

Boxing Clever

Jeeves wakes Bertie Wooster.

“What’s the time?”

“It’s ten, sir”

“What’s the bally rush Jeeves? Is the building on fire?”

“No sir, it’s time for the hair of the dog I perceive you may need after your night out.”

“Thank you Jeeves, I’m afraid I’m in a bit of a pickle.”

“I’m sorry to hear that sir. May one enquire what transpired last evening?”

“Tuppy Glossop insisted I accompany him to the opera to see, what was it...The Marriage of Carmen?”

“May I respectfully suggest sir, the Marriage of Figaro by Mozart.”

“Jeeves, please don’t interrupt my flow with trivial corrections.”

“My apologies sir, please continue.”

“Well Jeeves the caterwauling banshees on stage put me in such a state I’m afraid I sucked down too many martinis in the interval. Intoxicated does not do justice to my parlous state Jeeves. I was tight as an owl.”

“Indeed sir, I surmised as much when you tried to kiss me goodnight.”

“I’m afraid I seem to have been in a kissing mood Jeeves. I vaguely remember going to an après-theatre party and on the terrace around midnight found myself alone with Madeline Basset. She was blathering on in a poetic vein. She looked at the stars and said they were God’s sprinkled sugar. Well Jeeves, in order to forestall any further drivel I’m afraid I gave her a smacker on the lips.”

“Was that wise sir as you are no longer engaged to Miss Basset?”

“That’s just it Jeeves. As usual you’ve hit the bally nail on the head. She’s now engaged to that gorilla Roderick Spode, you know, the amateur dictator, leader of the Black Shorts. How was I to know that they were betrothed? Things are foggy after that. I remember old Tuppy lifting me out of a flowerbed and giving me the dreadful news that Spode had demanded satisfaction and would see me in the boxing ring at his dashed club. The contest is this evening at seven. If

I don't turn up he will promulgate to all and sundry that Bertram Wilberforce Wooster is a cowardly custard."

"Well sir that is a disturbing prospect as Sir Roderick is a very large man."

"I know Jeeves, he has muscles on his muscles and will biff me into oblivion."

"May I suggest sir that you leave it to me to devise a stratagem to extricate you from this perilous predicament?"

By six-thirty Bertie was convinced that his imperious valet had failed him. But just as he was about to leave, Jeeves handed him a card from Roderick Spode which read:

"Wooster, I withdraw my challenge and apologise for my intemperate language."

"Are you behind this Jeeves?"

"I'm afraid so sir. I told Sir Roderick's valet you have a serious heart condition and any physical confrontation might cause you to shuck of this mortal coil. I simply suggested that a manslaughter charge would not enhance Sir Roderick's reputation."

"By Jove Jeeves, you do take the giddy biscuit. What a spiffing wheeze."

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