

Kevin, Julia Brief's precious toddler, followed her into the Ante-Natal Clinic on the 'Zikov Kiddie-Leash' that she had recently invested in. Not only would it keep him at arms' length, but it would stop him from straying. Julia was settling her account from two years prior to that date. Recently she had - for a second time - left her husband, Pete, since he had returned to his incorrigible habits. She was, therefore, forced to work seven part-time jobs in order to repay her debt. She was not particularly devoted to Pete by that stage.

"I have a cheque for £2,500 here to pay for ante-natal fees from 1994," Julia told Nurse Aphrodite, now employed by Kissing Private Health.

"Eh?" said the nurse. "Bit late, ain't it, Mrs. Grief?" Julia pointed out that her surname was Brief and Aphrodite continued, "Okay, that's fare 'nuff, but be a bit quicker next time."

"Sorry, Aph. I only had two years of scrimping and saving," she told her amnesiac friend who seemed to have not only forgotten how to zip up her uniform (it was the wrong way round too), but also Julia.

While Julia was pondering her friend's sorry state, her cheeky lad had gnawed through the leash. "That's what Calcium Supplements does to kids' teeth," remarked the bouncer who stood at the door. "There's no substitute for good old breast milk." Julia tended to agree, but by the time that she realised exactly what the heck the bouncer had been talking about, her son had rushed past the bouncer, making a raspberry sound on his way. Julia ground her teeth as she saw Kevin disappear out the door with the red 'neverend' lollipop that she had given him to shut his gob. Nothing for it but to find him!

Julia had known from the very first moment she had laid eyes on Kevin (in the Maternity Ward of Kissing General Hospital in the Summer of 1994) that he would doubtlessly give her no end of . . .

TODDLER TROUBLE

This game - a *Brief Tale* - is a sequel to **For Pete's Sake** and **Labour Pains** and, though there is no need to have played the previous games beforehand, it may actually help. **Toddler Trouble** consists of two parts, the second of which is accessed by a password provided at the end of the first. Normal adventuring commands apply to this game, but if you are in any doubt **VOCAB** and **INFO** will provide you with further information. You will benefit immensely from conversing with the various characters you meet throughout the game and this can be facilitated by typing the character's name followed by the query or command, e.g **APHRODITE TELL ME ABOUT THE BOUNCER**.

The Daily Expatiator

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Ante-Natal Shock

by BLAIR UNDERWEAR,
legal correspondent.

The latest in a long series of shocks to strike our cosy little town is the news that the local ante-natal clinic, run by Mr. Joe McElpful, has been charging exorbitant rates for its services unbeknown to the mothers that have enrolled there. Ms. Susan Brief, the editor of this famed newspaper, is among one of the unsuspecting women who have fallen victim to McElpful's scheme. Nurse Aphrodite Turnip, an employee of the clinic, told the *Expatiator* that, "Such a notion is balderdash. Mr. McElpful is a very respectable man and he would never do such a thing." We shall leave that up to you, as the reader, to decide.

In legal terms, it is unfortunate that the mothers who have been 'taken for a ride' - the words of Mrs. N. Mansell - don't have a leg to stand on. This is unfortunate as Mr. L. Lawley, the solicitor on behalf of the MAROM (Mothers Against Rip-Off Merchants) has explained, "They all signed contracts, but I can assure you that I will use all my resources to ensure that they are compensated. It would not be the first time that I have performed miracles." Mr. Lawley is renowned in *The Jig and Thistle* for drinking ten pints of Carlsberg in under an hour.

Global Roundness by Fred Brief

I recently chatted to Professor Aristotle Popodopolis of the University of Athens. He explained to me that the world is round because that's the way it was created. My geography teacher (who can't be named for legal reasons - Ed.) was so shocked that she 'downed' a basin of coffee and hasn't been seen since. I just thought I'd let you all know the truth. By the way, I love you, Abigail, if you're out there!

Elvis Lives by T. Turnip

In a shock announcement to the *Expatiator* local magician extraordinaire, Small Daniels, claims that, "I was recently offered a post doing all the magical tricks of the King. While he plays his 'guit-ar' and sings his melodious songs, I am to perform various feats of magic. It is an honour to serve under such a man. He's a living legend."



"Why Is the World Round Anyway?" Dunno!

Mr. Daniels, who was recently promoted to the hallowed rank of sorcerer, told our reporter that Elvis is now living at Graceland Avenue, Upper Kissing. An investigation is in progress.

Serpents by Ophelia

"Ophelia's Ophidian Opera" has re-opened in Upper Kissing. Everyone is welcome to visit the wonderful snakes. It's perfectly safe. Free stuffed python given to all kids.

Mutiny! by Dr. Jamie Catchpole

A chronicle of the mutiny which occurred aboard the writer's great-great-grandfather's ship - the *Inferno* - 142 years ago has been unearthed. It is available for public inspection at the Kissing Book Society.

New Tea-Room by Dethby Poysin

Lady Matilda Hodgkins has opened a new tea-room in our town. It is believed that it will attract a great range of up-market customers although ordinary, run-of-the-mill townsfolk are most welcome. The Violator of Vindaloo herself told us, "I plan to use my own buns and rock-cakes to enhance the teas." We will keep you informed - in the obituaries.