

FLIRTING WITH VOCABULARY

By JoAnn Baca

A couple of years ago, Batbland issued a writing challenge: Write a B&B story of max 2000 words including all of these words: lovely, proper, beautiful, swell, absurd, flawless, unique, precious, hullabaloo, scrumptious, dandy, squabble, secure, contemplate, audacity, lousy, embrace, likely, inflection, pompous, sleepy, plump, efficacy, omit, loath, abominable, balderdash, peckish, skedaddle, thrall, winsome, mayhap, evolve, purpose, behalf, thankful, gruesome, residency, tangible, superfluous, great (in size), gumption, fetching, enormity, discombobulate, intrude, cleave, beam, eminent, accuracy, delightful, breathtaking, worthy, solitude, enthralled, sorrowful, taught, resplendent, dictate, present, regardless, mimic, realm.

Sixty-three words!

And nobody had taken up the challenge as of today.

Which was a challenge in itself! Thus...this story.

“How many did you get right?”

Samantha was smirking as she asked, so Geoffrey knew she believed her precious test score was likely higher than his. She had a lot of gumption acting so pompous; in fact, her audacity was breathtaking. He had been taught by Vincent not to swell with pride about getting good grades, that it wasn't proper. And he knew his spelling accuracy was nearly flawless. Well, he wouldn't let her discombobulate him and dictate his own attitude.

“How could I omit the third ‘u’ in ‘superfluous’?” he said, sorrowful. “But I did remember not to add an ‘e’ to the end of ‘loath,’ which made me thankful.”

Samantha kept up her abominable attitude. "I'm betting you missed 'gruesome' and 'skedaddle' and probably 'hullabaloo,'" she said, fetching some of the harder words off the vocabulary test.

Regardless of his earlier intention, he realized there was no purpose in declining to engage in this present squabble, so he plunged in on behalf of every other student with whom she was supercilious. Mayhap he could prove to her what a worthy student *he* was, at least. "Look, I hate to intrude on your lovely dream wherein you contemplate how unique and eminent your spelling skills are. But that's balderdash!"

At her absurd shock over his words, he pushed forward, determined to mimic her attitude while proving that her residency in the resplendent realm of superiority was a lousy one. She needed to evolve in a tangible way.

Geoffrey's main problem was that he was enthralled by Samantha's winsome charms – she could be delightful in great measure, and she was beautiful - he might even call her scrumptious. In his solitude at night, he could admit she held him secure in her thrall, and the enormity of that problem was evident now. He wanted to see her eyes beam whenever she saw him, and for her to embrace him and cleave to him.

While he was contemplating the efficacy of putting her in her place while he was simultaneously hoping to attract her as his girlfriend, something dandy happened; she relented!

"Look, I'll admit I spelled 'inflection' wrong, okay? I know I'm not perfect. I'm sorry I made you mad. I guess I'm just a little sleepy and I get cranky when I am." Slipping her hand into his, she tugged him along the path to the Dining Chamber. "I'm feeling peckish and you could stand to be a bit more plump. Will you sit with me at dinner?"

Geoffrey didn't quite know what had happened. This must have been the first time in history that a vocabulary test had made a girl like a boy!