

My chance conversation with...

We are in the library of a grand country house. I am sitting in a wing-back chair perusing the latest Illustrated London News. The door bursts open and an elegantly dressed and groomed young man sprints in.....

“Oh I say old bean, didn’t mean to charge in like a frenzied Spanish bull. I’m just trying to escape from the ghastly stream of claptrap flowing from the porcine mouth of that rotter Roderick Spode.”

“The leader of the Black Shorts?”

“That’s the cove...the ape-like creature with the thing like a squashed insect smeared on his upper lip. Whatever you do don’t shake hands with him he’s got a grip like the bite of a horse.... Oh dash it all, where are my manners, let me introduce myself, I’m Bertram Wilberforce Wooster, but everyone calls me Bertie.”

“How do you do Bertie, I’m a novice time traveller from a century hence. I’m here to observe the social mores of the upper class.”

“Are you by Jove, what a great wheeze. Anything interesting so far?”

“Well I’ve been fascinated to learn about the goings on in your Mayfair club. I was speaking earlier to your chum Tuppy Glossop and he was most informative.”

“Ah dear old Tuppy, splendid fellow, an all-round good egg. I was sucking down a martini with him earlier.”

“Yes he was very amusing about the description of all members of the Drones as ‘eggs’, ‘beans’ or ‘crumpets’.”

“Did he elucidate?”

“Not really.”

“Well it’s dashed simple really we attach the appropriate label to fellows who have the habit of addressing each other as ‘old egg’, ‘old bean’ or ‘old crumpet’, don’t you know.”

“That’s a unique classification system... Tuppy said he was also in awe of your valet whose name I think is Jeeves.”

“Ah yes, Jeeves is an absolute corker with a brain the size of a planet...a genius who is the rock on which Wooster GHQ rests. Do you know, several of the blighters I call my friends have tried to tempt Jeeves away from me with all manner of blandishments, offering oodles of do-re-mi. For reasons I don’t fully comprehend he remains in the employ of yours truly.”

“What’s so special about him?”

“Special? He is nonpareil. He soars above mere mortals like a benevolent god. He has the superhuman knack of anticipating everything I need for the smooth running of my bally life. Sometimes he appears as if by magic just before I’ve thought of something which was a bit

startling until I got used to it. When my Aunt Agatha is on the rampage threatening to rend me limb from limb, Jeeves always manages to keep my corpus entirus, so to speak.”

“Come now Bertie, he can’t be perfect...”

“Well old sport he can be a bit obdurate about certain things. When I try to cultivate a moustache things can get a bit frosty. It took me eons to fathom that a slight upward turn of his right eyebrow signified extreme distaste at my additional facial hair....Same thing happens when I choose the wrong hat or tie to complete my sartorial ensemble.”

“I would like to talk about...”

“Hang on old lad, I hear Spode’s odious warble outside...must dash, toodle pip.”

Conversation 500 words