

I Am In Frequent Contact With You-Know-Who

by Spencer Troxell

When I lay in bed at night reading about methods of medieval torture and execution, and unfortunate side-effects of our past and near-present lack of knowledge in the various sciences, sometimes I pray suddenly, almost catching myself by surprise: Lord, please don't let me or any member of my family be buried alive. Amen.

Then I consider my wording. "Lord, please don't let me or any of members of my family be buried alive." Will the lord be offended by my phrasing, or possibly because I put myself first in the request?

I rephrase:

"Dear Jesus, I sure hope no members of my family are buried alive, myself included. Amen."

People used to get buried alive a lot. How do I know that? Because it apparently happened enough that someone invented a device that would have a rope buried inside a person's coffin that was connected to a bell right above it. If a person woke up and found themselves buried alive, they could simply ring the bell and some hunch-backed grave-tender would come and dig you up.

"God, almighty redeemer, please give my loved ones the prescience to put a fully charged cell phone in my grave with me (with lots of minutes) when I "die," or let them lobby successfully for the creation of some similar contraption to the one I just described, amen. O, and likewise for all of them [my family] in case they are buried alive. Amen."

I am in frequent contact with you know who, and am able, most of the time, to surreptitiously send messages all day long every day, whenever I am inspired. On the ride to work:

"Dear God, let me not hit a deer today, nor be killed by a drunk driver. Amen." All of this without driving into a ditch.

In the hallway at work:

“Lord, please let Shelia have forgotten to wear that perfume that makes me sneeze today, and please let there be Bavarian crème donuts left from the meeting this morning, and let no one have stuck their fingers into them, and let there be no stray hairs around them. Amen.”

At my desk:

“Dear God, please send angels into Shelia's house at night and have them hide all of her bottles of perfume. Please smite Elizabeth Taylor.”

On the ride back from work:

“The ice age is coming, the sun is zooming in
Engines stop running and the wheat is growing thin
A nuclear error, but I have no fear
London is drowning and I live by the river”

I read in a book written by a Quaker that we should make every breath a prayer, and we should practice constant prayer so God knows that we're not just calling him for stuff. It's like when you need to borrow money from your mom, but you go and visit the week before without borrowing anything so you don't seem like a mooch.

Reading Gene Wilder's autobiography *Kiss Me Like A Stranger*, I discover that he used to pray compulsively as well, and would sometimes subject himself to rituals of mortification when he was younger in order to please the deity. Once he poured oil onto his hair and went to school with it all pat down. One time he passed an entire evening in a field anxiously praying, unaware of the passage of time.

“Thank you dear lord for not tormenting me as you did Gene Wilder. Please let no members of my family be similarly tormented, but I know you are loving god and would not torture members of my family or myself. Amen.”

and then, after consideration, just to be safe:

“Lord, please protect Gene Wilder from being buried alive. Amen.”

