

FRIDAY, JANUARY 26, 2007

➤ The Touch of Death



Fiona Phillips is the embodiment of car-crash daytime television. Crass, ill-informed and fundamentally moronic, no-one escapes from an encounter with the haggard sunbed disaster untainted. Not even Billy Bragg. I had switched over to GMTV just as Fiona was in the middle of a live two-way interview with Billy from Hive Beach, one of the beaches affected by the oil slick from the damaged SS Napoli.

Billy was wearing a semi-Barbour jacket and has clearly been on the pies, so it took me quite a while to be certain that this man who was appealing for local residents to come and help with the clean-up of the beach at the weekend was the same angry political firebrand of past.

So the interview comes to an end and it goes something like this:

FP: Well, thanks Billy for coming on the show and good luck with the clean-up. In fact I've been humming one of your songs all morning. Shipbuilding.

BB: (looks embarrassed.)

FP (to co-host Andrew Castle): such a good song

BB: it was Elvis Costello

FP: (aghast) oh gosh. Sorry my researcher told me it was one of your songs.

BB: (embarrassed) I wish it was. It's a great song.

FP: Oh well thanks Billy anyway.

FP: (to AC) so what are Billy's most famous tunes ?

AC: (looks flustered)

FP: Never mind. Anyway. This morning you could be winning £20,000.....

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