

## ARMAGEDON

'Who is it?' I shouts. Coronation Street was about to start when the doorbell rang. People's got no consideration these days. Sure to be one of them I thought, folk collecting for the blind, the deaf, the old.- The old, that's a laugh! I'm old aren't I? Well nobody gives me nothing, I even had to pay for my own teeth. Still look on the bright side I don't 'ave to go to the dentist no more.

It was a man. I see him through the glass of the door.

'What's that you say? Got good news for me. Oh ay, what's that then?' Can't be the pools 'cos I don't do them. Got better things to do with my money.

My hubby did the pools for forty years. He won once. Eight draws, he was that excited thought he'd be a millionaire turned out he'd won 35 pence.

'Do I use my bible?' He shouts through the letter box. Nosy beggar. What's it got to do with him? As a matter of fact I do, all the time since a foot came off the sideboard.

He wants me to open the door- 'Well all right,' I say, but I'm keeping the chain on.

He's a nice looking young man I'll grant you that. Fair hair, could do with cutting, still it's better than those what look like paleface Indians. I don't know what my hubby would say if he were alive. Got nice eyes, bright blue, dressed well too. A suit, not scruffy jeans and sweater like most of them these days.

He wants to come in. 'What for? I've got nothing to sell and I'm not parting with my bible it's too useful. I got that from school- the only useful thing they ever give me.'

'Now I sure am glad to hear that Ma-am,' he says. 'Perhaps we could read it together.'

'Oh I don't read it. No, it's a support.'

He told me somebody with a funny name- Arma something was coming. That put the wind up me I can tell you. I told him I was busy but he kept on, and then I heard Coronation Street start. 'Look,' I said, 'I've got to go.'

'Is that Coronation Street?' He said. 'I'd love to watch it.'

A bit of cheek that but he looked so disappointed. I couldn't do no more than ask him in. He looked such a nice young man and I thought I'd better get him off the door step before the

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other one came. That Arma-fella. He no sooner sat down than he started asking whether I had life insurance and what happens after.

I told him I've no worries on that score. My friend Mavis will do a nice 'am tea and if she goes first, I'll do the same for her.

'Who will arrange things for you then?' He asks.

I could see I wasn't going to get no peace so I offered him a glass of Mavis's home made wine. 'Help yourself.' I said. And he did! Then he wanted to know if I'd heard about suspended animation.

'No thank you,' I said. Well, that wouldn't suit me at all. 'I've bin cold enough here as it is. I'm going to be crematorianated. What's more I'm not sure I'd want to be resus-restat-brought back to life in a hundred years or so. What will life be like then? You tell me that.'

He looked a bit non de plussed and didn't answer.

'No sex, babies cloned all identical. Just think there might be millions of little Blairs running about or Bush's- bet he's put some sperm in deep freeze. I don't know which would be worse. We'd all be living on pills. Fancy no cream cakes.

Not that I get them very often now I've lost my housing allowance. You get by though don't you?

'Excuse me,' he said and dashed upstairs. I put Mavis's wine away. Well he'd drunk 'alf the decanter. He never came down. I did go up to see, but he was in the lav. I couldn't go in there could I? I haven't got a phone so I put my coat on and went round to Mavis. She came back with me.

'Where's the wine bottle?' She asked as soon as she walked in the door.

I went to get a glass out of the sideboard but before I could turn round she'd grabbed the bottle and his glass and made for the kitchen.

'There's no need to wash up now,' I said. 'I can see to them tomorrow. It's him I'm worried about.'

She took no notice, went back for my glass and sniffed at it. 'What were you drinking?' She asked.

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I never touch her homemade wine. I don't like elderberries. George loved her elderberry wine. He drank nearly a bottle the day he died. Well, at least he died happy.

'There was a drop of port left from Christmas, so I thought I'd have that.' I said. 'What do you think he's doing?'

'He's not doing anything'

'We could get the vicar,' I said. 'He could go in and talk to him. I mean what are vicars for?'

The Vicar called the police and they took the decanter away I don't know why.

Mavis went with them. Lucky beggar. I wouldn't have minded a ride in a police car.

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