

DIPLOMAT

Anyone who knows me will tell you I'm a peace loving guy.

I've always been the diplomatic sort. Whenever there's been a confrontation of any kind I've turned my back and walked away.

It's harder when you have kids. You want to take sides but I've always tried to be fair. This has led to the children thinking that their mother, Sally, is a cow and that I'm a saint. But there you are. Can't be helped. Best not to get involved.

It was different for me growing up. We all lived in fear of my dad once he got going. I would run to my room and hide under the bed until the screaming stopped. I couldn't leave home fast enough.

I kept my head down at uni, studied hard and obtained a good degree.

At work I kept my distance from colleagues. The boss liked me because I never took sides so I soon achieved promotion.

Now they're grown up, my children still keep in touch. It's been difficult in the past year with Covid but I'm hoping they'll still visit me whenever they can.

It was this time last year that the wife and I were in the car on the way to her sister's on the Sussex coast. Sally had wanted to go on her own but I insisted on driving.

Like most men, I like to drive in peace. I prefer to concentrate on the road but Sally does go on and on talking. I normally ignore her but this time it was different. She just didn't know when to stop.

All these years, she was saying, you've never supported me. You've always taken the children's side against mine. Why? They adore you and they hate me and it's all your fault.

I found this hurtful and said so. In fact, I told her to shut up. But she didn't. Just kept on and on, going at me. You did this. You did that. She was a saint of course. Never said boo to a goose. At least, that's what she'd have you believe.

We were getting close to her sister's house and I did something that I've never done before. I pulled off the road thinking I would have it out with Sally once and for all. She sensed something was wrong and undid her seatbelt before I'd even stopped driving. Next thing I knew she was out of the car and running away from me. Such a stupid thing to do when she knows I'm so much bigger and stronger than her.

I chased after the silly bitch and caught up with her right by the cliff edge. You're not a real man, she sneered. Well that was it. I saw red. I kicked her as hard as I could and she sailed over the cliff edge like an inflatable ball. I didn't look down. Just got back in the car and drove off.

It was the first time we had ever argued.