



## Heavy Weather

*P.G. Wodehouse , Anthony Lane (Introduction )*

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Monty Bodkin, abruptly given the boot by Lord Tilbury, has taken up his secretarial duties at Blandings Castle, home of Lord Emsworth and his adored pig, Empress of Blandings. There, it seems the publication - or otherwise - of the memoirs is becoming a "cause celebre".

Three camps are forming: those who want the book published, those who want it suppressed and those who, including Monty on one side and Percy Pilbeam, private detective, on the other, who have been sent to steal it. Whichever side they're on it's bound to involve blackmail, theft and the abduction of the Empress . . .

## Heavy Weather Details

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## From Reader Review Heavy Weather for online ebook

### Ian Wood says

‘Heavy Weather’ is the fourth book Wodehouse set at Blandings Castle and the first to be part of the Blandings ‘Saga’ following on directly from ‘Summer Lightning’ as a sequel. ‘Heavy Weather’ in fact has the same premise and plot as ‘Summer Lightning’ and with an identical cast and the same romantic leads it is a much a re-write using all the standard Wodehouse ‘business’ that he hadn’t fitted into the first book. ‘Heavy Weather’ is unique amongst the Blandings book as no-one present is posing under an assumed name as all the impostaers were reviled in ‘Summer Lightning’, however Wodehouse has enough stock misunderstandings to keep both the twists and the pages turning.

Central to the plot is that Ronnie Fish wishes to marry Sue Brown but his Aunt Julia will not hear of it, as she has previously appeared in the chorus, and she is putting the ‘bite’ on Lord Emsworth to deny Ronnie the capital he needs to set the thing in motion. Julia is thwarted in her attempts to break up the party by her brother Galahad whom has agreed to not publish his memoirs, which would not only embarrass the Threepwood family but also that of Sir Gregory Parsloe-Parsloe from the neighbouring estate, on the condition the capital is forthcoming.

New to the cast is Ronnie’s Mother, Lady Fish, who has come to add force to the argument against the nuptials. Lord Tilbury, proprietor of the Mammoth publish company, whom we met previously in ‘Bill the Conqueror’ and whom was alluded to in ‘Summer Lightning’ is now on the premises to get hold of the manuscript to ensure publication.

Hugo Carmody has only a cameo in this volume outlining the job of Lord Emsworth’s secretary to his replacement, one Monty Bodkin. Pilbeam is still on the premises allegedly protecting Lord Emsworth’s prize pig. Both Monty and Pilbeam are ex-employees of Lord Tilbury whom wishes to use either of them to secure the manuscript on his behalf. However as respectively Nephew and contractor to Sir Gregory Parsloe-Parsloe they are also under pressure to pass it his way.

It would be naive of anyone thinking Wodehouse couldn’t bring such a irresolvable conflict to a universally happy ending. Another fantastic book from the pen of Wodehouse and although it is possible to follow the plot without first consuming ‘Summer Lightning’ first ‘Heavy Weather’ is best served as the meat rather than the fish course.

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### booklady says

*Heavy Weather* (1933) is the continuation of *Summer Lightning\** (1929). Written within four years of each other, the two books actually encompass a fortnight of time in the life of the characters. As sad as I was to ‘leave’ the fictional Blandings Castle at the end of this my third privileged visit there, I considered what it must have been like to wait for the next P.G. ‘plum’ to be published. Anything like what our generation experienced anticipating the next Harry Potter, or earlier times awaiting their next serial of the latest Dickens?

I read and listened to the Blackstone audio version of *Heavy Weather*. As usual, Frederick Davidson does a

masterful job. You are truly at the castle. You see and hear the characters in all their idiosyncratic nuttiness. My only regret was the book's end. I did *not* want to leave. I found myself reviewing the castle's rules of etiquette, to see if I had broken any—to not be invited back at some future date was the worst of all possible fates! ?

\*Although here on goodreads we show *Summer Lightning* with a 1954 publication date, it was first published in the United States on 1 July 1929 by Doubleday, Doran, New York, under the title "Fish Preferred", and in the United Kingdom on 19 July 1929 by Herbert Jenkins, London. It was serialised in The Pall Mall Magazine (UK) between March and August 1929 and in Collier's (US) from 6 April to 22 June 1929.

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### **Justine Olawsky says**

I love P.G. Wodehouse, because he only wants to give me a good time and a few laughs and he never wants to make me a better person. God bless him!

After *Brideshead Revisited* and two non-fictions about the death industry, I was ready for a gay whirlwind of a book. No one is more frothy and fun than Wodehouse, who always delivers that balm for the reader's soul oppressed by too much sincerity and gravity.

First of all, a Wodehouse jaunt will always throw you right into some screwball action. Silly and overwrought plans will be made by silly and inept young men, usually ones in pursuit of their lady-loves and always ones who are good-hearted, even if somewhat dim. *Heavy Weather* is no exception to this tried-and-true formula. Breathless escapades topple one right on top of the other and witty dialogue ties them all together into a right good story.

There is not too much else to say. Pick a Wodehouse at random, and you really cannot go wrong. He is truly a gift for the ages.

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### **Dan Schwent says**

I'm beginning to think the Blandings Castle books are funnier than the Bertie-Jeeves ones.

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### **Elizabeth says**

My first P.G. Wodehouse--feel that the target audience for *Heavy Weather* was probably your average teenage boy in the 1920s; a group I imagine that was just as hygienically challenged/horrid as teenage boys can be today. Still, the book is "loads" of fun, even for readers far removed from the ven diagram of Wodehouse's original demographic. I enjoyed the way the plot tap-danced from one near miss to another and Wodehouse's language is quite simply fun, fun, fun. I like how he uses dialog such as "Pip pip," and overwrought (but I like over-wrought!) sentences: "It would have pained the immaculate Monty, could he have known that his prospective employer was picturing him at the moment as furtive, shifty-eyed, rat-like person of the gangster, type, liable at the first opportunity to sneak into the sties of innocent pigs and plant pineapple bombs in their bran-mash."

I'm a fan of the J&W television series, and it took a few chapters to banish Hugh Laurie from my mental landscape, but all in all this was a nice light read.

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### **Greg Brozeit says**

“Storms might be raging elsewhere in the grounds of Blandings Castle, but there on the lawn was peace—the perfect unruffled peace which in this world seems to come only to those who have done nothing whatever to deserve it.”

The world of Blandings is one of most popular of Wodehouse's creations that contains many of his most popular character types. Domineering aunts, eccentric uncles, a young couple whose love is constantly interrupted by shallow misunderstandings, a slithering villain, over privileged—but well-meaning—air-headed young men, an unruffled butler, a captain of industry, and of course, a pig.

*Heavy Weather* is among Wodehouse's most satisfying novels. He weaves together the exploits of his characters as only he could toward a joyful, happy ending. For those unfamiliar with Wodehouse with an interest in trying one of his pieces, this is as good a starting point as any. And it is a prequel of sorts to what I consider to be one of Wodehouse's funniest novels, *The Luck of the Bodkins*.

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### **Lady Shockley says**

Monty Bodkin, The Empress, and Blandings castle - it doesn't get much better than this! Delightful.

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### **Diabolika says**

Il tipico umorismo inglese si scatena nella storia di una scalcinata famiglia aristocratica, dove tutti i personaggi sono un po' matti, le disavventure rocambolesche ed i dialoghi da teatro dell'assurdo.

Delizioso, leggero e divertente!

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### **Bokeshi says**

Wodehouse is the sun on rainy days. Ridiculous, glorious, unforgettable!

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### **Jeff Crompton says**

This is the sequel to *Summer Lightning*, aka *Fish Preferred*; the action begins a few days after that book ends. Since I just reread the earlier book, I followed up with *Heavy Weather*. Like its predecessor, this book

represents Wodehouse at his best. As such, it's very funny, but at the same time, it's somewhat more emotional than a typical Wodehouse farce. Through a romantic misunderstanding, two of the main characters are unhappy through much of the book - and I mean deeply unhappy, not Wodehouse funny/unhappy. And one of those characters, Sue Brown, turns out to be the daughter of Dolly Henderson, the only woman Galahad Threepwood ever loved. Gally's disapproving family sent him to South Africa, and by the time he got back, Dolly had married someone else. So in this similar situation, Gally helps Dolly's daughter straighten out her romantic problems, and reminisces about her mother. Read *Summer Lightning* first, then read this one. It's funny and sometimes touching.

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### **John Frankham says**

One of the very best Wodehouse novels.

Perfect plotting, perfect prose, perfect wit - a delight to re-read!

The GR blurb:

'Lord Tilbury's blood pressure is rocketing skywards. The Hon. Galahad Threepwood's decision not to publish his scandalous reminiscences will lose him a small fortune. But he's one of the bulldog breed who don't readily admit defeat.

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### **kaelan says**

*Heavy Weather* has been my introduction to the Wodehousian world of evil aunts, oddball lords and benevolent butlers. The book is the fourth of the Blandings Castle series and forms a direct sequel to *Summer Lightning*. But despite my unfamiliarity with these earlier works, I doubt that my enjoyment of *Heavy Weather* has suffered as a result. For the fun I had whilst reading the novel was not related to its characterization or its plot (the one I found flat, the other predictable). No, what made *Heavy Weather* so ruddy amusing was the the exceptional funniness of Wodehouse's prose: rare was the paragraph that failed to be witty, droll or downright hilarious.

Here's an example that I've picked entirely at random:

Monty Bodkin was rather an attractive popinjay, as popinjays go. He was tall and slender and lissom, and many people considered him quite good-looking. But not Lord Tilbury. He had disapproved of his appearance from their first meeting, thinking him much too well dressed, much too carefully groomed, and much too much like what he actually was, a member in good standing of the Drones Club. The proprietor of the Mammoth Publishing Company [i.e., Lord

Tilbury] could not have put into words his ideal of a young journalist, but it would have been something rather shaggy, preferably with spectacles, certainly not wearing spats. And while Monty Bodkin was not actually spatted at the moment, there did undoubtedly hover about him a sort of spat aura.

So why doesn't *Heavy Weather* deserve more than three stars? My rationale will be best conveyed by means of an analogy. Although *Buffy the Vampire Slayer* is one of my favourite of TV shows, I would be hard-pressed to find a particular episode that I love as much as I love the series as a whole. In other words, the *love-of-a-series* function is more than just the aggregate of *love-of-an-episode(x?, x?, x?, x?, ... )*. In a comparable fashion, I suspect that the affection I felt for *Heavy Weather* was not directed at the novel *as such*, but rather at what I suppose is the Wodehousian universe *at large*, which serves to explain my three-star rating. **Q.E.D.**: I've got to read me some more P.G. Wodehouse.

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### **Maureen says**

the review i wrote for summer lightning, the effective prequel to this novel, sums up my feeling on heavy weather as well. they are interchangeable in my mind but for chronology at this point. to wit,

a link to that review: <http://www.goodreads.com/review/edit/...>

and in the spirit of additional content, here's a different link, to an essay called, "the agonies of writing musical comedy" by the ineffable mr. wodehouse: <http://www.readbookonline.net/readOnL...>

#### wodehouse major character rankings

jeeves and wooster but always together  
uncle fred  
the drones  
ukridge  
mr. mulliner ties golf stories  
blandings  
psmith

(my order of preference, at this point)

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### **Perry Whitford says**

The Reminiscences of Galahad Threepwood, 'as sprightly an old gentleman as was ever thrown out of a Victorian music-hall', promised to be explosive stuff.

So much so that, while publishing tycoon Lord Tilbury can't wait to get his greedy mits on them in anticipation of a huge profit, various eminent figures from Gally's past fear the worst for their reputations, and are just as keen to see the book go unpublished.

Galahad himself decides to defer going to the presses as an act of mollification in order that certain parties might agree to the marriage of his small, pink nephew Ronnie Fish ('like a minor jockey with scarletina') to

the chorus-girl Sue Brown, the daughter of the only woman he ever loved.

Ronnie himself doesn't give a hoot for the memoirs, he just wants the family cash and approbation needed to make the match.

Ronnie's commanding mother, Lady Julia Fish, didn't give a hoot for the Reminiscences either, but she wasn't going to sit by and see her only son married to a chorus-girl.

Ronnie's formidable aunt however, Lady Constance Keeble, did give a huge hoot about both the memoirs and the marriage, and she was determined to bring her considerable influence to bear in order to prevent any scandals.

Ex-employee of Lord Tilbury and Sue's previous intended, fatheaded Monty Bodkin, has his own threatened love match to worry about, but he becomes interested in the Reminiscences when he spots an opportunity to curry favor with his old boss.

Then there's oily private detective Percy Pilbeam, who couldn't give a hoot about marriages but, knowing their value on the free market, would sell his granny for those memoirs.

Which brings us to the head of the family, Clarence Threepwood, the ninth Earl of Emsworth. A dithering personality when it comes to the subjects up for discussion, he couldn't give a two-penny hoot for his brother's book, nor for Ronnie's - or indeed anyone's - marriage.

His monomaniacal mind has room for one thing only: the well-being of his prize pig, the Empress of Blandings. And he has reason to fear for her.

Winner of the prestigious Silver Medal in the "Fat Pigs" class at the local Shropshire Agricultural Show, you can readily understand the Earl's concern when this is the immediate effect the Empress has upon other pig-fanciers:

*'They came, saw, gasped, and went away unhappy, discontented men, ever after to move through life bemused and yearning for they knew not what, like men kissed by goddesses in dreams.'*

One of the earliest of the Blandings novels, *Heavy Weather* is, like all of the books of P. G. Wodehouse, a comedy confection to savor. Idiotic earls, authoritarian aunts, butlers imbued with the feudal spirit, young fops with sundered hearts - all are present and correct in this typically inspired pantomime of pass the parcel.

Generally I prefer my Wodehouse in the guise of Bertie Wooster's first-person narrations, but he can be just as thrilling in the third-person, which allows him to really go to town with the plotting, which is utterly inspired here.

The clouds gather over Blandings, but you just know that everything will turn out just fine again.

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### **Emma Rose Ribbons says**

Marvellous stuff, very charming, cosy and great fun. I do love Wodehouse, and this is one of his best.

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### **Kristyn says**

Listening to Wodehouse is even better than reading him. Jarvis does an excellent job. Merely saying "Monty Bodkin" is enough to improve one's day.

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### **Kressel Housman says**

After reading something that was supposed to be edifying and wasn't, it was sheer fun to read something just for laughs that actually delivered. This is classic, wry British humor – upper crust snobs making fools of themselves in an absolutely ridiculous situation. The situation is this: Sir Galahad, a real man about town in his youth, has written his memoirs, and they include dirty secrets on a whole lot of people. All of them are interested in destroying the manuscript, but the publisher, who knows it's a potential bestseller, is doing his best to get his hands on it, too. Throw in a couple of star-crossed lovers and a half-senile older brother obsessed with his prize-winning pig, and you've got one deliciously convoluted plot.

The whole time I was reading this, I kept thinking how well it would lend itself to a movie adaptation. Well, it turns out that the TV movie was made by the BBC in 1995, starring Peter O'Toole as Sir Galahad. I've given up movies through Chodesh Cheshvan, and planning on cutting down all year, but this one is on my to-see list.

Apparently, the book is a sequel, but it works very well as a stand-alone. So if you're in the mood for something silly yet intelligent, give this a try. You won't be disappointed.

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### **Lindley Walter-smith says**

Pretty much perfect Wodehouse, shimmery and brilliant. Lord Emsworth and Monty Bodkin in the same book, as well as Lady Constance Keeble and Lady Julia Fish, makes for utter adorableness.

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### **Leslie says**

August 2016 reread: One of Wodehouse's finest, full of zany plots and counterplots. I love his humor but have discovered (somewhat to my dismay) that not everyone shares my taste in humor/comedy. If you like Jeeves & Wooster but haven't discovered the delights of Blandings Castle yet, please start with Something Fresh (sometimes titled "Something New") as the comedy builds if you read the series in order. Even so, this is pretty darn funny as a standalone if you like this style of writing!

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### **K. says**

Blandings #4, if you aren't counting short stories (which I'm not, but this edition apparently is).

Love the title. Loved the book. Love to giggle at Wodehouse. Makes such delightful summer reading (or anytime reading) and certainly beguiles tedious moments such as sitting with an IV needle in your arm.

Lady Julia, trying to "wangle" a job for her son who she's trying to coerce NOT to marry what she calls a "chorus-girl."

Lord Tilbury (publisher): "Why do you want him to join my staff?"

"Well, primarily, to distract his mind."

"What!"

"To distract his . . . well, yes, I suppose in a loose way you could call it a mind."

"I don't understand you."

"Well, it's like this. The poor half-wit is trying to marry a chorus girl, and it seemed to me that if he were safe at Tilbury House, inking his nose and getting hustled about by editors and people, it might take his mind off the tender passion."

Lord Tilbury drew a long, deep, rasping breath. The weakness had passed. He could be strong now. This outrageous insult to the business he loved had shattered the spell which those china-blue eyes and that confident manner had been weaving about him. He spoke curtly, placing his thumbs in the armholes of his waistcoat to lend emphasis to his remarks.

"I fear you have mistaken the functions of Tilbury House, Lady Julia."

"I beg your pardon?"

"We publish newspapers, magazines, weekly journals. We are not a Home for the Lovelorn."

///Well, I think that's pretty amusing stuff ...but it may just be me.

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And I have to keep this quote handy whenever the language gets the best of me:

Lord Tilbury to Monty Bodkin (Monty is accusing Tilbury of trespassing on the Blandings Castle grounds): "May I ask what you are doing here yourself?"

"Me?"

"If, as you say, Lord Emsworth is on such bad terms with Sir Gregory Parsloe, I should have thought that he would have objected to his nephew walking in his grounds."

"Ah, but, you see, I'm his secretary."

"Why should the fact that you are your uncle's secretary--?"

**"Not my uncle's. Old Emsworth's. Pronouns are the devil, aren't they? You start saying 'he' and 'his' and are breezing gaily along, and you suddenly find you've got everything all mixed up. That's Life, too, if you look at it in the right way. ..."**

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And I just liked the imagery in this final quote:

"When he had left the Castle, the sun had been shining; but now it was blotted out by a dark rack of clouds. Apparently some minor storm, late for the big event, had come hurrying up and intended to hold a private demonstration of its own. There was a tentative rumble over the hills, and a raindrop splashed on his face. Before he had reached the end of the kitchen gardens, quite a respectable deluge was falling."

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