

Excerpt: Son of A Carpenter

written by

Tez Smith

Address
Phone
E-mail

MONTAGE: FRIENDS HEADING FOR NIGHT OUT (STEPPING OUT BY JOE JACKSON PLAYS): BOPPER AT HIGGS' PLACE, DONNING BLITZ-CLUB CLOTHES, B-MINUS SISTERS OF MERCY LEATHERS, CELIA AND JANET SOUXSIE GOTHS, LINDA IN CHERRY RED/TRACEY THORN CHARITY-SHOP CHIC, VERONICA 50'S STYLE WITH BEEHIVE; VIC, SOUL-BOY STYLE, ALREADY IN BLACK SWAN ASSESSING FIRST PINT

INT. PUB

Linda and Vic at the bar of Black Swan pub, a regular haunt, talking while waiting to order drinks. As other bartenders serve (regulars of Raffles), landlord comes over (looks like Donny Osmond)

LINDA

Couple of Taylors please, Donny

DONNY

Certainly Linda. You two alright?

LINDA

Yeah, fine and dandy. Last night celebrations, so it's gonna be a good night

DONNY

Well enjoy it, but keep an eye on him, a sniff of the barmaid's apron and he's legless

Vic, defensively in Lord Whimsey accent

VIC

Steady, I have a reputation to maintain, don'tcha know

Landlord turns to pull pints, Linda and Vic acknowledge other bartenders. Bloke with mates, interrupts the conversation, talking at Vic

RANDOM BLOKE

Is she your girlfriend then?

Linda and Vic look at each other, then Vic responds

VIC

No, we're just friends

RANDOM BLOKE

Well that's good then. She's a looker. Is she clean?

VIC
What the feck?

RANDOM BLOKE
I like to know before wasting my
time

Vic turns to Linda

VIC
Do you want to dignify this muppet

LINDA
He does sound like fun, let me give
it a whirl. So, gawgeous, is that a
general personal-hygiene enquiry,
or are we talking about my domestic
standards, before we get to tying
the knot and settling down?

RANDOM BLOKE
No, love, are you on t'blob or
what? If you're going with me, I
need to know

LINDA
Ah, so you're enquiring about my
menstrual status, my period, or
flow if you will? I'm currently
follicular phase, pre-ovulation, so
you're safe

RANDOM BLOKE
So you're not on t'rag then?

LINDA
I am indeed sans-tampon, thereby
fulfilling your limited selection
criteria

RANDOM BLOKE
Sounds good to me, love, can't do
with a mess. I'm Aiden. It means
fire in Gaelic. I bet you didn't
know that. And I'm the hottest
thing you're going to meet t'night
so why don't I buy you a Babycham?
No obligation, love.

LINDA

I'm glad to hear that accepting a sparkling Perry doesn't constitute a legally binding contract to accompany you to the bedroom gymnasium. But no thanks.

RANDOM BLOKE

Ey-up! This one's a live wire. Are you from round here? You're not one of those Streethouse slags are you?

LINDA

It seems I've ticked another of your boxes, as no, I'm from Sandal

RANDOM BLOKE

That's more like it, classy. Do you live in t'castle eh?

LINDA

Since the Duke of York's calamitous adventures, it's state of repair unfortunately renders it uninhabitable. We have more modest accommodation, near the Walnut Tree

RANDOM BLOKE

Well if you fancy sampling some salted nuts at my gaff tonight you might want to accept the offer of a drink or two

LINDA

And what, pray, might make you think I'd ever entertain such a notion, as tempting as it might appear to some?

RANDOM BLOKE

You'll not do better around here love. I'm in charge of exports at Redicut rugs, own parking space out front 'n'all. I can even have your oven bunned-up tonight so you can get your own free place on the social and have some spending money for tabs

LINDA

Ah, the ultimate aspirations of all star-crossed lovers. No ties for him; a sprog, council flat and fags for her

RANDOM BLOKE

Well what else are you gonna do
love? It's not like you're Maggie,
and you're no Lucy Ewing

LINDA

So it's either grow some balls to
play with the big boys, or sport a
cleavage for domestic leverage?

RANDOM BLOKE

You stick to the babies, love, and
by the way t'offer is still there

LINDA

Well I do have the biological
wherewithal to grow my own sprog,
so I mean, what exactly is the use
of a bloke?

RANDOM BLOKE

Us blokes sort out t'complicated
stuff love. That's how it works

LINDA

And what a brilliant job you've
made of it for the past few
millennia. But really, there must
be better means of ensuring genetic
diversity and the evolution of the
species, without recourse to a
mulleted-peripatetic sperm bank,
and accepting a lifetime of
domestic servitude

RANDOM BLOKE

Like you say, love. Been like that
for centuries and it ain't gonna
change anytime soon. And definitely
not round here

LINDA

So, just for being able to grow a human while managing a career, if she has one, at a bargain rate to her employer of only two-thirds that paid to the nearest bloke, and performing ninety-nine percent of the domestic chores, as the Y-chromosome-hampered flump wrestles with the TV remote on the sofa, a woman can expect to be denied access to a bicycle, never mind a car, in certain parts of the world, be segregated educationally and spiritually on the basis of some male-written sky-god drivel, and be generally derided for brimming with love and hope for humanity. All that emotion is really not necessary when blokes have pride, power and munitions. They're good with guns. And really good at fighting. And generally fucking things up. Like you say, let's look at human history to date..

VIC

Ghengis khan

LINDA

Bloke

VIC

Robespierre

LINDA

Mounsieur

VIC

Pol Pott

LINDA

Geezer

VIC

Vlad the Impaler

LINDA

Hombre

VIC

Attila the Hun

HuMANoid LINDA

Napoleon VIC

Fop LINDA

Stalin VIC

Comrade LINDA

Freeman, Hardy and Willis VIC

LINDA
Gentlemen shoemakers, although I'm
not are what they're doing in your
top ten of genocidal maniacs

VIC
Sorry, I meant Hitler, Himmler and
Gobbels

LINDA
Most definite Herren.

To the random bloke

LINDA (CONT'D)
You get the picture

Random bloke addresses Vic

RANDOM BLOKE
Is she always like this?

VIC
Thankfully, yes

RANDOM BLOKE
What, and you agree with everything
just to get a sniff of a shag?

VIC

Like I said, we're friends. But think about it, if it was anything to do with you, the only way a female could get a seat and her feet under the power table would be by gender reassignment, realignment or any which way that made her male

RANDOM BLOKE

She said it herself. Bloody feminists, truth is you just can't stand blokes

LINDA

Luckily it's not all blokes, it's just ones like you. The history of mankind (an oxymoron if ever a wonderful-wiz-there-was) is the eternal subjugation of the female of the species. Wo-man. Wo-men. Females. Even our nouns are plagued by men and males. Women have never had an easy ride and the passage got bumpier with the current incumbent of Number 10

RANDOM BLOKE

Maggie's one of us, an honorary bloke I mean, and bloody brilliant

LINDA

Tell that to the good folks of the pits round here. I'm sure they love her. Anyway, back to you and your-kind. The only rainbow's-end resolution to ensure world peace, an end to poverty and starvation, and the long-term preservation of the planet is to castrate all males post-puberty. You're allowed a sticky deposit in a J. Arthur Rank-repository just prior to that, to maintain a Kay's-catalogue of diversity for women to select from, in the comfort of their own home. But relieving blokes of the pressures engendered by post-pubertal testosterone surges should result in a more sunny male disposition, with all the associated societal benefits

Linda takes a swig from the pint Vic has just provided. Vic chips in while she drinks

VIC

I'm at the vanguard of this; after
I'd amassed a few pints of gold-top
in the freezer up at Pinderfields,
for the posterity of man-, sorry,
hu-man-, sorry people-kind, I've
gone the whole porker and I'm
definitely now singing from the
castrati-section of the choir

RANDOM BLOKE

You're bloody mad you two. But I
still fancy a bit of you, love.
Although I can't stand a tash on a
lass

Bloke reaches over and wipes the froth-moustache from Linda's upper lip. Instantaneously Linda picks up tin tray from the bar and quadruple-whammys Bloke about the head while instructing him on male etiquette

Wham tray-left!

LINDA

Do not

Wham tray-right!

LINDA (CONT'D)

Ever

Wham tray-uppercut!

LINDA (CONT'D)

Touch a woman

Wham tray-head-slam!

LINDA (CONT'D)

Without her consent

Final blow sends Bloke dazed and sprawling to the floor.
Tableau: Linda stands above him, Ali-esque over Sonny Liston

LINDA (CONT'D)

You presumptive, wretched
Neanderthal-excuse-for-a-man. And
get a decent feckin' hair cut,
ferchrissakes...

Landlord signals to bouncer to eject Random Bloke and his stunned entourage, now crowded around the prostrate Bloke. Linda and Vic continue to drink their pints.

DONNY

Not Mr Right then?

LINDA

Is it me or are they on the increase?

DONNY

We do seem to be getting more of our fair share these days. Must be a sign

Linda and Vic leave pub heading for next