

Comerealot

Why did it have to be me that King Arfer Brain chose to rescue his fair Lady?

Here I am, lost in the forest depths of Comerealot. I am wounded. My pride has ridden off along with my horse and my place in the Knights of the Somewhat Oblong Table must be under threat.

Let me tell you how I came to be here.

I was born in Comerealot, but sadly I lost my parents in a freak boating accident (My dad did tell my mum we needed a bigger boat, she always packed too much). I was adopted by the Lady of Lakeland Catalogue who helped me make my way in this land by advertising SwordShine cleaner and GrassStainBeGone.

I spent my evenings learning the art of swordplay and chivalrous maiden rescues; in the hopes of one day becoming a Knight (I loved their uniforms). I made a fair living as a model but prancing in front of the camera just didn't do it for me. I wanted to be prancing to heroism on my horse that bravely went with me to battle.

The Lakeland Lady noticed as my enthusiasm waned, and was deeply concerned when the new range of boiling pots failed to bring a smile to my face.

'Prancealot, what ever is the matter,' she gargled.

‘My fair Lady, I am grateful for your kindness, but modelling is not what I want to do for eternity. I want to be a Knight.’

‘Then you must go to King Arfer Brain’s court and join the trials. You are master of both horse and sword. You will thrive.’

‘I am honoured by your faith in me; it is by your hand I will succeed.’

So, it was set, my steed and I went forth to the castle to take part in Knight Idol. The first round was a breeze; I had to demonstrate swordplay against an invisible foe. The judge Sir Cowbell said I simply must go through to the second round. Much harsher words I heard him utter to some other contestants, as for the fellow who sliced his own arm open with his sword, Cowbell was in hysterics.

‘I’ve never seen anything so pathetic,’ he wept when he had caught his breath.

Second round was ‘The Rescue’. But again I did well, I fought off all five of the ‘enemy’ guards and rescued a blow-up maiden, my reward; a place in the final round and I got to keep the maiden!

The final round was the most nerve-wracking for me. I had never jousting before. But a jousting tournament it was and the last man left on his horse would be welcomed into the Knights of the Somewhat Oblong Table. My steed and I stared down our first opponents and galloped toward them, boy was that scary, and the lance was bliming heavy. I took the full weight of my opponent’s lance in the chest but I managed to stay on my horse. I turned to find that he was unconscious on the floor.

Round by round the other contestants fell but my steed and I pranced strong and hard to the final, to sudden death. The adrenalin of hearing the

crowd (the final was before a live audience) calling my name was phenomenal. I couldn't let them or Lady Lakeland down, I must win.

My opposition was clad in black, a fierce enemy; none who had jousting against him had escaped injury. I held my lance aloft, and at the drop of the handkerchief charged, charged, charged and... I was on my back, in the dirt. The crowd fell silent, then Cowbell shouted Fight, Fight, and the chanting crowd joined in, Fight, Fight. I scrambled to my feet to see my enemy do the same; he drew his sword and came toward me. This must be what happens when we both fall off, I thought as I ducked his first blow. My sword gleamed; bathed in SwordShine (I got a year's free supply as payment for modelling) and blinded the enemy by redirecting the sun. One swish and he was down and I was Comerealot's Knight Idol. I had succeeded in my desires.

My induction to the Table was smoother than Knight Idol had been; Sir Cowbell was a pussy cat away from the crowds. My skills surpassed many of the other Knights and I was soon off fighting and protecting my King and country. I didn't get my first table meeting until my return from dragon slaying – a messy business. The table was bigger than I could have imagined, and somewhat oblong because of a construction error where one end was narrower than the other. That wasn't the only error as I later found out. The wooden seats were ornate and each decorated with the flag of Comerealot with our names embroidered on them (A gift from Sir Cowbell, stitched by his hand).

As the newest member to the Table I was seated alone at the narrow end. The secret salute began the meeting; we turned away from the table,

stamped our left, then our right foot (what a racket), turned back then slammed down both our fists on the table. As I performed this final salute the table jerked and my flagon of beer flew up into my face. The other Knights found this hilarious; I joined in with their laughing and successfully completed my hazing. One leg of the table was shorter than the other three. After the raucousness died down, Sir Cowbell got out a parchment and slid it under the shortest leg, rendering the table safe, for now at least and for the closing salute I remained dry. I checked for the parchment each time I joined the table after that.

King Arfer Brain, I soon learnt, was a big fan of Knight Idol and he had been following my progress with interest. He attended a Table meeting a year after my initiation and pulled me to one side when the meeting ended.

‘Sir Prancealot, I have a dangerous mission for you, which I believe I can entrust to no-one but yourself.’

‘King Arfer, I would be honoured to serve you and Comerealot.’ Suck up.

‘My love, my fair Lady Giveitere, is returning from a distant place and my wish is for you to meet her in the neighbouring Kingdom and see her safely back to me. Will you accept?’

‘Yes, my King.’

‘Thank You, Prancealot. I must warn you of one thing. My Lady’s beauty is great and you must resist temptation or face death.’

‘You can trust me; I will bring her back, safe and chaste.’

At the following sunrise I rode out toward the Kingdom of Senthreifbad, with a map directing me to Lady Giveitere's rendezvous point. At sunset, I rested, knowing that she was not far from reach.

The next morning I reached the Castle at Senthreifbad and was welcomed by a fanfare and a parade. The Kingdom seemed to be in the midst of celebrations, but no-one would tell me why. The King wept when I announced my task and a page was sent to collect the Lady.

Lady Giveitere glided into the room, her long red locks, more striking contrasted with her flowing pink robes. Her eyes were entrancing and her aroma mingled with those from the crown of white flowers in her hair. No wonder the King wept, he was losing a treasure.

To save him any further sadness I requested that Lady Giveitere accompany me to my steed so we could begin our journey. I trembled as she took my hand, in awe of her and fearful of King Arfer's threat. It was not safe to ride through the celebrating crowds, so we walked to the gate of the castle and as soon as we crossed the moat, the drawbridge was raised and a cheer erupted from inside.

'Lady Giveitere, why do the people celebrate?'

'Sir Prancealot, this Kingdom celebrates me.'

'I thought they would mourn your leaving.'

'I see King Arfer has told you little about me'

'He will be anxious to see you. Do you require assistance to mount the steed?'

'No and if you don't mind, I prefer to ride at the front.'

‘My Lady, this horse is strong-willed; I fear you may not be able to handle him.’

‘I have handled much stronger than him. I ride at the front.’ And with that she mounted my horse with ease, leaving me to mount behind her. She kicked the horse into life and we jolted forwards at a tremendous speed.

‘My Lady, slow down, the horse will not withstand such riding.’

‘King Arfer Brain sends me you. A brave Knight from his Table! You cannot withstand speed, how are you to protect me?’

‘I am proficient in swordplay; fear not, I am armed. The enemy dare not attack.’

‘Be silent, you’re giving me a headache.’

This fair maiden was so beautiful, yet with a harsh tongue that cut as well as my sword. The horse carried us towards Comerealot with such speed that we entered the forest as night fell.

‘Lady, we must rest here, the forest is not safe at night.’

‘Is that right, Prancy Nancy?’

‘I promised the King I would return you safely to him.’

‘And I promised never to steal again – but then again, I’m a liar.’ Lady Giveitere reared up the horse and as I was no longer holding her waist, I was thrown clear. I pulled myself to my feet, using the horse’s reins and called for her to halt. She leaned forward, her face pushed towards mine,

‘Sir Prancealot, it’s been a blast, but no second rate reality contestant is going to accompany me into Comerealot. See you.’

A mouthful of dust later she was gone, and here I am.

I'm feeling pretty sleepy now, so I think I will rest and aim to find my way to the castle at daybreak. I fear for my life if the Lady does not make it back safe.

'What's that, where, who?' I am burbling, woken by the sounds of hooves. King Arfer stares down at me.

'Prancealot, I am disappointed. And you my best, bravest and handsomest Knight.'

'My King, did lady Giveitere not make it to you? She rode off on my horse against my request.'

'She is safe in the castle.'

'Is all not well then?'

'Did you not find her beautiful?'

'She is the fairest maiden I have ever seen.'

'And is she chaste?'

'Yes, my King, I kept my word.'

'Prancealot, you have condemned me. You must leave the Table.'

'Condemned you Sir, to what?'

'A lifetime with that kleptomaniac woman, I thought for sure that she would run away with you. I counted on it. I am miserable and you are banished.'

‘SwordShine, it makes your sword shiny!!!’ As you can see I’m back to
Lakeland modelling, never more to Comerealot.