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Pelham Grenville Wodehouse

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.

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**THANK YOU,  
JEEVES!**

**by P.G. Wodehouse**



# 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?”

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<sup>1</sup> **banjolele** — банджо

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

<sup>3</sup> **Pauline** — Полина

“Yes, sir.”

“Avoid her?”

“Yes, sir.”

“Moreover, they were accompanied by Sir **Roderick Glossop**<sup>1</sup>.”

“Indeed, sir?”

“Yes. It was at the **Savoy Grill**<sup>2</sup>. And the fourth member of the party was Lord Chuffnell’s aunt, **Myrtle**<sup>3</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>4</sup>.”

“What!”

“Yes, sir.”

“He called to see me?”

“Yes, sir.”

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<sup>1</sup> **Roderick Glossop** — Родерик Глоссоп

<sup>2</sup> **Savoy Grill** — «Савой Гриль» (название ресторана)

<sup>3</sup> **Lord Chuffnell’s aunt, Myrtle** — тётя лорда Чаффнела, Миртл

<sup>4</sup> **called to see you this morning** — приходил сегодня утром к вам с визитом

“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>1</sup>.”

“We have no dog, sir.”

“Then step down to the flat below and borrow **Mrs Tinkler-Moulke’s Pomeranian**<sup>2</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>3</sup>. And in a week, at the **Sherry-Netherland**<sup>4</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

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<sup>1</sup> **set the dog on him** — спустите на него собаку

<sup>2</sup> **Mrs Tinkler-Moulke’s Pomeranian** — шпиц миссис Тинклер-Мульке

<sup>3</sup> **to blow over** — успокоиться

<sup>4</sup> **Sherry-Netherland** — «Шерри-Незерленд» (название отеля на Манхеттене)

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>1</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>2</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>3</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>4</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

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<sup>1</sup> **second cousin** — троюродный брат

<sup>2</sup> **Bertram Wooster** — Бертрам Вустер

<sup>3</sup> **Honor** — Гонория

<sup>4</sup> **Wickham** — Уикем

I was not the ideal **son-in-law**<sup>1</sup>. **At any rate**<sup>2</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>3</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?”

“You’re a **public menace**<sup>4</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!”

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<sup>1</sup> **son-in-law** — зять

<sup>2</sup> **at any rate** — в любом случае

<sup>3</sup> *dementia praecox* — шизофрения

<sup>4</sup> **public menace** — угроза для общества



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>1</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.

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<sup>1</sup> **loony-bin** — дурдом

“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!**”

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>2</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?”

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<sup>1</sup> **Show Sir R. Glossop out!** — Проводите сэра Р. Глоссопа

<sup>2</sup> **Manglehoffer** — Манглюхффер

“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>1</sup>, of B.5; and by **Sir Everard and Lady Blennerhassett**<sup>2</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>3</sup>.”

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<sup>1</sup> **Lieutenant-Colonel J. J. Bustard, DSO** — подполковник ДЖ. ДЖ. Бастард, кавалер ордена «За выдающиеся заслуги» (военная награда Великобритании, Distinguished Service Order)

<sup>2</sup> **Sir Everard and Lady Blennerhassett** — сэр Эверард и леди Бленнерхассет

<sup>3</sup> **honeysuckle-covered** — покрытый жимолостью

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>1</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>2</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.”

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<sup>1</sup> **give my notice** — заявить об уходе

<sup>2</sup> **Elia Gospodinoff** — Элья Господинофф

The Wooster blood boiled over. This blighter thinks he is domestic **Mussolini**<sup>1</sup>. But what is Jeeves, after all? A valet. A salaried servant!

“Then, Jeeves, leave, **dash it!**”<sup>2</sup>”

“Very good, sir.”

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<sup>1</sup> **Mussolini** — Муссолини

<sup>2</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>1</sup>, I observed a familiar form.

This familiar form was none other than that of my boyhood friend, the fifth **Baron Chuffnell**<sup>2</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>3</sup> together. Now he

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<sup>1</sup> **Piccadilly** — Пикадилли

<sup>2</sup> **Baron Chuffnell** — барон Чаффнелл

<sup>3</sup> **Eton and Oxford** — Итон и Оксфорд