native language and then it'll be you who is really suffering.

So its time to eat now, this may be a broadband fast, but that does not stop me from eating, even though I have to go to the Dental Hospital to have some roots out. Stay happy and see if you can live without your wifi.

Monument to Headstone ©

By

Michael Casey

I saw The Monuments Men on Film 4 via Freeview yesterday, and I was pleased, I enjoyed the story and though at times it seemed a little lightweight it really got me thinking. So George Clooney you did well, even if you do look like an older version of me, or is it Huw Edwards?

The story in Monuments Men is based on true events. The Nazis were hoovering up Art and stealing it, then hiding it in old mines, in the future there would be a museum all planned by Hitler himself, so the film told. What was so interesting was that by stealing Art, the Nazis were wiping out People's very existence. There was a line in the film about if you take their Art away you steal and destroy their very soul. Think of Dash in Iraq right now, or Pol Pot in Cambodia, wiping the face of History, so only Evil remains. The Rape and Kill policy of conquest.

Another scene at the end of the film the Monuments Men found a drum of gold nuggets, only it was not gold nuggets, it was the gold filling of Jews who had been murdered. Such tremendous Evil.

Now whatever I say next is trivial and worthless compared to what we are all thinking about now, the Evil men sink to. But I'll try because if we all sink into despair then Evil has won. We have to remember to laugh, to think of the silly things that may us all Human.

Like giving a leaving present of a four pack of toilet paper to somebody who always hid in the toilet instead of working. Or a pair of silver foil pants because he once set fire to his trousers while having a cigarette while sat on the toilet on a night shift. How we all laughed.

Silly remembrances make us human, like the time you set fire to a fart in the middle of the dark of the night while the building was being refurbished, all the colours of methane or whatever it is. Sadly it was 20 years before mobile phones were invented otherwise it would have been filmed and live streamed. This would be called a Modern Art Installation and maybe win a Turner Prize, the Nazis would never have collected it and buried it down a mine. It would have been burnt just as Picasso and books were.

I've talked about either end of the spectrum to highlight, light and laughter compared to Evil. We all have our favourite possessions too, it may be a mint Pink Floyd album, it may be granddad's old walking stick gathering dust in a corner, or a photo of dad riding a donkey at the beach, you had to really beg him before he got on the donkey. But now that photo is a really treasured possession. Think what would you save if the house was on fire, or a flood was coming. It's at these moments that you may discover for the very first what Love really means. You love the memories, the love behind the items. What is your Rosebud item?

They say that when you die, or are electrocuted your whole life flashes before you. So what will be on your film reel, will it be great works of Art that you were able to buy because you were a success in your life? Or will it be thousands of smiling faces, lit like lights when they see you? Or even if it is just one smiling face, your wife, your lover, or your children.

If when you life goes to black there are tears, real tears from millions or even just one person, then you have not wasted your time on this earth.

This is your Monument, the tears shed on your tombstone, here lies Michael Casey the Birmingham Writer, he may have been a totally useless man, but his stories made me more human, and for that I thank him and I shed tears on his grave.

Chilling with my Daughter ©

By

Michael Casey

Well we are in between wifi providers so a dead calm has hit the Casey household. My big daughter is off for 2 months now until she goes to 6th form college, so we have time to chat, especially with the wifi off. When mum returns its a tsunami of noise as she is surgically attached to her phone, and that was before her new job which involves connections galore. So me and big daughter have time to chill and chat, until a friend phones and she's back in her room nattering away.

My only concern is the chair I sit in as I talk to you all, its just a formal black chair, it came flat-packed and I had to construct it a year ago. I was in mid-construct when my old school friend Dr P arrived in time to heckle from the settee as I allan keyed it together. It was in fact a pair of chairs, and my friend enjoyed heckling, but I did once nearly kill him when we were in 1st year grammar school together, approaching 50 years ago now. So he claims divine right to heckle or say anything he likes.

My daughter wanders down stairs wondering what's to eat. That last sentence may make some of you Esol English students scratch your heads, wander and wonder, it least it's not weather and whether. The joys of English, though I really did enjoy my time as an Esol English teacher. So my daughter opens the fridge and says there is nothing to eat. So I get up from my Lotus Position on the carpet, next to the coffee stain I recently made, and yes I'm being nagged to death about. I am a Yoga man or is it yoghurt, you'll have to decide for yourselves.

Anyway I rise gracefully, like a 3 metric tonne elephant, and lumber to the fridge, using my trunk, sorry I mean hand I open the fridge. I rattle off 6 different menus, half of them egg based. French toast, scrambled eggs, boiled eggs, fried eggs with bacon and tomatoes, scrambled eggs with beans in, just remember to open the bathroom window later. Then there is porridge made with milk or water, with honey topping, 2 or three different cereals.

Finish your sister's tin of tomato soup, with bread or toast to dunk into it. Bacon sandwich, ham sandwich. I open the cupboard opposite, with 3 different toppings, I inspect one at the very back of the cupboard, and decide that should be in the bin, not unless she wants a job at Porton Down, or is it Watership Down.

Yes dad, like I said, nothing to eat. What do you want I say. I don't know comes the reply, but not that. And certainly not that she says pointing to the Porton Down sample before I finally put it in the bin.

I have a trick up my sleeve, its the freezer below, Birds Eye Chicken Nuggets, I bow and reveal the Chicken Nuggets, round of applause from all of you, I may be a Useless Husband but I am a great writer but most of all I am an even better dad, all be praised Birds Eye Chicken Nuggets.

I resume my Lotus position on top of the coffee stain on the carpet, I heard that heat and pressure could get the coffee stains out of our new carpet. So sitting in the Lotus position on top of it may just do the trick, or my bum may just smell of Kenco Rappor, but you have to try don't you? The smoke alarm goes off my daughter has forgotten to watch her chicken nuggets, luckily they are not burnt. She reaches for the Heinz tomato ketchup, the one squirt solution to all students' cooking experience.

Any slops I ask as she finishes, she hands me the plate as I sit in my Lotus position, only the plate slips between us. Disaster beckons, a tomato and chicken nugget stain to match the Kenko Rappor coffee stain. Though this you won't believe, even if you believe the rest of this Tale, I have lightning fast reactions, do you want me to show you again? Ali and me have that in

common, we are fast, very fast, though I probably am a shade heavier than Ali.

Do you think that I, Michael Casey the Birmingham Writer would allow food to go to waste? I may think clean carpets are important, but wasting food, that is an absolute NO NO. As the plate falls I hurl myself sideways, from my Lotus position, like an ice hockey goalie, like when the Czech beat Russia. I catch the plate and gather the remaining chicken nuggets into my body. The carpet is spared. And I have food for my belly.

I finish the chicken nuggets and follow it with a cup of tea, still in my Lotus position on the Kenco Rappor coffee stain. I stay in position for 3 hours, until I let rip a rasping fart, raising from my Lotus position to go to the bathroom all is revealed, the coffee stain has vanished.

Shakespeare and Me ©

By

Michael Casey

Well we continue with Freeview tv and wait for our Broadband too, so it was great to stumble over a programme on Shakespeare, while my kids hid in the next room and attacked our piano. And no they don't play Chopsticks, even though they are 1/2 Shanghai Chinese, they are in fact both Grade One on piano, and my big daughter has her Deans Award for choral singing. Me I just sing along to the radio, luckily our neighbours are all deaf.

So now that John Nettles has finished talking about Will Shakespeare it gave me the idea about talking about Words. I can never invent as many new words as Will did, he's had a 400 year head start after all, but I hope I can raise a few laughs by my use of words, or my cartoons made with words. Words give you a picture and can be very colourful, especially if events drive you to curse, so long as alls well that ends well as Will used to say.

I read recently, and no I don't mean I learnt to read recently, as Will's wordplay would say, that swearing denotes a higher level of intelligence. So Teamsters must be really highly educated, and rappers must be the most highly intelligent people of all. Discuss, or not discuss that is the question, whether a Blankety Blank is nobler than a Zippy Zap Dang and can you move or remove your Thang, or is it Thong?

Will has given me a few thoughts now, we are connected you know his Ghost sleeps under my bed, I would never share a bed with a man, only Ghost or no Ghost. A woman is acceptable but no men in my bed. So how about an all Pop Version of Shakespeare, though some may say Baz from Moulin Rouge has done it already. But Pray Forgive me and I offer my Humble Version of Will Shakespeare a la Pop plus.

Zoons says Snoop Dog as he lashes out with words, rhythms must be heard, no matter how absurd. Lionel Richie is all soft and sooth, he is dragged away and put in stocks, why does he wear those absurd golfing socks. Big bad Barry White strides onto the stage scattering all before him, he is the Man for all Seasons and many many more, nobody defy him or he'll sing them to the floor. Lionel Richie sings once twice three times a lady, and he is dressed to play the female part just as they did in Shakespeare's day.

50 Cent comes on all draped in Gold, he is giving Measure for Measure and much much more, his girls adorn the floor. Eminem climbs the ivy to the lady's chamber, only she's a lady, so Beyonce throws her chamber pot full of ale over his head, he can find another amour instead.

Stephen Fry wanders on stage, quoting Shakespeare, offering a pound of flesh, but 50 cent says he has 100s of pounds flesh, bowing to his ladies at his feet. Stephen Fry mutters something before breaking out into a break dance. Stephen Fry swivels on his head, like a Jester begging for his bread. The rappers applaud and throw coins at him, ok only 50 cents in total, but Stephen Fry will appear for any small amount, it all goes into his Barclay Bank account.

Lady Gaga appears in mist as Lady Macbeth, she may have been born that way, but on the stage she knows her measure for measure. Tina Turner is a Shrew who'll never be tamed, not by Lionel Richie nor 50 cents, but when Barry White hits those low notes, she'll be HIS lady, his ever so sweet lady, and Lionel Richie can just watch dressed in his frock still in the stocks.

The ghost of Sinatra appears and sings My Way, what else, Shakespeare himself applauds from the wings, if only Sinatra was around when he had his Globe theatre, Andrew Lloyd Webber would not have bothered to be born. He would have been really useful with the thunder machine though. Elvis was due to appear too, but he had left the building before the audience arrived. Time and Tide waits for no man after all.

One Direction and the Jonas Brothers fight it out for Juliet's affections

Fighting with Ballads as the audience goes to the bar unimpressed, Will Shakespeare's Globe had the very first Stella Artois after all. And on it goes, till Meatloaf and Alice Cooper descend to the stage dressed as angels and say the final words, Sleep Well Dear Audience, and if things go bump in the night it may just be somebody sneaking into Michael Casey's bed for the night. The Ghost of Shakespeare or the Lady Macbeth herself.

Tidying Up ©

By

Michael Casey

Now this is not be confused with Tidying Yourself Up which is a piece I wrote a month ago. Today's Tidying Up concerns tidying your place, or Palace up, if you are rich, or have limited English. I came to this idea as the girls where tidying up the dry washing they'd just brought in from our washing line, ready to be replaced, or is it repalaced with another load from our over eager washing machine. The door is so big we thought it was made from a left over docking station from the Space Station, open the door and astronaut Tim appears, with freshly washed knickers around his head.

Why do we tidy up? To be able to find things, order makes things easier and faster after all. Do you have your clothes or school uniform or office clothes ready? I know I'm ready and everything is to hand. It has to be or my wife will just throw it out, or send it to the charity shop. That's her view on my clothing, or tents, as I'm so large compared to her, maybe 3 times the size. So I have to keep things tidy or they get thrown away into the ever open mouth of our dustbin or sack for charity shop.

As for our girls, one is tidy, the other is not, but a shout of "Wifi Off" soon brings a tornado of tidying, if you excuse my fake alliteration. Though this past week that would not work as we are changing our Broadband and TV package. However normally the threat of loss of broadband does work wonders.

When you tidy up you have more space, even on the coffee table, we're not posh, our coffee is the table we eat from, just like in Japanese restaurants, as you know Shanghai is so close to Japan they are like cousins. And the wife is a Shanghai girl. Packaging can also be tidied up, so our recycle bin is well used too, if you stopped and looked at the amount of rubbish that can be recycled just by the average family of 4 you would be amazed. So give it a try. Though I pity the recycle workers who have to deal with in all.

When you tidy up in general you may come across things you have long forgotten, that's where you left those stockings as suspenders, and no not the wife's to spice up your sex life. But the ones you, yes you the bloke of the house wore to a stag do. I have to confess that I did dress up in stockings and a woman's dress once, but it was a fancy dress party. And for some reason all the girls at the party wanted to kiss me. Katy Perry had not been invented then, I kissed a girl and I liked it and so on, though it was a rugby player sized man in drag, in his mother's clothes in fact. Don't mock me, you just try it and see what it does for you. But I've digressed as usual, or trans-dressed might be more accurate.

You may discover old school reports, and those can be a source of amusement and amazement. I found an old school report from 2nd year of Grammar school, I got over 80% in Chemistry. Then I dropped it, my daughter was impressed, my wife has a Chemistry degree after all, but to discover dad knew his periodic table and not just his times tables really impressed her. Luckily I hid the photos of me in drag down the back of the sofa or they would have been loaded up to cyberspace forever.

Old clothes can be found at the back of the wardrobe, Tee shirts and the like, though in our house my small daughter is forever stealing my old tops to turn them into bags and all manner of craft things. The moths never get a look in, besides Totoro our cat is a moth hunter, so no need of that disgusting stuff that grannie sent from Shanghai which is supposed to kill moths in your wardrobe. Totoro the moth hunter, a wife that throws away plus a craft centric small daughter makes an unholy trinity that keeps my clothes in order.

Photos are also discovered and my small daughter will spend hours laughing at them. I have not changed I'm told, if you saw the first photo of me and the wife from 20 years or so ago, and one from today you'll say I haven't changed. That's because FAT PEOPLE DON'T HAVE WRINKLES, as my children kindly remind me in chorus. So I'm 20 in my head, but 58 on my birth certificate, though on bad days my body in pain feels 95, and I'm ready to ring for the Undertaker myself. Some days I walk like an Olympian other days I'm limping along, but look at my face I look 40 something, provided I've had the 3Ss, S_T, Shower and Shave. And I'm viewed in a good light from a far angle.

What else can you find, shoelaces and cello-tape, odd socks and a ton of gloves and scarves. You kept them all as they are so cute, but not the Charity Shop beckons. Never throw anything away, somebody out there may need your caste-offs. Especially with kids clothes as they are never worn out as kids grow so fast. If you haven't got the energy to take them to the Charity Shop, and I know all about dipping energy levels, what with my illnesses, then display them on your front garden wall.

Instant Charity Shop on your own garden wall. Stand guard and drag people off the street and make them take your girls' old clothes away. If you cannot get rid of everything then there is the 90 year old Bulgarian woman who pushes the child's pram as she collects scrap metal. She will take anything. My wife was going to leave me on the pavement but the Bulgarian did not take me away as the wheels on the pram would not take the 110kilos plus of my weight.

And on it goes, more space in your wardrobes and in your nooks and crannies, ready for stuff sent by grannie in Shanghai, though sometimes you wish she did not try. However your Prom dress was the star of the show and if only they knew it cost 1/10 as much as everybody else's. Well I'll finish now, and no I won't wear my daughter's Prom dress to the next fancy dress party I attend, the colours don't match the colour of my eyes, otherwise, otherwise...

Tapping the Plaster ©

By

Michael Casey

Tapping the Plaster, no I'm not referring to a doctor taking off the plaster from your broken leg. John G broke his twice in fact, he's in New Zealand now, he met his wife in Scandinavia I think at a railway station, a romantic brief encounter. They were to go to Paris for a honeymoon only her visas etc would not allow it so they went to Edinburgh instead. John G is a very kind man and I owe him a great deal, so You'll have to forgive me if he becomes the Prologue, he doesn't look anything like Frankie Howerd either. Mind you that was over 20 years ago so he may have changed.

But what of tapping the plaster? Well I'm not talking about sticking plaster either, what I am talking about is when you buy a house you go around tapping the walls, if you get a different sound that'll indicate that the plaster beneath is loose and may all slide off leaving a hole. So beware of fresh decorations and paint, as it can hide a multitude of sins, as can freshly

painted exterior walls and new cheap carpet. People buy new cheap carpet to uplift a property before they sell it.

A recent property we looked at was so sweet on the website and even a quick exterior look was better than the photo. However on opening the front door it banged into the electricity mains cable, the entire house was freshly carpeted, in a dark horrid carpet upstairs and downstairs. Cheap and not cheerful, a socket in the kitchen was hanging off the wall. I could go on but I won't. So immediately I would never buy that property, I knew in 5 seconds it was both dangerous and ugly. On the specs it looked big, but specs and reality are a very different thing.

If I refer back to John G for example you may overlook him because he was soft spoken and small. Or you may look at me and think I'm a Sumo on vacation in Birmingham. You have to tap the plaster to find out what people are really like, don't just look and say he's just a big sack of whatever, in my case. Or he is an apprentice Hobbit, he does live in New Zealand now after all. He'll probably give me a slap if ever our paths cross again.

If you bother to get past first impressions and tap the plaster a bit, or a lot if we are referring back to John G and his 2 broken legs, only joking John, he probably has All Black friends by now. If you investigate a little, over a pint or a coffee then you'll reveal more of the person behind the plaster. I always thought you were a stuck up bastard, and now I know you are not stuck up, even if you are a bastard, fancy your mum falling for that line, she should have tapped the plaster first.

That's the great thing about working in a hotel, you really do tap the plaster, you met so many different people, the guests, and the staff. As I did 10 roles on a regular daily basis I got to see how the whole hotel worked. If you spent time with Vicky cleaning rooms and then doing the security role on walkabout all over the hotel then you'd experience more than if you just stood all day in the foyer. Working with most branches of the hotel staff gives you a great overview of the hotel and the staff. And obviously the guests are great fun too.

I never thought I'd be writing about it 15 years later, some just thought I was the fat guy popping up like a magician's rabbit all over the place. And at the time I was too busy working to philosophise about it, working 12 hour shifts and then 2 hours travelling on top, but having one then 2 toddlers makes you work really hard. Standing all day too, maybe that's why I had great veins ready for my unplanned quadruple heart bypass a decade later. Life is a circle after all.

As you can imagine I talk a lot, either to people when I get the chance, or hurling insults as the radio and tv news. But I do enjoy tapping the plaster with people I bump into, if you bother to talk to that little old lady in the street or at the bus stop you can discover a whole world that you'd miss otherwise. Conversation is a dying art as people talk on Facebook without actually talking, everybody just reacts or Twitters this or tweets that which can be totally superficial, just like the specs of the house I first spoke about.

Thinking, talking, writing does require a bit more effort than an instant Tweet, you can get reaction in a dead frog by adding electricity, but the frog is still dead. So tap that plaster, have a conversation, go out for a drink, or buy some cheap teabags and invite somebody in, or give a passing policeman a cuppa over the garden wall. Otherwise all you have is a dead plastered wall with all life hidden beneath.

Missing Broadband ©

By

Michael Casey

Well we are still waiting for our new broadband to arrive, the phone switch was painless but the actual Broadband part of it has not arrived yet. My girls went down the library to use their Wifi, only to discover that the actual broadband could take at least 10 days to arrive. They interrogated Google to find out when their lifeblood would arrive, and girls wanting Broadband can be very very nasty, Google hobbled away tears streaming

down his face. But at least he now knew never to upset the Casey girls, or my big daughter knew exactly how to hurt him, she did take not one but 2 Maths exams simultaneously. So Google put that in your pipe and smoke it, or my big daughter aided and abetted by her little sister would ask you to compute $MC=4C$, and that only had one answer that not even Dr Who would be able to find.

Which brings me to what exactly have I been doing while the wait is on. As I've said in another piece its all so quiet in the Casey household, but what about me the Master of the house. By the Master I don't mean Missy the nemesis of Dr Who, though I'd kill to be able to wear her clothes, the Evil Marry Poppins look, but I digress comme d'habitude. So what exactly have I, the Master, ok the ignored dad, being doing?

Well I've been tidying up the files on the computer, a decade of stuff, and versions of stuff and copies of stuff, and a bit of this and a bit of that. I have gained 20gig, yes 20 gig of space, which is more that some of the new flipperty giberbert, fancy bendy over contortionist laptop, hand held computer thingys have. As its all in the Cloud, where hackers can steal all your embarrassing photos and sell them to the Sunday Newspapers.

Nobody has ever taken such photos of me, if ever I become a famous writer or radio star, then women will flock to me, just to take photos to blackmail me. But this is doomed to failure, not because I would not be tempted, but because there is not a wide angle camera invented with a lens good enough to take snaps of my fat hairy arse.

But I've digress, put that picture or non picture out of your mind, go have a stiff drink then return to my page. Shall I continue, I will then, I've had the last the Pepsi from the fridge, now where was I? Yes, what have I been up to? Apart from tidying up my words, my babies, I have pruned my files so there is more space on my computer, an old fashioned desktop PC, though I have a large screen. At my age I need to see things, if ever I make money I'd buy a large screen Apple thingy. I also did the usual 10 off site securities to media. Remember I was a computer operator for decades so backups are my bread

and butter, and my stories are much more important to me than mere work files.

As for my Internet habits, what do I miss. I miss my Daily Telegraph, though as I don't have a subscription I cannot read all the stuff. If they want to donate a subscription to me that would be nice. At the moment it's a bit like being in a strip club and the stripper removes her gloves and high heels and slips off her evening dress. Then NOTHING, because The Daily Telegraph paywall kicks in. I want to see what Tim Stanley has to offer or Michael the Deacon, and all the other stuff. So aroused but disappointed I have to flick to the Guardian then The Daily Mail, or I would usually only my Broadband has gone AWOL, well for 10 days at least. I could kick Google in its Al Gore, or some other Politician. Only I cannot, not unless I go down the road to the Library.

So gently simmering in my own juices, and I've never been much of a cook, apart from beans on toast with 3 free range eggs mixed in. It's good for your heart, your heart I said are you as deaf as a fart? I miss my morning Press review. I watch the evening version on tv, and I do watch Sky and BBC Press previews on the computer while the family is watching tv. So not having my broadband means I'm suffering withdrawl symptoms, No Norman Smith or Laura and her gold coloured chav bag, no Sky human interest angle on events. I cannot mix and match my habits, my media habits as I pass my day writing stories and having a think, in-between my many visits to the toilet, Ckd does that to you, its not just being a journalist.

Though I have an idea for a story, it'll be in the finale of Tears for a Butcher, Where the story is just so big, so important that when the Sky reporter rings his editor he gets the best command ever in the life of any journalist. BUY THE PUB. Rupert is on a visitation to Sky Centre, Big Sid the butcher has been shot 3 times defending his friends, his life is in the balance. If he lives he'll get the George Medal. So the reporters are all gathered outside Dudley Road Hospital, in the bar of the Windmill Pub, they are going to be thrown out as its Closing Time. Its then that Rupert with ink in his veins says into the ear of the Editor. BUY THE PUB. NUJ membership allows entry into the bar, immediately a private members club.

Well I'll leave that idea with you for now, I may or may not ever get around to writing Tears for a Butcher, If Rupert wants to donate a fast typing legal secretary I could finish that sequel in time for the Christmas market. Or a sober journalist would do, they are very fast typists after all. Though finding a non drinking journalist might be as hard as finding an honest politician.

Another of my habits is music, I have background music as I write, though at the moment I've had none as I talk to you today. Spotify is good, the Free version has a few adverts but it is worth a try. I've been listening to the Beatles Sergeant Pepper album recently, and singing along. Wednesday Morning is my favourite track at the moment. You can track down Michael Jackson's History album too, that's really good. I did have a copy of the album once but it disappeared from the house.

Broadband gives you a Window on the world, as Bill Gates will testify, we need to make sure it stays free of regulation that'll allow totalitarian governments destroy it. Having said that Facebook and Google and the like should pay their fair share of taxes. 20% is fair, other companies pay, so should they, and none of this fiddling. Any big company can play the altruist card, and even run for President, and how can they afford to do all that? They are not paying their taxes by exploiting the very people they claim they want to lead and show a better path too. Pay your taxes, everybody else does, or are you using broadband as a tool to fool. Broadband is to educate, inform and entertain, and not to profane in all but name.

Signposts ©

By

Michael Casey

It's a hot sunny day here in Birmingham, its 5th July 2017, I mention the date as North Korea seems to be hotting up to its sad and awful inevitable conclusion. Not unless somebody somewhere is saying the Rosary, which is

Mary's very own nuclear weapon of Love. Or the dear leader gets shot in the back or dies of a heart attack while eating his favourite French cheese. Only History will tell. I mention all this as I was thinking what should I choose to write about today. Our neighbour crossed the road with his 1/2 Japanese son and his guitar case in hand, so I thought about Crossings and roads and then Signposts.

So what is a signpost? I ask as a cyclist races past on his bike, all shiny in the afternoon sun. In a hurry to get home no doubt, I just hope he read the signpost of he's in for a shock. Lorry's forget to read signposts and then they get stuck under low bridges, or damage them entirely. Clever firemen just hum and deflate his massive tyres so he can squeeze his 18 wheeler out of the gap beneath where he should not have gone. If only he had read the signpost, then he would not have been stuck and the firemen could have had their dinner on time. I just hope they remembered to switch the gas off before they came out to rescue the lorry driver. For any USA readers I should perhaps explain that a Lorry is the English work for Truck.

By hurrying and not following or reading the signposts you do get in a pickle if I can use another old English phrase. So reading or noticing signposts IS very important. However Life is not like that, a Signpost does not appear advising you what to do or what not to do. Ask her out, she likes you, and you miss your chance because you are shy. Yes blokes can be shy too. Years later you discover she never married, and you would have made a great couple. But there was no signpost in the sky to advise you. The reverse is true too, so you marry a bad one, and are lumbered with 3 kids before the bastard pisses off, if only you had listened to your brothers. Who will now lynch him if ever they see him again, but he is in Malaga selling Time Shares.

Are signposts only visible after the event, like rumbling farts after the event, leaving smell and wisdom, afterwards as you come down with food poisoning? Never have the last egg sandwich from the sandwich shop where it has been festering for hours in the front of the glass sandwich box. I did 10 years ago and I lost half a stone, or 4kilos in a week. I also

discovered a signpost, that my then employer were bastards, ringing me up every day to see when I was coming back to work.

This IS bad employment practice, it is little wonder that I decided to leave them, as did many staff, they had a major staff turnover problem. So the food poisoning was both signpost and a crossing of the Rubicon as far as I was concerned. I can also remember the unkind words uttered by somebody who should have know better, or just made sure they were out of earshot. I did meet a couple of great people, my fellow workers, their kindnesses I remember to this day.

We don't have to be like the Buddha to rise above the fray and look down on ourselves, but having an Interior Life of any sort will help and guide you. Failing that 17 pints of Stella Artois and sex in the cellar with the local barmaid does help to relax you and put everything in perspective. Life is about going with the flow after all.

Some people are lucky and one thing leads to another, and no I'm not talking about sex in the cellar after or during your 17 pints of Stella Artois, or was Stella just her name, I cannot remember. There are these beautiful lucky people who have it all. But really they have nothing, I'd rather have Jim from CPNEC on that desert island when your plane crashes, or anybody practical or inventive. They will help you and guide you when all the signposts are broken.

A signpost can lead you this way or that, but its the people you meet along the way that make the difference. John G was one person I mentioned in a previous piece, he warned me to relax so I did. I ended up in the Czech Republic stopping with a gay Doctor, and then meeting a former fashion model who came to my house for a month to learn English. Its all in the Czech story its in one of my books somewhere.

Barry and Miss Dangly were also signposts and friends of great import in my life, I cannot mention all the people who helped and indirectly guided

me to better things. But as I look back 20 years those two really were my daily bread, Julie was Miss Dangly's Christian name, she was wise beyond her years. We had so many laughs, and a fair few tears.

So what should I say to help and advise you all? There is no help and advice I can give. You may not see the Signposts in your life, but if you slow down a little you may avoid getting stuck under any low bridges. Apart from Stella in the cellar, so perhaps you should avoid alcohol, that's for you to decide. If something feels right then do it, Stella in the cellar included, just enjoy it as much as the 17 pints. Don't feel guilty about anything, not unless you are an old style Catholic.

So long as you do everything in good faith then you will sleep well, and wake up with a clear conscience, though the concept of conscience seems not to exist much in today's world. Don't be a writer, aloof and just watching, not part of life. Life is an ocean so just dive in and enjoy the swim. No swimming trunks required.

Style, or the Way I Write ©

By

Michael Casey

Frank Carson the Comedian used to say, you've heard them all before, but it's the way I tell them. Roger our driver was in tears and nearly crashed the van taking Frank back to the airport, because Frank really was that funny. I'll never be like Frank, I don't wear glasses for a start and my best fake Northern Irish accent is laughable. But I do have something in common with Frank, a certain style. No not in Fashion but in the Way I tell Them, or rather write them.

You can write in a variety of styles, just as you speak differently to different members of your family. You won't cheek your mum or she's give you a slap in the puss, and if she's been cleaning the floor then she may just slap you with the mop bucket, and throw the dirty water over you too. It never happened but you were wise enough not to vex her. You speak differently

to your kids and to your cat Totoro too. In my case I never treated my girls as children I just talked to them straight, the cat I talk to as if she is a child, thought in cat years she is a teenager. So Totoro must be thinking why am I treating her like a child as she slips in or out of a window at 3am, ready for fun.

The way I've written so far could be called my Style, it's come about after first 20 years of listening to BBC Radio 4, which is speech radio, quality PSB if you are an American reader. Then my 30 years writing on top, so that's 50 years of loving words. Which only happened because of a Signpost in my life when I was scared of a teacher so I hid in books. One thing does lead to another. What you are reading could now be called my natural style, as opposed to my Gangnam Style or another style I may adopt as the urge takes me.

Sarcasm or Parody or just simple exaggeration can be used to make a point. Such as the Leader has had his office extended in order to fit his ego in, or to fit in a bigger desk, so he can have sex with 2 interns simultaneously while he is on the job, or to fit more maps on so he can see which country he'll invade next. And on it goes.

The point of a joke is to make a point, and you can repeat the same joke to get another laugh in. However I'd say after 3 times you need to have a new joke, otherwise it's just boring. Not unless you are a great comedian delivering those line, discuss. We have a comic writer and performer in UK whose material is good, however the delivery is not so good, the timing is out be a second, in my opinion. Which goes back to Frank Carson, it really is the way you tell them that matters.

As a writer by putting a comma in I hope this means that when you read it you get the timing right and it's funny, or it amuses you. If my punctuation is bad then it's not as funny. Though do people read punctuation? I try and break my stuff down into short paragraphs so the reader and the eye gets a rest. If it's a sea of ink then people can be put off, especially if the reader does not have English as a first language. Ellen Palin the NY poet, I hope I

spelt her name right, she once said I should keep it punchy, then she split my lip for upsetting her, ONLY JOKING ELLEN.

So by use of style you keep the reader interested and not longing for the end of the sentence or paragraph, or bathroom as any fellow Ckd sufferer knows from experience. You'll have noticed that the last couple of paragraphs were serious in tone, but I punctuate them with a laugh to make the reading more fun, or bearable if you hate my writing. Wait for the joke could be the nature of my writing, just keep on reading then they'll be a custard pie moment, though I hope I don't telegraph my humour too much, as American comedies do, discuss.

Having said all that I don't write to be read, and yes I can hear the cards amongst you saying, too bloody right he should be burnt not read, so thank you Nazis and KKK for your appreciation. Though Nazis with KKK could be something on the menu in some Chicken Diner somewhere, in the Deep South, south of Hell or Hades if I'm being posh. No where was I, yes I just put my dinner on, I'm having Chicken what else.

I write to be heard, by your ears, so its a Storyteller that you are reading on the computer in front of you. Get your girl to read this to you while you are in bed, consider my writing to be a form of foreplay, when she gets to the end then...

Stop, I haven't finished, get out of bed and put your clothes back on, my words should be respected. No, my words should be enjoyed like a bar of Cadbury's chocolate, then once finished you can get on with your life, or just go back to bed with your girl. What I want is just a couple of minutes of your time, before you couple. See the obvious use of words to convey different meanings, but you are smiling now, or one of you is dead. That's all I want to do with my words, to make you smile, to give you a bit of relief in your hard and fast days.

I also try never to be explicit, naughty maybe but always nice, its all in your mind, not mine. Its like Panto and Ken Dodd, a joke for the kids and a joke for the mums and dads, and on and on spiralling into infinity, until we all get dizzy and throw up all over the cat. And why are there always carrots in puke, even when you never eat vegetables?

I hope I've given you an inkling into my words, and if you have an inkling I'd suggest you go and visit your doctor before it becomes a rash. Words are Weapons of Laughter, I hope I can get my 1,100,000 words read on the radio, any station, any time, any place anywhere all over the world in any language. Even if my own voice is not good enough to be used, but the Words are, that I am certain of. So what word can I finish with to impress my readers all over the world. It really should not be a word but a sound as I write for Ears, so my final word is, listen, **FART**.

Sidemen or 2nd Fiddles ©

By

Michael Casey

I've just watched a show on BBC4 about Sidemen, or the backing musicians to Stars. The narrator was in fact a sideman to David Bowie, he also played with John Lennon. Another guy was featured who was sideman to the Rolling Stones, and Billy Joel's sideman was also featured, who was actually a woman and the Lesbian lovers who were in Prince's band also featured. So it was a really good documentary, 90 mins of great music and so on. Go watch it on the BBC iplayer if it's there. I did spend years in smoky rooms watching bands in bars. Bell and Pump and Waterwaters Jazz, in fact it was the same room, an upstairs bar above the main bar, in a dodgy area by Edgbaston Reservoir.

So I do like my music and have seen 100s of acts over those years, or not so many acts but each several times. Mad Jocks and Englishman spring to mind as one of the best Folk acts. Mick Bisiker was the host, and now spooky as it may seem it must be 30 years ago when I was there, I can date

it because he is mention in The Butcher The Baker and The Undertaker. So he must be as 10 years older than I am now, and the beautiful Michelle behind the bar must be pension age now. Where has my life gone, where are all those wild oats I should have sown, the only oats I have are breakfast cereals, I was always working shifts.

All this is by way of a prologue, what about Sidemen? I was a sideman, or wingman to the priest. I grew up as an altar boy, we all were, my sister was in the choir, still is for 50 years. So what did I do as a priest's sideman. I passed him water to wash his hands with, and wine to celebrate Mass with. I also rung bells at the highpoint of the Mass. Funerals and Benediction was best as you got to use the thurifer if I've spelt that right, this is a metal orb with a charcoal piece inside, and then the priest throws incense on it. And he shakes it in blessing then you the altar boy get to shake it too. Great fun when you are 12 years old.

Afterwards me and DMC would remove the charcoal and drop it down the drain in the church garden and watch it fizz and move about. Funerals had the most shaking of the thurifer and the Funeral Mass is the most moving with the best reading, the one about Lazarus. Jesus wept for his friend, and raised him from the dead. In those days 40 to 50 years ago the Funeral was an all in black Mass. I counted up that I served 30 funerals as a boy altar boy. So Death does not make me afraid, though I'm in no hurry to meet it, even when I'm having my pain days from my Arthritis and surgery scars.

I was also a wingman when I worked at CPNEC, as Taz from security once said you could put me anywhere and I could perform. Some said it was a performance, I'd say I was just desperate to feed my toddlers so I worked my butt off. Doreen on Reception said she could always rely on me as I went room checking our 242 rooms so that she could release them. Then I'd hand her a slip of paper with the room numbers I'd just checked for her and give her an electric shock. Walking all over the carpeted hotel I built up and electric charge and discharged it when I handed the paper to her. It was nice to be useful and do my little bit. As time progressed I also worked on reception and switchboard as well as many other roles. To be able to slot in and be a sideman or a wingman was very fulfilling.

However I don't think I could be a sideman as a writer. I write my stuff and its done, I would hope somebody uses it well and not ruins it. Americans have teams of writers I don't know if I could work as a team member on a comedy show. The writing culture is different, their humour is custard pie humour, its telegraphed. Ok, I'll pause so that the Americans reading this can throw a custard pie at the screen.

Being in a team is nice so long as the leader pulls his weight, I have suffered from lazy leaders and worse in the past, I would not put up with it nowadays. The air would be blue very blue. Oh, just for balance I've had female bosses too and we got on great, its the manner that matters not which toilet the boss uses. Not that I'll ever have a regular job, all I could do is write these silly stories you see, or hear before you. Yes I still dream of reading them on the radio, one story read six times a day on the radio, a verbal laxative to clear the mind via laughter.

If you can find your niche in work it great, but if you find your perfect match in love that is even better, especially if it lasts in today's world. My parents seemed to be so well matched, mum taking dad's socks off with wooden tongs as the sweat had glued them to his feet after 12 hours in the steel works. When mum died dad said she had a phrase for every occasion and that she had all the graces. Something he never said in her lifetime. He also said that she was as strong a horse, which is high praise coming from a County Kerry Blacksmith.

This weekend would have been 68 years married, what more can I say, find love and hope that it lasts. Me I found words and I've gone past the million word mark, but nobody knows. I could die as the undiscovered writer, it would just be nice to have a bit more comfort in this life. Or maybe I'll end up a writer for USA tv, but first I'd need to take cookery lessons, to make all those custard pies.

Talking In Code ©

By

Michael Casey

Somebody said I talk in code today, I won't say who, that could be classed as talking in code too. Though Roger the Dodger, he knows who he is, he once said that too, or am I talking in too much code? Maybe I am just talking BOLLOCKS, but then I'd be blunt and not talking in any code at all. Sometimes we talk in code for fear of upsetting or offending somebody we love, or somebody could overhear us so we talk in code instead.

I hadn't thought of what to write today then that person said that thing about me, so I was off I had a THEME, talking in code. Once I have that one word away I can go and you get 500, 1000 or even 1500 words. Which in pages is, 1 to 3 pages, or even 4 depending on the font size. And no I don't prepare, I've only just sat down here a few minutes ago. Its like the jug of words is chosen and I pour it on the page, and no I don't think of such words as the jug of words it kind of appears, rather like the coffee stain on the carpet behind me where I juggled a mug of hot coffee and avoided dropping it, but managed to mess the carpet.

So that's why I'm as good or as bad as you think I am. Hopefully Good, but you may use another choice of words, so as not to hurt my feelings. Then you would be talking in code, in actual fact you would be lying, you LIAR. How does it feel to be called a LIAR? Or should I be economical with the truth as Politicians say, and say that you were not exactly correct with your assertions.

Code is used to have fun under the very nose of your boss, I can remember one of my bosses was thought to be a total BSer, so the lads had a visual clue about him, before his very face. Now they weren't being LIARS like you, yes you slouching there pretending to do your homework, when in fact you are reading my RUBBISH. So they were being honest.

Codes were used in the war and here in UK it was a gay code breaker who was instrumental in breaking Enigma. We all seen the film with the Sherlock actor playing the lead. I won't tell you any more you have to work it out for yourself, this talk is about talking in code after all. Hitler is roasting in Hell and Satan tells him it was a Gay Englishman who broke his code. Then Hitler has to guess who, so Satan gives him the telephone books of the entire world and Hitler has to read out all the names and Satan pretends he hasn't the answer. Throwing the pages into the fire to burn Hitler even more.

There are lots of examples of talking in code, when he love somebody but we are afraid to say, I want to spend more time with you, becomes I was just in the vicinity. You are up a mountain hanging from a rope 6000 metres in the air. I had these spare cinema tickets so I thought you might go and see a film with me. Its a 3 day trek back to base camp then a 12 hour ride on a camel. You were too shy to say, I fancy you, and the urge is upon me, I need to have a baby.

I'll take it into consideration is the reply. Take it into consideration. Sounds like a Judge sentencing you. Love is not a sentence, its a word, MADNESS. A madness that we all go through or the Human Race would end. The Code to Life is love. Your friends might think you are dead below the waist or maybe Gay even, they talk in code by the coffee machine. He must be Gay, or she's a Lesbian, or is he/she must be one of the A whatis you know one of those you know those Asatchels, it sounds like briefcase, Asatchel. Or maybe Celebrities, you know they don't do it because they are one of those Celebrities. So they never celebrate their bodies because they are an Asatchel.

Then one day you turn up with a male model, and how did she get him, she's so plain, and her arse is too big anyway. They don't talk in code now, no more code. Just Jealous. So you snog him right in front of the security cameras, just to make sure everybody now knows you may be plain with an arse that's too big, but YOU have a male model as a boyfriend.

They say he's gay and you paid him to stage it all. Only from the camera evidence he was not gay, not unless he was an actor, a porn actor. But you don't care, you have a love of crossword puzzles and that's how you met, he dropped his Times crossword puzzle and you lent him your dictionary. Or is that a metaphor a code for something really really disgusting. You go on and on and on, is that another code, and have 9 children together.

Well I must finish for the night and that's no code, I have further reason to write more comedy tonight, to share a laugh instead of sharing tears. That is my mission in life, to share laughter and banish tears. That is my Code.

The Jigsaw ©

By

Michael Casey

Well yesterday I was wondering what to talk about then as I mused while I looked out the window then I thought of my big daughter. She's been away on NCS or something these past couple of weeks. She did a few days up near the Lake District, basically walking in the rain. Then she came home with a suitcase of smelly washing.

The highpoint was when somebody said they did not like the food, so my daughter said "beggars can't be choosers", to which this other 16 year old replied "are you calling me a Beg?" Which is some rough modern slang for something, go ask your own kids. To think I handed our large dictionary to the charity shop yesterday when I could have donated it to this child.

VOCABULARY MAKES A DIFFERENCE IN YOUR LIFE, as does common sense.

This week my daughter is at the local university, having a play at being a student, so that in 2 years time when she does go to university she will have a clue what the life is all about. She's due home in 2 hours, so I have bought Cadbury's chocolate and glazed do-nuts ready for her return. I have also decided that I'll buy her a car, provided that she gets into Cambridge

University to study Medicine. So all of you out there have 2 years to buy some books, otherwise I'll just have to die to finance the car promise. Though I could get into medical school before her, as a cadaver, sounds quiet impressive, Michael Casey at Medical School.

What's all this got to do with Jigsaws? Well a family is a jigsaw, all the parts make the whole, just as the parts of the body make the whole person, the whole person. There is a piece in the Bible about it, concerning unity makes the whole work better, don't argue with yourself. Go and annoy your local priest if you want the detail. Ditto regarding the family, if smelly grandpa in the corner wasn't there you'd miss him, though perhaps not the smell. Why do grandpas fart so much or belch so much. If yours does not maybe its a stranger who's been sitting in your living room all these years. Ask him to show you his ID, you know the one he uses when he goes down the off licence for his Blue Nun.

A family has many part, the sister that does nothing as she is on the phone or WhatsApp whatever that is. The sister that tidies all the time because she joined Green Peace and thinks it's her duty to corral all plastic into a corner, so Sky can make a film about it. There's the mum or granny who always bakes, badly, but you never tell her. You just put an extra dollop of butter on her burnt offerings, she must be related to Alfred or something.

There's dad who's always hunting for his glasses behind the back of the chair. They were in that nice metal glasses case the dog found when they were on holiday to Abegele. Only the dog thinks the glasses case belongs to him and repeatedly buries it in the sand at the bottom of the garden, Doopy the dog thinks he's still in Abegele, so he keeps on burying the case and glasses. Luckily dad has a metal detector so he can find his glasses.

These are the pieces of a jigsaw that is a family. But when one part is missing the family does not sit well together, its like the 3 legged coffee table that is propped up by three tins of backed beans. Grandpa fell over the table when he had too much Blue Nun and broke one leg of the table. They should have thrown it out but grandpa cried because it was the first

piece of furniture that he and Nana had bought when they married an eternity ago. Now Nana is gone so the rickety table is like her ghost, her remembrance, hence the tins of beans keeping it up.

Once in the snow storm they ran out of food, only Nana fed them, her three tins of baked beans, it also formed smelly central heating too. So none of the family would ever dare throw away that coffee table, it was Nana, a piece of the family jigsaw. You all have your own family dynamic, even its just you and your cat. Without this person or that person, or just the cat the family would be incomplete. We are a mosaic of colours, of experiences each and every one of us, without all the pieces we are incomplete. So remember that next time you trip over the cat, or grandpa lets rip with a bunker busting fart, a family is made up of many many parts.

Letter to Get Noticed ©

By Michael Casey

Hello Olivia,

I would like to interview Andrew LLOYD Webber, but why should he waste his time with me? So I'm going to be Left of Field and if at the end of it you decide to forward this email then that's good. If not then you have at least had a minute's grace from your own busy day, but beware you may spill your coffee all over your nice wool carpet. If you do spill your coffee perhaps you can send me the stain removal liquid left over, as I have a nasty stain right behind me, all over our nice new carpet.

I'd like to take Andrew to the Quaver and Crotchet our local pub here in Old Forge and Singing Anvil, Big Sid the butcher normally plays of a weekend but he's in Dubai watching Ed Sheeran, so it might be an opportunity for Andrew to have another arrow in his quiver. At his time of life an opportunity to top up his pension would not go amiss. The pub is right next door to the fish shop so its not hard to find, as the street light outside is broken the smell of fish is a guide to where the pub is.

If you are wondering who I am, then I can say I'm just a fat silver haired guy from Birmingham, I've been to Liverpool once, but don't have long hair or any lovers up there. My own wife is a Shanghai girl, I met her in the old people's home she was vacuuming my dad's room, 20 years ago. She also

had a 2nd job at our local take away, she only came to my house because 785 on Sky is Chinese tv.

I was of course positively vetted by her then best friend Lai, a ballerina from the Birmingham Royal Ballet. I was vetted in the Queen's tavern a straight bar in the Gay Quarter here in Birmingham. We got engaged fast and then I sent her back to Shanghai to tell her family all my bad points. Six months later she came back to me. Though I did visit Shanghai too, to help explain all my bad points.

Now we are married, in nagging bliss, and have 2 very pretty bilingual daughters, my wife does of course look like a model, but when I met her she looked like a refugee, but nobody believes that.

Annie is waiting for her GCSEs and hopes to go to Cambridge to study medicine after A levels in 2 years time. One of my brothers was at Downing Cambridge, the another is a Queen, Queens Oxford. Eve her younger and smarter sister will be the next Julie Walters, we live down the road from where Julie to lived in Bearwood/Smethwick.

Now back to Andrew, does he do woodwork? He must need loads of shelving for his awards. If he's in Birmingham he could pop to our house just up the Hagley Rd, 10 Reginald Rd Bearwood B67 5AQ, there are few odd jobs he could do before we try and sell our house. The irony is that my wife has changed jobs while we are searching for a new home, and yes you've guessed it she is now an, Estate Agent at a Chinese property company.

Who needs inspiration when your reality is like this. Does Andrew hear music in everyday sounds? Like cups and saucers and the sloshing of wine at tastings. Everything is music, for example as I talk to you the sound of the keyboard is footsteps on a empty ballroom. And the magpies outside are assassins shooting dead somebody as they cross that empty ballroom. I listen to JM Jarre quiet often, I have to he's such a noisy bugger, and all those lights just when I 'm trying to get to sleep or listen to a Book at Bedtime. Anyway I imagine his music as the soundtrack to a chase sequence I have in my head for Tears for a Butcher the sequel to The Butcher The Baker and The Undertaker.

Ok, shall I get to thepoint? I heard Andrew, he's so loud like JM Jarre, you would think they have Chinese blood in them, but I digress. I heard that he has a ton of music in his head, he just wants words to go with it. Well I have 1,100,000 words over 30 years of writing. My play Shoplife a comedy was

called Spakling, Very Real, Great Fun, Hilarious, We Hope to Produce it, We could not stop reading it.

So I'd like Andrew to take a gander at it, no need to goose it, just read it in the bath. And think I could do something with that, but tell him not to get his toe stuck in the tap again. Mrs Smith from the flat below has only had her ceiling fixed from the last time. And Sara the fireman, sorry fire-fighter she's had enough sex education already, so extracting a nude Quavering Crotchet from his bath is not her favourite occupation.

Should Andrew not like Shoplife, as he doesn't like stacking tins of beans next to the toilet paper, then I would not get into a huff, because in a minute and a huff my eggs will be boiled. And I shall have breakfast the eggs cracking are like ice breaking as that nuclear submarine rises from beneath the waves. At this point Andrew wakes up as Sara from 999 has broken down his bathroom door while he was composing in the bath. Luckily as well as fixing shelves Andrew is a DAB hand at fixing broken doors, that CSE grade D in woodwork has really come in handy.

Well Andrew I hope this Left of Field passed the test and you are now reading Shoplife in your bath. Just leave the door ajar ready for Sara or better still get Blue Watch to listen to a reading while you luxuriate in the bath.

Thanks for your time. Michael Casey
Or just google me "michaelgcasey" 13 books on Amazon too all I need is a few readers, one bath and fire-fighter at a time.

Pausing for Thought ©

By

Michael Casey

I'm sat here this Saturday morning with my various aches and pains throbbing, it's my life, I wish it wasn't so forgive me for being repetitious, so what shall I talk about today? I paused and looked out the window on this dull and damp Saturday, a lone car passes by, even the cars feel the gloom. So I pause, and then I have an idea, I'll write about Pause, not paws,

though that could be a diversion into cat territory. So off I'll go and in an hour you'll all be reading this.

Yes, it really is as simple as that, I think of a theme and away I go. Now this morning I spotted Spain looking at my site, so hola to the, did I tell you about my Barcelon trip in 1999? That was a pause in my life, JG whom I mentioned in an earlier piece had said do some travelling, all I was doing was working and visiting my dad every single day in the old people's home, so I listened to JG and did a bit of travelling.

A pause or break in your life can give you a better perspective, it can help you see things differently. You are not that gerbil in a cage going around and around to the Kylie song. A pause helps you think, avoid mistakes, like buying a house at the top of a hill when you have a heart condition. Or buying a house near a brothel when you are overly religious, though they say opposites attract.

Whatever you are doing, take a break, pause for thought. Especially if you are planning a wedding, or just coupling without being a couple. Stop and think, no I don't want to do that, to sign this contract or that contract, to follow the herd and give in to peer pressure. Thinking, pausing is the most important thing you ever do in your life. At a market the guy hands things out and his patter is so good, only a quid for the mystery packet so everybody has one, thinking it has a great bargain inside. If you have any doubts you can have your money back says the man. Nobody does, he will make a killing, but one lone voice in the crowd does ask for his money back. That was my brother, the others, they got ripped off.

More than ever in today's fast world you have to stop and pray, or have a quiet 17 pints of Stella Artois, whatever is your form of prayer or preferred form of Quiet. Then make a decision, its not a pair of jeans you can send back with the courier, hello to our courier, he's like Lenny Henry's brother, warm and funny. But I digress. There are consequences to all our actions, so pause for thought. I won't bother tidying up, my boyfriend will, in the end he leaves you are moves in with his fellow road sweeper, you didn't

even notice he was really gay. You just loved him because the flat was always tidy, it was like living in a hotel. But now he is gone, he has ran off with a bloke, and your flat is just a tip.

Food is important, I'm enjoying the quality food we switched to at my daughter's bequest, just a different loaf of bread makes such a difference. By pausing as you shop and buying this instead of that your fatty levels can go down, not mine, you yes you in Spain reading this today. It doesn't take too much time to look at the traffic light symbols we have on food, and it could save your heart. I speak from experience now.

If only I had thought is another common expression, results matter and in today's world it is Volley and Return, Wimbledon is on hence that expression. But a couple of seconds thought do save the day. When you are a parent, or standing in the foyer of CPNEC you should be looking all around you for danger or for things to do. Being proactive does make a difference, your gerbil or your baby is still alive because you tidied up all those little plastic bags when you came home from that shopping trip.

If ever you go to Lourdes on pilgrimage as well as the holy stuff there is the cafe life, watch and see the waiters descend like locusts to tidy up, il march bien as the head waiter said to me. They think about keep the pilgrims catered for and how to stop big pauses in trade. Would you go to a cafe that was so messy? So they are highly skilled at making it march bien.

Few of us get miracles in our lives, my dad's survival over 20 years ago. Me meeting a professional model in Czech Republic in 1998, while I was stopping with a gay doctor, she came to Birmingham and I taught her English for a month, everybody thought it was a miracle. Then the next year I met a Shanghai girl who became my wife. Having 2 daughters, the miracle of life itself.

Some of these things happened because I paused my life, I stopped and had a rest, a break. Now my life is one big pause you could say, punctuated by

pain which ebbs and flows. But as I look back at my life, at the pauses intentional and unintentional, I can say I'm happy that its brought me to where I am now. I am the fool on a hill, the undiscovered writer, and it may only be when I pause at my end that you all pause and discover me. So pause you own lives and discover somebody important, not me, just pause and discover yourselves.

15July 2017

Well the new Dr Who is be be announced tomorrow, its going to be a woman, it's me in drag, so you have been warned.

I hope you enjoyed these 62,350 words.

Michael Casey