

The Use of Diamond Rings

As requested by the Hon. Hyacinth on the twenty third night of March in bequest of Baron Von Munchausen to one Lord Peter Wyndham-Smythe. Being transcripts of some merit.

I've been intrigued by certain whispers that I've heard about you, in particular where your wealth has come from, and I was wondering if you could tell me whether it is true that it has all come from exploits in the diamond mines of deepest, darkest, Africa, and where exactly the penguin comes into all that.

When I was wandering the world without riches, having lost much money trying to find ways to naturally produce lard through the use of chemicals and machinery, rather than digging it up in mines where it is normally found.

Captain Sir Robert: But didn't your family already own the largest lard mines in North Africa?

Yes, but there was a recent coup in North Africa and all the native Africans rebelled against the government and took over the mines as strongholds.

I tried to find some other way of raising funds as our investments were now in the hands of the native Africans. With the funds I was hoping to raise an army and take back the mines. That's when I found out about these diamond mines, which also happened to be in Africa. In deepest, darkest Africa, which is slightly south of normal Africa.

Captain Sir Robert: What gave you the idea to mine diamonds? Which at the time were well known to be worthless, utterly worthless - because you couldn't cook with them for a damn.

As I was saying, I was quite depressed about the natives and the losses I had suffered financially - so I went to seek solace at a nunnery.

The mother superior, whom we affectionately called Penguin mentioned to me these other mines in deepest, darkest Africa. These diamond mines, and that diamonds may be useful for something other than cooking.

Lady Floria: No doubt it occurred to you that there was an opportunity here, given the rate at which young engaged ladies slipped out of their commitments when their lard rings slipped off their fingers.

The idea of using something other than lard for rings was quite a stroke of genius on her part. It was because the rings were slipping off that young ladies did not stay engaged very long, which was frowned upon by the church in general and her in particular. Having had many young ladies flee their engagements to far off places such as Turkey.

Lady Katerina: So did she in fact, send you on a mission from God?

Yes, or as I know him, Cliff. To make a more substantial ring, to keep young ladies wed and law abiding.

Hon. Hyacinth: A ring that would bind them?

...in deepest, darkest Africa. I managed to cobble together enough money from the local nuns who all chipped in to buy me a ticket to deepest, darkest Africa. I managed to get past the natives in normal Africa, by disguising myself.

Captain Sir Robert: [by normal Africa] you mean shallower, paler Africa.

Lady Floria: Shallower, paler Africa would be where the Poles come from?

Yes, and other materials of tent manufacture. Due to the tallness of the trees. The trees growing so tall as the roots were unable to go down very far, the ground being so shallow.

If I sucked in my stomach and crept from tree to tree, I could hide from the natives amongst these poles. I also wore a disguise so they wouldn't recognise me as the owner of the mines in which they were encamped.

Hon. Hyacynth: That disguise being?

That disguise being mostly vegetable based suit made out of excess vegetables I found discarded in odd places around the nunnery.

Lady Floria: [Knobbly] cucumbers in particular?

[The vibrating/moving ones?]

Once sliced, they did stop moving. Which was a comfort.

I noticed when I snuck from tree to tree, if I stayed very still, the Africans - being a carnivorous race - ignored me completely.

I made my way past shallower, paler Africa into deepest, darkest Africa - stumbling onto the diamond mines quite easily, breaking my leg in the process.

I discovered this large deposit of diamond just lying in the mine. Diamonds are actually quite hard, which is why I broke my leg, and very difficult to make splints out of. I spent a good many years attempting to make a splint. Unfortunately by the time I got something that was even close to the shape of a splint, my leg had healed.

I went to the nearest authority...

Baronet Clive: That would be the seven Dwarf lords in their halls of stone?

Who were quite enamoured of using this "diamond" for rings and demanded some of their very own. They weren't willing to help me mine the diamond themselves, but they recommended some friends of theirs: 9 friends of theirs, all of whom were lepers, who would be willing to work for a pittance. With their help I mined the diamond.

Before they died, they managed to transport the diamond and myself to the nearest port. They were buried with their rings as payment for their services, so they did not die paupers.

It was quite a do to be able to market diamond rings successfully. In order for it to catch on as an engagement ring. It involved...

Baron Celsius: The Sultan of Turkey, obviously. Who would set the trend immediately, having lost so many of his harem recently.

Baronet Clive: It must have been quite a shock being invited to your own engagement to the Sultan of Turkey.

Yes it was. For some reason my copious costume of vegetables made him think I was a female, perhaps it was the way they were shaped.

It was a lovely wedding, but didn't last too long past the arrival of the toasters as presents. No wedding can survive 8000 toasters.

But as it turned out, the Sultan was in disguise himself, or should I perhaps say herself, so it all worked out in the end. The diamond rings certainly took off after that, especially whenever the Sultan wore them while playing the piano. Ever since then young ladies have decided to wear them, instead of lard.

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