

Alfie Evans: From the Cradle to the Grave

Offspring was not reared at the will of the father, but was taken and carried by him to a place called Lesche, where the elders of the tribes officially examined the infant, and if it was well-built and sturdy, they ordered the father to rear it...but if it was ill-born and deformed, they sent it to the so-called Apothetae, a chasm-like place at the foot of Mount Taygetus, in the conviction that the life of that which nature had not well equipped at the very beginning for health and strength, was of no advantage either to itself or the state.

–Plutarch ([Lycurgus: 16](#))

Any parent can imagine another parent's pain. And that imagining, though merely a sliver of the real suffering, is excruciating. I can think of no worse situation than having to choose whether or not to continue treating my child.

Actually, that's not true. There is a worse situation.

When the state takes that choice away from me and decides, contrary to my own judgment, that it's time for my child to die. When the state won't allow me to do everything I can to keep my child alive. When the modern state, the benevolent state, the state ostensibly built on the foundations of altruism and good intentions has decided, in all its wisdom, to kill my child.

That is exactly what happened this week when the British government decided that 2-year-old [Alfie Evans](#) had to die. That any attempt to save him would be forbidden.

Like the cruel villain who would restrain parents—forcibly keeping their eyes open while their child dies—the British

justice system has decided to impose death onto Alfie Evans and ordered that no attempt be made to keep him alive. Despite not having been able to *actually diagnose his illness*, they pulled out his breathing tubes. But Alfie didn't die. So death by starvation it will have to be.

Attempts to save Alfie's life are now criminal acts.

Justice indeed.

That same "justice" is now, through the threat of violence, staying the love of Alfie's young parents, Tom 21, and Katie 20 and yet forcing them to watch their son starve to death. It is reminding them (and anyone else who may get ideas), at every turn, of their impotence in the face of its power. The Italian government and the Vatican have offered to provide medical care, but that too has been denied—on the grounds that the trip . . . *might kill him*. People are trying to smuggle life-saving equipment to the boy. They, too, are being [forcibly removed from the hospital](#). It was reported that Alfie's father tried to administer mouth to mouth to his dying boy. Frankly, I'm surprised that he wasn't arrested on charges of practicing medicine without a license. Tom Evans has said "[This is not justice. This is a cruel bureaucracy.](#)" He was right.

We've moved well beyond slippery slopes at this point. We've reached the [Chthonic](#) valley that lies at their inevitable destination, the foot of our own [Taygetus](#)—at the intersection of good intentions and ultimate power. This is where bureaucracy has replaced the moral compass; where we're told by our self-described betters that [we are morally deficient if we try to keep our children alive](#); that there is innocent human life not only unworthy of saving, but that warrants extermination. We're starting to see, quite vividly, the moral and civic destination of the road we have been on since the turn of the 20th century when, drunk with the hubris of progress and the perfectibility of society, we began to

willingly cede our freedoms and identities to the ever-broadening notion of the benevolent and matronly state. To let her care for us from cradle to grave. Mother, after all, knows best. In this case, she thinks its time that you let your child die—the cradle has become the grave.

How truly magnificent must it be to get your broken arm set for free when the only price you have to pay is the possibility of the state determining that your child die.

And what of those who would complain, who would criticize this perversion of good intentions into this ghastly spectacle? They will, of course, be [investigated by the police](#). Chief Inspector Chris Gibson made clear:

Merseyside Police has been made aware of a number of social media posts which have been made with reference to Alder Hey Hospital and the ongoing situation involving Alfie Evans. I would like to make people aware that these posts are being monitored and remind social media users that any offences including malicious communications and threatening behaviour will be investigated and where necessary will be acted upon.

Of course, “malicious” is *just* broad enough to mean anything the prosecutorial authorities so determine.

What’s worse, is that large swaths of people watch this and determine that the parents, not the state, are the villains. Alfie’s young parents are dismissed as low class ([“chavs”](#) being the most common term bandied about by their social media detractors), with some of the more incendiary commentators suggesting that sterilization is best for the likes of them, anyway. I wonder how the conversation would turn if the baby were not born to those in the lower socio-economic strata that Tom and Katie occupy.

Just this week Kate Middleton and [Prince William](#) had a baby. It does make one wonder if, should this advantaged child be

so unfortunate as to become as sick as young Alfie, whether he too would be forced to die at the time of the state's choosing? Would the new Royal Baby be allowed to travel to Italy for medical care? Would this child of privilege be denied access to life-saving care all because the state thought it knew better? Somehow, I think the royals would find a way around that. They always do.

It's a good thing then, that we in America—or at least those of us called “deplorable”—continue to cling to our guns and religion. We cling to them because they exist as constant reminders of who we are, the ideals we value, and the things we would stand against. Our guns offering both, symbolic reminders of, and real protections against, this kind of state encroachment on our rights. And our religion that—even to the non-religious among us—affirms the metaphysical basis for our natural rights and inherent dignity, guarding us against the kind of moral and spiritual rot that would allow seemingly good and intelligent people ever to consider that starving a child is ethically superior to allowing his loving parents to do everything in their power to extend his life.

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