

P.G. WODEHOUSE

THANK YOU, JEEVES!



ЭКСКЛЮЗИВНОЕ ЧТЕНИЕ  
НА АНГЛИЙСКОМ ЯЗЫКЕ

**П.Г. ВУДХАУС**

# ДЖИВС, ВЫ – ГЕНИЙ!



**2000 СЛОВ**

**ГРАММАТИЧЕСКИЙ  
КОММЕНТАРИЙ**

Эксклюзивное чтение на английском языке

Пелам Гренвилл Вудхаус

**Дживс, вы – гений! /  
Thank you, Jeeves!**

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Берти Вустер переезжает в коттедж своего друга Чаффи с целью оттачивания мастерства игры на банджо вдали от городской суеты и чужих ушей. Сам Чаффи, без памяти влюбленный в американку Полин Стокер, в то же время всеми силами пытается обустроить свое семейное будущее. Когда Берти самоотверженно пытается помочь другу, ситуация быстро выходит из-под контроля. Текст произведения снабжен грамматическим комментарием и словарем, в который вошли ВСЕ слова, содержащиеся в тексте. Благодаря этому книга подойдет для любого уровня владения английским языком.

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# **П. Г. Вудхаус / Pelham Grenville Wodehouse**

## **Дживс, вы – гений! / Thank You, Jeeves!**

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# 1

## Jeeves Gives Notice

I was perturbed. I was sitting in my old flat, idly touching the strings of my **banjolele**<sup>1</sup>, an instrument to which I had become greatly addicted.

“Jeeves,” I said, “do you know what?”

“No, sir.”

“Do you know whom I saw last night?”

“No, sir.”

“**J. Washburn Stoker**<sup>2</sup> and his daughter, **Pauline**<sup>3</sup>.”

“Indeed, sir?”

“They must be over here.”

“It would seem so, sir.”

“Awkward, eh?”

“I can conceive that after what occurred in New York it might be distressing for you to encounter Miss Stoker, sir.”

“Jeeves, do you mean that I ought to keep out of her way?”

“Yes, sir.”

“Avoid her?”

“Yes, sir.”

“Moreover, they were accompanied by Sir **Roderick Glossop**<sup>4</sup>.”

“Indeed, sir?”

“Yes. It was at the **Savoy Grill**<sup>5</sup>. And the fourth member of the party was Lord Chuffnell’s aunt, **Myrtle**<sup>6</sup>. What was she doing in that gang?”

“Possibly her ladyship is an acquaintance either of Mr Stoker, Miss Stoker, or Sir Roderick, sir.”

“Yes, that may be so. But it surprised me.”

“Did you enter into conversation with them, sir?”

“Who, me? No, Jeeves. I ran out of the room. If there is one man in the world I hope never to exchange speech with again, it is that Glossop.”

“I forgot to mention, sir, that Sir Roderick **called to see you this morning**<sup>7</sup>.”

“What!”

“Yes, sir.”

“He called to see me?”

“Yes, sir.”

“After what has passed between us?”

“Yes, sir. I informed him that you had not yet risen, and he said that he would return later.”

“He did, did he?” I laughed. “Well, when he does, **set the dog on him**<sup>8</sup>.”

“We have no dog, sir.”

---

<sup>1</sup> **banjolele** – банджо

<sup>2</sup> **J. Washburn Stoker** – Дж. Уошберн Стоукер

<sup>3</sup> **Pauline** – Полина

<sup>4</sup> **Roderick Glossop** – Родерик Глоссоп

<sup>5</sup> **Savoy Grill** – «Савой Гриль» (название ресторана)

<sup>6</sup> **Lord Chuffnell’s aunt, Myrtle** – тётя лорда Чаффнела, Миртл

<sup>7</sup> **called to see you this morning** – приходил сегодня утром к вам с визитом

<sup>8</sup> **set the dog on him** – спустите на него собаку

“Then step down to the flat below and borrow **Mrs Tinkler-Moulke’s Pomeranian**<sup>9</sup>. I never heard of such a thing. Good Lord! Good heavens!”

And when I give you the whole story, I think you will agree with me that my heat was justified.

\* \* \*

About three months before, noting a certain liveliness in my Aunt Agatha, I had decided to go to New York to give her time **to blow over**<sup>10</sup>. And in a week, at the **Sherry-Netherland**<sup>11</sup>, I made the acquaintance of Pauline Stoker. Her beauty maddened me like wine.

In New York, I have always found, everything is very fast. This, I believe, is due to something in the air. Two weeks later I proposed to Pauline. She accepted me. But something went wrong.

Sir Roderick Glossop, a nerve specialist, nothing more nor less than a high-priced doctor, he has been standing on my way for years. And it so happened that he was in New York when the announcement of my engagement appeared in the papers.

What brought him there? He was visiting J. Washburn Stoker’s **second cousin**<sup>12</sup>, George. This George had been a patient of Sir Roderick’s for some years, and it was George’s practice to come to New York every to take a look at him. He arrived on the present occasion just in time to read over the morning coffee and egg the news that **Bertram Wooster**<sup>13</sup> and Pauline Stoker were planning to marry. And, I think, he began to ring up the father of the bride-to-be.

Well, what he told J. Washburn about me I cannot, of course, say: but, I imagine, he informed him that I had once been engaged to his daughter, **Honor**<sup>14</sup>, and that he had broken off the match because he had decided that I was an idiot. He would have told, no doubt, about the incident of the cats and the fish in my bedroom: possibly, also, on the episode of the stolen hat with a description of the unfortunate affair of the punctured hot-water bottle at Lady **Wickham’s**<sup>15</sup>.

A close friend of J. Washburn’s and a man on whose judgment J. W. relied, I am sure that he had little difficulty in persuading the latter that I was not the ideal **son-in-law**<sup>16</sup>. **At any rate**<sup>17</sup>, as I say, within a mere forty-eight hours of the holy moment I was notified that it would be unnecessary for me to order the new trousers and flowers, because my nomination had been cancelled.

And it was this man who dared to come at the Wooster home! I thought that he was going to say that he was sorry for his doing wrong.

I was still playing the banjolele when he arrived.

“Ah, Sir Roderick,” I said. “Good morning.”

His only reply was a grunt, and an indubitably unpleasant grunt. I felt that my diagnosis of the situation had been wrong. He was glaring at me with obvious distaste as if I had been the germ of **dementia praecox**<sup>18</sup>.

My geniality waned. I was just about to say the old to-what-am-I-indebted-for-this-visit, when he began:

“You ought to be certified!”

“I beg your pardon?”

---

<sup>9</sup> **Mrs Tinkler-Moulke’s Pomeranian** – шпиц миссис Тинклер-Мульке

<sup>10</sup> **to blow over** – успокоиться

<sup>11</sup> **Sherry-Netherland** – «Шерри-Незерленд» (название отеля на Манхэттене)

<sup>12</sup> **second cousin** – троюродный брат

<sup>13</sup> **Bertram Wooster** – Бертрам Вустер

<sup>14</sup> **Honor** – Гонория

<sup>15</sup> **Wickham** – Уикем

<sup>16</sup> **son-in-law** – зять

<sup>17</sup> **at any rate** – в любом случае

<sup>18</sup> **dementia praecox** – шизофрения

“You’re a **public menace**<sup>19</sup>. For weeks, it appears, you have been making life a hell for all your neighbours with some hideous musical instrument. I see you have it with you now. How dare you play that thing in a respectable block of flats? Infernal din!”

I remained cool and dignified.

“Did you say ‘infernal din’?”

“I did.”

“Oh? Well, let me tell you that the man that hath no music in himself...” I stepped to the door. “Jeeves,” I called down the passage, “what was it Shakespeare said the man who hadn’t music in himself was fit for?”

“Treasons, stratagems, and spoils, sir.”

“Thank you, Jeeves. Is fit for treasons, stratagems, and spoils,” I said, returning.

He danced a step or two.

“Are you aware that the occupant of the flat below, Mrs Tinkler-Moulke, is one of my patients, a woman in a highly nervous condition. I have had to give her a sedative.”

I raised a hand.

“Don’t tell me the gossip from the **loony-bin**<sup>20</sup>,” I said distantly. “Might I inquire, on my side, if you are aware that Mrs Tinkler-Moulke owns a Pomeranian?”

“Don’t drivell.”

“I am not drivelling. This animal yaps all day and night. So Mrs Tinkler-Moulke has had the nerve to complain of my banjolele, has she? Ha! Let her first throw away her dog.”

“I am not here to talk about dogs. Stop annoying this unfortunate woman.”

I shook the head.

“I am sorry she is a cold audience, but my art must come first.”

“That is your final word, is it?”

“It is.”

“Very good. You will hear more of this.”

“And Mrs Tinkler-Moulke will hear more of this,” I replied, taking the banjolele.

I touched the buzzer.

“Jeeves,” I said, “**show Sir R. Glossop out!**<sup>21</sup>”

\* \* \*

With a good deal of quiet self-satisfaction I proceeded to play “The Wedding of the Painted Doll”, “Singin’ In the Rain”, “Three Little Words”, “Good-Night, Sweetheart”, “My Love Parade”, “Spring Is Here”, “Whose Baby Are You”, and part of “I Want an Automobile With a Horn That Goes Toot-Toot”, in the order named: and it was as I was approaching the end of this last number that the telephone rang.

I went to the telephone and stood listening. And, as I listened, my face grew hard and set.

“Very good, Mr **Manglehoffer**<sup>22</sup>,” I said coldly. “You may inform Mrs Tinkler-Moulke and her associates that I choose the latter alternative.”

I touched the bell.

“Jeeves,” I said, “there has been a spot of trouble.”

“Indeed, sir?”

---

<sup>19</sup> **public menace** – угроза для общества

<sup>20</sup> **loony-bin** – дурдом

<sup>21</sup> **Show Sir R. Glossop out!** – Проводите сэра Р. Глоссоба

<sup>22</sup> **Manglehoffer** – Манглюхoffer



“I have just been talking to the manager of this building on the telephone, and he has delivered an ultimatum. He says I must either stop playing the banjolele or go out.”

“Indeed, sir?”

“Complaints have been lodged by the Honourable Mrs Tinkler-Moulke, of C.6; by **Lieutenant-Colonel J. J. Bustard, DSO**<sup>23</sup>, of B.5; and by **Sir Everard and Lady Blennerhassett**<sup>24</sup>, of B.7. All right. So be it. I don’t care. We shall be rid of these Tinkler-Moulkes, these Bustards, and these Blennerhassetts. I leave them readily.”

“You are proposing to move, sir?”

I raised the eyebrows.

“Surely, Jeeves, you cannot imagine that I ever considered any other course?”

“But I fear you will encounter a similar hostility elsewhere, sir.”

“Not where I am going. I want to retire to the depths of the country. I shall find a cottage, and there resume my studies.”

“A cottage, sir?”

“A cottage, Jeeves. If possible, **honeysuckle-covered**<sup>25</sup>.”

There was a brief pause, and then Jeeves gave a sort of cough and there proceeded from his lips these incredible words:

“In that case, I fear I must **give my notice**<sup>26</sup>.”

There was a tense silence. I stared at the man.

“Jeeves,” I was stunned, “did I hear you correctly?”

“Yes, sir. If it is your intention to play that instrument within a country cottage...”

“You say ‘that instrument’, Jeeves. And you say it in an unpleasant voice. Am I to understand that you dislike this banjolele?”

“Yes, sir.”

“Let me tell you one thing. Are you aware that a certain Bulgarian, **Elia Gospodinoff**<sup>27</sup>, once played the bagpipes for twenty-four hours without a stop?”

“Indeed, sir?”

“Well, do you suppose Gospodinoff’s personal attendant went away? A laughable idea. Be Bulgarian, Jeeves.”

“No, sir. I fear I cannot.”

“Are you serious, Jeeves?”

“Yes, sir.”

“And you are resolved?”

“Yes, sir. If it is really your intention to continue playing that instrument, I have no option but to leave.”

The Wooster blood boiled over. This blighter thinks he is domestic **Mussolini**<sup>28</sup>. But what is Jeeves, after all? A valet. A salaried servant!

“Then, Jeeves, leave, **dash it!**<sup>29</sup>”

“Very good, sir.”

---

<sup>23</sup> **Lieutenant-Colonel J. J. Bustard, DSO** – подполковник ДЖ. ДЖ. Бастард, кавалер ордена «За выдающиеся заслуги» (военная награда Великобритании, Distinguished Service Order)

<sup>24</sup> **Sir Everard and Lady Blennerhassett** – сэр Эверард и леди Бленнерхассет

<sup>25</sup> **honeysuckle-covered** – покрытый жимолостью

<sup>26</sup> **give my notice** – заявить об уходе

<sup>27</sup> **Elia Gospodinoff** – Элья Господинофф

<sup>28</sup> **Mussolini** – Муссолини

<sup>29</sup> **dash it!** – чёрт побери!

## 2

### Chuffy

I assembled the stick, the hat, and the lemon-coloured gloves and strode out into the streets of London. Though I was afraid what existence would be like without Jeeves, I had no thought of weakening. As I turned the corner into **Piccadilly**<sup>30</sup>, I observed a familiar form.

This familiar form was none other than that of my boyhood friend, the fifth **Baron Chuffnell**<sup>31</sup> —the chap, if you remember, whose Aunt Myrtle I had seen the previous night with the hellhound, Glossop.

The sight of him reminded me that I was looking for a country cottage and that here was the very chap who had one.

I wonder if I have ever told you about Chuffy? Stop me if I have. He's a fellow I've known more or less all my life, he and myself having been at private school, **Eton and Oxford**<sup>32</sup> together. Now he spends most of his time down at **Chuffnell Regis**<sup>33</sup>, where he owns an enormous great place with about a hundred and fifty rooms and miles of parkland.

Don't think, however, that Chuffy is one of my wealthier friends. He can't afford to live anywhere else. If somebody came to him and offered to buy the place, he would kiss him on both cheeks. But who wants to buy a house that size in these times? So he lives there most of the year, with nobody to talk to except the local doctor and parson and his Aunt Myrtle and her twelve-year-old son, **Seabury**<sup>34</sup>, who live at the **Dower House**<sup>35</sup> in the park.

Chuffy also owns the village of Chuffnell Regis—not that that does him much good, either. I mean to say, the taxes on the estate and all the expenses of repairs are very high. Still, he is the landlord, and, as such, would have dozens of cottages at his disposal.

"You're the very chap I wanted to see, Chuffy," I said accordingly. "Come right along with me to **the Drones**<sup>36</sup> for a lunch. I must tell you something."

He shook his head.

"I'd like it, Bertie, but I'm due at **the Carlton**<sup>37</sup> in five minutes. I'm lunching with a man."

"Well, bring him along, then."

Chuffy smiled.

"I don't think you'd enjoy it, Bertie. He's Sir Roderick Glossop."

I goggled.

"Sir Roderick Glossop?"

"Yes."

"But I didn't know you knew him."

"I don't, very well. Just met him a couple of times. He's a great friend of my Aunt Myrtle."

"Ah! That explains it. I saw her dining with him last night."

"Well, if you come to the Carlton, you'll see me lunching with him today."

"But, Chuffy, old man, is this wise? Is this prudent?"

---

<sup>30</sup> **Piccadilly** – Пикадилли

<sup>31</sup> **Baron Chuffnell** – барон Чаффнелл

<sup>32</sup> **Eton and Oxford** – Итон и Оксфорд

<sup>33</sup> **Chuffnell Regis** – Чаффнел-Реджис

<sup>34</sup> **Seabury** – Сибири

<sup>35</sup> **Dower House** – вдовый флигель

<sup>36</sup> **the Drones** – «Трутни»

<sup>37</sup> **the Carlton** – «Карлтон» (название отеля)

“Nothing to do, Bertie. I had **an urgent wire**<sup>38</sup> from him yesterday, telling me to come up and see him immediately. So, I shall go, Bertie. But I’ll tell you what I will do. I’ll dine with you tomorrow night.”

But I had already formed my plans and made my arrangements and they could not be altered.

“I’m sorry, Chuffy. I’m leaving London tomorrow.”

“You are?”

“Yes. The management of the building where I reside has offered me the choice between leaving immediately or ceasing to play the banjolele. I elected to leave. I am going to take a cottage in the country somewhere, and that’s what I meant when I said I wanted to talk to you. Can you let me have a cottage?”

“I can give you your choice of half a dozen.”

“It must be quiet and secluded. I shall be playing the banjolele a lot.”

“There is one. On the edge of the harbour and not a neighbour within a mile except **Police Sergeant Voules**<sup>39</sup>. And he plays the harmonium. You could do duets.”

“Fine!”

“And there’s a troupe of negro minstrels down there this year. You could study their technique.”

“Chuffy, it sounds like heaven. And we shall be able to see each other sometimes.”

“By the way, what has Jeeves said about all this? I don’t think he wants to leave London.”

“Jeeves has nothing to say on that or any other subject. We have parted.”

“What!”

“Yes,” I said, “he told me that if I didn’t give up my banjolele he would resign. I accepted his proposal.”

“You’ve really let him go?”

“I have.”

“Well, well, well!”

“These things happen,” I said. “I’m not pretending I’m pleased, of course, but I can live without him. ‘Very good, Jeeves,’ I said to him. ‘So be it. I shall watch your future career with considerable interest.’ And that was that.”

We walked on for a bit in silence.

“So you’ve parted with Jeeves, have you?” said Chuffy. “Well, well, well! Any objection to my looking in and saying good-bye to him?”

“None whatsoever.”

“I’ve always admired his intellect.”

“Me too.”

“I’ll come after lunch.”

“As you wish,” I said.

\* \* \*

I lunched at the Drones and spent the afternoon there. Then I went home. I had much to think of. We Woosters can be honest with ourselves. There never had been anyone like Jeeves.

Abruptly, I went into the sitting-room.

“Jeeves,” I said. “A word.”

“Yes, sir?”

“Jeeves,” I said, “about on our conversation this morning.”

“Yes, sir?”

---

<sup>38</sup> **an urgent wire** – срочная телеграмма

<sup>39</sup> **Police Sergeant Voules** – сержант полиции Ваулз

“Jeeves,” I said, “I have been thinking things over. I have come to the conclusion that we have both been hasty. Let us forget the past. You may stay on.”

“It is very kind of you, sir, but... are you still proposing to continue the study of that instrument?”

“Yes, Jeeves, I am.”

“Then I fear, sir—”

It was enough. I nodded haughtily.

“Very good, Jeeves. That is all. I will, of course, give you an excellent recommendation.”

“Thank you, sir. It will not be necessary. This afternoon I entered the employment of Lord Chuffnell.”

I started.

“Did Chuffy come here this afternoon and steal you?”

“Yes, sir. I go with him to Chuffnell Regis in about a week’s time.”

“You do, do you? Well, it may interest you to know that I am going to Chuffnell Regis tomorrow.”

“Indeed, sir?”

“Yes. I have taken a cottage there. We shall meet there, Jeeves.”

“Yes, sir.”

“Very good, Jeeves.”

“Very good, sir.”

### 3

## Meeting the Past

You know, the longer I live, the more I feel that the greatest thing in life is to be sure what you want and be yourself. When I had announced at the Drones, on my last day in the metropolis, that I was going to the country for an indeterminate period, practically everybody had begged me, with tears in their eyes, not to do such a foolish thing.

But I had acted according to my plan, and here I was, on the fifth morning of my visit, absolutely happy. The sun was shining. The sky was blue. And London seemed miles away—which it was, of course. I wouldn't be exaggerating if I said that a great peace enveloped the soul.

As I stood there that morning, there was a nice little garden, containing a bush, a tree, a couple of **flower beds**<sup>40</sup>, a lily pond with a statue of a nude child, and to the right a hedge. Across this hedge, **Brinkley**<sup>41</sup>, my new servant, was chatting with our neighbour, Police Sergeant Voules.

There was another hedge straight ahead, with the garden gate in it, and over this the placid waters of the harbour. And of all the objects I noted the yacht. It was white in colour, and in size resembling a young liner.

And at this moment the summer stillness was broken by the horn, and I ran to the gate with all possible speed for fear some fiend in human shape was scratching my paint. I found a small boy in the front seat, and was about to give him a good lesson when I recognized Chuffy's cousin, Seabury.

"Hallo," he said.

"Hallo," I replied.

He was a smallish, freckled kid with aeroplane ears. In my Rogues Gallery of repulsive small boys I suppose he would come about third—not quite so bad as my Aunt Agatha's son, Young Thos., or Mr Blumenfeld's Junior.

After staring at me for a moment, he spoke.

"You're to come to lunch."

"Is Chuffy back, then?"

"Yes."

Well, of course, if Chuffy had returned, I was at his disposal. I shouted over the hedge to Brinkley that I would be absent from the midday meal and climbed into the car and we rolled off.

"When did he get back?"

"Last night."

"Shall we be lunching alone?"

"No."

"Who's going to be there?"

"Mother and me and some people."

"A party? I'd better go back and put on another suit."

"No."

"You think this one looks all right?"

"No, I don't. I think it looks rotten. But there isn't time."

Then he gave me some local gossip.

"Mother and I are living at the Hall again."

"What!"

"Yes. There's a smell at the Dower House."

---

<sup>40</sup> **flower beds** – клумбы

<sup>41</sup> **Brinkley** – Бринкли

“Even though you’ve left it?”

He was not amused.

“You needn’t try to be funny. If you really want to know, I think it’s my mice.”

“Your what?”

“I’ve started breeding mice and puppies. And, of course, they stink a bit. Can you give me five shillings?”

“Five shillings?”

“Five shillings.”

“What do you mean, five shillings?”

“I mean five shillings.”

“But why? We were discussing mice, and you said about five shillings.”

“I want five shillings.”

“Maybe. But why should I give it to you?”

“For protection.”

“What!”

“Protection.”

“What from?”

“Just protection.”

“You don’t get any five shillings out of me.”

“Oh, all right.”

He sat silent.

“Something happens to guys that don’t give me their protection money,” he said dreamily.

And on this note of mystery the conversation concluded, for we were moving up the drive of the Hall and on the steps I perceived Chuffy standing. I went out.

“Hallo, Bertie,” said Chuffy.

“Welcome to Chuffnell Hall,” I replied. I looked round. The kid had vanished. “I say, Chuffy,” I said, “young blighted Seabury. What about him?”

“What about him?”

“Well, if you ask me, he’s just been trying to get five shillings out of me and babbling about protection.”

Chuffy laughed heartily.

“Oh, that. That’s his latest idea.”

“What do you mean?”

“He’s been seeing gangster films.”

“He thinks he is a racketeer?”

“Yes. Rather amusing. He goes round collecting protection money from everybody. Makes a good profit. **I’d pay up**<sup>42</sup> if I were you. As for me, I gave him some coins.”

I was shocked. Chuffy was exhibiting this attitude of tolerance! Strange. Usually, when you meet him, he is talking about his poor financial situation. I sensed a mystery.

“How is your Aunt Myrtle?”

“She’s fine.”

“Living at the Hall now, I hear.”

“Yes.”

It was enough.

One of the things, I must mention, which have always made poor old Chuffy’s life so hard is his aunt’s attitude towards him. Seabury, you see, was not the son of Chuffy’s late uncle, the fourth Baron: she got him in the course of a former marriage. Consequently, when the fourth Baron died, it

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<sup>42</sup> **I’d pay up** – я бы заплатил

was Chuffy who inherited the title and estates. And Chuffy's aunt would clasp Seabury in her arms and look reproachfully at Chuffy as if he had robbed her and her child. She looked like a woman who had been the victim of a swindler.

So Lady Chuffnell was not one of Chuffy's best friends. Their relations had always been definitely strained, and when you mention her name, a look of pain comes into Chuffy's face and he winces a little.

Now he was actually smiling. Even that remark of mine about her living at the Hall had not jarred him. Obviously, there were mysteries here.

"Chuffy," I said, "what does this mean?"

"What does what mean?"

"This cheeriness. You can't deceive me. Not old Wooster. What is all the happiness about?"

He hesitated.

"Can you keep a secret?"

"No."

"Well, it doesn't much matter, because it'll be in the *Morning Post*<sup>43</sup> in a day or two. Bertie," said Chuffy, in a hushed voice, "do you know what's happened? Aunt Myrtle will leave me this season."

"You mean somebody wants to marry her?"

"I do."

"Who is this **half-wit**<sup>44</sup>?"

"Your old friend, Sir Roderick Glossop."

I was stupefied.

"What!"

"I was surprised, too."

"But old Glossop can't marry!"

"Why not? He's been a widower more than two years."

"Well, I'm dashed!"

"Yes."

"Well, there's one thing, Chuffy, old man. This means that little Seabury will get a devilish stepfather and old Glossop is just the stepson I could have wished him!"

"You know, this Glossop is not very bad, Bertie."

I could not accept this.

"But would you really say there was good in the old pest? Remember all the stories I've told you about him from time to time. They show him in a very dubious light."

"Well, he's doing me a bit of good, anyway. Do you know what it was he wanted to see me about so urgently that day in London?"

"What?"

"He's found an American he thinks he can sell the Hall to."

"Really?"

"Yes. If all goes well, I shall at last get rid of it and have a bit of money in my pocket. Thanks to Uncle Roderick, as I like to think of him. So Bertie, you must learn to love Uncle Roddie **for my sake**<sup>45</sup>."

I shook my head.

"No, Chuffy, I fear I can't."

"Well, go to hell, then," said Chuffy agreeably. "Personally, I regard him as a life-saver."

"But are you sure this thing is going to be? What would this fellow do with the Hall?"

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<sup>43</sup> **Morning Post** – «Морнинг пост» (название газеты)

<sup>44</sup> **half-wit** – недоумок

<sup>45</sup> **for my sake** – ради меня

“Oh, it is simple enough. He’s a great pal of old Glossop’s and the idea is that he will let Glossop run the house as a sort of country club for his nerve patients.”

“Why doesn’t old Glossop simply rent it from you?”

“What sort of state do you suppose the place is in these days? Most of the rooms haven’t been used for forty years. I need at least fifteen thousand to put it in repair. Besides new furniture, fittings and so on.”

“Oh, he’s a millionaire, is he?”

“Yes. All I’m worrying about is getting his signature. Well, he’s coming to lunch today, and it’s going to be a good one too. He will like it.”

“Unless he’s got dyspepsia. Many American millionaires have. This man of yours may be one of those fellows who can’t get outside more than a glass of milk and a **dog biscuit**<sup>46</sup>.”

Chuffy laughed jovially.

“Not much. Not old Stoker.” He suddenly began to leap about like a lamb in the springtime. “Hallo-hallo-hallo!”

A car had drawn up at the steps. Passenger A was J. Washburn Stoker. Passenger B was his daughter, Pauline. Passenger C was his young son, **Dwight**<sup>47</sup>. And Passenger D was Sir Roderick Glossop.

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<sup>46</sup> **dog biscuit** – сухарик

<sup>47</sup> **Dwight** – Дуайт



## 4

### Pauline Stoker Asks for Help

Chuffy was the genial host.

“Hallo-allo-allo! Here you all are. How are you, Mr Stoker? How are you, Sir Roderick? Hallo, Dwight. Er—good morning, Miss Stoker. May I introduce my friend, Bertie Wooster? Mr Stoker, my friend, Bertie Wooster. Dwight, my friend, Bertie Wooster. Miss Stoker, my friend, Bertie Wooster. Sir Roderick Glossop, my friend, Bertie—Oh, but you know each other already, don’t you?”

I surveyed the mob. Old Stoker was glaring at me. Old Glossop was glaring at me. Young Dwight was staring at me. Only Pauline appeared to find no awkwardness in the situation. She was as cool as an oyster on the plate. She bounded forward, full of speech, and grabbed my hand warmly.

“Well, well, well! Old Colonel Wooster in person! To find you here, Bertie! I called you up in London, but they told me you had left.”

“Yes. I came down here.”

“I see you did. Well, sir, this has certainly made my day. You’re looking fine, Bertie. Don’t you think he’s looking lovely, father?”

Old Stoker made a noise like a pig swallowing half a cabbage. Sir Roderick had turned purple.

At this moment, however, the Lady Chuffnell came out. Before I knew where I was, the whole gang had gone indoors, and I was alone with Chuffy. He was staring at me.

“I didn’t know you knew these people, Bertie.”

“I met them in New York.”

“You saw Miss Stoker there?”

“A little.”

“Only a little?”

“Quite a little.”

“I thought her manner seemed rather warm.”

“Oh, no. About normal.”

“I thought you were great friends.”

“Oh, no. She talks like that with everyone.”

“She does?”

“Oh, yes. Big-hearted, you see.”

“She has got a delightful, impulsive, generous, spontaneous, genuine nature, hasn’t she?”

“Absolutely.”

“Beautiful girl, Bertie.”

“Oh, very.”

“And charming.”

“Oh, most.”

“In fact, attractive.”

“Oh, quite.”

“I saw her in London.”

“Yes?”

“We went to the Zoo and **Madame Tussaud’s**<sup>48</sup> together.”

“Tell me,” I said, “how do the prospects look?”

“Sometimes good. Sometimes not.”

“I see.”

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<sup>48</sup> **Madame Tussaud’s** – музей восковых фигур Мадам Тюссо (в Лондоне)

“Uncertain.”

“I understand.”

“This Stoker makes me nervous. He’s friendly enough as a general rule, but at any moment he may fly off. You can’t tell me if there are any special subjects to avoid when talking to him, can you?”

“Special subjects?”

“Well, you know how it is with a stranger. You say it’s a fine day, and he goes all white and tense, because you’ve reminded him that it was on a fine day that his wife eloped with the chauffeur.”

I considered.

“Well, if I were you,” I said, “I wouldn’t harp too much on the topic of B. Wooster. He doesn’t like me.”

“Why not?”

“Just one of these unreasonable antipathies. And I was thinking, old man, it might be better if I didn’t join the throng at the luncheon table. You can tell your aunt I’ve got a headache.”

“Well, I’m glad you told me. You had better go away.”

“I will.”

“And I suppose I ought to join the others.”

He went indoors, and I went down the gravel. I was glad to be alone.

I am a man who can read faces. Chuffy’s expression, as he spoke of Pauline, showed that he was in love with her. Well, if it was so, it was all right with me. As far as I was concerned, Pauline Stoker could marry anyone she liked. I could still see that she was one of the most beautiful girls I had ever met, but of the ancient fire which had caused me **to bung my heart at her feet**<sup>49</sup> there remained not a trace.

Analysing this, if *analysing* is the word I want, I came to the conclusion that this was due to the fact that she was so dynamic. Pauline Stoker was one of those girls who want you to come and swim a mile before breakfast.

But Chuffy is very dynamic himself. He rides, swims, shoots, chivvies foxes with loud cries. He and this P. Stoker would make the perfect pair.

So when I saw Pauline coming out of the house and going to me, I greeted her. The last thing I really wanted was to be close with this girl. The first shock of meeting her was over, but I did not like the prospect of a heart-to-heart talk.

“How perfectly extraordinary finding you here, Bertie,” she began. “What are you doing **in these parts**<sup>50</sup>?”

“I am temporarily in retirement,” I replied. “I needed a place where I could play the banjolele in solitude, and I took this cottage.”

“What cottage?”

“I’ve got a cottage down by the harbour.”

“You must have been surprised to see us.”

“I was.”

“More surprised than pleased, eh?”

“Well, of course, I’m always delighted to meet you, but when it comes to your father and old Glossop...”

“He’s not one of your greatest admirers, is he? But you saw father’s face when he noticed you. He’s convinced that I’m still in love with you.”

“You don’t mean that?”

“I do, honestly.”

“But, dash it—”

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<sup>49</sup> **to bung my heart at her feet** – бросать своё сердце к её ногам

<sup>50</sup> **in these parts** – в этих краях

“It’s true, I tell you. He looks on himself as the stern Victorian father who has parted the young lovers and must keep them from getting together again. He does not know that you never had a happier moment in your life than when you got my letter.”

“No, I say!”

“Bertie, be honest. You were delighted.”

“I wouldn’t say that. I always esteemed you most highly.”

“You did what? Where do you pick up these expressions?”

“Well, I suppose from Jeeves, mostly. He had a fine vocabulary.”

“Where is he now?”

“He’s left me. He didn’t like me playing the banjolele. He is now with Chuffy.”

“Chuffy?”

“Lord Chuffnell.”

“Oh?”

There was a pause. She sat listening for a moment to a couple of birds who were having an argument in a nearby tree.

“Have you known Lord Chuffnell long?” she asked.

“Oh, rather.”

“You’re great friends?”

“Yes, we are.”

“Good. I hoped you were. I wanted to talk to you about him. I can confide in you, can’t I, Bertie?”

“Of course.”

“I knew I could. Tell me about **Marmaduke**<sup>51</sup>.”

“I don’t think I know him.”

“Lord Chuffnell, idiot.”

“Is his name Marmaduke? Really? Well, well! What? Marmaduke!” I said, laughing heartily. “I remember he was always evasive and secretive about it at school.”

She seemed annoyed.

“It’s a beautiful name!”

I looked at her. This, I felt, must mean something. Nobody would say Marmaduke was a beautiful name wantonly and without good reason.

“Hallo!” I said. “Hallo, hallo, hallo! Hallo! You love this... ha, ha! Excuse me... this Marmaduke?”

“I’m crazy about him.”

“Good! Well, if what you say is really so, be prepared. He is deeply enamoured of you.”

She wiggled her shoulder impatiently.

“I know that, you chump. Do you think a girl can’t tell?”

I was frankly surprised.

“Well, if he loves you and you love him, I can’t understand what you want more.”

“Why, can’t you understand? He’s obviously in love about me, but he is silent.”

“He does not speak?”

“Not a syllable.”

“Well, why would—Naturally he wouldn’t say anything yet. Give the man a chance. He’s only known you five days.”

“I sometimes feel that he was a king in Babylon when I was a Christian slave.”

“What makes you think that?”

“I don’t know.”

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<sup>51</sup> **Marmaduke** – Мармадюк

“Well, you know best, of course. Very doubtful, I should have said myself. And, anyway, what do you want me to do about it?”

“Well, you’re a friend of his. You could give him a hint. You could tell him there’s no need for coldness—”

“It is not coldness. It is delicacy. We men have our code in these matters. We are gentle knights. We—”

“What utter nonsense! You asked me to marry you after you had known me two weeks.”

“Ah, but there you were dealing with one of the Wild Woosters.”

“Well, I can’t see—”

“Yes?” I said. “Proceed.”

But she was looking past me at something to the south-east; and, turning, I perceived that we were no longer alone. There, standing in an attitude of respectful courtliness, was Jeeves.

## 5

### Bertie Takes Things in Hand

I nodded affably. I am always debonair.

“Ah, Jeeves.”

“Good afternoon, sir.”

Pauline appeared interested.

“Is this Jeeves?”

“This is Jeeves.”

“So you don’t like Mr Wooster’s banjolele?”

“No, miss.”

I preferred that this delicate matter be not discussed.

“Well, Jeeves? What is it?”

“Mr Stoker, sir. He is inquiring after Miss Stoker’s whereabouts.”

“You’d better go,” said I to Pauline.

“I suppose so. You won’t forget what I said?”

“Never,” I assured her.

She went away, and Jeeves and I were alone together in the great solitude.

“Well, Jeeves.”

“Sir?”

“I mean to say, we meet again.”

“Yes, sir.”

“I hope you’re getting on all right with Chuffy?”

“Everything is most pleasant, sir. I trust your new personal attendant is giving satisfaction?”

“Oh, quite. A wonderful fellow.”

“I am extremely gratified to hear it, sir.”

There was a pause.

“Er, Jeeves,” I said.

“Sir?”

“I should rather like, if you have a moment to spare, to split a word with you.”

“Certainly, sir.”

“I wish to canvass your views regarding old Chuffy.”

“Very good, sir.”

I hesitated no longer.

“You will agree with me that something’s got to be done about the fifth Baron.”

“I beg your pardon, sir?”

“Come, come, Jeeves. You know what I mean as well as I do.”

“Am I correct in supposing, sir, that you are alluding to his lordship’s feelings towards Miss Stoker?”

“Exactly.”

“I am, of course, aware that his lordship is experiencing for the young lady a sentiment deeper and warmer than that of ordinary friendship, sir.”

“Very well, then. Now, mark this. She, too, loves, Jeeves.”

“Indeed, sir?”

“She was telling me so when you came along. And she’s very upset, poor girl. Extremely upset. Her feminine intuition has enabled her to read his secret. She detects the lovelight in his eyes. And

what is worrying her is that he does not tell his love. So, he loves her. She loves him. So what's more? I know Chuffy. A swift performer. Yet now look at him. Why?"

"His lordship is a gentleman, sir, and he feels that he has not the right to propose marriage to a young lady as wealthy as Miss Stoker."

"But, dash it, she isn't very rich."

"No, sir. Mr Stoker's fortune amounts to as much as fifty million dollars."

"What! You're talking through your hat, Jeeves."

"No, sir. I understand that that was the sum which he inherited recently under the will of the late Mr George Stoker."

I was stunned.

"Good Lord, Jeeves! Has Second Cousin George **kicked the bucket**<sup>52</sup>?"

"Yes, sir."

"And left all his money to old Stoker?"

"Yes, sir."

"Now I see. Now I understand. This explains everything. That yacht in the harbour is his, of course?"

"Yes, sir."

"Well, well, well! But, dash it, George must have had nearer relations."

"Yes, sir. I understand that he disliked them all."

"You know about him, then?"

"Yes, sir. I saw his personal attendant when we were in New York. A man named **Benstead**<sup>53</sup>."

"He was crazy, wasn't he?"

"Certainly extremely eccentric, sir."

"Any chance of one of those other relations contesting the will?"

"I do not imagine so, sir. But in such a case Mr Stoker would rely on Sir Roderick Glossop, of course, to testify that the late Mr Stoker was perfectly sane."

"Hm. And unless old Stoker buys the Hall, Chuffy will continue to be the man without a bean. And yet, why, Jeeves? Why all this fuss about money? After all, plenty of poor guys have married rich girls before now."

"Yes, sir. But his lordship is a gentleman of peculiar views on this particular matter."

Yes, it was quite true. Chuffy is a fellow who has always been odd on the subject of money.

"It's difficult," I said. "One fails for the moment to see the way out. And yet you may be wrong, Jeeves. After all, you're only guessing."

"No, sir. His lordship did me the honour to confide in me."

"Really? And how?"

"Mr Stoker had expressed a wish that I should enter his employment. He approached me in the matter. I informed his lordship. His lordship instructed me to wait."

"You can't mean that he wants you to leave him and go to old Stoker?"

"No, sir. He was anxious that I should not break off the negotiations with a definite refusal until the sale of Chuffnell Hall had gone through."

"I see. He wanted you to keep old Stoker sweetened till he had signed the fatal papers?"

"Precisely, sir. And the financial status of his lordship is sufficiently good, his self-respect will not permit him to propose marriage to the young lady."

"Silly ass!"

"I confess that I regard his lordship's attitude as somewhat **hyper-quixotic**<sup>54</sup>."

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<sup>52</sup> **kicked the bucket** – сыграл в ящик

<sup>53</sup> **Benstead** – Бенстед

<sup>54</sup> **hyper-quixotic** – чересчур идеалистический

“We must talk him out of it.”

“Impossible, sir, I fear. I endeavoured to do so myself, but my arguments were of no avail. His lordship has a complex.”

“A what?”

“A complex, sir. He once witnessed a musical comedy, in which poor **Lord Wotwotleigh**<sup>55</sup> was endeavouring to marry an American heiress. He stated to me in the most unequivocal terms that he refused to place himself in a position like that.”

“But suppose the sale of the house does not go through?”

“In that case, I fear, sir—”

“What would you advise, Jeeves?”

“I fear I have nothing to suggest at the moment, sir.”

“Come, come, Jeeves.”

“No, sir. As long as the image of Lord Wotwotleigh persists in his lordship’s consciousness, I fear that there is nothing to be done.”

“Of course there is. Why this strange weakness, Jeeves? It is not like you. What he needs is a jolt. If he thought there was danger of some other guy near her.”

“Jealousy is undoubtedly an extremely powerful motivating force, sir.”

“Do you know what I am going to do, Jeeves?”

“No, sir.”

“I am going to kiss Miss Stoker and Chuffy will see it.”

“Really, sir, I should not recommend—”

“Jeeves, it came to me in a flash, as we were talking. After lunch, I shall draw Miss Stoker aside to this seat. You will arrange that Chuffy follows her. Then I shall fold her in a close embrace. If that doesn’t work, nothing will.”

“I consider that you would be taking a decided risk, sir.”

“No, Jeeves, I desire no further discussion. **The thing is settled**<sup>56</sup>. All that remains is to fix the time. I suppose lunch would be over by about two-thirty ... Incidentally, I’m not going in to lunch myself.”

“No, sir?”

“No. I cannot face that gang. I shall remain out here. Bring me some sandwiches and some beer.”

“Very good, sir.”

“Put plenty of mustard on the sandwiches.”

“Very good, sir.”

“And at two-thirty inform Miss Stoker that I would like a word with her. And at two-thirty-one inform Lord Chuffnell that she would like a word with him. The rest you can leave to me.”

“Very good, sir.”

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<sup>55</sup> **Wotwotleigh** – Вотвопли

<sup>56</sup> **The thing is settled.** – Дело решено.

## 6

### Complications

Jeeves returned with the sandwiches.

“So, Jeeves, did hear anything?”

“Yes, sir. Mr Stoker was inviting all those present to a party on his yacht.”

“What party?”

“It appears that it is Master Dwight Stoker’s birthday tomorrow, sir. The party, I gathered, was to be in celebration of the event.”

“And was the suggestion well received?”

“Extremely, sir. But Master Seabury did not like Master Dwight’s arrogant assertion that this was the first time that Master Seabury had ever seen a yacht.”

“What did he say?”

“He retorted that he had been on millions of yachts. Indeed, if I am not mistaken, trillions was the word he employed.”

“And then?”

“Master Dwight was sceptical concerning this claim. But at this moment Mr Stoker announced his intention of hiring the troupe of negro minstrels to perform at the party.”

“And that went well?”

“Very well, indeed, sir. Except that Master Seabury said that he was sure Master Dwight had never heard negro minstrels before. Master Dwight had then thrown a potato at Master Seabury.”

“I wish somebody would and chain those kids up. They’ll spoil the whole thing.”

“Master Dwight said that his hand had slipped, and the apology was gracefully received.”

“Well, go back and see if you can hear some more.”

“Very good, sir.”

I finished my sandwiches and beer, wishing that I had told Jeeves to bring me some coffee. But you don’t have to tell Jeeves things like that. He came back with the steaming cupful.

“Luncheon has just concluded, sir.”

“Ah! Did you see Miss Stoker?”

“Yes, sir. I informed her that you desired a word with her, and she will be here shortly.”

“Why not now?”

“His lordship engaged her in conversation immediately after I had given her your message.”

“Had you told him to come here, too?”

“Yes, sir.”

“No good, Jeeves. They will arrive together.”

“No, sir. If so, I can easily detain him for a moment on some matter.”

“When did you see Miss Stoker?”

“About a quarter of an hour ago, sir.”

“Ah!”

I had observed a gleam of white among the bushes. The next moment, the girl appeared. She was looking more beautiful than ever, her eyes, in particular, shining like twin stars.

“Hallo, Bertie,” said Pauline. “Are you really having a headache? You seem to have been doing yourself pretty well, in spite of it.”

“Oh ... You had better take these things back, Jeeves.”

“Very good, sir.”

“And if his lordship should want me, I’m here.”

“Yes, sir.”



He gathered up the plate, cup and bottle and disappeared.

Pauline had grabbed my arm.

“Bertie—” she was saying

But at this point I caught sight of Chuffy’s head over a shrub, and I felt that the moment had come to act. I waited no longer. Folding the girl in my arms, I kissed her on her right eyebrow.

But the fellow in the shrub was not Chuffy. The bloke who now stood before us was old Stoker. It was, you must admit, not a little awkward. A fellow with fifty millions in his pocket doesn’t have to wear the mask. If he wants to give anybody a nasty look, he gives him a nasty look. He was giving me one now.

Fortunately, the thing did not go beyond looks. The civilization prevailed. With one more of those looks he collected Pauline, and the next moment I was alone.

Suddenly Chuffy appeared.

“Look here, Bertie,” he began without preamble, “what’s all this I hear?”

“What’s all what you hear, old man?”

“Why didn’t you tell me you had been engaged to Pauline Stoker?”

“I don’t understand you, Chuffnell,” I said stiffly. “Did you expect me to send you a post card?”

“You could have told me this morning.”

“I saw no reason to do so. How did you hear about it, anyhow?”

“Sir Roderick Glossop happened to mention it.”

“Oh, he did, did he? Well, he broke it off.”

“What do you mean?”

“He happened to be in New York at the time, and to urge old Stoker to give me the push. The whole thing didn’t last more than forty-eight hours.”

“You swear that?”

“Certainly.”

“Only forty-eight hours?”

“Less.”

“And there’s nothing between you now?”

“Nothing.”

“You’re sure?”

“Nothing whatever. So, Chuffy, old man,” I said, patting his shoulder, “fear nothing. The girl is in love with you.”

“Who told you that?”

“She did.”

“Herself?”

“In person.”

“She does really love me?”

“Passionately.”

A look of relief came into his face.

“Well, that’s all right, then. You know, when a fellow’s just got engaged to a girl, it’s rather strange to find that she was engaged to somebody else about two months before.”

I was astounded.

“Are you engaged? Since when?”

“Since shortly after lunch.”

“But how about Wotwotleigh?”

“Who told you about Wotwotleigh?”

“Jeeves. He said the shadow of Wotwotleigh brooded over you like a cloud.”

“Jeeves talks too much. Immediately before I talked to Pauline, old Stoker told me he had decided to buy the house.”

“Really!”

“Absolutely. I think it was the wine that did it. My best wine.”

“You couldn’t have done a wiser thing. Your own idea?”

“No. Jeeves’s.”

I could not restrain a wistful sigh.

“Jeeves is a wonder.”

“A marvel.”

“What a brain! He eats a lot of fish. What a pity he does not like good music,” I said. “Well, this is fine, I hope you will be very, very happy. I can honestly say that I always look on Pauline as one of the nicest girls I was ever engaged to.”

“I’m trying to forget that you ever were engaged to her. I wonder what made her accept you?”

This had puzzled me too.

“I once consulted a knowledgeable pal,” I said, “and his theory was that the sight of me hanging about like a sheep awoke the maternal instinct in woman. There may be something in this.”

“Possibly,” agreed Chuffy. “Well, I’ll be off. I suppose Stoker will want to talk to me about the house. You are coming?”

“No, thanks. I could stand your Aunt Myrtle. I could even stand little Seabury. But add Stoker and Glossop, this is too much for Bertram. I shall take a stroll about the estate.”

\* \* \*

I spent an agreeable two hours strolling about, and it was late afternoon when the imperative need for a cup of tea sent me back. I wanted to find Jeeves.

A maid directed me to his room.

“In fact, Jeeves,” I said, “I suppose old Chuffy is feeling great.”

“Not exactly, sir.”

“Eh?”

“No, sir. I regret to say that there has been something wrong.”

“What! Have they quarrelled already?”

“No, sir. His lordship’s relations with Miss Stoker continue cordial. It is with Mr Stoker that he is on distant terms.”

“Oh, my God!”

“Yes, sir.”

“What happened?”

“The origin of the trouble was a **physical contest**<sup>57</sup> between Master Dwight Stoker and Master Seabury, sir. Master Seabury tried to get exact from Master Dwight the sum of one shilling and sixpence for what he termed protection.”

“Oh, Lord!”

“Yes, sir. Master Dwight, I gathered, declined. One word led to another, with the result that at about three-thirty sounds were heard proceeding from the room, and the senior members of the party discovered the young gentlemen on the floor, they were struggling. At the moment of their arrival, Master Dwight was seated on Master Seabury’s chest, bumping his head on the carpet.”

“And then?”

“The initiative was taken by Lady Chuffnell.”

I moaned.

“On witnessing it, her ladyship uttered a sharp cry and struck Master Dwight with considerable force on the right ear.”

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<sup>57</sup> **physical contest** – состязание в силе

“Upon which, of course—?”

“Precisely, sir. Mr Stoker kicked Master Seabury.”

“He got him, Jeeves!”

“Yes, sir. Master Seabury was rising at the moment, and was well adapted for the receipt of such an attack. Her ladyship called to Sir Roderick for support, and **high words**<sup>58</sup> ensued. Then Mr Stoker informed Sir Roderick that if he supposed that he, Mr Stoker, intended to purchase Chuffnell Hall after what had occurred, he, Sir Roderick, was in grave error.”

I buried the head in the hands.

“His lordship urged Mr Stoker to disclaim these words. It was his lordship’s view that Mr Stoker, having given his promise to purchase Chuffnell Hall, could not, as an honourable man, recede from this obligation. Mr Stoker replied that he did not care what he had promised or what he had not promised. After that, his lordship, I regret to say, became unguarded in his speech.”

I moaned again.

“Then Mr Stoker returned to the yacht with Miss Stoker and Master Dwight. Sir Roderick has gone to the local inn. Lady Chuffnell is with Master Seabury in his bedroom. His lordship, I believe, is taking the dog for a run in the west park.”

“When all this happened, had Chuffy told Stoker he wanted to marry Miss Stoker?”

“No, sir.”

“Well, I don’t see how he can very well do it now.”

“I think the announcement would not be cordially received, sir. And I chanced to be an auditor of a conversation between Mr and Miss Stoker. It was the gentleman’s intention to keep Miss Stoker on board, not permitting her to go ashore.”

“But you said he didn’t know anything about the engagement.”

“Mr Stoker’s motive is not to prevent her encountering his lordship, but to obviate any chance of her meeting you, sir. The fact that you embraced the young lady has convinced him that her affection for you has persisted since your parting in New York.”

“You’re sure you really heard all this?”

“Yes, sir.”

“You were talking with Chuffy, right?”

“Yes, sir.”

“And he heard all that, too?”

“Yes, sir.”

“About me kissing Miss Stoker?”

“Yes, sir.”

“What did he say?”

“He mentioned something about giving you a good lesson, sir.”

“Jeeves,” I said, “advise me, Jeeves.”

“Well, sir, I think it might be judicious if you were to attempt to persuade his lordship that the spirit in which you embraced Miss Stoker was a purely brotherly one.”

I rose.

“It may work, Jeeves. It is, at least, worth trying. I shall now leave you, to prepare myself for the ordeal before me with silent meditation.”

“Your tea will be here in a moment, sir.”

“No, Jeeves. This is no time for tea. I must concentrate. I dare say I shall see him shortly.”

“It would not surprise me if you find his lordship awaiting you at your cottage, sir.”

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<sup>58</sup> **high words** – слова в повышенном тоне

\* \* \*

He was absolutely correct. No sooner had I crossed the threshold than I saw Chuffy, gazing upon me.

“Ah!” he said, “Here you are at last!”

I gave him a sympathetic smile.

“Here I am, yes. And I have heard all. Jeeves told me. Too bad, too bad. I did not think, old man, when I bestowed a brotherly kiss on Pauline Stoker by way of congratulating her on your engagement, that it would make all this trouble.”

“Brotherly? Hm!”

“Essentially brotherly.”

A struggle was going on in the old boy’s bosom. Then he became calmer.

“Well, all right,” he said. “But in future if you want sisters, seek them elsewhere.”

“Just so. Then you still intend to marry this Pauline?”

“Intend to marry her? Of course I intend to marry her. I’d look a silly ass not marrying a girl like that, wouldn’t I?”

“But Stoker is not going to buy the Hall, is he?”

“Bertie,” he said, “don’t remind me of a time when I must have been absolutely stupid. I can’t imagine how I ever felt like that. My views have changed. I don’t care now if I haven’t a bean and she’s got millions.”

“Fine.”

“What does money matter?”

“Quite.”

“I mean, love’s love.”

“You never spoke a truer word. If I were you, I’d write her a letter embodying those views.”

“I will. And, by Lord!”

“What?”

“Jeeves shall take it to her. I should have told you that Stoker wanted Jeeves to leave me and enter his service. Now I am all for it. Jeeves shall go to him.”

“I see what you mean. Under the Stoker banner, he will be free to come and go.”

“Exactly.”

“He can take a letter from you to her and then one from her to you and then one from you to her and then one from her to you and then one from you to her and then one—”

“Yes, yes. You’ve got the idea. And in the course of this correspondence we can fix up some scheme for meeting. Have you any idea how long it takes to organize a wedding?”

“I’m not sure. I believe, if you get a special license, you can do it like a flash.”

“I’ll get a special license. I feel a new man. I’ll go and tell Jeeves at once. He can be on that yacht this evening.”

At this point he suddenly stopped.

“I suppose she really does love me?”

“Dash it, old man, didn’t she say so?”

“She said so, yes. Yes, she said so. But can you believe what a girl says?”

“My dear chap!”

“Well, she may have been fooling me.”

“Stop it, laddie.”

He had left me. It had been a strenuous day. I felt restless.

“I shall dine out, Brinkley,” I said.

This man had been sent down by the agency in London, and I want to say he wasn't the fellow I'd have selected if I had had time to make a choice in person. Not at all the man of my dreams. A melancholy blighter, with a long, thin, face and deep eyes. I had been trying to establish cordial relations ever since he had arrived, but with no success. Outwardly he was all respectfulness, but inwardly you could see that he was a man who was dreaming about the Social Revolution and looked on Bertram as a tyrant and an oppressor.

“Yes, Brinkley, I shall dine out.”

He said nothing, merely looking at me.

I went round to the garage and got the car out. It was only a matter of thirty miles or so to Bristol, and I got there to watch a musical comedy. I was feeling rested and refreshed when I started back home.

As I opened the door of my room, I dropped the candle. Pauline Stoker in my heliotrope pyjamas was sitting on my bed.

## 7

### A Visitor for Bertie

The attitude of fellows towards finding girls in their bedroom after midnight varies. Some like it. Some don't. I didn't.

"What—What—What—?"

"It's all right."

"All right?"

"Quite all right."

"Oh?" I said. I stooped to pick up the candle, and the next moment I had uttered a cry.

"Don't make such a noise!"

"But there's a corpse on the floor."

"There isn't."

"There is, I tell you. I was looking about for the candle, and my fingers touched something cold and still and wet."

"Oh, that's my swimming suit."

"Your swimming suit?"

"Well, do you think I came ashore by aeroplane?"

"You swam here from the yacht?"

"Yes."

"When?"

"About half an hour ago."

"Why?" I asked.

"You know, Bertie, steps should be taken about you."

"Eh?"

"You ought to be in some sort of a home."

"I am," I replied coldly and rather cleverly. "My own. But what are you doing in it?"

She did not answer.

"Why did you want to kiss me in front of father? I can quite understand now why Sir Roderick told father that you ought to be under restraint."

"The incident to which you allude is readily explained. I thought he was Chuffy."

"Thought who was Chuffy?"

"Your father."

"I don't see what you mean," she replied coldly.

I explained.

"The idea was to let Chuffy observe you in my embrace. To force him act speedily."

"That was very sweet of you."

"We Woosters are sweet, exceedingly sweet, when a pal's happiness is spoken about."

"I can see now why I accepted you that night in New York," she said meditatively. "If I wasn't so crazy about Marmaduke, I could easily marry you, Bertie."

"No, no," I said, with some alarm. "Don't dream of it. I mean to say—"

"Oh, it's all right. I'm not going to. I'm going to marry Marmaduke; that's why I'm here."

"And now," I said, "we've come right back to it. You say you swam ashore from the yacht? Why? You came here. Why?"

"Because I wanted somewhere to go till I could get clothes, of course. I can't go to the Hall in a swimming suit."

"Oh, you swam ashore to get to Chuffy?"

“Of course. Father was keeping me a prisoner on board the yacht, and this evening Jeeves arrived with an early letter from Marmaduke. Oh! I cried six pints when I read it. It was beautiful. It throbbed with poetry.”

“It did?”

“Yes.”

“This letter?”

“Yes.”

“Chuffy’s letter?”

“Yes. You seem surprised.”

I was a bit.

“I felt I couldn’t wait another day without seeing him,” she continued. “And, talking of Jeeves, what a man!”

“Oh, **you confided in Jeeves?**<sup>59</sup>”

“Yes. And told him what I was going to do.”

“And he didn’t try to stop you?”

“Stop me? He was all for it.”

“He was, was he?”

“You should have seen him. Such a kind smile. He said you would be delighted to help me.”

“He did, eh?”

“He spoke most highly of you.”

“Really?”

“Oh, yes, he thinks a lot of you. I remember his very words. ‘Mr Wooster, miss,’ he said, ‘is, perhaps, **mentally somewhat negligible**<sup>60</sup>, but he has a heart of gold.’ He was lowering me from the side of the boat by a rope.”

I was chewing the lip in some chagrin.

“What the devil did he mean, ‘mentally negligible’?”

“Oh, you know. Loopy.”

“Tchah!”

“Eh?”

“I said ‘Tchah!’”

“Why?”

“Why? Well, wouldn’t you say ‘Tchah!’ if your late servant was telling people you were mentally negligible?”

“But with a heart of gold.”

“Never mind the heart of gold.”

“Bertie! Are you annoyed?”

“Annoyed!”

“You sound annoyed. And I can’t see why. I thought that you would help me get to the man I love. Having this heart of gold.”

“The point is not whether I have a heart of gold. Many people have hearts of gold and yet they will be upset at finding girls in their bedrooms at night. The girls who come in, in the middle of the night, and coolly take your pyjamas—”

“You didn’t expect me to sleep in a wet swimming suit?”

“—and leap into your bed—”

She uttered an exclamation.

---

<sup>59</sup> **you confided in Jeeves?** – ты всё рассказала Дживсу?

<sup>60</sup> **mentally somewhat negligible** – не семи пядей во лбу

“I know what this reminds me of. I’ve been trying to think ever since you came in. The story of the Three Bears. ‘There’s somebody in my bed...’ Wasn’t that what the Big Bear said?”

I frowned doubtfully.

“As I recollect it, it was something about porridge. ‘Who’s been eating my porridge?’”

“I’m sure there was a bed in it.”

“Bed? Bed? I can’t remember any bed. What will people say when they find you here?”

“But they won’t find me here.”

“You think so? Ha! What about Brinkley?”

“Who’s he?”

“My new man. At nine tomorrow morning he will bring me tea.”

“But wait a minute. You are talking about Brinkley, but there is no Brinkley.”

“There is Brinkley. One Brinkley. And one Brinkley coming into this room at nine o’clock tomorrow morning and finding you in that bed will start a scandal.”

“I mean, he can’t be in the house.”

“Of course he’s in the house.”

“Well, he must be deaf, then. I made big noise getting in.”

“Did you smash the window?”

“I had to, or I couldn’t have got in. It was the window of some sort of bedroom on the ground floor.”

“Why, dash it, that’s Brinkley’s bedroom.”

“Well, he wasn’t in it.”

“Why not?”

But what she would answer, I did not learn. Somebody was knocking on the front door.



## 8

### Police Persecution

We looked at each other with a wild surmise.

“It’s father!” Pauline gargled, and she doused the candle.

“What did you do that for?” I said. The sudden darkness seemed to make things worse.

“So that he shouldn’t see a light in the window, of course. If he thinks you’re asleep he may go away.”

“What a hope!” I retorted, as the knocking started again.

“Well, I suppose you had better go down,” said the girl. “Or”—she seemed to brighten—“shall we pour water on him from the staircase window?”

I started.

“Don’t dream of it!” I whispered urgently.

I mean to say, dry J. Washburn Stoker was bad enough. But wet J. Washburn Stoker was even worse.

“I’ll have to see him,” I said.

“Well, be careful.”

“How do you mean, careful?”

“Oh, just careful. Still, of course, he may not have a gun.”

“Well, dash it,” I said, “I shall have to go down and talk to him. That door will be splitting asunder soon.”

“Don’t get close to him.”

“I won’t.”

“He was a great wrestler when he was a young man.”

“You needn’t tell me any more about your father.”

“Is there anywhere I can hide?”

“No.”

“Why not?”

“I don’t know why not,” I replied. “They don’t build these country cottages with secret rooms and underground passages. When you hear me open the front door, stop breathing.”

“Do you want me to suffocate?”

I did not reply and hurried down the stairs and flung open the front door. Well, when I say “flung”, I opened it a matter of six inches.

“Hallo?” I said. “Yes?”

“Oy!” said a voice. “What’s the matter with you, young man? Deaf or something?”

It wasn’t the voice of J. Washburn Stoker.

“Frightfully sorry,” I said. “I was thinking of this and that. Sort of reverie, if you know what I mean.”

The voice spoke again.

“Oh, I beg your pardon, sir. I thought you was the young man Brinkley.”

“Brinkley’s out,” I said, “Who are you?”

“Sergeant Voules, sir.”

I opened the door. It was pretty dark outside, but I could recognize the arm of the Law.

“Ah, Sergeant!” I said. “Anything I can do for you, Sergeant?”

My eyes were getting accustomed to the darkness by this time, and I was enabled to see another policeman. Tall and lean, this one.

“This is my young nephew, sir. **Constable Dobson**<sup>61</sup>.”

“Ah, Dobson!” I said.

“Are you aware, sir, that there’s a window broke at the back of your residence? My young nephew here saw it and thought best to wake me up and have me investigate. A ground-floor window, sir.”

“Oh, that? Yes, Brinkley did that yesterday. Silly ass!”

“You knew about it, then, sir?”

“Oh, yes. Oh, yes. Quite all right, Sergeant.”

“Well, you know best if it’s quite all right, sir, but I should say there was a danger of thieves getting through.”

And at this point Dobson said, “I thought I saw a thief getting through, Uncle Ted.”

“What! Then why didn’t you tell me before, you **young muttonhead**<sup>62</sup>? And don’t call me Uncle Ted when we’re on duty.”

“No, Uncle Ted.”

“You’d best let us make a search of the house, sir,” said Sergeant Voules.

“Certainly not, Sergeant,” I said. “**Quite out of the question**<sup>63</sup>.”

“It would be wiser, sir.”

“I’m sorry,” I said, “but it can’t be done.”

He seemed discontented.

“Good night, sir.”

“Good night.”

I shut the door and came back to the bedroom. Pauline was sitting up in bed.

“Who was it?”

“Police.”

“What did they want?”

“Apparently they saw you getting in.”

“What a lot of trouble I’m giving you, Bertie.”

“Oh, no. Only too pleased. Well, I suppose I must go away.”

“Are you going?”

“I shall go to the garage,” I replied.

“Isn’t there a sofa downstairs?”

“There is. **Noah’s**<sup>64</sup>. He brought it ashore on **Mount Ararat**<sup>65</sup>. I shall be better off in the car.”

“Oh, Bertie, I am giving you a lot of trouble.”

I sighed. Love’s love.

“Don’t you worry. We Woosters are always ready to help poor lovers. You put your little head on the pillow and sleep. I shall be all right.”

And, so saying, I went down the stairs, opened the front door, and out into the scented night. Suddenly a heavy hand fell on my shoulder.

“Ouch!” I said.

It was Constable Dobson.

“I beg your pardon, sir. I thought you were the thief.”

“Quite all right, Constable. Quite all right. Just going for a stroll.”

“I understand, sir. Breath of air.”

---

<sup>61</sup> **Dobson** – Добсон

<sup>62</sup> **muttonhead** – баранья башка

<sup>63</sup> **Quite out of the question**. – Об этом не может идти и речи.

<sup>64</sup> **Noah’s** – принадлежащая Нюю

<sup>65</sup> **Mount Ararat** – гора Арарат

“Yes. Exactly. A breath, as you astutely observe, of air.”

“Oh, yes, sir. Well, good night, sir.”

“Good night. Tra-la, Constable.”

I proceeded on my way. I had left the garage door open, and I went to my old car, glad to be alone again. I climbed into the car and.

A light suddenly flashed on the features and a voice instructed me to come out of the car.

“Ah, Sergeant!” I said.

Another awkward meeting.

“Is that you, sir?”

“Yes.”

“Sorry to have disturbed you, sir.”

“Not at all. I thought I’d try to get a bit of sleep in the old car, Sergeant.”

“Yes, sir.”

“Such a warm night.”

“Just so, sir.”

His voice was respectful, but there was something in his manner that gave me the idea that he considered Bertram eccentric.

“I often sleep in the car in the summertime.”

“Yes, sir?”

“Good night, Sergeant.”

“Good night, sir.”

I soon saw that all efforts in the direction of the restful night would be fruitless. I went out of the car and decided to sleep on the floor. It was smelling of mice and mould. But at the end of about half an hour a soothing drowsiness had begun to come to me.

And at the end of about thirty-five minutes the door flew open and there was the old, familiar lantern shining in again.

“Ah!” said Sergeant Voules.

And Constable Dobson said the same.

“Yes?” I said. “What is it now?”

“Is that you again, sir?” inquired the sergeant.

“Yes, it is, dash it! What, may I ask, does this mean? Sleep under these conditions becomes impossible.”

“Very sorry, sir. It never occurred to me that it could be you.”

“And why not?”

“Well, sleeping in a shed, sir—”

“You do not dispute the fact that it is my shed?”

“No, sir. But it seems funny.”

“I see nothing funny in it whatsoever. I have a right, have I not, to sleep where I please?”

“Yes, sir.”

“Exactly. It might be the **coal cellar**<sup>66</sup>. It might be the **front door steps**<sup>67</sup>. It happens to be this shed. I will now thank you, Sergeant, to withdraw.”

“Are you intending to remain here the rest of the night, sir?”

“Certainly. Why not?”

**He was at a loss.**<sup>68</sup>

“Well, I suppose there’s no reason why you shouldn’t, if you want to, sir.”

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<sup>66</sup> **coal cellar** – угольный подвал

<sup>67</sup> **front door steps** – крыльцо

<sup>68</sup> **He was at a loss.** – Он растерялся.

I had had enough of this.

"I hate beds," I said. "Can't stand them. Never could."

"Very good, sir." He paused a moment. "Quite a warm day today, sir."

"Quite."

"Yes, sir. Good night, sir."

"Good night, Sergeant."

"Good night, sir."

"Good night, Constable."

"Good night, sir."

The door closed softly. And not ten minutes after I had decided that I should never get to sleep again in this world I was off as comfortably as a babe.

It couldn't last long, of course. The next thing I remember is someone joggling my arm.

I sat up. There was the good old lantern once more.

"Now, listen—" I was beginning, when the words froze on my lips.

The fellow who was joggling my arm was Chuffy.

## 9

### Lovers' Meetings

I just sat goggling at him, wondering how he had got there.

Chuffy was bending over me, in the background I could see Sergeant Voules. What had become of Constable Dobson, I did not know. Maybe he was dead.

"It's all right, Bertie," said Chuffy soothingly. "It's me, old man."

"I found his lordship by the side of the harbour," explained the sergeant.

"The sergeant was worried about you, Bertie. He thought your manner was strange. So he brought me along to have a look at you. Very sensible of you, Voules."

"Thank you."

"You couldn't have done a wiser thing."

"Thank you."

"Something went wrong, old chap," said Chuffy gently, "didn't you? If you are sleeping out here."

"Why shouldn't I sleep out here?"

I saw Chuffy and the sergeant exchange glances.

"But you've got a bedroom, old fellow. You've got a nice bedroom, haven't you? It is more convenient to sleep in your cozy little bedroom."

"There's a spider in my bedroom."

"A spider, eh? Pink?"

"Pinkish."

"With long legs?"

"Very long legs."

"And hairy?"

"Very hairy."

Chuffy grinned in a most unpleasant manner and, rising, drew Sergeant Voules aside and addressed a remark to him,

"It's all right, Sergeant. Nothing to worry about. He's simply drunk."

"Is that so?" said Sergeant Voules. And his voice was the voice of a sergeant to whom all things have been made clear.

"That's all that's the trouble. Completely drunk. You notice the **glassy look in the eyes**<sup>69</sup>?"

"Yes, I do."

"I've seen him like this before. Once, after a party at Oxford, he insisted that he was a mermaid and wanted to dive into the college fountain and play the harp there."

"Young gents will be young gents," said Sergeant Voules in a tolerant and **broad-minded manner**<sup>70</sup>.

"We must put him to bed."

I jumped up. Horror-stricken. Trembling like a leaf.

"I don't want to go to bed!"

Chuffy stroked my arm soothingly.

"It's all right, Bertie. Quite all right. We understand. No wonder you were frightened. Beastly great spider. Enough to frighten anyone. But it's all right now. Voules and I will come up to your room with you and kill it. You aren't scared of spiders, Voules?"

---

<sup>69</sup> **glassy look in the eyes** – пустой взгляд

<sup>70</sup> **broad-minded manner** – широта взглядов

“No.”

“You hear that, Bertie? Voules will stand by you. Voules can **tackle any spider**<sup>71</sup>. How many spiders did you kill India, Voules?”

“Ninety-six.”

“Big ones, if I remember rightly?”

“Enormous.”

“There, Bertie. You see there’s nothing to be afraid of. You take this arm, Sergeant. I’ll take the other. Just relax, Bertie. We’ll hold you up.”

Looking back, I am not certain whether I didn’t do the wrong thing. I punched the sergeant in the tummy and ran away.

Well, you can’t go far fast in a dark littered shed. I fell with a dull, sickening thud, and in a minute I found I was being carried through the summer night in the direction of the house. Chuffy had got me under the arms, and Sergeant Voules was attached to my feet. And, thus linked, we passed through the front door and up the stairs.

We had reached the bedroom door now, and what I was asking myself was, What will be when Chuffy opens the door?

“Chuffy,” I said, and I spoke earnestly, “don’t go into that room!”

“I know, I know,” he said. “Never mind. Soon be in bed.”

I considered his manner offensive, and would have said so, but at this moment speech was wiped from my lips. With a quick heave, my bearers had suddenly dumped me on the bed, and there were only a blanket and pillow on it. No girl in pyjamas.

I lay there, wondering. Chuffy had found the candle and lighted it, and I was now in a position to look about me. Pauline Stoker had absolutely disappeared.

“Thanks, Sergeant. I can manage now,” said Chuffy

“You’re sure?”

“Yes, it’s quite all right. He will sleep.”

“Then I’ll be going. It’s a bit late for me.”

“Yes. Good night.”

“Good night.”

The sergeant clumped down the stairs, and Chuffy took off my boots.

“That’s my little man,” he said. “Now you lie quite quiet, Bertie, and take things easy.”

Suddenly the door of the hanging cupboard outside the room opened and Pauline Stoker came in. In fact, she seemed entertained.

“Oh! What a night, what a night!” she said amusedly. “Bertie, who were those men I heard going out?”

And then she suddenly saw Chuffy, and the love light came into her eyes as if somebody had pressed a switch.

“Marmaduke!” she cried, and stood there, staring.

Chuffy’s eyebrows had shot up, the jaw had fallen, and **the eyes were protruding from the parent sockets**<sup>72</sup>.

“So!” he said, finding speech—if you can call that speech.

“What do you mean? Why are you looking like that?”

I had risen from the bed on Pauline’s entry and had been going towards the door. But I had no boots on, I had decided to remain.

“What you need, Chuffy, old man,” I said, “is simple faith. The poet **Tennyson**<sup>73</sup> tells us—”

---

<sup>71</sup> **can tackle any spider** – может справиться с любым пауком

<sup>72</sup> **the eyes were protruding from the parent sockets** – глаза выскочили из орбит

<sup>73</sup> **Tennyson** – Теннисон

“Shut up,” said Chuffy. “I don’t want to hear anything from you.”

Pauline was looking a bit fogged.

“Oh!” she said.

Naturally, she’s a bit upset.

“Oh!” she said, for the third time, and her teeth gave a little click, most unpleasant. “So that’s what you think?”

Chuffy shook his head.

“Of course I don’t.”

“You do.”

“I don’t.”

“Yes, you do.”

“I don’t think anything of the kind,” said Chuffy. “I know that Bertie has been sleeping in a shed,” continued Chuffy. “But that’s not the point. The fact remains that in spite of being engaged to me, you are still so much in love with Bertie that you can’t keep away from him. You think I don’t know all about your being engaged to him in New York, but I do. Oh, I’m not complaining, you have a perfect right to love who you like—”

“Whom, old man,” I corrected him.

“Will you keep quiet!”

“Of course, of course.”

“Shut up!”

“Sorry, sorry. **Shan’t occur again**<sup>74</sup>.”

“Well, then, perhaps you’ll listen to what I’m going to say. I suppose you have no objection to my putting in a word?” said Pauline.

“None,” said Chuffy.

“None, none,” I said.

Pauline was very angry. I could see her toes wiggling.

“In the first place, you make me sick!”

“Indeed?”

“Yes, indeed. In the second place, I hope I shall never see you again in this world or the next.”

“Really?”

“Yes, really. I hate you. I wish I’d never met you. I think you’re a worse pig than any you’ve got up at that beastly house of yours.”

This interested me.

“I didn’t know you kept pigs, Chuffy.”

“**Black Berkshires**<sup>75</sup>,” he said absently. “Well, if that’s how you feel, well, all right.”

“My Uncle Henry—” I began.

“Bertie,” said Chuffy.

“Hallo?”

“I don’t want to hear about your Uncle Henry. I am not interested in your Uncle Henry. It will be all right with me if your damned Uncle Henry dies.”

“Too late, old man. He passed away three years ago. Pneumonia. I was only saying he kept pigs. It’s very profitable.”

“Will you stop—”

“Yes, and will you,” said Pauline. “Are you going to spend the night here? I wish you would leave me.”

“I will,” said Chuffy.

---

<sup>74</sup> **Shan’t occur again.** – Больше не повторится.

<sup>75</sup> **Black Berkshires** – чёрные беркширские (порода свиней)

“Do,” said Pauline.

“Good night,” said Chuffy. “But one last word—”, he said with a wide, passionate gesture. His knuckles hit a **projecting beam**<sup>76</sup>, he danced in agony, overbalanced, and the next moment was on the ground floor.

Pauline Stoker ran to the banisters and looked over.

“Are you hurt?” she cried.

“Yes,” yelled Chuffy.

“Good,” cried Pauline.

She came back into the room.

---

<sup>76</sup> a projecting beam – балка



## 10

### Another Visitor

Pauline picked up her bathing suit.

“Go away, Bertie,” she said.

“But listen—”

“I want to change.”

“Change what?”

“Put on my swimming suit.”

“Why?”

“Because I am going to swim.”

“Swim?”

“Swim.”

I stared.

“You aren’t going back to the yacht?”

“I am going back to the yacht.”

“But I wanted to talk about Chuffy.”

“I never wish to hear his name mentioned again.”

“Oh, come!”

She looked at me.

“A girl and a bloke can say lots of things she or he doesn’t mean.”

“Oh? Well, let me tell you I meant every word I said. I told him I never wanted to speak to him again. I don’t. I told him I hated him. I do. I called him a pig. He is.”

“Aren’t you a bit hard?”

“Am I?”

“And rather rough on Chuffy?”

“Am I?”

“You wouldn’t say his attitude was excusable?”

“I would not.”

“I think it was a shock for the poor old chap, I mean, finding you here.”

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