

Flat 29 present a Radio Play for the Elderly

Small Girl: Oh Grandmamma, that really was a most exquisite luncheon, but perhaps before we move on to the final course, Alfred and myself may be permitted to perform a short play for you to repay you for your hospitality.

Small Boy: Oh yes, do let us. We have a most marvellous story we could tell, which we learnt in school last week. I do think it would be very much to your taste, and yours too Papa.

Father: Now Children behave. This is not the time for such jovial nonsense; we are here to enjoy this sumptuous meal and should not have to play folly to your whims for entertainment. If you don't desist this instant, I shall be forced to remove my belt, albeit the lifeline for my modesty, and give you a damn good thrashing.

Grandmother: Now, now Edgar, don't go getting yourself into such a state, your heart isn't what it was after the accident. I can't see any harm in such a thing, just this once. A play would be lovely Dearies, just make sure you are ready for jelly and ice cream afterwards.

Children: Hurrah!

Small Girl: Grandmamma, that is quite simply our favourite, however did you know?

Grandmother: A grandmother just knows these things.

Small Boy: No time for that, quickly we must hurry through this, to get our reward.

(He coughs theatrically, his voice dropping as he does so)

We present a dramatisation, of Rudyard 'Exceedingly Good' Kipling's 'So What?' story – How the elderly got their wrinkles.

Old Man: The year is 1907 and I am attending my regular haunt of 'The Grouchy Club' on Soho's Bean Street – so recently named after my good friend Mr Heinz. Here, in the confines of a high-backed, leather bound armchair, hallucinating mildly on a heady mix of Opium and Absinthe, I begin to recount another tale from my youthful adventures....

Percy: My name is Montague Fitzpercy Elron St Patrick, the second – Percy to my friends, 'Sir' to my Enemies and 'Hung like an Elephant' to my lovers and I am the hero of this tale.

The year it 1837 and I have been challenged with a quest once more. Not only is this to be THE quest of a lifetime, but upon this journey a wager has been placed so large as to be almost unimaginable, for if I am to succeed, I am to become President of the Empire, second only to Her Majesty the Queen and leader to the masses.

Dear listeners, I suppose I must impart to you the nature of my pursuit, for without this knowledge you may well be at a loss. Ladies and Gentlemen, I tell you that I, 'Percy' have been challenged to discover 'The Fountain of Youth'!

As this in itself is thought to be a relatively simple task, as being well educated and from a time when these things are taught, I have a solid knowledge of Ancient Babylonian and of the mythical world, I have been handicapped in my quest by an irritating companion. As well as my regular lackey 'Hans Dooniztroozers', an orphan of dubious geographical origin, I have also been saddled with someone of the weaker gender, a female if you will, who is to be the millstone around my neck.

Hans: Hello, I am Hans.

Percy: Yes, yes, we know who you are, and for God's sake will you stop doing that.

Elisabeth: I am Elisabeth Comegently, Virgin daughter of the 7th Earl of Cunning-on-the-lingis, and I am here to fulfil my role as token helpless female. Oh woe, and alas is me.

Percy: We set off at once for distant lands, but this being the olden days and travel taking a very long time; we opted for Hot air balloon, as it seemed more exciting for the listener, despite the obvious impracticalities. It is also noted for its desert crossing capability.

Hans: This is true, but I don't know if we will ever come across a trifle big enough for you to have to fly over it.

Percy: Idiot.

Elisabeth: Woe unto me, we must be nearly there for we have been travelling for what feels like forever, and I am ever so air sick and feeble.

Percy: Of course we aren't; we only left London at the end of my last sentence and shall not be there until Hans has said his next line.

Hans: Percy, look down there, is that not the very place we are heading for on the horizon?

Percy: Yes, I do believe you are correct Hans, and will you please stop doing that when were all so close together. But first I believe we have another challenge, for unless I am very much mistaken, that is a band of bandits attempting to shoot us down.

Elisabeth: Oh woe and disaster!

Old Man: Alas, I was right in my assumption. There were Bandits and they did manage to shoot us down. ‘Pop’ went the balloon and we found ourselves falling towards the earth, just as one might expect. We landed with a bump...

Hans: Help, we have fallen and I can’t get up.

Percy: Oh come on; just use your hands for something else for once.

Hans: ah, I can get up.

Percy: Quick, we must take cover from the bandits.

Hans: From the air, I though I saw a very large depression that we could take shelter in.

Percy: Don’t be an idiot man; the great depression doesn’t happen until 1929. But what’s that, next to the people all looking like Smiths fans. I do believe there is a completely different depression, we can hide after all!

Hans: Perhaps it is because they are listening to the sounds of the Oasis.

Percy: I think that would be more likely to cause a selection of imitation beetles.

Elisabeth: Oh, woe! I am starting to feel a little depressed.

Percy: Quickly Hans, we must get out of here, make it past the Bandits and to the Fountain of Youth as quickly as possible, for I must win that wager.

Hans: Whatever are you going to do Percy?

Percy: Have no fear; something will turn up to give us good fortune.

Hans: What ever is making that large cloud of dust? It looks, it looks like...

Percy: Yes Hans, look, coming this way; a clinic of Psychiatri, have been drawn towards the depression. If only we could saddle a few we could ride our way to victory.

Hans: You are right Percy, what fabulous luck.

Percy: You make your own luck, my Boy.

Elisabeth: Oh woe unto me and all my companions.

Old Man: Now it may seem preposterous to you that such good luck should befall our party, and indeed it did seem that way to us, but fall on us it did, and once we had picked ourselves up and brushed ourselves off, we reached the fountain, without further incident...

Percy: My thanks to you Freud, this has been a most enlightening ride, but I really can agree that everything boils down to sex and my mother. Now be off with you before I am forced to shoot you.

Hans: Look Percy, there on the entry way, conveniently written in ancient Babylonian, what does it say?

Percy: It is a warning, it says: Beware the prunes for they will never leave you. Partake in moderation and future generation's wrinkles shall be few.

Hans: I wonder what that could mean.

Elisabeth: Oh woe will come unto us all. Hans, I have had a premonition - beware the one they call Old Nick.

Percy: Silence woman. Onwards, into the breach, dear friends.

Man: Well I must say this is lovely, wouldn't you say so rubber ducky?

Duck: Quack!

Man: Yes, I do agree, the water is lovely, I feel so wonderfully refreshed, but I have to say, I seem to have been in here so long, I have become quite wrinkled like a prune. Oh, Hello there! Come to join me in a bath, a quick splash of water upon the old unmentionables?

Percy: Certainly not. I have come to complete a quest and take a small sample of the water. But did I just hear you say something about Prunes?

Man: Why yes? I was just saying to Ducky here, would you mind passing me the soap? That I have become quite wrinkled, but then I have been in here a very long time.

Hans: Percy! The warning on the entrance!

Percy: Oh you fool, you have cursed us all!

Old Man: And with that I shot him dead. Bang. But it was too late from then on all youthful complexions started to fade into the haggard features you hear before you. But there is more to this tale, for we still had to escape the fountains guardian.

Nick: Ello, ello, ello, what's going on 'ere then? I am Old Nick the Griffin I am, and I guard this 'ere fountain from the likes of you lot.

Hans: Elisabeth, what was it you said earlier about bewaring Old Nick?

Elisabeth: What? Oh yes, I do believe it was something along the lines of 'oh woe will come unto all of us, Hans beware the one they call Old Nick'?

Hans: Yes that was it.

Nick: A foreigner in my fountain, I don't think we should have the likes of you in here.

Percy: Come now Mr Griffin, I don't think that's the sort of behaviour we need to be fostering here in the British Empire.

Nick: Who are you to be saying such things? This little lad is not welcome here, and it is about time for my lunch.

Hans: Help me! For he is eating me, even as I speak.

Elisabeth: Oh woe, oh woe!

Percy: Now really Mr Griffin, I don't think that was at all necessary. Take that.

Nick: Ow! You 'it me

Percy: That is correct; I have struck you with her majesty's weapon for the forces of the Empire. The hard-backed British Passport: perfect for disciplining Johnny Foreigner.

Nick: Well, that's certainly taught me a lesson. I guess I'll be off.

Elisabeth: Oh hoorah, Percy you have saved us!

Old Man: And that about wraps it up for my tale. We travelled back to England, via camel and dolphin, having many more adventures, including the one where I got this scar. Elisabeth and I were wed sometime later. Although,

time waits for no woman, and when her looks deserted her, I was out of there.

Young Boy: The End.

Young Girl: Yes, that is the end. I do hope you liked the telling of our tale Grandmamma.

Grandmother: Yes it was delightful. Now hurry up, this ice cream will not last forever.

Children: Hurrah.

THE END