

AMBULANCE

David C F Wright, PhD

When my daughter was fifteen, she worked on Saturday nights in a local fish and chip shop just out of town. It was only ten minutes walk away but as she finished at eleven o'clock at night I always went down to meet her and accompany her home.

There was one Saturday night I will always remember.

On the way to collect my daughter, an ambulance with its lights flashing and siren screaming passed by me, bounced off another car which was slowing down to let it pass, and went through a red light almost on two wheels and on its side. Other vehicles slammed on their brakes and I saw two drivers thrown forward and probably suffered later from whiplash. I have never seen such mad and dangerous driving.

A few moments later, I saw the ambulance park on the forecourt of the fish and chip shop. It nearly took the large front window with it.

One man from the ambulance rushed into the shop.

I feared the worse. I concluded that there must have been an accident and my daughter was involved and perhaps seriously hurt. There is no more terrifying feeling for a father who loves his daughter.

I began to run. My heart was pounding. I felt the fire in my face. My armpits were sweating.

As I got to the shop I was exhausted and weak. I thought I would have a heart attack.

Then I saw the paramedic come out of the shop with two bundles of fish and chips. The white paper was stained with dripping vinegar. He got into the ambulance and they pulled away gently.

I was furious. The flashing lights and siren was to enable them to buy fish and chips on the stroke of closing time.

An ambulance crew is in the business of saving lives not killing people which their dangerous driving could have caused.

The owner of the shop came out and disgust was written all over her face.

“It is a pity that they do not know who their parents are!” she said.

Clever! I understood and appreciated what she said.

Then I heard the voice I have known and loved all my life.

“Hello, Dad!”

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