

Alexander Knott

So, I'm getting married. It's been bit of a whirlwind to be honest, I mean, we only got engaged in the Summer and I thought we'd be getting hitched the following year. But Eve, that's my fiancée, has this Aunt who has this husband who's an America politician and apparently he's got a shot at the Democratic nomination in nineteen sixty. Well I don't know much about politics across the pond but there does seem to be an awful lot of campaigning involved and he is going to spend the next year campaigning for the nomination and then after that it's the election. Two years! It's amazing those people achieve anything - actually it's probably better that they don't.

Anyway, Eve. I met her at a do at Cheesy Neate's pad up in Windsor; I was there with all the usual mob, Blimp, Nahnas, Gibbon - actually come to think of it Squealer Lewis couldn't make due to the that unfortunate business with the mangle and Piggie Cameron wasn't there because he'd caught the lurg - but there was enough of the gang there to make it a fun night. Eve was there as a guest of Bunny, Cheesy's sister, and was there with a whole gaggle of other girls. They always seem to travel in packs, don't they? Well, I saw Eve across the room and well - I have no words. Imagine if you can, Aphrodite emerging from the crystal waters of Paphos and then you might have an inkling of the image that melted my mind in Windsor that night. She was simply the most astonishingly beautiful thing I had ever seen. She still is. I made it my sole aim that evening to get to know her and just before ten, I got my chance after that embarrassing incident when Egghead, after having a bit too much sauce, tripped over and pulled down Dumpling's dress revealing her

underwear to the entire ensemble. They got engaged shortly after that.

So while some of the girls were helping Dumpling recover what was left of her decorum and the chaps took Egghead outside for a word in his shell, I saw Eve alone, by the punchbowl and I made my way over and casually introduced myself. I was all fingers and thumbs as you can imagine but she was just perfectly charming, although I thought I'd blown it when she asked me what I did for a living. *Officially* I work for the Ministry of Agriculture, Food and Fisheries so spent twenty minutes talking about scallops. Scallops! I'd met the girl of my dreams and all I could talk about was bloody Scallops! What was I thinking?

Well I fumbled out an invitation to dinner and to my surprise she said yes and a couple of weeks later she invited me down to Stargrove, her family's place in Hampshire. I say family, all she has is her father who's an ex-Colonel in the Royal Hampshire and the Aunt who lives in the States who I've never met although I'm told she's quite a character. There's Nell - some distant cousin who Eve stays with if she's in town, but that's it. Her mother died in car crash, years ago, Eve told me. She doesn't talk much about it and I don't enquire.

So, here we are, a year after that night at Cheesy's on the verge of getting married. Everyone's coming and Egghead has agreed to be my best man - well it down to him really we got together in the first place although Dumpling has given him strict orders that he's to stay away from the booze.

And we won't be serving scallops.

