



Someone To Watch Over Me

Back in 2014 we introduced you to George Bailey, the hapless IT support technician, whom we last saw finally confessing his love for Blodwyn Jones. Fast forward to now, and they're living in wedded bliss with their six year old son, Winston Lloyd George Bailey (as parents, they believed in firing his ambitions early in life). So here's young Winston on his way to school, eyes glued to his mobile phone, about to step straight out into traffic

(Horns blare).

Winston felt himself being yanked backwards by his collar, but just when he should've landed hard on his rear end, he seemed to float onto a nearby grass bank. "What are you doing?!" two voices shrieked at the same time. "My job!!!" both voices replied.

Winston looked up and found an elderly, round-faced man squaring off with a very sparkly blonde-haired woman who wasn't much taller than Winston himself.

"What do you mean, your job?" demanded the man.

"Well ah'm his fairy godmother!" the sparkly woman declared. "Ah'm Loretta!" She pronounced it Low-retta. "An' who might you be?"

"Duw," muttered the man. He drew himself up so that he towered over her. "I'm Emlyn, His Guardian Angel, see? And I've got everything under control, here, so off you trot back to Fairyland."

Loretta gasped. "Ah am his Fairy GODmother, not some mangy billy goat! Why don' you run along back to ... wherever it is you come from?"

"I was here first!" Emlyn glared at her. She glared back.

"Excuse me," piped up Winston politely. "But can either of you do magic?"

Loretta turned to him with a smile.

"Why yes," she said happily. "Ummm, not as such," said

Emlyn, reluctantly.

"Then I think, if you don't mind, I'd rather have a fairy godmother please," said Winston hopefully.

Loretta smiled fondly at Winston, then turned back to Emlyn.

"Well there you go." She blew Emlyn a mocking kiss. "Bu-bye now."

"Oh no you don't. I've been his guardian angel since he was born," protested Emlyn. "I was his father's guardian angel." And believe me, I earned my wings on that one and no mistake.

"Well sugar," Loretta drawled, "you know what they say - you're a rooster one day, feather duster the next. Toodle-oo."

She helped Winston back to his feet and shooed him off towards school, following at a discreet distance. Emlyn trailed along behind her. She turned and scowled at him.

"Oh, ah'm sorry, did we apply for a parade permit?" she asked sarcastically.

"Look you, a boy needs his guardian angel," insisted Emlyn. "There's places I can go that you can't, see?"

"Ah can go anywhere ah please," she said, waving a hand airily. "An' certainly anywhere you can go."

"The boys toilets?" asked Emlyn smugly.

"Oh bless your heart, they have same sex toilets now."

"They have what?" Emlyn was horrified.

They arrived at the school gates and Loretta faltered.

"Well now, what in the wide world ...?"

Emlyn followed her gaze and broke into a broad grin.

"O-ho! Didn't know he was going to a Welsh Language school now, did you then? I think you'll find this is where I take over." He pointed to the sign. "Ysgol Gynradd Pen y Bont. Bridgend

Primary School to you. Well, there's a shame, isn't it though? You're not going to understand a word of what goes on in there."

"Oh pooh, it don' matter none. Ah'll jus' follow him 'round."

"Whereas I will always be prepared by being where he's going to be, because I can read the timetable. Looks like you'll be ... now, what's that colourful phrase they use where you come from? Oh yes, you'll be about as much use as a cat-flap in a canoe. Toodle-oo," he mimicked, with a little finger wave.

"It's a minor setback, is all," shrugged Loretta. "Ah'll have you know ah'm perfectly able to step up to the plate once school is out."

"If someone gives you a ladder maybe," chortled Emlyn, looking down at her diminutive height.

"Oh hardy-har-har."

"I'd have thought with your magic, you'd be able to translate on the fly, see," jeered Emlyn. "Can't you conjure up some kind of universal translator?"

"Ah'm a Fairy Godmother, not a Klingon," she snapped. "Read my lips," he snapped back. "We. Don't. Need. You. I've been looking after Winston since he first drew breath."

"Ah have too!" "Poppycock, madam! I've never seen you before today!"

"Same, ah'm sure. Now why might that be, hmmm?" She tapped her lip with her finger. "Oh, ah know! It's 'cause you're nowhere to be found when he's in trouble!"

"I am ALWAYS there!!" Emlyn thundered.

"Really? Do tell! Then who was it fished him outta the duck pond when he was two?!"

"What? When?!" "March 17th, 2018. 'Bout half past 5 o'clock, as ah recall."

"March 17th, March 17th..... ??? Oh! Oh, c'mon now, that's not fair. I remember now, the rugby was on, wasn't it, but? Five minutes into injury time with the score tied! I was distracted! But okay, where were you when the lad was about

to crash his tricycle into the garden wall, huh? June 24th, 2020. Quarter to four."

Loretta pursed her lips. "Ah recall ah may possibly have been at the beauty salon at that precise moment. Mah roots were showin'!" she said indignantly. "But how 'bout when that tree branch he was sittin' on was fixin' to break?" she countered.

"I was there! I was too there! I just got cramp when I was running," protested Emlyn. "Anyway, were you at the match when the lad nearly got beaned in the head with a cricket ball? I don't think so."

"Whoa! Now you jus' hold your horses, sugar. Ah was there, believe you me."

"Oh yeah? What was the score then?" "Score? Folks actually give 'em scores? Heavens to Betsy, it was so all-fired borin', I jus' clean fell asleep. Anyways, ah didn't see you runnin' to the rescue when his kayak done spring a leak on that campin' trip this last spring."

"All right, butit was me towed him away from that rip tide last summer! And I don't recall seeing you when he was about to fall down that abandoned mineshaft the month before."

"Ah was there! Well ah was nearly there. The heel broke off mah shoe. But ah was surely fixin' to be there!"

"Duw, duw. 'Oh yes, I'll be there now in a minute'," mocked Emlyn. "Don't try pulling that one with a Welshman, madam. We invented it!"

"Well you try runnin' in stilettos!" "I wouldn't be so stupid, which is another reason I'm better suited to look out for the boy. I dress for practicality, see?"

Loretta barked a laugh. "Well it's for sure it's not for style, hon'. That's some butt-ugly vibe you got goin' on there."

"At least I don't dress like an explosion in a glitter factory! How do you think you're going to blend in?"

"Well now why would ah even try? Ah've simply resigned mahself to bein' fabulous, 24/7."

Emlyn's jaw dropped open. She leaned over and pushed it shut. "You'll be lettin' the flies in, sugar."

Emlyn shook himself and went back on the offensive. "Well ... well ... who caught him when the minister dropped him at the baptism? Me, that's who!"

Loretta rolled her eyes. "Well ah did the Heimlich manoeuvre on him at his third birthday party, so there!"

"I've saved him from being run over! A lot!"

"An' ah've fished him outta more swimmin' pools than you can shake a stick at, sugar."

"Oh! Oh! That time he had his head in the oven. That was me!" "Y'all put his head in the oven?!!!"

"No!! I pulled him out!" "Well but when he fell off'a the divin' board"

".... when he was pulling the kettle off the counter ..."

"... when he was playin' with matches ..."

"... duw, when he tried to eat those toadstools ..."

"... Lordy, when he got hisself up on the shed roof an' was fixin' to fall off ..."

"... and what about when he got hold of the paint-thinner and was going to drink it..."

".... oh mah stars, when he went diggin' in that field an' found the grenade!!"

They stopped suddenly, looking at each other.

Emlyn rubbed his chin and eyed Loretta thoughtfully. "You've got to say the lad's a bit disaster-prone, isn't he but?"

"Whoo-eee. Like a lightnin' rod in a thunderstorm, ah swear."

"Look you, let's be honest - it's a full-time job just making sure he survives each day."

"Or" Loretta looked speculatively at Emlyn, "... might it possibly be a job-share?"

Emlyn rocked back on his heels and gave this some thought. "We-e-ell, you know rugby season can be distracting, right enough," he said.

"It surely can, ah've heard that. An' ah may look fabulous, but that don't mean ah don't have to work at it, y'know?"

"I think terms could be reached, don't you?" suggested Emlyn carefully.

"Ah'm sure. But how would we decide? Rock, paper, scissors?" "Around him? Are you serious? Duw! Some of those are dangerous!"

"Y'all know it's just a game, right?" "Are you still fighting over me?" asked Winston, when he found them by the school gates at lunchtime.

"Well mercy, hark at the boy!" said Loretta, ruffling his hair. "Of course we're not, hon'. In fact, we've decided we're both gonna look out for you. Isn't that nice?"

"I guess. But you'll still do magicky stuff, right? Like if I wish for things?" Winston knew exactly

where his priorities lay. "Ah think you're confusin' me with a genie, sweetie. Ah don' do none'a that three wishes thing."

She shrugged. "An' ah don' live in no grubby li'l bottle neither."

"Oh." If he didn't get any wishes, Winston couldn't really see the point in a Fairy Godmother. Or a Guardian Angel. It wasn't like anything ever happened to him.

"So what're you up to this afternoon, hon'?" asked Loretta.

"I've got double PE," said Winston glumly. "Ahhh, rugby," sighed Emlyn happily.

"No, the rugby coach is sick. So they're going to teach us archery." Loretta's fist shot out.

"Rock!" she declared. "What? Where?" Emlyn looked around sharply.

"Ah called Rock." "Yes, I heard you. But why?" Loretta sighed.

"Rock, paper, scissors, hon'. Remember? You have to call one as well."

"Oh. Right. Rock!" "No hon'," she said patiently, "you have to say it at the same time as me. Let's try it again. Ready? One, two, three ... Rock!"

"Rock!!" "Okay, we'll call that one a tie then. Thing is, sugar, you're meant to choose one yourself, not jus' say what I say. See this shape? This is Paper. An' this? This is Scissors. Let's try one more time, huh? One, two, three ... Scissors!"

"Paper!" "Aw shucks, hon', you lose. Scissors cuts paper, see?"

"What?" "Scissors cuts paper, paper covers rock, rock blunts scissors."

"I don't understand!" wailed Emlyn. "Ah'll explain later, sugar, but for now, well, ah'm afraid you lost. He's all yours this afternoon."

She patted his cheek. "An' for mercy's sake, don' let anyone near him with an apple."

