Having folded his underdrawers on the bedroom chair, Jeeves had scarce picked up his dressing-gown before he heard a mewling cry come trickling from the main bedroom. The dressing-gown was a rather magnificent creation and would have been quite the silliest thing on a lesser man than Jeeves. However, Jeeves would never permit such considerations to colour his actions and the exquisite dressing-gown was donned with its owner’s usual calm efficiency. Being of the efficient sort, it took the merest of moments for those two rather large, very pink beneficiaries of excellent pedicures to be snugly ensconced in slippers. Some poor sheep was undoubtedly shivering on a Welsh hillside, but Jeeves was snug as a bunny, if one can mix one’s metaphors with such gay abandon and complete disregard for all the efforts of one’s Masters at school. Jeeves glided down the main corridor to the bedroom occupied by his employer, a certain Bertram Wooster, called ‘Bertie’ by his friends and ‘that dashed young fool’ by those who knew him rather better than they cared to. The bedroom, or so it seemed by the ululating racket emanating from behind the door, was also occupied by a rather spoilt little boy of approximately five summers.

“Jeeves!” came the peevish cry. “It’s doing it again!”

Bertie was all alone, the plaintive infant’s cry belonging to him and him alone, much to Jeeves’ relief, for he was, after all, a valet and enormously unsuited to nannying. In fact, Bertie had once observed the excellent Jeeves in the presence of a child and thereafter spent the next fortnight delightedly trumpeting the tale of How Jeeves Shuddered. Jeeves pushed the door open and entered the bedroom whilst another high-pitched whine was reverberating, rather piercingly to the old ears, around the room. “It’s been and gone and done it again!”

“May I enquire to what sir is referring?” Jeeves asked in his usual plum velvet tones. He would have sounded quite natural and appropriate if he had been in the Royal Enclosure at Ascot, that is, rather than standing at the foot of a disgracefully untidy bed that contained an appallingly dishevelled man.

“This!” Wooster shouted. One could perhaps, if one were of a less than truly charitable nature or unkind still, if one were a close acquaintance of Sir Roderick Glossop, one could even describe it as an hysterical shriek. One is, however, neither uncharitable nor a friend of Sir Roderick Glossop, so one will simply state that Bertie Wooster was sitting upright in bed, bed-clothes clenched in his raised hands and his voice raised even louder as he shouted for his man.

“Would sir be so kind as to clarify what ‘it’ is and precisely what ‘it’ is doing ‘again’?”

Bertie blushed, quite prettily for a girl, but as he was a long way from a girl, both in geography and anatomy, the blush was not pretty, but as red as a flag to a bull. He mumbled in a manner that, if he heard such unmannerliness, his dear old Pater would tear the few remaining hairs from his pate and weep over all that money mis-spent on tutors.
and schools and the like.

“I do beg your pardon, sir,” Jeeves murmured, for Jeeves rarely merely spoke, “but I failed to distinguish the words of your pronouncement.”

“Oh, dash it all, Jeeves, must I really say it? Must I really permit the filthy words to pass these pure lips?”

“I really do not think it my place, sir, to comment upon the purity of your lips. However, if I am to render you assistance, then I must respectfully request some additional information. As Shakespeare once wrote, ‘a little knowledge—’”

Bertram made a sound authors most commonly, and common authors invariably, render as ‘pshaw!’. “There is a time and a place for everything, Jeeves, and my bedroom is no place for Shakespeare!”

“I shall attempt to keep him in the parlour where he belongs, sir. Will that be all?”

“Yes—NO!” Bertie cried once more, bestowing a morose stare upon the offence taking place under the bedcovers. “There is still this matter. Oh, do help me, Jeeves. You always have an answer for everything, you winkle me out of every scrape I have ever landed myself in, please, don’t let me down on this!”

“I shall endeavour to render sir every satisfaction,” Jeeves responded, blissfully unaware that he was being more than usually prophetic, even for a man of his enormous talents. That last, however, is even more prophetic than Jeeves was to dear old Bertie. Enough of such banter, let us continue with the story.

“I don’t know what satisfaction you can render with this thing,” Bertie said, sighing gustily. “It does this quite often, every bally morning, I must admit. It usually sorts itself out, if I ignore it for a long enough time and simply pretend that nothing exists below the old belt-buckle. Although perhaps that’s not the word I’m looking for. Perhaps I mean that I pretend that nothing exists below the old pyjama ties, because it usually does this every morning. Before I awaken, there it is, ready to ambush me the instant I open my eyes. Quite terrified me the first few times it happened, I don’t mind telling you.”

Now, all Society knows what a treasure Jeeves is, and all Society knows that Jeeves knows everything there is to know, and all Society knows that Jeeves sees all, knows all and says nothing. All Society would still, I put to you, be shocked at what Jeeves was presently knowing.

“I believe the event to which you refer is a normal physiological function of the male member, sir.”

Bertie turned redder than a sunset at sea and his mouth gaped wider than a caught fish. “That’s silly, Jeeves. How can it be normal?”

“I am merely expressing the opinions of several learned men who are leaders in their field which is medicine and the human anatomy, sir.”

“But still, it seems deuced odd to me. Anyway,” Bertie shrugged as best he was able with his hands still lifted on high with the bedclothes wrinkled over them, “Nanny told me all about it, and when was Nanny ever wrong? Hmm? Go on, Jeeves, tell me one instance, just one, when Nanny was wrong?”

Jeeves, impressively well-mannered, made no comment. “I am quite sure I could not do such a thing, sir. May I ask the occurrence that precipitated Nanny’s pronouncements?”

“Must I?” Bertie whimpered.

Jeeves, ruthless in his search for knowledge, nodded.

“Oh, very well,” Bertie sighed. “It was when I was but a lad. One night, I was awakened by the most peculiar sensation. At first, I thought the earth had moved under me, but not another soul was up and about. Oh, I listened, but there wasn’t a single sound, apart from some dratted squirrels or bats or some such creature scuttling around whimpering and moaning.”

Once more, proving what a sterling fellow he was, Jeeves offered no comment. It was not, in that worthy’s opinion, his place to shatter the innocence of his master by drawing his attentions to truths of a somewhat carnal nature, if one can forgive the use of such language.

“Anyway, in the morning, after the chambermaids changed the linens on my bed, Nanny called me up to her rooms.”

“Then you were no longer in her charge, sir?”

“Of course not! I was far too old for that! But you know how it is with Nannies. One grows very attached to them, and she had been in the family for years.”

This gave rise to another opinion which Jeeves preferred not to utter. It smacked too much of disloyalty to comment that if Nanny, whom he had met on several less than auspicious occasions, had been with the family for years, then that fact...
would go a rather long way in explaining why the entire Wooster brood was a trifle odd.

“You were saying, sir?” Jeeves prompted, still preferring not to do anything so commonplace as speak.

“Oh, yes, where was I? Up in Nanny’s rooms, with her giving me some lecture in botanics. Is that the word I need, Jeeves? Botanics, or something that covers flora and fauna. Or is it something else entirely? Are bees fauna, Jeeves?”

Jeeves drew himself up to his full and impressive height, tucked his hands behind his back and took a deep breath. This was a pose everyone, and most particularly Mr. Bertram Wooster, was familiar with as being Jeeves’ lecture pose. Bertie raced hurriedly into speech. “Not that it matters too terribly much, I suppose. So there I was and there she was, and she was rabbitying on about birds and bees and needing to shave and going blind. Well, as you can imagine, it took me quite a bit of time to sort all this jumble out, and Nanny, being a dear, took pity on me and explained it all to me again.”

“May I enquire as to the details of this explanation, sir?”

“I’m surprised that you need me to tell you all about it, Jeeves. I thought you were quite the man of the world. But a man can’t leave his fellow man wallowing in ignorance, so I shan’t spare my blushes. Well,” he lowered his voice and whispered, so quietly that Jeeves couldn’t make out a word of it until Bertie patted the bed and gave him permission to sit thereupon. “As I said, Nanny told me about how it, you know, that thing down there, sometimes rises up. Well, that’s because it’s an instrument of Satan and we all know how often the Bible tells us Satan’s instruments of Evil will rise up and smite the good?”

Jeeves nodded, far too stunned to make any comment on this, which was rather a pity, for he had thought of another substitute for ‘said’.

“It turns out,” Bertie mused, using the word Jeeves had been saving for himself, “that it, one’s membrum virile,” he broke off there to wipe the sweat from his forehead. Dashed difficult work, this explaining all this and having to actually utter the naughty words. “It rises up and when it does, one must not, absolutely must not touch it. You see, if one were to touch it, then one would be aiding Satan by spilling one’s seed on the ground. And we all know what a sin that is.” He sat back, rather puffed up with pride at having delivered such a difficult lecture so well.

Jeeves said nothing for quite a few moments. In fact, so many moments passed that Bertie was beginning to wonder if Jeeves would need to borrow a thesaurus before he opened his mouth again. But then, at last, Jeeves postulated: “However, I believe that the continuation of this situation has become an ever enlarging problem for you, sir.”

“And never a truer word was spoken.”

Jeeves winced at such a banal and simple verb being applied to his prestigious pronouncements, but being of a generous and forgiving soul, he immediately reminded himself that this was, after all, Bertie Wooster speaking and certain allowances should therefore be made for the dear, sweet thing. “If I may be permitted, sir,” Jeeves continued, not by one flicker of a hair revealing any of the thoughts racing round his mind, and certainly being far too subtle for Bertie to uncover his secrets, “there is, I believe, an honest and moral solution to this increasing problem.”

“I was hoping that you, of all people, Jeeves, would come up with something just the teensiest bit cleverer than that old solution. I suppose there’s nothing else for it.” He heaved an enormous sigh, dropped the bed-covers whence they immediately formed either a small mountain or a very large molehole (depending on one’s point of view and list of comparative experiences) over his lap. With an expression of pathos upon his handsome features, Bertie stretched his hands out in front of himself and remained in this odd position, apparently not only waiting for Jeeves to do something, but expecting Jeeves to know that something was.

Faith in one’s abilities is always flattering. However, it can be somewhat bemusing when that faith is blind to the point of obscuring the issue so thoroughly that one is hard-pressed to have even the faintest idea of what is expected of one. Fortunately for Bertie Wooster, Jeeves was not as the rest of us mere mortals, but a man of singular intelligence and more importantly, a considerable acquaintance with Bertie’s mental machinations.

“I assume you are indicating, sir, that Nanny was in the habit of placing either mittens or boxing gloves on your hands when you retired for the evening?” Jeeves presumed in a very understanding voice.
“Red ones. Until she discovered that the wool was simply too soft to beat back Satan’s rising instrument of evil.”

“There are some who would say that soft, woollen mittens can be a positive asset in the matter of beating rising members. However, I do not believe that the answer to your problem is to run from Satan’s wickedness.”

“Gosh!” A wide smile of enormous gratitude spread across Bertie’s face, animating him rather. “I knew I could depend on you! You are such a dear chap.”

“Thank you, sir,” Jeeves acknowledged.

“But Jeeves, before you, well, you know, solve this little problem for me, there is one thing I would really like to ask you. It’s above and beyond the call of duty, of course, and you don’t have to answer and I’ll be happy to pretend I never so much as mentioned it and simply sweep it under the carpet, if that wouldn’t offend your housekeeping standards, but really, do you have the same battle that I do?”

“Indeed, sir,” Jeeves replied smoothly. “I believe it is a problem endemic to the male of our species and it is therefore a source for constant alertness. As I was explaining to you a few moments ago, sir, I believe I have a solution not only for your problem, but also for mine. As Nanny said, one really must not touch one’s own member when it has risen in such a manner.”

“Don’t I just know it,” Wooster agreed.

“Then may I suggest that we assist one another in this matter of such extreme delicacy?”

“How?” Bertie queried, breathless, a fact not entirely unexpected due to the manner in which Jeeves was administering him one of his chest massages.

“If we enjoin this battle together, sir, then we shall surely defeat Satan’s rising power. You will lay your hands upon my member, I shall do the same to yours, and thus, Satan will be routed, the rising tower shall be cast down once more, and as we will not have touched his power with our own hands, we shall be protected by the strength and goodness that comes from sacrificing oneself for one’s fellow man,” Jeeves explicated, also more than a little breathless, a state undoubtedly caused by his continuing massages which had moved from Bertie’s chest to Bertie’s back. This move made it necessary, of course, for Jeeves to press Bertie against his chest that his arms might reach round far enough to soothe the tensed back muscles. This was a service Jeeves had been providing for some months now, and dashed effective it was too. The molehill was gone, and it was definitely a mountain that remained, a fact to which Jeeves was only too willing to attest.

“So what you’re saying, old chap, is that united we stand, divided we fall, in essence.”

“Yes, sir, that is precisely my position,” Jeeves lied, proceeding now to a massage of the gluteus maximus. Understandably, Bertie wound his arms around Jeeves’ neck, for it was nigh near impossible to remain on one’s posterior if one wished to have a gluteal massage at all, and Bertie was rather fond of the full treatment received in return for full access.

“Oh, well, then, why don’t we get on with it then?”

“Certainly, sir. May I assist you with your pyjamas?” Jeeves enquired, slowly releasing his hold on Wooster.

“Oh, pish, Jeeves, I can bally well take my own jammies off. Now, go on, you do the same. I shan’t have the courage to do this if we don’t do it together.” A considerable amount of huffing and puffing from the bed, and Bertie was, eventually and at a considerable cost to his hair-dressing, denuded of those impediments called pyjamas. “I say,” he said, “d’you think it really is necessary to doff the old jim-jams?”

“Absolutely, sir,” Jeeves indicated in a low voice that had the most peculiar effect on Bertie. “If we were to remain clothed, how would we see if Satan did, indeed, get himself hence behind us?”

“Hmm, that is true, I suppose. Oh, well, it doesn’t matter, does it? What’s done is done, or it would be, if you were done, but you’re not, so it isn’t, is it?”

Jeeves, slippers discarded, stood up once more and removed his pyjama bottoms, revealing his own bottom in the process. Having folded his pyjamas neatly across the foot of the bed, he turned towards his master.

“Oh, I say!” Bertie exclaimed. “Satan must really want to defeat you, you poor old thing. Do come here and let me help you.”

Jeeves was in this, as in all things pertaining to the service of his master, more than willing to accede to Bertie’s wishes. He turned the bedcovers down, revealing the root of Bertie’s problems and
the answer to many a prayer of his own.

“Snuggle up, Jeeves,” Bertie pleaded as soon as they were both under the covers. “No need in making this any harder than it already has to be. Yes, yes, I know, it’s not exactly the done thing for a valet to lean on his master so, but I really don’t mind. After all you’re doing to help me, I’d be a cad to complain about a bit of indecorousness, wouldn’t I? Now, what is it we must do?”

“If you will permit me, sir, I will do what’s necessary and if you would be so kind as to echo my movements, I’m sure that we will find that to be a most satisfactory solution to our dilemma.”

“Oh,” Wooster erupted in surprise as his problem rubbed against Jeeves moral dilemma, “I think you’re right as always!”

“Thank you, sir,” Jeeves gasped, somewhat distracted by the solving of their mutual distress to their mutual satisfaction. “It is always my intention to please you.”

He was certainly succeeding in this laudable goal, as witnessed by the breathless sighs and high-pitched moans coming from the throat of his master.

“Oh, Jeeves,” that worthy sighed, “I would never have believed that sacrificing oneself could bring such joy. Is this,” his voice broke as he copied a particularly effective blow against Satan’s rising power, “is this what the books call an ecstasy?”

Jeeves was pressing his advantage home, and much to his relief, Bertie was matching him stroke for stroke. “Oh, yes, yes, yes!” Jeeves ejaculated.

Bertie lost no time in echoing him in this either, although his ejaculation owed nothing to the verbal and everything to the physical.

“You know, Jeeves,” Bertie murmured sleepily, moving readily as his valet mopped those regions requiring the attentions of a damp cloth and some rather extraordinary attentions from his devoted manservant, “I believe we must, as the Bible charges us to do, be ever vigilant in this battle.”

“Indeed, sir,” Jeeves agreed, smoothing his master’s pyjamas into place and retreating a slight distance to don his own pyjamas and exquisite dressing-gown before returning to his master’s side.

“Hmm, yes. In fact, I think we need to make absolutely certain that we practice every day.”

“A very wise move, sir. Also, if I may be so bold, I believe it behooves us to wage an ever increasing campaign, instigating new techniques at frequent intervals,” Jeeves finally merely said, too worn out by his earlier ejaculation to bother with verbal variety.

“What a brilliant plan, Jeeves, dear chap. I couldn’t agree more.”

Sanguine, though less spunky than usual, Jeeves was impassive as he politely disported his master in bed. Not by one flicker of an eyelash did Jeeves reveal his self-congratulation, which was probably for the better. For, unbeknownst to Jeeves, Mr. Bertram Wooster was not quite as great a fool as the world supposed him, which is hardly surprising, for a rock is not so stupid as the world supposes Bertie to be. Gosh, Bertie thought as Jeeves tucked him in again, that bally book I found in Mr. Johnson’s back shop really was a treasure. I wonder what other ideas I’ll find in there…