

Ye Olde Plum News

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INSULTS

VEILED -

CAUSE AND EFFECT

'I might have known,' she said, 'that disaster and trouble was goin' to 'appen. The very morning I went down to Langley End, I broke a mirror.'
'You shouldn't have looked in it,' said Slingsby.
(If I Were You, 1931)

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DELIVERY DELAYED

'There's another thing about you that I don't like. I've forgotten what it is at the moment, but it'll come back to me soon.' (Money for Nothing, 1928)

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NO OFFENCE

'I don't want to hurt your feelings, but you must have a soul like a stevedore's under-vest.' (The Old Reliable, 1951)

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DULL-WITTED

'All I said was 'I know you started to play bridge this morning, Reggie, but what time this morning?'; but he didn't like it.' (Do Butlers Bungle Banks, 1968)

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NOT HINTING

'I'm rather sorry we agreed to keep clear of personalities, because I should have liked to say that, if ever they have a skunk-show at Madison Square Garden, you ought to enter – and win the blue ribbon. Still, of course, under our agreement my lips are sealed, and I can't even hint at it.'
(Jill the Reckless, 1921)

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NO OFFENCE TAKEN

'Ickenham, you are a cad.' 'Now, you're just trying to be nice. I bet you say that to all the boys.' (Service With a Smile, 1962)

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HYPOTHETIC INSULT

Mr Butterwick had left his hat with the hat-check girl, but if it had been on his head, Monty would have accused him of talking through it. (Pearls, Girls and Monty Bodkin, 1972)

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INTENTION

'Forget that I called you a dish-faced moron.'
'You didn't.' 'Well, I meant to.' (Spring Fever, 1948).

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PERSUASION

Mr Jelliffe persuading Henry Pifield Rice to abandon his detective career and become an actor: *'I need you in my business. ... As a sleuth you are poor. You couldn't detect a bass drum in a telephone-booth.'* (Bill the Bloodhound, 1915)

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CIVIL

Mr. Llewellyn told what he said to Mr. Butterwick: *'I regard you as a louse of the first water, and I hope that on your way back to West Dulwich you get run over by an omnibus.'* He added: *'I could have put it stronger, but the man was my host. One has to be civil.'* (Pearls, Girls and Monty Bodkin, 1972)

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- AND UNVAILED

HELPFUL

'Because,' said Ricky, becoming frank, 'if ever there was a pot-bellied little human louse who needed to have the stuffing kicked out of him and his remains jumped on by strong men in hobnailed boots, it is you, Mr Pott. The next time I see a mob in the street setting on you, I shall offer to hold their coats and stand by and cheer.'
(Uncle Fred in the Springtime, 1939)

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NO SECRET

'Clarence, you're an idiot!' Even the presence of the chauffeur, Voules, could not prevent Lady

Constance from saying that. After all, she was revealing no secrets. Voules had been in service at the castle quite long enough to have formed the same impression for himself. (Summer Lightning, 1929)

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HONESTY

Tuppy Glossop about Angela Travers: *'She gave me the push. Yes, she did. Simply because I had the manly courage to speak out candidly on the subject of that ghastly hat she was the chump enough to buy. It made her look like a Peke. And instead of admiring me for my fearless honesty she bunged me out on the ear. Faugh!'* (The Ordeal of Young Tuppy, 1930)

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NOT SPEAKING

'Go into the silence, Butterwick. I'm not speaking to you. I wouldn't speak to you if your shirt was on fire. I regard you as a louse of the first water, and I hope that on your way back to West Dulwich you get run over by an omnibus.'
(Pearls, Girls and Monty Bodkin, 1972)

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BETWEEN CRONIES

Bill Paradene to Judson Coker: *'If you had twice as much sense, you'd be half-witted ... I should have thought that any one with one ounce more brain than a billiard-ball could have understood.'* (Bill the Conqueror, 1924)

Dolly Molloy to Chimp Twist: *'Sweet potatoes!'* moaned Dolly. *'Use your bean, you poor sap, use your bean. If you had another brain you'd just have one.'* (Money for Nothing, 1928)

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LA DONNA È MOBILE

'I said that I loved her as no one had ever loved before. Upon which, she said that I did not love her as much as she loved me. I said yes, I did, because my love stood alone. She said no, it didn't because hers did. I said it couldn't because mine did. Hot words ensued, and a few moments later she was saying that she never wanted to see or speak to me again, because I was an obstinate, fatheaded son of an Army mule. She then handed back my letters and left me.' (The Letter of the Law, 1936)

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