

Ye Olde Plum News

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WAYS TO PROPOSE

GEORGE CRISTOPHER MEECH

You see what looks to you like an opening, and you take it. For instance, with my first young lady we just happened to be sitting in a cemetery, and I asked her how she'd like to see my name on her tombstone. (If I Were You, 1931)

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### JEFF MILLER

*He was still quite at a loss to understand how the ghastly thing had happened. The facts seemed to suggest that he must have let fall some passing remark which had given the girl the impression that he was proposing to her, but he had no recollection of having done anything so cloth-headed. All he knew was that at a certain point of time at the evening party he had been a happy, buoyant young fellow, making light conversation to Myrtle Shoemith behind a potted palm, and at another point of time, only a moment later, or so it seemed to him, he was listening appalled to Myrtle Shoemith discussing cake and bridesmaids. (Money in the Bank, 1947)*

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WILHELMINA 'BILL' SHANNON

"You'd better marry me, Smedley." "But, Bill--- --" "I am only speaking for your own good." "But, Bill... Marriage..." "What's wrong with marriage? It's fine. Why, look at the men who liked it so much that, once started, they couldn't stop, and just went on marrying everything in sight. Look at Brigham Young. Look at Henry the Eighth. Look at King Salomon. Those guys knew when they were on a good thing." "... Bill saw his drawn face light up. She linked her arm in his and gave it a squeeze. "Wilt thou, Smedley," she said, "take this Wilhelmina?" "I will," said Smedley in a low but firm voice. Bill kissed him tenderly. "That's my little man," she said. "This afternoon we'll go out in my jalopy and start pricing ministers." (The Old Reliable, 1951)

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### RONNIE FISH

*It sort of happened all of a sudden. I was feeling miserable and very angry with you and ... and all that. And I met Ronnie and he took me for a stroll and we went down by the lake and started throwing little sticks at the swans, and suddenly Ronnie sort of grunted and said 'I say!' and I said 'Hullo?' and he said 'Will you marry me?' and I*

*said 'All right,' and he said 'I ought to warn you, I despise all women,' and I said 'And I loathe all men' and he said 'Right-ho, I think we shall be very happy. (Summer Lightning, 1929)*

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JERRY SHOESMITH

It is always unpleasant for a man to have to listen to a comparative stranger proposing marriage to his fiancée, and even aesthetically Henry did not enjoy the performance. When he had proposed to Kay, it had been in a restrained, dignified manner in keeping with the tradition of the British Foreign Office, and this Shoemith was being loud and incoherent and rancous. A torrent of words proceeded from him, and worse was to follow, for suddenly he ceased to speak and there came to Henry's ears a curious sound as if a wrestling bout were in progress. (Frozen Assets, 1964)

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### ROLLO FINCH

*Here's the thing in a nutshell. You find a girl. Right. Of course, you've got to meet her once, just to establish the connection. Then you get busy. First week. Looks. Just look at her. Second week, letters. Write to her every day. Third week, flowers. Send her some every afternoon. Fourth week, presents with a bit more class about them. Bit of jewellery now and then. See what I mean? Fifth week, lunches and suppers and things. Sixth week, propose, though you can do it in the fifth week if you see a chance. (Ahead of Schedule, 1911)*

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HAROLD PICKERING

'But when I asked you to be my wife, you rose and walked haughtily from the room,' 'I didn't.' 'You did. I was there.' 'I mean I didn't walk haughtily. I hurried out because I was alarmed and agitated. You sat there gasping and gurgling, and I thought you were having a fit of some kind. So I rushed off to phone the doctor, and when I got back you had gone.' ... 'You mean that?' 'I certainly do.' 'You will really marry me?' 'How long does it take to get a license?' (Scratch Man, 1959)

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### FREDDIE CARPENTER

*'I don't know if you know the fifteenth hole here?' 'I don't play golf.' 'Oh? Well, it's rather a tricky hole. ... Mavis, however, when it came to her turn to perform, sliced rather badly and went into this under-growth I was speaking of, we got into conversation about this and that and finally ... Under a pine tree, was it not?' 'Yes Freddie,' said Mavis. 'Until finally, under this pine tree I was speaking of,' proceeded Freddie, blushfully delivering the punch line, 'I asked her to be my wife, and, to cut a long story short, she said she would.' (French Leave, 1955)*

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BERTIE WOOSTER

Bertie tried to pave the way for Bingo Little who was in love with Honoria Glossop: 'It's like this,' I said. 'It may sound rummy and all that, but there's somebody who's frightfully in love with you and so forth - a friend of mine, you know,' 'Oh, a friend of yours?' 'Yes.' She gave a kind of laugh. 'Well, why doesn't he tell me so?' 'Well, you see, that's the sort of chap he is. Kind of shrinking, diffident kind of fellow. Hasn't got the nerve. Thinks you so much above him, don't you know. Looks on you as a sort of goddess. Worships the ground you tread on, but can't whack up the ginger to tell you so.' 'This is very interesting.' 'Yes. He's not a bad chap, you know, in his way. Rather an ass, perhaps, but well-meaning. Well that's the posish. You might just bear it in mind, what?' 'How funny you are!' Bertie pushed her little brother into the water for Bingo to be a hero and save him, but Bingo never showed up, so Bertie had to jump into the water. 'You ARE funny!' she said again. 'First proposing in that extraordinary roundabout way, and then pushing poor little Oswald into the lake so as to impress me by saving him.' (The Inimitable Jeeves, 1922)

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### PETER BURNS

*I was engaged to be married. An hour back I had proposed to Cynthia Drassilis. And I can honestly say that it had come as a great surprise to me. (The Little Nugget, 1913)*

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