

Newspaper Reading Club
Fiona, Michala and Fiona
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Diagnosis danger. Wait, why check-ups, tests and surgery can make your health worse. O – double of sevens back. Jane Clifton, have we reached peak, Red Peak yet? All aboard – why we need to keep Kiwi whale, KiwiRail running. Ooh, AC/DC coming to New Zealand. The decent thing, the editorial. But it's hard to talk at the same time. Jason's, Joseph Stalin is reported to have said that one million is a tragedy, a million deaths a statistic. I'm looking at a picture of – I'm not even sure what that is. Some crazy looking building. Um, then I usually skim through and have a wee look. See if there's any art, um, we go into the letters, Letters to the Editor. Welcoming refugees. I am pleased we are open, opening our doors to hundreds of refugees, many of whom will be shell-shocked veterans of war. They would need housing, health care and mental health support. From Caroline Maybury of Glen Eden, Auckland. Oh, I'm looking at the caption finalists. They always have crazy photos, of people doing weird stuff and you have to give a f-, um, a good quote that goes with it. 10 quick questions. See if you can answer the, um, the questions. True or false: all Sherlock Holmes stories are narrated by Dr Watson? I think that's true. This is about the speed it read it. Flicking, flicking. Ah, Diana Wittchell re-, um, does the TV review on Reverend Hosking. On the Mike Hosking's take on refugee changes with the time of day.

Who's Reverend Hosking?

Hm?

Who's Reverend Hosking?

Oh, he's not really a Reverend. Um, there's this guy Mike Hosking.

Ah'huh.

He's just a TV personality.

Okay.

He's a bit of a joke but, um, he's really popular. Sadly enough. I quite like, I actually quite like the political bit usually. Who cares wins. This is by Jane Clifton. Is policy making by social media democracy's future? Tweet if you agree. Have we reached peak, Red Peak yet? How many Syrians can you personally squeeze into your guest room. And who exactly has Maurice Williamson come as, a Shirley Temple, b Jane Fonda, or c a long-forgotten eighties television character? There's no doubt we've arrived at the era of click-bait politics. Politicians every tick and blurt launch a massed pounce of opinion ranging from witty to puerile with a compelling long span of heartfelt-

[UNINTELLIGIBLE]

In between. Counting clicks. Alongside the patent sincerity of the design proponents of Red Peak, other supporters will have been drawn as they are to anything that might discomfort the government and Prime Minister they wholeheartedly despise. How many Red Peakers are genuine and how many even subconsciously are simply protesting are utterly untestable. I think I read that wrong. I quite like the Red Peak. But maybe I'm just going against the government. An epidemic of over-diagnosis. An aggressive approach to detecting cancers means that some patients are suffering unnecessarily including having breasts removed or becoming incontinent or impotent. Screening, the four rules. What are the best ways to minimise the problems associated with screening? Welch's book, should I be tested for cancer?, offers this advice. Don't, no was it – tell your doctor you understand there are reasons not to be tested. Doctors assume patients want tests, even when they think it may not be the most sensible thing to do. You can change that dynamic. Give your doctor permission to consider not testing. Another one – get a second opinion on small cancers or if there is any ambiguity about the result. Ambiguity. Consider a menu of treatment options. Don't get pushed to act before you've had time to think. Most people overestimate the importance of acting quickly. They always do health stuff. I think it's cos it's aimed at the baby boomers.

Ah.

Of which I'm not but, I just, just, yeah. It's not the m-, it's not the, the, um, magazine it used to be, that's for sure. They used to have a lot more art stuff in it. So now I'm just skimming. Which tests are best – cervical screening, oh, da da, da, bowel cancers.

This is, this is like from a Wellington perspective mainly?

Um, it's Au-, it's based in Auckland.

Ah.

Um, yeah. It's quite blue, like I think the editor at the moment is, well she comes across as being, um, National.

Yeah.

But, yeah. Usually, to be honest, the main article is not the most interesting one these days.

Right.

Here's a massive article on the Rugby World Cup. Eyes on the Ball. As the nation switches to Greenwich Mean Time for the duration of the Rugby World Cup there are seven key factors that will determine the All Blacks' fate.

And there's a giant picture of Richie McCaw doing the haka.

When does the World Cup start?

It's not far away, um, there it is November, oh, no that's 2013. No idea. It's coming quite soon I think.

He's been in the All Blacks for ages now, right?

Yeah, I think it's his last World Cup, yeah.

Yeah. I mean he must be getting a brain shake.

I don't know, he doesn't say much. I think it's cos there's not much going on. But I could be wrong.

[LAUGHTER]

I dunno there's been a lotta urban myth about him, like I still –

I quite, is he from here?

Yeah. I was talking to a friend the other day who had heard that he was gay but that's never come out. But there's a lot of stuff about you know, he's, he doesn't, he's not married and he's, um, he's kind of connected to various girlfriends but, um, nothing's ever been you know proven and there's been other kind of associations with men and things but – so that would be really radical if that ever came out.

That would be amazing.

The unofficial guide to World Cup speak. Well that'd be useful cos I, I don't really know rugby. Oh, I dunno if this makes sense actually. The sin bin – an establishment off the High Street with friendly ladies and discreet credit card facilities. Oh. 'Cos they always get in trouble for doing something. The nation holds its breath – Dan Carter's knee is sore. Barnstorming fast with thick thighs and tattoos. Quality ball – one made by Gucci. That doesn't make, really make a lotta sense. A bolter – an escaped streaker. The bench – ten cubic metres of testosterone. Hard man – a forward with no neck. Hard yards – concreted rear section in suburbia. Arty farty drivel – asking who's playing. That's about as close as I ever get. I don't even know how many people are in the team. And that goes on and on.

It's pretty fucken –

It's quite weird recently –

It's pretty telling having arty farty as like a, um – insult

[LAUGHTER]

Yeah. It's funny actually my son – this is an aside –

It's like right now we're like, zip, arty fartys sitting in front of a work and income.

I know, I know, looking at, um, you know we've all been on the dole at some stage.

Yep.

But if you were here when they announced who was in the team, they announced it in Parliament.

Whoa.

They actually did it, yeah, in the building –

Wow.

– and the Prime Minister, you know it was all, ah, it was outrageous. Everybody is just jumping on the bandwagon cos they're winning you know.

Right.

Everybody wants a bit of them.

Right, right, right.

Which is quite, oh, so that's what that f-, picture before was about.The Age of Disruption. There are lessons New Zealand can learn from Israel's transformation into a high-tech innovator.

What?

I didn't know they were a high, high-tech innovator.

Oh.

Because that sort of thing doesn't really interest me. On a sweltering summer's afternoon in downtown Tel Aviv, Ami Daniel is pouring shots of Jack Daniels for his visitors. The thirty one year old tech entrepreneur runs Windward, widely considered one of the most promising of the five thousand or so startups operating in Israel. So trying to show the nice side of Israel, successful side, more, more of that. Shelf life. Cathartic, if I hear that world a-, word again I will go nuts. Words have been playing a crucial role in actor and writer Owen Scott's life since the brutal murder of his brother in Fiji. For a writer to have a first book made into a movie is usually a cause for celebration but for Owen Scott it was a bittersweet achievement. Scott wrote Deep Beyond the Reef, upon which the documentary movie, An Island Calling, was based. It explored the killing in Fiji of Scott's brother John and his partner, Greg Schrivener. The Scott brothers were fourth generation white Fijians steeped in Fijian culture and educated in New Zealand. More World Cup. Tournament guide for sale. Imagine there's no imagery. A mood disorder can leave people unable to conjure up mental pictures.

Mm, that's sad.

M'yeah. It's weird isn't it? I usually read these briefs cos

that's, half the time I don't have time for that. Prostrate cancer hype – won't worry about that. Health – heart health findings. Women aged forty five and under who have diabetes are six times as likely to have heart attack – to have a heart attack it should be – as those who don't have diabetes. According to research presented at a European Society of Cardiology Congress the study of more than seven thousand women also found that young women who had a heart attack were more likely to be smokers. That's not that surprising. Nutrition. A noisy noise annoys the eater. Sound can affect the way our food tastes and could even be to blame for expanding waistslines.

Ooh.

Each of us perceives taste in a completely individual way. My version of salty is not the same as your idea of salty for example. Everything from genetic differences to life experiences can to-, can come together to shape our perception of taste in addition to myriad weird and wonderful external factors. Blah, blah, blah. A lot of research has investigated how taste is influenced by not only what we see but also by what we smell and feel. But until recently relatively little effort has been spent looking at how our hearing might influence our eating experiences. When we eat a potato crisp we expect to hear a crunch sound. If not, we may conclude the chip is old and stale. Likewise the crackle of a carbonated drink tells us whether it is fresh and fizzy or old and flat.

Mm.

Spouse that makes sense? But the influence of sound goes further than assessing the texture and freshness of the food. Sound can actually alter our understanding of taste. Airline food is often the subject of much criticism levelled at both its taste and appearance but could air cabin, aircraft cabin noise be partly to blame for the poor flavour? La, la, la, then they have this bit, usually by somebody well-known talking about what they ate. What they eat, what they ate when they were growing up and it's usually pretty boring. I usually have a wee look at technology. That's the great thing about this magazine, it's got a bit of everything.

Totally.

You don't have to know anything about anything.

Right. It's-

[UNINTELLIGIBLE]

And cos we've got a te-, a couple of teenagers it's quite useful. Apple's iPhone hype machine cranking again. Here are a couple of android alternatives. I wonder how much they are. That's the bit I'm interested in. Chances are you haven't heard of – I don't even know how to pronounce it – Huawei, one of a handful of Chinese tech companies challenging the smartphone market leaders. In the first half of the year Hu-, Huawei had the third highest worldwide smartphone sales, behind Apple at number one and Samsung. Oh, now I've just heard of this one, Lenovo – apparently that's quite popular. Hua-, Huawei's rise is down to incredi-, increasingly incredible offerings such as the P8, its new flagship phone. It cleverly avoids going head to head with the top models from its android rivals. Oh, the psychology's terrible. That guy's got – he's really got no idea. It's just shocking, I'm not even gonna bother.

It's cool.

I'm like, I just can't go there really. Money, that's, um, sometimes interesting. Rails of National Significance. KiwiRail is unlikely to ever be profitable.

Ohh.

But there are good reasons to keep it running. The logic is that the roads can actually handle the volume. Yes they can, at two am but not at rush hour. Some media recently reported that the Treasury was recommending closing down KiwiRail. Clearly someone forgot to tell whoever designed the cover of the government's newly minted thirty year infrastructure plan. Of the three images of national infrastructure at work, two are of KiwiRail assets, one a train and the other an inter-island ferry. The irony hasn't escaped KiwiRail chief executive Peter Reedy. In the hotseat since February last year and charged with the latest in a long series of efforts to find a viable future for the problem child of the New Zealand rail system. I really miss rail travel actually.

Yeah, it's the best.

There's hardly any of it left, it's sad.

Yeah it is.

You guys should do that. Ah, have you ever done that one over to the Coast?

Oh, no.

It's quite good. It's a bit touristy but it's still awesome.

Tell it – so where does it go?

It just goes to Greymouth and back.

Oh, yeah.

Yeah, but you don't have to come back on it but, what else are you gonna do really, it's a –

Yeah.

– and I think the one up to, um, Picton still runs.

Yeah.

Which – I haven't done that. Well not for, not since I actually had to get there for some reason. But it, it runs as a tourist thing as well but, um –

That's awesome.

- it's really amazing.

I've done the, I do the one up and down to Wellington.

Yeah, is that still going?

Yeah, it –

I think it's –

Yeah it's awesome. It takes the whole day but it's absolutely beautiful. Going past the mountain and –

That's the one where you do that crazy –

Spiral.

[UNINTELLIGIBLE]

In a spiral.

Spiral, mm. I haven't done that for years but, um, well actually when I was a kit we used to go down to Port Chalmers every holidays or ev-, twice a year in the holidays and we'd always catch the train down to Dunedin and that was another great one cos there was loads of tunnels and, yeah, it was good fun. This life food. Don't really like oysters. Incredible edibles. Farmed oysters are gaining in popularity and are at their plump and creamy best in spring. This isn't so useful to me cause there's never any food that the kids will eat so I always kind of look but can never make any of it.

Right. For that next phase of life.

Yeah and I don't like oysters anyway so it's like, um, Oh, I am into cricket. Heads we win, tails you lose. Doing away with cricket's coin toss would be one way to level the playing field, really? Luck of the draw. England's Alastair Cook and Australian Sir Michael Clarke at the Oval. You could argue as many have that test cricket is an observed-, observity. Men and women in long white trousers play for six hours, pausing for lunch and afternoon tea. Mens games can last five days, womens four, with no guarantee of a result at the end of them. That is mad.

That is crazy, eh.

This is probably why I like it. It's kind of – exactly, it's like, it's sport like when did, yeah. Yeah. I must admit I get confused about who wins at the end but, um, my youngest daughter plays and so I've got kind of into it.

Oh, that's good.

But captains can be fined or even banned if their sides don't bowl sufficient overs in a day's play. The umpires can stop the game if they think the light isn't good enough, even if both teams are happy to play on. Weird. Twice an over, bowlers can propel the very hard ball at a batsman's head at one hundred and fifty km/h. If they hit it, nothing happens. If they mouth off at the batsman while he tries to gather his senses they may be fined. Here – I'm skimming now to the end. Former Australian captain Ricky Ponting has called for the toss to disappear from test cricket to make life easier for visiting teams. He argues that if the away team automatically gets to choose whether to bat or bowl it would dissuade the hosts from preparing wickets that suit them and/or don't suit the visitors. Don't know if that makes much sense. Sometimes I like to look at the wine but it's relating to oysters so. Oyster Bay, Hawkes Bay Merlot 2014 twent dollars. Books and Culture. The latest James Bond author Anthony Horowitz – is that how you say it – tells Stephen Jewel he took the assignment because he always loved the character. I'm amazed they're still churning out James Bond books [UNINTELLIGIBLE]

Yeah.

Yeah, that you can you know, when the guy died like when? The twenty or something I think is when he died.

Oh.

Do try this at home. Dan Williams reviews recent non-fiction releases. The boy who played with fusion – extreme science. Extreme parenting – how to make a star. That sounds quite good. Shadows in the vineyard – the true story of a pilot. Nobody ever really goes on it, well they might in summer actually. You do get a few tourists on it.

[UNINTELLIGIBLE]

Oh, okay, well in the rain.

Yeah.

Ah, it's all right I spose, I just, it's just a bit naff. The art, there's actually an art review. You don't always get one. Desires and anxieties. Cutting edge video artist brings bold new digital style to New Zealand.

Mm.

A scene from the Coloured Sky New Woman Two by Yang Fudong. He's looking quite cool.

Yeah.

When video installations by Chinese contemporary artist Yang Fudong opened in Auckland this month, the city's large Chinese population is an obvious target audience. But Yang, coming from Shanghai for the opening, wants to be a bigger drawcard in his push to take cutting edge Chinese work to the world. The audience should not be limited to China only. I want audiences from around the world to experience Chinese art, he says. He hopes this, New Zealand's first survey exhibi-

tion of his work, along with his exhibition in Melbourne earlier this year, will stimulate new opportunities for China's young artists to showcase their works internationally. The exhibition at Auckland Art Gallery features three films on an endless loop. Curator Ulanda Blair is the curator, worked with Auckland Art Gallery, principal curator Zara Stanhope. That's quite a long review. Theatre the travelling squirrel, circa Wellington. This finely tuned production showcases Robert Lord's sparkling dialogue and comedic talent. Music. Creative creatures. T-, two one-woman forces of electronic dance music. There seems to be a lot of that. Shortcuts. In between product-, producing albums for such legends as Mavis Staples and Richard Thompson and touring with his son Geoff Tweedy – with his son, Geoff Tweedy has thrown together a rough and ready rocker for Wilco's ninth studio outing. But what a talent the twenty one year old Chicago based six piece are. Coming together four years after The Whole Love they've created something that bounces around inspiration from the likes of television, glam rock and The Velvet Underground. They have some quite good stuff in there sometimes. Film. Mountain Brotherhood. As a film based on Rob Hall's death on Everest hits the screens, Ni-, Nina Taylor talks to star Josh Brolin.

Mm.

That's so depressing isn't it.

Oh, my God I want to see that.

What's that?

[UNINTELLIGIBLE]

Have you seen it?

No I wanted to see it on the plane.

Oh, a girlfriend of mine always goes to the m-, art festival, I'm a bit slack at getting the list – or the music festival, ah, film festival. And she gave me two options, it was this or it was some other random one set in Italy and I thought this looked fun. It was really good, okay I'll read a bit of it cos it was a great movie. Woman of the cloth. She's like ninety something. Oh yeah ninety four. Doco on grand dame of fashion is a feast of style over substance, well that's true. That's why it's a movie. Starring into Iris Apfel's enormous heavy rimmed glasses can be mesmerising. All her qualities are there. Self-assurance, wry knowingness, and respect found only in decades of experience. A matriarch of the fashion world, ninety four year old Iris still lectures on style, still attends the openings of exhibitions created around her colour-blasted and zany image. She consults on clothing lines bearing her name and models for photographers and editors young enough to be her great grandchildren. Although known for her aesthetic independence, Apfel's reputation was ordained through interior design. With Carl, who's – that's her husband – she founded Old World Weavers in the early 50s. The company specialised in the unique and the couple's intrepid adventures from the basements of Paris to the bazaars of the Mediterranean dredged up all kinds of gems. Despite their quirk and iconicism Iris and Carl inhabit an old money lavishness unashamed to be the last survivors of a Gatsby party. In this way Iris is voyeuristic. One is allowed into the luxuriousness only to marvel in wonder. What little glimpses are granted underneath the jewellery aren't quite enough to elicit any feeling of intimacy. Well that's probably true actually. Now showing, people places things – Jeremy, Jemaine Clement – romantic comedy. Me and Earl and the dying girl – four and a half stars. A walk in the woods, thirty minutes, thirteen minutes. Ac-, most of the time when the movies are on I have no i-, none of them sound very familiar at all to me. Oh, I usually look at the – Veronica Schmidt culture vulture. Oh, my God he's [UNINTELLIGIBLE] that's gotta be Miley Cyrus, Cyrus, yeah. Wearing the most outrageous pink lycra skin tight with blow up. Do it written on it and a pig hat or sort of a bow with a pig snout on it. What does it say about her? Do you read this stuff?

I can't help but read this stuff.

I never get to read it anywhere else.

Dude, it's all good.

I may – Yeah, I do when I come across it, like right now I'm eating it up. Yeah. Also, just cos people talk about them, like who are these peop-, I gotta know who they are. There may be very little to the, ah, to the outfits Miley Cyrus wears but it turns out a lot goes into them. In an interview with the Hollywood reporter, the singer stylist Simone Harouche describes the effort put into figuring out Cyrus's MTV video music awards costumes. She and Cyrus, who hosted the awards – wow so the stylist hosted the award.

No, I think she's Cyrus who was –

Oh, who hosted the award, yeah, yeah. It's quite, when you, I'm not used to reading stuff out.

Yeah.

You actually – it's easier to understand it when you do it in your head, you know.

Yeah, yeah, yeah.

Anyway, began the design process by sending one another references that inspired them before Harouche created mood boards and sketches and then moved onto a modification process. Who else am I interested in? I didn't – David Bowie. Oh Cyndi Lauper. I did love her when I was growing up. David Bowie, John Legend, Cyndi Lauper and Aerosmith's Steven Tyler and Joe Perry are all penning original tunes for the SpongeBob musical due to open in Chicago next month before moving to Broadway but all of the stars partial to SpongeBob – of all the stars – Bowie is clearly the most dedicated.

It is his second foray into Bob's undersea world. He voiced the role of Lord Royal Highness in the 2007 TV movie Sponge Bob's Atlantis Squarepants.

[LAUGHTER]

Sorry one sec I'll have a drink.

So what happened to the guy that climbed Everest? He passed away?

Yeah, it was, I think there was an avalanche, um.

Oh, he's a New Zealander?

Mm, yeah, ah, if I remember rightly, yeah, he-, Rob Hall, so he's the son of somebody else, another Hall I think that, that's big in climbing, there's sort of a few climbing families that you hear about.

Oh.

I think he might've been one of the first to climb it without something –

Right.

Or did it in a certain time or, I dunno. But, yeah, I think it was an avalanche and I think he was the one and he was on his cell phone-, - I can't believe he'd have cell phone coverage – but he was somehow in communication I think with his wife and –

Yeah.

- yeah, and I always have to have a go at the quiz word. And I always have to do Sudoku.

Cool.

And that's my favourite Kukuro. Love Kukuro.

That's cool.

Some really bad ads usually. What's on TV? The Doctor will see you now. Dr Who and his time travelling tardis return for another season of adrenalin fuelled adventures. I don't watch that. Again the Rugby World Cup. So it's opening.

Rad.

This Saturday.

Oh.

It's even on Prime. Cos we don't have pay TV, we're cheap.

Yeah.

And also we'd just watch telly all day if we had proper TV. Well not all day but, so if it's on actually on free TV it's generally a big deal. Either it's really the sport nobody wants so they put it on or they want everyone to see it, I spose. Farty Towels. For a two season comedy comprising twelve episodes in total, Fawltly Towers has had a lasting impact, influencing everything from The Young Ones to The Office, both of which had similarly short lifespans. It's forty years – blah, blah, blah, since John Cleese was there. Big Bang Theory. Documentaries. Despite the fake jeopardy of the reality show format, The Autistic Gardener is a charming series that is both heart-warming and insightful. The gardener in question is actually Alan Gardner – his real name – a tattooed 55 year old with pink hair who has won awards at Chelsea.

Oh, wow.

She looks insane.

That looks actually kind of psycho lookin'.

One of his, um, people that helped, looks like she's just escaped from somewhere. That's mean isn't it, but. Then I usually look at the movies. The Chronicles of Narnia, Prince Caspian. Not much else. Radio. The best of the week. I'm looking at a picture of Tirau, I don't know why that's there, a big, looks like a corrugated iron dog's head.

[UNINTELLIGIBLE]

Corrugated iron paradise spectrum Sunday, let's see what that is. Oh, yeah, here we go. The urbanisation that began in the 1960s left many New Zealand towns struggling to stay afloat. But one settlement that has been successful in attracting visitors is Turou. Tirau?

Tirau.

Tirau, south east of Hamilton. I've never heard of it. This is largely down to the vision of local businessman Henry Clothier who saw the potential for Tirau to become a shopping destination for antiques and turned the town into a corrugated iron paradise. Have you been there?

It's great.

Is it? First came the giant sheep.

[LAUGHTER]

I didn't realise there was something so great near Hamilton.

They're just a tea rooms.

Oh, really?

Mm.

Giant sheep which houses naturally a wool shop then Clothier – Clothier? – persuaded his son Steve to build a giant dog which houses an information centre. Other

corrugated iron sculptures have joined them including the in theme Good Shepherd outside the church. Lisa Donaldson meets Henry, Steve, and Steve's wife Cheryl to talk about the turnaround. Where are you from? You're from Auckland?

Yeah.

Yeah. So you'd know all the stuff up there.

Yeah.

And then really it's just all the TV. So but one thing I do tend to do, I tend to just skip past that. That's not very interesting.

[UNINTELLIGIBLE]

Got listings and stuff.

I do have – yeah, that's still TV.

Do your kids love TV?

Ah, no not really. They, um, it's YouTube. They're into YouTube.

Aah.

Yeah, I think TV's dying really, yeah.

Yeah, yeah.

So my son who's thirteen and a half is, he's right into YouTube and he posts absolutely boring stuff of him playing computer games cos I won't let him have any pictures of him in it, um, and, and there's likes, like, like, liking all these different YouTubers and, yeah, no they're massive on it and Neve who's eleven had to do a speech recently and she chose YouTube. And she'd, we'd researched all the statistics and it's amazing like you know, the Pope's got his own YouTube – what is it called, it's not an account? Channel. He's got his own channel. Everybody got channel. Yeah.

Oh, Amazing.

Don't know what he puts on his though.

So they watch shows on YouTube or?

I dunno what he does half the time. He's on his phone, I think, yeah, I think and cos there's just so much, like how to play game, like cheats on playing games and –

Yeah.

We had, um, bat – d-, I dunno, if you haven't got kids but they had like bands, um, loom bands they were called, out of, made outta little rubber bands.

Amazing.

Did you have those? Yeah, they got – anyway how you can make them it's, all of that's on YouTube.

Yeah.

So I spent entire Mother's Day one year learning how to do this starburst band.

Yeah, yeah, yeah.

You can just, just stop it and, you know, and watch it.

Yeah, yeah.

Anyway. They're in, way more into it than I am. Sometimes I read Life, Bill Ralston.

Oh, right.

Phone lists and fancy – people hate him, there's, they always complain about him. Cos he's basically a baby boomer and he drinks too much and he, he's kind of sexist and, but I think he's quite funny. Sometimes not so much. Phone lists and fancy free. For relief from the flag and refugee crisis just get your phone flinched.

What does that mean?

Stolen.

Oh.

Oh, or does it mean s-, lost? Flinched – usually stolen. A week or so ago I lost my smartphone. In the intense detective work that followed I established the last small transaction was on my phone at eleven fifty seven pm as I arrived home in a taxi after dinner with friends.

Mm.

It has been in the same pocket as my wallet and the logical conclusion is that it fell out when the fare was paid. Blah, blah, blah. Whoever found it had sinister intent. He or she immediately turned it off despite it having plenty of battery life so as to avoid my plain-, plaintive wails the next morning, which was a Friday. I tried the Find my iPhone app, blah, blah, blah, that didn't work. I put a message up on Facebook and Twitter and I apologised to anyone trying to call me. I have gone four days without a mobile and much to my surprise it was enormously relaxing. No calls, no messages, no frantic checking websites, Facebook or Twitter. Nothing but peace of mind, aside from the irritation of losing the damned thing, of which, of a kind that I haven't had for more than a decade. For weeks I'd been checking my Facebook and Twitter feeds by phone and they have been clogged with people arguing the flag issue. Many had begun by saying there was no interest in the new flag and denying the need for a change at all. Then they berated the selection panel choice and finally they decided they liked the illegible Red Peak design.

I like that design.

Yeah, I quite like it too. All of which goes to show that despite denying the need for a flag debate they immediately fell into line with John Key who I suspect is their mortal enemy and promptly had a debate about the flag. For the record I find the current flag to be a boring non-entity of an ensign but I've yet to see any design that cranks my handle.

And that's it, I think. Oh, what's the joke? Well if she doesn't love you for your money son maybe she's not the girl for you.

[LAUGHTER]

Dad's advice.

Fantastic.

Thank you so much.

That's okay.

Thank you so much Fiona that's a great reading.

Yeah, thank you.