

The 'York Road 'Saga as told to old Uncle E'Benn

Tedious Ted knocked again on the great carved door of No 10.5 Upping St, where Mrs Slatcher held court. It was difficult to get an audience with such a mighty personage as nowadays she was totally involved with the Troggs and Gnomes and other Playmates. Even the handsome Balcock could be kept waiting. He would sit outside for hours serenading this exalted being, accompanying himself on his bicycle bell.

Tedious was lucky. Only a mere four days were needed before the door creaked open and an aged retainer stood before him.

"She'll not see anyone" said the ghost of Rocky Stocky. "She is about her rituals. Making an effigy of the noble Wiseperson out of bread crumbs and araldite. Wicked doings are afoot ere long. Can you not smell brimstone and treacle?"

"I fought it was the canteen" said Tedious, never short of a merry quip.

An evil cackle emanated from the inner sanctum.

"I wouldn't be in the noble Wiseperson's body stocking for all the concessions in Blunderland" said Rocky Stocky throwing a few punches in the air.

"Chance would be a fine thing" replied Tedious wisely. "Not even Knee-handler has had that privilege"

"Who is without?" rasped a voice

"Tedious Ted, your infallibility."

"I am without nothing" said Tedious Ted. "I can get a doctor's note to prove it"

"Come here insignificant speck. I wish to deliver a directive.

Tedious shuffled forward, holding his TASS diary at arms length in front of him, as protection against the evil eye.

"I will trade the noble Wiseperson for Bulky Brian. Wiseperson must be broken or my plans for Herospace domination will fail. A single mortal being, handsome, wise, devil may care, but nevertheless a mere man.

She who must be Obeyed jabbed another pin into the effigy of the noble Wiseperson. Tedious Ted winced as the steel penetrated the knee joint.

"He will not succumb" she said. "He lives with the Pain and yet he will not yield. "Will you do a trade?" she asked.

"I don't know. We ordinary folk all admire the noble Wiseperson. He is like a father figure to us. He always sits next to E'Bennn, so it is his knee that is fondled by that crazed creature."

"You would sacrifice the freedom of all Protocamp for one individual. Without the elastic from Bulky Brian's underpants, you will never know the intoxicating freedom of living in Lectronland, to be able to study the art of Tippex painting and freestyle spelling in the style of Wobbly Wendy, a tradition so ably carried on by D and M".

"To watch on a long summer's morning Richard Buttons climb the north face of Berrisbored, using safety pins and high tensile embroidery cotton" echoed" Tedious Ted, with longing in his voice.

"All this will never be yours unless you give me the noble Wiseperson", persisted she who must be obeyed, now transformed with the aid of plastic padding and touch-up

paint into a beguiling creature who even the masterful Ballcock would have found almost irresistible, on a bad day that is.

But Tedious Ted was not done yet. A born negotiator, was it nepotism that had prevented his appointment to a position of supreme power on the JOC?

"What will you do to the noble Wiseperson?"

"Turn him into a tubby toad. He will enjoy sitting in his own greenhouse pulsating and opening his mouth and saying nothing."

"He does that already" said Tedious, who could not avoid the truth.

"You will do it then?"

"No!" said Tedious. "You ask too much. The noble Wiseperson is much loved in Protocamp."

"The naughty boy" said Rocky Stocky

"Those self-sacrificing, dedicated, wonderful creatures, the Solder Ants of Protocamp would rather remain forever imprisoned than see the noble Wiseperson subject to your desires"

And so it came to pass that the Solder Ants remained imprisoned in Protocamp. Bulky Brian remained with his underpants virgo intacto, and the noble Wiseperson escaped to fight again for freedom, justice, and everything worthwhile. Thanks to Tedious Ted, hero of Protocamp.

Next Month: Where are the windows?

Are individual life support systems a reality for York Rd?

Will the Irish 2p token system revive the flagging Herospace economy?