

## The Tremendous Legislator Visits The Newly-Expanded Holding Camps

it's striking how much He loves this part of the job. Hands behind His back, snug in His long coat, surveying the gaunt faces on the other side of the wire, like a billionaire looking at a painting he's already decided not to buy.

And then there's this little kid, all smudge and pigtails and, no lie, an honest-to-God battered old teddy bear dangling from her little hand, and she's somehow on this side of the fence. (Later, at leisure, we wonder why

nobody thought to ask how she got through, or to whisk her away muttering *where are your parents, sweetie?* I mean we all knew fucking well where her parents were.) And when He looks down at her, of course those of us who know Him best

can see from the twitching at His temples that the notion has arrived in His mind to take a run up and punt her right across the courtyard. Certain people would certainly have cheered it. In the end, He sighs, and sidles from her

like a cat abandoning a maths problem. Not half an hour later, He's back in His quarters watching television and phoning down for chicken nuggets. Admit it, though: this is your very favourite story: there's a little cute one and a big surly one,

and Surly's beetroot malignance dims Cutie's unstoppable starshine not one jot, and by the end of the story they're sharing ice cream cones at the zoo together. Don't say that's not your favourite story when every time somebody retells it

they make another million dollars. So when she stretched out her little arms to Him, don't say you didn't want so badly for Him to see her, really see her, and for her to transform Him; for Him to govern in His twilight years like the grandfather

who claims never to have wanted the puppy he now feeds at night from a pipette. Don't say it. If you say you didn't want that, you weren't there.