

AM I MY MOTHER?

~ Colin Iles

Prelude ... Curtain-Raiser

My sister is now a grandmother. During school holidays she supervises her grandchildren while their parents can continue to earn a living. That obligation required the purchase of a seven seater people mover. The vehicle has all the mod cons: two seats in the rear cargo compartment, tinted windows and child safety seats aplenty.

Age has damaged my Adonis body, especially my good looks. I am now an old man with a *dad bod*. My love of beer has provided me with a very corpulent protruding middle and I am sporting a *Friar Tuck* horseshoe haircut, albeit silver hair turning to white. The Co-Vid 19 home detention saw me neglect my usual visits to the barber for a chat. Hence, I no longer look like Friar Tuck - I have taken on a Moses-like appearance.

One Friday morning, my sister and brother called around to drive me to the U3A lectures at Harris Park. While the younger generation (my sister's two grandchildren) remained under supervision in the people mover with my sister, my brother, Mervyn, jumped out of the car to get me. As the pair of us wandered over to the car, I could see two excited kids bouncing in the back seat. As I climbed into the front seat, my sister, in a half-snigger said, "Say hello to the children."

I realised - too late - that this was a deliberate ploy to let the children hear my baritone voice, "Hello. How are you kids today?" The kids burst into laughter.

I was, naturally, quite lost as to why the greeting was so funny. We stopped enroute to buy some coffee, my brother hopping out to pick up three coffees plus some juice for the kids. It was at this point that my sister confided to me as to why my greeting caused such mirth. The children, as they watched me walking with my brother to the car, thought I was someone else. They simply asked if I was 'Uncle Mervyn's mother'!

"No," she told them, "He is Uncle Mervyn's brother... and he is my brother too."

At that point, I burst into laughter myself, "It's a wonder they didn't ask if I was pregnant, too." How could they mistake me for my brother's mother - our mother! I have a snow white goatee beard for one thing! I would have thought Santa Claus perhaps?