

Here is the official line on attire

Kathryn Maris

Gentlemen must wear lounge suits, ladies must wear dresses with a hemline below the knee, no trousers of any description. Hats are customary but not essential. Cash and cards may be used for refreshments.

This extraordinary spectacle is one of the best things Britain has given the world: civilised conduct on land, absolute brutality on the water.

Not a joke

There was a bridge, a therapist and a patient.

The patient, who feared bridges, booked 10 sessions of cognitive behavioural therapy.

The patient stood on one side of the bridge, while the therapist sat in his office at the hospital on the other side of the bridge. That's the joke but there's more:

after the agoraphobic managed to cross the bridge by listing the capital cities of countries beginning with the letter 'A', she got stuck in a faulty lift which the hospital, strapped for cash, did not have the means to repair.

The P Man

His superpower was launching the careers of mainly female potters, first by detecting talent in pensioners he instructed in adult education programmes; later by inviting younger potters to classes at his home, a known arena of drinking and swiving. Apropos of swiving, he appreciated what he termed 'big women': one was a recovering alcoholic palace librarian whose youth, he said, 'flattered him'; another ran off and married a different man only days after her last physical encounter with the P Man, leaving the latter to view himself, simultaneously, as exploited and alone.

It's not her story to tell

The famous novelist and not-so-famous poet, long time colleagues in the same English department, never had a real conversation until they both landed a residential course in Rome, during which the famous novelist, who had just finalised a bitter divorce, felt fragile enough to talk about her life, and the poet, who was feeling chatty himself, told his autobiography over grappa and ice. The next year the famous novelist published a book in which the main character was a not-so-famous poet who had the same life experiences as the not-so-famous poet in Rome. Outraged, the not-so-famous poet texted an even-less-famous poet who had never been to Rome but who had once complimented the famous novelist on her leather jacket at the departmental Christmas party. 'Can you believe she wrote *my* story?' he typed. 'It's not her story to tell.' The even-less-famous poet replied, 'Isn't that awful!'

This essay has been extracted from Pamphlet Issue six, which also features Zinzi Clemmons, Andrew Munks and Sophie Michaels.