

Spot the commas .. and some other stuff.

(Solution on following page)

There is an old German fable about porcupines who need to huddle together for warmth but are in danger of hurting each other with their spines. When they find the optimum distance to share each others warmth without putting each others eyes out their state of contrived cooperation is called good manners. Well those old German fabulists certainly knew a thing or two. When you acknowledge other people politely the signal goes out Im here. You're there. I'm staying here. You're staying there. Aren't we both glad we sorted that out? When people don't acknowledge each other politely the lesson from the porcupine fable is unmistakable. Freeze or get stabbed mate. It's your choice.

Missing – please supply:

7 commas

2 apostrophes of possession

7 apostrophes of omission

2 pairs of speech marks

The Solution

There is an old German fable about porcupines who need to huddle together for warmth, but are in danger of hurting each other with their spines. When they find the optimum distance to share each other's warmth without putting each other's eyes out, their state of contrived cooperation is called good manners. Well, those old German fabulists certainly knew a thing or two. When you acknowledge other people politely, the signal goes out, "I'm here. You're there. I'm staying here. You're staying there. Aren't we both glad we sorted that out?" When people don't acknowledge each other politely, the lesson from the porcupine fable is unmistakable. "Freeze or get stabbed, mate. It's your choice."

Borrowed from

Talk to the Hand: The Utter Bloody Rudeness of the World Today, or Six Good Reasons to Stay Home and Bolt the Door by Lynne Truss, Profile Books, 2005.