

## Elk (2022)

Kale,

I just saw a picture of an elk that somehow got his head inside a tire, and it now hangs around his neck.

You know his friends made fun of this elk with this tire around his neck. Called him Tire Head. Michelin Man. Jack. Told him he was the spare Elk. And I can't imagine it is too easy to get a date when you have a tire stuck around your neck.

And then one day he wakes up from the tranquilizer and realizes the tire and his antlers have disappeared! What in the heck happened to me? He'd be asking his buddies if they saw anything. "Well, we did see these two guys carrying a tire and some antlers, but we didn't think much about it."

"You didn't think much about it?? You know I've had a tire around my neck for two years!! And I had antlers. But you didn't think much about it?? Didn't think much about it!!!"

"No not really."

"Unbelievable."

And now his friends need to come up with some new names for him. Cue ball. Rip Elk Winkle.

Life has not been an easy road for this boy. Hopefully a better 2022 for him.

## Buried (2013)

John,

I just read the attached story, where a Sri-Lankan man died after attempting to set a record time for being buried alive.

I guess the adage, "if at first you don't succeed, try, try again," doesn't apply here.



Kale,

It says they were unable to establish a cause of death right away. While I haven't been on the scene, have no medical training, and pretty much know nothing about this, I have a theory on the cause of death: He was BURIED ALIVE!

Which I don't think does much for a person.

Who should I send my medical examiner invoice to?

## Alumni (2005)

Kale,

Sorry to hear that you didn't get invited to the alumni basketball game.

They sent me 12 tickets. And specifically requested that I not mention it to you. But I don't keep secrets very well.

I guess they like some alum better than others.

That's all I can figure.



John,

I'd be hurt, except that they asked me to play.



Kale,

Well, they asked me to coach, and I doubt I'll put you in.

## Time (2022)

Kale,

Jennie and I went to Wendy's for lunch today. On the way back we drove past where I used to play football.

I asked Jennie if she would like to go back in time and sit in the stands and watch my sixth-grade team play football.

She said no.

I couldn't believe it. What do you mean, no???

Wouldn't that be cool to do? But she really had no interest. I told her I would travel back to high school and sit in the stands to watch her swim team - I think that would be cool.

But she still didn't really want to watch my sixth-grade football team. I don't know. I don't understand.

Would you travel back and watch my football team, since my wife apparently won't? Would be great to see you there, of course I won't know who you are, and a fully grown man trying to pal around with a sixth grader would be kind of creepy. But who knows - could be fun.



John,

I would take you up on that offer. So long as you reciprocated and came to watch some of the Obee Grade School 7th grade basketball games.

I was kind of a big deal there, at least for one year. I once scored 12 points in a game, against Inman's 7th grade team (as

I remember it, nearly 50 years later). The next year they moved the 7th and 8th graders to Union Valley, a larger middle school. I went from being a decent sized fish in a small pond, to being a small fish in a pretty good-sized pond.

Went from starting to occasionally making the team that got to travel to other schools. My growth spurt kicked in at about age 29. And some aspects of it are still going strong...



Kale,

I would absolutely come and watch your 7th grade games. Especially to see how all the girls would flock around you after the game.

I'd bring a sign that says, "Kale – my future college roommate."

Considering I am 60, that would be a bit confusing for everyone, and I can see me eventually being asked to leave the gym and not linger in the parking lot.

I assume you played in a gym. I know it was a small school, so maybe it was a goal in the parking lot - not sure.



John,

You have to remember I grew up in Reno County, which is where Johnson County recruits servants and day laborers, so our sports facilities probably didn't meet Shawnee Mission School District standards.

Below is how good ol' Obee Grade School looks now. That taller section on the left would be the gym – note the gravel

parking lot – so, no basketball there. Oh, and the pole in front of the building – that’s where the telephone was.



Kale,

You mean like the office phone was out by the pole? That would be really inconvenient for the office secretary - but I bet running out there regularly kept her in really good shape. She no sooner gets back inside and the dang phone starts ringing again.

Especially tough in the winter. Although that would keep her from gabbing on the phone and wasting time.

Their outgoing message probably said something like, "We can't come to the phone right now, seeing as how it is raining and all."

## Epilogue

What you've just read is only a tiny sampling of the nonsense Kale and I have produced over the past 23 years. There are hundreds more pages of this "literary genius," which is either inspiring or deeply concerning, depending on how you look at it.

The real key to these emails (at least for us) is that we tell each other something odd, mildly alarming, or that is completely stupid, and then we simply follow the conversation wherever it wanders. It's like jazz, but with fewer instruments and more stupidity.

And yes, a shocking amount of this took place during the workday. That probably explains why neither of us is currently running a Fortune 100 company. Well, that and the fact that no major corporation is clamoring for leaders who spend half their time debating the religious affiliation of a buried dog.

Anyway...

A question I am constantly asked (almost exclusively by Kale) is:

"When will the sequel be released?"

A fair question.

The honest answer? The sequel will come out as soon as the public demands more of our insightful, thought-provoking, borderline-genius correspondence. So... it might be a while.

Until then, thanks for reading, laughing, cringing, and wondering how two grown men made it this far in life.

And if this book inspires you to reach out to your own lifelong friend, then Kale and I have officially done something worthwhile, besides wasting company time.