

Three Men and a Maid

By P. G. WODEHOUSE

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"ALPHONSO."

Mrs. Horace Hignett, world-famous writer on theosophy, author of "The Spreading Light," etc., etc., arrives in New York on a lecturing tour. Eustace, her son, is with her. Windies, ancestral home of the Hignett, is his, so her life is largely devoted to keeping him unmarried. Enter her nephew, Sam, son of Sir Malabry Marlowe, the eminent London lawyer. It is arranged that Sam and Eustace shall sail together on the Atlantic the next day. Enter Bream Mortimer, American, son of a friend of an insufferable American named Bennett, who has been pestering Mrs. Hignett to leave Windies. Bream informs her that Wilhelmina Bennett is waiting for Eustace at the Little Church Round the Corner. Bream himself is in love with Wilhelmina. Mrs. Hignett marches off to Eustace's room. The scene shifts to the Atlantic at her pier. Sam, heading for the gangplank, meets a glorious, red-headed girl, with whom he instantly falls in love, though her dog bites him. Eustace appears, heart-broken. It appears that his mother had "pinched his trousers" and delayed the ceremony, whereupon Wilhelmina had declared the wedding off. Sam is pushed overboard, has a desperate struggle in the water with another swimmer and rejoins the Atlantic at a quarantine. The red-headed girl is Wilhelmina Bennett—"Billie." She hails Sam as a hero and introduces Bream.

CHAPTER III—Continued.

"Any special poet?"
"Well, she seemed to like my stuff. You never read my sonnet-sequence on spring, did you?"
"No. What other poets did she like besides you?"
"Tennyson principally," said Eustace Hignett with a reminiscent quiver in his voice. "The hours we have spent together reading the 'Idylls of the King!'"
"The which of what?" inquired Sam, taking a pencil from his pocket and shooting out a cuff.
"The Idylls of the King? My good man, I know you have a soul which would be considered inadequate by a common earthworm, but you have surely heard of Tennyson's 'Idylls of the King?'"
"Oh, those! Why, my dear old chap; Tennyson's 'Idylls of the King! Well, I should say! Have I heard of Tennyson's 'Idylls of the King? Well, really! I suppose you haven't a copy with you on board by any chance?"
"There is a copy in my kit-bag. The very one we used to read together. Take it and keep it or throw it overboard. I don't want to see it again."
Sam prospected among the shirts, collars and trousers in the bag and presently came upon a morocco-bound volume. He laid it beside him on the lounge.
"Little by little, bit by bit," he said, "I am beginning to form a sort of picture of this girl, this—what was her name again? Bennett—this Miss Bennett. You have a wonderful knack of description. You make her seem so real and vivid. Tell me some more about her. She wasn't keen on golf, by any chance, I suppose?"
"I believe she did play. The subject came up once and she seemed rather enthusiastic. Why?"
"Well, I'd much sooner talk to a girl about golf than poetry."
"You are hardly likely to be in a position to talk to Wilhelmina Bennett about either, I should imagine."
"No, there's that, of course. I was thinking of girls in general. Some girls bar golf, and then it's rather difficult to know how to start conversation. But, tell me, were there any topics which got on Miss Bennett's nerves, if you know what I mean? It seems to me that at one time or another you may have said something that offended her. I mean, it seems curious that she should have broken off the engagement if you had never disagreed or quarreled about anything."
"Well, of course, there was always the matter of that dog of hers. She had a dog, you know, a snappy brute of a Pekinese. If there was ever any shadow of disagreement between us, it had to do with that dog. I made rather a point of it that I would not have it about the home after we were married."
"I see!" said Sam. He shot his cuff once more and wrote on it: "Dog-concilliate." "Yes, of course, that must have wounded her."
"Not half so much as he wounded me! He pinned me by the ankle the day before we—Wilhelmina and I, I mean—were to have been married. It is some satisfaction to me in my broken state to remember that I got home on the little beast with considerable jolliness and lifted him clean over the Chesterfield."
Sam shook his head reprovingly.
"You shouldn't have done that!" he said. He extended his cuff and added the words "Vigilantly important" to what he had just written. "It was probably that which decided her."
"Well, I hate dogs," said Eustace Hignett, querulously. "I remember Wilhelmina once getting quite annoyed with me because I refused to

step in and separate a couple of the brutes, absolute strangers to me, who were fighting in the street. I reminded her that we were all fighters nowadays, that life itself was in a sense a fight; but she wouldn't be reasonable about it. She said that Sir Galahad would have done it like a shot. I thought not. We had no evidence whatsoever that Sir Galahad was ever called upon to do anything half as dangerous. And, anyway, he wore armor. Give me a suit of mail reaching well down over the ankles, and I will willingly intervene in a hundred dog fights. But in thin flannel trousers, no!"

Sam rose. His heart was light. He had never, of course, supposed that the girl was anything but perfect; but it was nice to find his high opinion of her corroborated by one who had no reason to exhibit her in a favorable light. He understood her point of view and sympathized with it. An idealist, how could she trust herself to Eustace Hignett? How could she be content with a craven who, instead of scouring the world in the quest for deeds of derring-do, had fallen down so lamentably on his first assignment? There was a specious attractiveness about poor old Eustace which might conceivably win a girl's heart for a time; he wrote poetry, talked well, and had a nice singing voice; but, as a partner for life . . . well, he simply wouldn't do. That was all there was to it. He simply didn't add up right. The man a girl like Wilhelmina Bennett required for a husband was somebody entirely different . . . somebody, felt Samuel Marlowe, much more like Samuel Marlowe.

Swelled almost to bursting-point with these reflections, he went on deck to join the ante-luncheon promenade. He saw Billie almost at once. She had put on one of these nice sackie sport-coats which so enhance feminine charms, and was striding along the deck with the breeze playing in her vivid hair like the female equivalent of a Viking. Beside her walked young Mr. Bream Mortimer.

Sam had been feeling a good deal of a fellow already, but at the sight of her welcoming smile his self-esteem almost caused him to explode. What magic there is in a girl's smile! It is the raisin which, dropped in the yeast of male complacency, induces fermentation.

"Oh, there you are, Mr. Marlowe!"
"Oh, there you are," said Bream Mortimer, with a slightly different inflection.
"I thought I'd like a breath of fresh air before lunch," said Sam.
"Oh, Bream!" said the girl.
"Hello!"
"Do be a darling and take this great heavy coat of mine down to my stateroom will you? I had no idea it was so warm."

"I'll carry it," said Bream.
"Nonsense. I wouldn't dream of burdening you with it. Trot along and put it on the berth. It doesn't matter about folding it up."
"All right," said Bream moodily.
He trotted along. There are moments when a man feels that all he needs in order to be a delivery wagon is a horse and a driver.

"He had better chirrup to the dog while he's there, don't you think?" suggested Sam. He felt that a resolute

CHAPTER IV

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"And so, calm and golden, the days went by, each fraught with hope and youth and sweetness linking two young hearts in silken fetters forged by the laughing Love-God!"—and the males in the audience will shift their chewing gum to the other cheek and take a firmer grip of their companions' hands and the man at the piano will play "Everybody wants a key to my cellar" or something equally appropriate, very soulfully and slowly, with a wistful eye on the half-smoked cigarette which he has parked on the lowest octave and intends flashing as soon as the picture is over. But I prefer the plain frank statement that it was the fourth day of the voyage. That is my story and I mean to stick to it.

Samuel Marlowe, muffled in a bath-robe, came back to the stateroom from his tub. His manner had the offensive jauntiness of the man who has had a cold bath when he might just as easily have had a hot one. He looked out of the porthole at the shimmering sea. He felt strong and happy and exuberant.

It was not merely the spiritual pride induced by a cold bath that was uplifting this young man. The fact was that, as he towed his glowing back, he had suddenly come to the decision that this very day he would propose to Wilhelmina Bennett. Yes, he would put his fortune to the test, to win or lose it all. True, he had only known her for four days, but what of that? Nothing in the way of modern progress is more remarkable than the manner in which the attitude of your lover has changed concerning proposals of marriage. When Samuel Marlowe's grandfather had convinced himself, after about a year and a half of respectful aloofness, that the emotion which he felt towards Samuel Marlowe's grandmother-to-be was love, the fashion of the period compelled him to approach the matter in a roundabout way. First, he spent an eve-

ning or two singing sentimental ballads, she accompanying him on the piano and the rest of the family sitting on the side lines to see that no rough stuff was pulled. Having noted that she drooped her eyelashes and turned faintly pink when he came to the "Thee-only thee!" bit, he felt a mild sense of encouragement, strong enough to justify him in taking her sister aside next day and asking if the object of his affections ever happened to mention his name in the course of conversation. Further paroliers having passed with her aunt, two more sisters, and her little brother, he felt that the moment had arrived when he might send her a volume of Shelley, with some of the passages marked in pencil. A few weeks later, he interviewed her father and obtained his consent to the paying of his address. And finally, after writing her a letter which began "Madam! you will not have been insensible to the fact that for some time past you have inspired in my bosom feelings deeper than those of ordinary

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He let down the trick basin which hung beneath the mirror and, collecting his shaving materials, began to lather his face.
"I am the Bandolero!" sang Sam blithely through the soap. "I am, I am the Bandolero! Yes, yes, I am the Bandolero!"
The untidy heap of bedclothes in the lower berth stirred restlessly.
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Sam regarded his cousin with commiseration. Horrid things had been happening to Eustace during the last few days, and it was quite a pleasant surprise each morning to find that he was still alive.
"Feeling bad again, old man?"
"I was feeling all right," replied Hignett churlishly, "until you began the farmyard imitations. What sort of a day is it?"
"Glorious! The sea . . ."
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way?" inquired Sam, solicitously, as he fell into step by her side.

"Much better now, thanks. I've made friends with a girl on board—did you ever hear her name—Jane Hubbard—she's a rather well-known big-game hunter and she fixed up some sort of a mixture for Pinky which did him a world of good. I don't know what was in it except Worcester sauce, but she said she always gave it to her mules in Africa when they had the bots . . . It's very nice of you to speak so affectionately of poor Pinky when he bit you."

"Animal spirits!" said Sam tolerantly. "Pure animal spirits! I like to see them. But, of course, I love all dogs."

"Oh, do you? So do I!"
"I only wish they didn't fight so much. I'm always stopping dog fights."

"I do admire a man who knows what to do at a dog fight. I'm afraid I'm rather helpless myself. There never seems anything to catch hold of." She looked down. "Have you been reading? What is the book?"

"It's a volume of Tennyson."
"Are you fond of Tennyson?"

"I worship him," said Sam reverently. "Those—" he glanced at his cuff—"those Idylls of the King! I do not like to think what an ocean voyage would be if I had not my Tennyson with me."

"We must read him together. He is my favorite poet!"
"We will! There is something about Tennyson. . . ."

"Yes, isn't there! I've felt that myself so often!"

"Some poets are whales at epics and all that sort of thing, while others call it a day when they've written something that runs to a couple of verses, but where Tennyson had the bulge was that his long game was just as good as his short. He was great off the tee and a marvel with his chip-shots."

"That sounds as though you played golf."
"When I am not reading Tennyson, you can generally find me out on the links. Do you play?"

"I love it. How extraordinary that we should have so much in common. We really ought to be great friends."

He was pausing to select the best of three replies when the lunch bugle sounded.

"Oh, dear!" she cried. "I must rush. But we shall see one another again up here afterward?"

"We will," said Sam.
"We'll sit and read Tennyson."
"Fine! Er—you and I and Mortimer?"

"Oh, no, Bream is going to sit down below and look after poor Pinky."
"Does he—does he know he is?"
"Not yet," said Billie. "I'm going to tell him at lunch."

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What is a Teaspoonful?

—it depends on the Baking Powder you use. You must use a heaping spoonful of many brands because they don't contain as much leavening strength as



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The Economy BAKING POWDER

Level spoonfuls are all that are necessary when you use CALUMET—it makes more bakings which means a real saving on bake day.

Sales 2 1/2 times as much as that of any other brand

THE WORLD'S GREATEST BAKING POWDER

Magnificent, for the Dentist.
A friend of ours went to a dentist and asked him to take a look at his teeth. The dentist did so and seemed full of admiration.
"What do you think of them?" asked the patient.
"Magnificent! Magnificent!" was all the dentist said.
"Then you don't find anything to go to them?"
"To do to them? Why, there are four to be pulled, six to be filled and a bridge to make," said the dentist.

Accommodating.
Tailor—I should like to know when you are going to pay that bill. I can't come here every day in the week.
Jones—What day would suit you best?
"Saturday."
"Very well, then, you may call every Saturday."—London Answers.

MOTHER! GIVE SICK CHILD "CALIFORNIA FIG SYRUP"

Harmless Laxative for a Bilious Constipated Baby or Child.

GIRLS! A GLEAMY MASS OF BEAUTIFUL HAIR

35-Cent "Danderine" So Improves Lifeless, Neglected Hair.

Constipated, bilious, feverish, or sick, colic Babies and Children love to take genuine "California Fig Syrup." No other laxative regulates the tender little bowels so nicely. It sweetens the stomach and stands the liver and bowels acting without griping. Contains no narcotics or soothing drugs. Say "California" to your druggist and avoid counterfeits! Insist upon genuine "California Fig Syrup" which contains directions.—Advertisement.

An abundance of luxuriant hair full of gloss, gleams and life shortly follows a genuine toning up of neglected scalps with dependable "Danderine."

Falling hair, itching scalp and the dandruff is corrected immediately. Thin, dry, wispy or fading hair is quickly invigorated, taking on new strength, color and youthful beauty. "Danderine" is delightful on the hair; a refreshing, stimulating tonic—not sticky or greasy! Any drug store.—Advertisement.

A Safe Way.
He was talking to his friend Scribbler, the journalist.
"Do you believe in writing anonymously?" he asked the hero of the pen.

The Brute.
Wife (with empty pocketbook)—I'd like a little—a little change, dear.
Heartless Husband—So would I. But the law requires we be divorced first.—New York Sun, and Globe.

Scribbler looked to see that the door of his study was shut ere he replied in a confidential whisper:
"Well, I've often wished that one of my productions had been anonymous."
"What was that?"
"A letter proposing to Mrs. Scribbler," groaned the writer.

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