

**THE DAILY MAIL – BIRD FLU by PHILLIP BARRON**

**VT text THE DAILY MAIL.**

**An EDITOR sits behind his desk, scrutinising a submission. A REPORTER stands anxiously in front.**

REPORTER: Well, chief? What do you think?

EDITOR: It's not really a Daily Mail story is it? I mean bird flu, a few birdies in Russia sneeze a bit. So what? Where's the human interest angle? Where's the bigotry? Where's the hatred?

REPORTER: It's just the facts chief.

EDITOR: You're new here love aren't you?  
**(beat)**  
Daily Mail readers don't want facts; they want to be outraged; they want to cower in their homes in fear. Do English birds have this?

REPORTER: No chief.

EDITOR: Could they catch it?

REPORTER: I suppose so, if the Russian birds migrated to England.

EDITOR: Brilliant.

**The editor makes a note on the story.**

EDITOR: Communist bird bastards poised to spread Bird Flu throughout Britain. Can it spread to humans?

REPORTER: No chief.

EDITOR: Not even blacks or gays?

REPORTER: They're still people Chief.

EDITOR: You're going to have to buck your ideas up young lady if you want to keep your job. What if it mutated?

REPORTER: Well, if it became a completely different virus, then, yes. I suppose it could.

EDITOR: Fantastic. You've got a degree haven't you?

REPORTER: Yes chief, in journalism.

EDITOR: Great, so you're an expert?

REPORTER: In journalism, I guess.

EDITOR: Do you think bird flu could be here by the end of the year?

REPORTER: Maybe.

EDITOR: Yes! Experts warn it MAY spread to England by the end of the year. How many people might catch it?

REPORTER: How many people might catch the non-existent virus which isn't here yet? I don't know, millions?

EDITOR: Virus predicted to kill up to two million people. I love this story, I love it.  
**(beat)**  
Now, how is it Tony Blair's fault?

**END OF SKETCH**