

The birth of the techno-mom



Mom emailed today and casually threw into the regular mix of gardening updates and wallpapering-of-the-spare-room announcements, the fact that dad has bought her an iPhone.

I wasn't quite sure how to take this. An iPhone, you see, to me at least, is a shining trophy of the modern-day techno-freak. It's the symbol of having reached the peak of your geekiness and actually feeling proud. It's the gadget a thousand ad execs with thick-rimmed glasses and music gurus with flared chord trousers place lovingly on their desks in those little cosy sock-things; and, probably kiss before they go to sleep at night. It's a snowy white emblem of techno-perfection owned, and deserved by only a special few, who have climbed the complicated ghetto-blasters carrying, walkman-wielding ladder of musical advancements, and been awarded their final prize.

It is not an object regularly handled by a crime-thriller reading, lasagne-baking, lawn-weeding lady from Lincolnshire, like my mom; who took roughly 15 years to figure out how to reply to a text message on the last phone she was entrusted with.

Her new possession unnerves me not least because I myself am still carting round an ancient Nokia, which is only one model up from having a luminescent green screen. You might remember those from "the time before color." It's so battered that the model number's worn off, and so old and gray that it puts some of my worst pair of knickers to shame.

It has never failed me though, of course. Like a faithful puppy, the Nokia 2004 AD has accompanied me on every walk, woken me up in the mornings, offered hours of amusement in times of total solitude...but there's no denying, he's damn ugly. Poor Nokia-of-old. Sure, he answers my calls and delivers my texts; but, should he carry a CV,

the semi-functional little sausage would be laps behind the competition.

When in Dubai's multitude of bars and buzzing nightspots, I would admire flashy ring tones from afar and stare longingly at shiny black models resting provocatively on tabletops; wishing I too could run my fingers along their sexy bodies. And yes...I'm still talking about phones (tut). Of course, I knew this world was out there and voyeuristically I would teeter on the edge of conversion. But my ancient Nokia would always utter its synthetic wail; reminding me it was doing the job quite adequately, thank you very much. And I'd clasp it fondly, loyally turning away from temptation.

But now of course, my 60-year-old mother has the option of sending me sound files of the chaffinch fleet causing a riot in the garden; or multi-mega pixelled, hour-by-hour images of the lavender paint drying on the walls of the downstairs toilet. She could Bluetooth tracks from Randy Newman in exchange for The Killers, were I to invest in the technology to match her's. I'm suddenly thinking it might be rather nice not to watch from outside he circle anymore. I'm suddenly realizing how much I'm missing out on.

Of course, it's lovely that our parents start rewarding themselves with all these little luxuries, once their children finally pack up and fly the nest. I don't hold anything against mom for wanting a funky, technological trinket to talk to her mates about – I mean, I've admired the Kraftmatic adjustable bed for years now, and personally can't wait for my hips to fail so I can finally find a reason to buy one. But when it comes to our parents buying better gadgets than us, when they neither need nor know how to use them; it kind of throws the whole relationship off-balance, somehow.

Is it too much these days to just go on a cruise or something? ^b

1 LEARN PHOTOGRAPHY ON A BUDGET... Gulf Photos arrives at Knowledge Village on April 29, for a week of lectures, tips and techniques from the world's best photographers. There's even a session on how to take better facebook profile pics – now there's something we all could do with exploring! Even better, they've now announced a 'Photo Friday Day Ticket' to enable more aspiring photographers, particularly those on a budget, to have the opportunity to attend.

For more information:

Ticket Price: AED190 for Photo Friday
www.gulfphotoplus.com

2 SHAKESPEARE 4 KIDS (AND SIMPLETONS)... At four and a half hours, an authentic, word-by-word production of Hamlet is enough to cure even the greatest of insomniacs. But thankfully, there's one theatre company who understands us busy city-dwellers don't have enough time for things like that. We like our culture often and in manageable doses, which is why Julian Chenery has approached Shakespeare and made it digestible for children (and their parents). With music and original songs in a unique, musical theatre genre, it will also be (so they say) pretty easy to follow. Something different for a date, at least!

Shakespeare 4 Kidz Hamlet

Timings: April 21- 24, 9am and 12pm daily
Venue: DUCTAC, Mall of the Emirates

3 RAZORLIGHT AT THE LODGE... It's rare we get a decent dose of Indie music in these parts, but anyone hailing from the skinny-jeaned masses in the UK will most definitely have heard of Razorlight. The group has signed up to be headline DJs in the Indie room at Home, The Lodge on April 25. No guitars though, unfortunately. They're just spinning the tunes. Still, something's better than nothing. Joining the sticky-floor jumping will be local bands and DJs, fire-eaters, men on stilts (good luck getting through those doors!) and living statues. Whatever they might be. There are hot dogs too – be generous with the ketchup. We really need more sticky spills on those floors.