

Dead Man Walks

This is a sketch about the resurrection

Editor of the Sunday Courier (E) and Jackie (J), a Junior Reporter

E Come in Jackie. Now the reason I've asked you in is that I'm a bit concerned about this feature you have written for the Sunday Supplement.

J Oh? I really thought the article was quite sensational

E It is in a way but it's all a little too unusual. "Dead man walks!" seems to me to be a little dramatic.

J I wouldn't say so. I think someone who was dead and comes back to life is a genuine human interest story.

E Yes, but it opens us to all sorts of accusations about truthfulness

J And when has that ever worried you? Aren't you the guy who believes that we should never let the truth get in the way of a good story?

E True, but I always have problems with religious stories. They never sell newspapers.

J I don't know. I think we did well with the naughty vicar story last year. I thought your headline "Frock girl defrocks guy" was a masterpiece.

E I know. But your story is just a bit beyond truth. I don't run a fiction supplement. There are plenty of other explanations for the disappearance of this guy's body from the grave it would seem to me.

J Not really. It was sealed and guarded.

E So – the authorities may have taken it away to stop his followers making the tomb a meeting place. Obvious I think.

J So why didn't they just admit to that when his followers started to say he had come back to life? That would have stopped them in their tracks.

E Mmm. I hadn't thought of that - besides in your article you say that the authorities actually claim that his followers stole the body. So there it is. Pretty obvious really. They go to the tomb, chase the guards off, nick the body and away.

J So why haven't they been arrested? They've even been in custody a few times for other things like preaching without a licence but they've not been nicked for tomb raiding. That's a serious offence. And they're still going around talking saying the guy's alive.

E So they're lucky! Come on. A few guys nick the body, make up a tale and fool the nation. Police get tied up with red tape and can't do much. Do you see what I mean? It's just a flimsy story. So the body disappears. Let's just put it in a simpler story of "Missing body riddle". Better still, perhaps it should be "Scandal of Grave Robbers: why are these men still at large?" Now that's a biggie which will sell lots of print.

J But that doesn't explain the sightings.

E Sightings?

J Yes, over 500 people claim to have seen him.

E So – more people than that have claimed to have sighted Lord Lucan so that means nothing!

J At the same time? And when they can talk to him and examine his wounds?

E There's an easy explanation for that. He didn't die! He just went unconscious and when they put him in the tomb he revived, pushed the entrance open, freaked out the guards who thought he was a ghost and away. He goes to his followers and says - "look at me! I'm alive – I must be God!!"

J But consider this. He suffered extreme trauma, excessive blood loss from wounds on his limbs and from being impaled through his chest. He's pronounced dead by the authorities and the body released for burial where it is bound up with bandages mixed with preservative spices. He then revives in the tomb, gets the bandages off, pushes a half ton stone away.

E Hey! What a story, what a headline! "Superman lives!"

J But that just isn't it is it? With those wounds he had to be dead as a dodo. People who've had a stake plunged through their chest don't usually come back to tell the tale.

E So who is this guy then?

J He claims to be the Son of God and he's now gone back to heaven. God has raised him from the dead and now he's gone to live with him.

E How convenient! The guy comes back to life and then disappears. See what I mean? I hate religious stories. Just when they are getting interesting, the person you really want to speak to is "unavailable for comment".

J But his followers claim that he can be known today. You see, millions of people claim to know his presence and power in their lives today. They can talk to him and he speaks. He even does amazing and miraculous things. They claim that everybody can get to know him and that he can transform their lives.

E So why haven't I ever heard of it?
J Because you can't be bothered to take an interest – because religious stories don't sell print.
E Well that's interesting. But how am I going to fit this into a half inch item in one column.
J You mean that's all I've got?
E Yes. I meant to tell you – your article is too long.
J But I can't tell it in half an inch.
E Well I can. Headline: "Missing Body Riddle" Text: "Authorities are baffled at the disappearance of the body of Jesus. Some people claim he is alive."
J But that's ridiculous. This is a story that could change people's lives and you put in that bland statement.
E Look, people aren't interested in something that's life changing. They much prefer the sort of tat I'm going to put on the rest of the page.
J And what's that.
E It's an articles on David Beckham's changing haircut. How much has Posh influenced his style? Now that's real human interest!
J But ... what about Jesus?
E What about him? I don't want to know about him unless he does something spectacular.
J He changes lives. He transforms communities. He heals people. He raises people from death. What's more spectacular than that?
E Well, perhaps he could get our circulation up to 5 million? Now be a good girl and go and follow up the story about Michael Howard being a vampire. It's much more our sort of thing.
J But it's so trite
E Then I suggest you get a job with The People's Friend and you'll learn what trite is.
J Bah! (*exits*)

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