28.09.26

Dear E, P and T (apologies, I never did learn to spell your names)

How are you all? Sorry, but I find it difficult to start any correspondence without a bit of phatic communication these days, I suppose it gives me more thinking time - and you'll know what I mean there!

Anyway, as you can see, I am handwriting this letter. I would want you to think that this is because it's an unimportant piece of communication, far from it, it's just that when you've known each other for as long as we have, it feels like the personal touch is needed. So here we are.

I recently read that typing a letter is faster, cleaner and easier to change than handwriting it and so, bearing this in mind, I definitely need to use a pen rather than a keyboard. After all, there's really been nothing fast or clean about our relationship has there? And then there's the 'easier to change' Rubbish, of course, but it does get to the nub of this letter and allows me to address the subject on which I am writing, which is not easy. I'm addressing this subject to all of you, of course, so I will use your collective term .... Oh, for goodness sake, I've just read that back to myself and really there's nothing to be gained by my rambling, So:

P.T.O.

Hormones, (E, P and T) the doctor wishes you relieved, that is, I am replacing you. You are to be replaced.

There, you have it.

Part of me is sorry, of course, but I am sure that this does not come as a massive shock to you. Perhaps it is even a relief

I am grateful for your work over the years which includes growth, monthly meetings, internal protection stuff, pregnancies (hyperemesis gravidarum was a bit O.T.T. as I mentioned once or twice or, more likely, one hundred times, but no need to dwell on that now). Lately, however, you have been underperforming in some areas, as you probably already realise. It seems that now I have 'old' to deal with and the doctor, yes the same one who blamed you for many, many things throughout the years, has suggested ~~[illegible]~~, replacing you - let's not beat around the bush.

At this juncture, I would like to stop and acknowledge your later work in attempting to make me feel young again. It didn't go unnoticed, including by my workmates, children facebook friends and some random chap in King Street. That said, there's no blame attached. You were trying something new and we call that 'thinking outside of the box! You tried your best. Particularly noteworthy were:

Acne, to remind me of my teenage years - nice.
Disturbed nights, so that I could recall being a new mum again.
Chubby echoes of my toddler years as the weight piled on, compounded by the lack of vocabulary due to brain fog - very comprehensive!

And last, but by no means least (though I could well have forgotten things) the reddening and fiery hot of my face and body without having to experience anything that actually embarrassed me: A touch of genius on your part, ~~a~~ almost.

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I would like to point out though that hiding in the girls' loos with Sharon Hardcastle until both the maths' ball and the pink hue of my cheeks had gone is no longer available to me, so it did prove embarrassing in itself - maybe an own goal and something to work on in the future, if you get the chance?

Goodness! I see that I have prattled on - and I have work to do (for another twelve years, in fact). I hope that you can understand this 'replacement' decision once you've had time to process it. If you have any questions, I doubt that I can answer them, but it might help to know that you're not the first. My knee was replaced last year, so it seems that this really is just the natural way of things.

I am not sure how to end a letter containing such news. Perhaps 'with thanks and appreciation and looking forward for all of us'?

Actually, the last time I handwrote anything to anyone was a postcard from Tenerife to my knee consultant, thanking her for such a neat scar. I ended that one with the classic 'wish you were here!' Actually...

WISH YOU WERE HERE

T x