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How MRS POMFROY Won the Tour de France



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HOW MRS POMFROY WON THE TOUR DE FRANCE

written by

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Synopsis

The genteel ladies of an English cake club contrive to win the Tour de France as it passes through their village. And after a fashion, with the aid of a slippery banana skin, succeed.

Cast of Characters

MRS GREEN	
MRS POMFROY	
MRS ABLE	
MRS DAVIS	
CYCLIST 1	Male
CYCLIST 2	Male
CYCLIST 3	Male
TRAINER	Male
RADIO COMMENTATOR	
ANGRY FRENCHMAN	

Props

Scene 1

Cake on a stand
Plates for each female character
Cake knife
Comfortable chairs for the women
Tea pot
China cups on saucers for the women characters
Jug of milk
Old bicycle
Cycling helmet and yellow jacket for MRS POMFROY
Padding for MRS POMFROY
Map

Scene 2

T-shirt marked “Trainer”
Towel for the TRAINER
Cycling posters
Massage table with blanket
A couple of bikes propped against the wall (optional)
A map to unfold

Scene 3

Low table
Four comfortable chairs
Maps for cyclists

Scene 4

Small radio
Bunch of bananas
Two banana skins
Four small flags
Three additional helmets

ACT I

Scene 1

Setting: A village hall.

At Rise: The female characters sit in a half circle, in soft chairs. A cake, plates and knife are on a low table. There is a pot of tea and a jug of milk. Each woman has an agenda sheet. They are all eating cake. Gentle dignified background music plays.

MRS ABLE

More tea, Mrs Davis?

MRS DAVIS

Thank you, dear. And another slice of your delicious cake, if I may.

(MRS ABLE pours tea and passes it to MRS DAVIS.)

MRS ABLE *(giggling)*

Oh, Mrs Davis. You are so naughty. A moment on the lips and a lifetime on the hips, you do know that, don't you?

(MRS DAVIS helps herself to cake.)

MRS DAVIS

Oh, I do, Mrs Able, I do, but it's simply too divine, isn't it? You tempt me so.

MRS ABLE

Will you be standing for the parish council again, Mrs Green, dear?

MRS GREEN

I certainly will, Mrs Able. And I hope you'll support me. So few people these days want to fight the good fight.

MRS DAVIS

The good fight, Mrs Green? You sound as though you're planning to become archbishop.

MRS GREEN

Don't be ridiculous, dear. We positively have to stop those hooligans shouting at the ducks like that.

MRS ABLE

Can you pass a by-law against that? Against shouting at ducks? It doesn't sound the sort of thing that would go up to the United Nations, not to me it doesn't. I don't see some sort of Camp David accord about it.

MRS GREEN

Now you're being insulting, dear, and I won't have it. So far as I'm concerned, it all went to pot when they started building garages on council houses. Labour, of course.

MRS DAVIS

Perhaps we should change the subject.

MRS GREEN

(with a sycophantic smile)

Yes, indeed. Let's. Now tell me, dear, how are those delightful grandchildren of yours?

MRS ABLE

Oh, they're just adorable. Robert is top of his class at school. Well, almost at the top, although I'm afraid there was that unfortunate incident with the gym teacher.

(The others look up in shock.)

MRS GREEN

There was?

MRS ABLE

(hurrying the conversation along)

Yes, there was. But the teacher got her knickers back and the school said it'd say no more about it. And Gemima came top of maths and she's deputy head of netball, you know.

MRS DAVIS

(with a mouth full of cake)

Oh, how splendid. You know, I was going to bring you up to date on Mr Davis's lumbago. He's a martyr to that, my Mr Davis is. You know, he was on his allotment the other day, watering his begonias, when...

(She is interrupted by the noisy arrival of MRS POMFROY, dressed in a cycling helmet and bright yellow jacket, her trousers tucked into her socks. She is padded to give an impression of fatness. She parks her ancient bicycle against a wall and joins the others.)

MRS POMFROY

Oh, I'm so sorry, ladies. So sorry. I'm late. It's that lollipop lady in the High Street. She really is a slow-coach. Why she has to pat every child on the head, I really don't know. I'll write to the council. And the Ratepayers. Anyway, I'm here now. Have I missed much?

MRS GREEN

Not at all, Mrs Pomfroy. Do come and join us. We were about to draw up the cake roster. Have you tried Mrs Able's latest? It really is heavenly.

(She helps herself to another slice.)

MRS GREEN

We can't take important decisions like that unless we're all here, can we? The cake roster, I mean. It's as well that you're here, Mrs Pomfroy. Look what happened that last time. We chose Victoria sponge, Mrs Leadbetter came in late, saw what we'd done without her and walked out.

MRS POMFROY

Will she come back, do you think?

MRS GREEN

I really don't think so. She wanted White Cake and Vanilla, you know, with sprinkles on top. Wouldn't hear of it, Victoria Sponge.

MRS POMFROY

Oh, that's getting carried away, that is. Sprinkles! There's such a thing as going too far, if you ask me.

MRS ABLE

I saw her in Waitrose the other week. Wouldn't so much as look at me. I looked at her, though. She was buying cream crackers and Instant Whip. I ask you! How a woman who can walk out over a Victoria sponge could then buy herself Instant Whip, well...

MRS DAVIS

We must maintain our standards, ladies, maintain our standards.

(She stands.)

Anyway, I declare this meeting of the Upper Mordlake Gateau Society open. Thoroughly open.

(She sits and looks at MRS GREEN, who is paying more attention to the cake than the meeting.)

MRS DAVIS

Thoroughly open, I said. Rather like Mrs Green's mouth, I notice. Dear Mrs Green, please do concentrate on matters in hand, there's a dear.

MRS GREEN

(with a mouthful of cake)

So sorry. You were saying?

MRS DAVIS

I was saying, dear Mrs Green, that this meeting of the Gateau Society is now open. You'd know that, dear, if you'd been concentrating. We've started on agenda item one. Now, then, can we take Upside Down Cake as read?

MRS GREEN

There is no need to insult me, Mrs Davis. You are addressing the vice-chairman of the parish council and secretary of the Upper Mordlake cat's home.

MRS DAVIS

Very well, dear, very well. Now, Upside Down Cake, everybody?

MRS ABLE

As read.

MRS GREEN

Agreed.

MRS POMFROY

I vote for.

MRS DAVIS

And we can call on you once more, Mrs Green?

MRS GREEN

With pleasure, Mrs Davis. My Herbert loves upside-down cake. What we don't finish, he can have for his tea. When he's not out at the Old-Time Gramophone Society, anyway.

MRS DAVIS

Then we shall pass on to item two on the agenda. Will you read it for us, please, Mrs Green?

MRS GREEN

(pompously, and looking at her agenda)

Item two: how our grandchildren are getting on.

MRS ABLE

I think we can skip that, can't we? I don't think we need to go over the gym teacher's knickers again, do you?

MRS GREEN

(with a polite cough)

Quite so, quite so. It was embarrassing then and it's best finished and done with now. My Herbert was shocked. Shocked.

MRS POMFROY

(quietly but able to be heard)

Surprises me she wears any, the hussy.

(The others smirk.)

MRS GREEN

Item three, then: where we're all going on our holidays.

(They all look pleased.)

MRS ABLE

Well, us, we're going to Greece to see the ancient monuments.

MRS POMFROY

(quietly but audibly)

You'll be well at home there, dear.

MRS ABLE

What did you say?

MRS POMFROY

I said it'll be hell at home without you, dear. Much better you see the Acropolis and travel back in time.

MRS GREEN

(quietly but audibly)

She'll be used to that, her age, being back in time.

MRS ABLE

What?

MRS POMFROY

She said she hoped you'd be home in time, dear.

MRS ABLE

Home in time for what?

MRS POMFROY

Well, er...er...For the Tour de France, of course. It's coming through the village. Right past Waitrose and up past the cake shop. I saw it in the paper. Didn't you see it ? Somewhere to somewhere else, it said, right up the High Street. Before it goes to France, you see. It's big in France, the Tour de France is.

MRS ABLE

And why's it coming here if it's the Tour de France?

MRS DAVIS

They eat snails in France, don't they? Disgusting I call that. And croissants. You tried them? We had croissants once in Paris. Soggy things you'd find down an old man's trousers. How a country can invent the Rights of Man and not manage a decent fruit cake baffles me.

MRS ABLE

Will they all be French?

MRS GREEN

Will all who be French?

MRS ABLE

All those Frenchmen in the Tour de France. Will they all be French?

MRS POMFROY

Well, of course they'll all be French. The French ones, anyway. They'll be French. But there'll be Belgians and Germans, too, I expect. And Italians.

MRS DAVIS

I can't stand the French, me. Especially their toilets. No wonder they widdle in the street. Can't be doing with that. But Italians. That's different. They're lovely, Italians. I mean, not Mussolini, he wasn't, obviously, but the rest of them, yes.

MRS ABLE

That bloke in the restaurant's a bit of all right, isn't he?

MRS GREEN

Giuseppe? You know his real name's Kevin, don't you? He worked in the tyre-fitters down Station Road until he went on a course to boil spaghetti. I was all against that, me. It's, well, it's not normal, is it?

MRS DAVIS

That Brigitte Bardot's French, isn't she? And who's that French bloke, him with the blue eyes. Alan someone.

MRS POMFROY

Alain Delon that is. Was, anyway. Died a while back and didn't leave me as much as a château. The least he could've done, that is, leave me a château, given the fortune I gave him in cinema tickets. Ooh, I fancied him something rotten. If they were all like that, I'd move to the Riviera tomorrow.

(They eat more cake.)

MRS DAVIS

And they shave their legs, don't they?

MRS GREEN

Who do? Alain Doodah and Brigitte Barmaid?

MRS DAVIS

No. Those Frenchmen in the Tour de France. I've seen them on telly. All smooth legs and baby lotion, they are. I don't hold with that, me. It's not natural. I said to my Albert, "Albert, you've got to promise me right now that you're not going to start shaving your legs".

MRS GREEN

And what did he say?

MRS DAVIS

He said "Shave my legs, you daft woman? You think I'm going to start shaving my legs at my age? These legs won me the knobbly knees at Butlin's. I'm not about to change a winning formula now, am I?"

MRS POMFROY

Oh, I didn't know he won the knobbly knees. He's a dark one, your Albert, isn't he?

(They laugh.)

MRS ABLE

Is there anybody British taking part?

MRS DAVIS

In the knobbly knees?

MRS ABLE

No, this Tour de France business.

MRS POMFROY

I don't know. Probably. A British fella won it once. Barry Higgins, his name was.

MRS GREEN

There's a Barry Higgins in the allotment society.

MRS DAVIS

Well, I hardly think that's him, do you? I saw him in shorts once. School fete, it was, on the apple-bobbing. That stand where you have to get apples out of water with your teeth. His legs are bandy, I can tell you that much. And they're certainly not shaved.

MRS ABLE

Oh yes, I remember that. He got so splashed he looked like he'd pissed himself.

ALL

Mrs Able, really!

MRS ABLE

True, though, isn't it? Don't tell me you didn't look. It showed all his...

(They laugh.)

MRS POMFROY

No, it wasn't Barry Higgins. Bradley Wiggins, that's who it was. Tall bloke with sideburns like Elvis. Didn't sound like Elvis, though. None of your uh-huh-huh like Las Vegas. More London barrow-boy, if you ask me. Got to Paris and told all the British fans not to get drunk.

MRS ABLE

Will he be in it again? It's just that I'd like a drink if he won.

MRS POMFROY

Nothing's stopped you having a drink any other time, has it? Anyway, no, he's not in it this time. He's stopped.

MRS DAVIS

Well, you would, wouldn't you? It'd puff you out, doing something like that every day. And you'd get tired shaving your legs all the time, wouldn't you? Up every morning and on with the Philishave. Imagine that.

(The others look pointedly at her legs and raise their eyebrows.)

MRS DAVIS

You'd be daft to do it again, wouldn't you? Especially if you've already been to Paris and you don't like croissants.

MRS ABLE

(quietly but audibly)

Well, you clearly do, dear.

MRS DAVIS

What did you say?

MRS ABLE

I said that you have a clear view...of society and so on.

MRS GREEN

We should put up red, white and blue pennants just in case. In case anyone round here's taking part. Patriotic, that'd be. The parish council would be for it.

MRS POMFROY

On condition they didn't frighten the ducks, you mean?

(All but MRS GREEN laugh. She silences them with a glare.)

MRS POMFROY

No, it's the Tour de France, isn't it? It's blue, white and red over there.

MRS ABLE

Same thing, isn't it? Depends where you start looking. Red, white, blue, one way, but then if you start with blue, it's blue, white and red. They'll do anything to be awkward, the French. They won't even say 'Paris' right.

MRS GREEN

Well, they could look back over their shoulders, couldn't they? If it looks wrong going one way, it'd look right going the other.

MRS DAVIS

Not all the way to Paris or wherever they go, it wouldn't. We can't do that. And they wouldn't have flags up on the ferry. They have special flags on ferries. We might announce we're sinking. And that'd get in the local paper and that'd be the end of the Gateau Society.

MRS ABLE

I don't mind knitting tea cosies for the Women's Institute, me, but I'm blowed if I'm going to sew flags all the way to Paris. Not with feet like mine.

MRS DAVIS

Eurostar's bad enough for me. Imagine riding a bike as well. And having black coffee for breakfast every day.

MRS GREEN

It's not natural. It's tea or nothing for us at the parish council.

(brief silence)

MRS ABLE

Does that Barry Higgins live round here, then?

MRS POMFROY

I don't think so. He's never been to any of our meetings, anyway.

MRS DAVIS

You've got to admire him, though, haven't you, riding all that way and not eating cake.

MRS GREEN

I can't imagine us riding a bike. Or denying ourselves cake. Not like you, Mrs Pomfroy. You're the slimmest of us all.

MRS POMFROY

Don't look at me. You're not getting me to ride the Tour de France. I wouldn't even make it past the cake shop.

MRS ABLE

It'll be a shame not having anyone local to cheer, though, won't it?

MRS DAVIS

I'd never get my Albert to do it. He reached his natural peak in the knobbly knees.

(They all look at MRS POMFROY.)

MRS DAVIS, MRS GREEN AND MRS ABLE

But Mrs Pomfroy could!

MRS POMFROY

Me? Me?

MRS DAVIS

Yes, just look at you there in all your snazzy cycling clothes. The very peak of fitness, you are. You're just made for it.

MRS POMFROY

Me?

MRS ABLE

Yes, you, Mrs Pomfroy!

MRS DAVIS, MRS GREEN AND MRS ABLE

You're going to ride the Tour de France!

MRS POMFROY

Me?

MRS DAVIS, MRS GREEN AND MRS ABLE

Yes, you!

(Curtain)

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Scene 4

Setting: The village hall, with four comfortable chairs and table. There is a small radio and four small flags on the table.

At Rise: The four women are standing nervously in a group in the hall, MRS POMFROY their centre of attention. They ad-lib. Enter the TRAINER. He holds a bunch of bananas.

TRAINER

Are we ready, ladies? I've got the van outside ready and running. The time has come, Mrs Pomfroy. You're going to ride the Tour de France. Come along! Present arms!

MRS ABLE

Or present legs, anyway.

MRS GREEN

And present bicyclette, my dear!

MRS DAVIS

Aux armes, citoyens!

MRS ABLE

Oh what?

MRS DAVIS

Aux armes, dear. It's what they shout in France if they want to get anything done. If that doesn't work, they shoot an admiral.

TRAINER

Very well. Now, listen. I'll drive you to just short of the start line, see? Then you get out and I get your bike out. And when nobody's looking, you set off the other way, the way the riders go. There'll be arrows all round the course, so

TRAINER (CONT)
don't worry, you'll know where to go. Remember, you've done all this before.

MRS POMFROY
I have?

TRAINER
Of course you have.

MRS POMFROY
Not in the Tour de France, I haven't.

(He hands her a bunch of bananas.)

TRAINER
Now, you remember the plan? You eat the bananas for energy. You've got to do that or you'll get the bonk.

MRS POMFROY
The bonk.

TRAINER
It's what cyclists say when they run out of energy. Like marathon runners hitting the wall.

MRS DAVIS
Oh, for a moment I thought you meant...I don't think my Albert's up to that. You don't, not when you've got knobbly knees.

MRS GREEN *(sniggering)*
"Up for that!"

(She corrects herself.)

I'm so sorry.

MRS ABLE

I thought that's what he meant as well.

MRS POMFROY

Chance would be a fine thing.

TRAINER

Oh, do behave, ladies. Now, listen, when you see us, you throw the skin in the road, right? It can't fail.

MRS POMFROY

The bananas may not fail but I'm not sure I won't.

MRS GREEN

Nonsense, Mrs Pomfroy, nonsense.

TRAINER

Your bicycle, Mrs Pomfroy. Follow me.

(The TRAINER leaves the stage, followed by MRS POMFROY with her bicycle.)

(The others turn to the audience and salute.)

MRS DAVIS, MRS GREEN AND MRS ABLE

For the glory of Upper Mordlake and the Upper Mordlake Gateau Society!

MRS POMFROY

(from off-stage)

Oh dear!... Oh dear, oh dear, oh dear.

(Curtain closes.)

(crowd noises, faint French music)

(MRS DAVIS, MRS GREEN, MRS ABLE and the TRAINER push excitedly through the curtain. They stand in a row, as if by the road, facing the audience. They have flags and one holds the radio. They leave enough room for the CYCLISTS to pass in front of them.)

MRS GREEN

Oh, it's so exciting.

MRS ABLE

Did you make sure to bring cakes?

MRS DAVIS

Of course I brought cakes. Upside Down Cakes, as agreed in the minutes. They're in the hamster.

MRS GREEN

In the hamper, dear, the hamper.

RADIO COMMENTATOR

(unseen, ideally at the sound quality of a small radio)

Twenty-five kilometres into the race now with many more to go and we already have a leading group of three. The excitement mounts here.

MRS DAVIS

Go and get the cakes, Mrs Able. I'm dying for a nibble.

MRS ABLE

No, wait, it's all happening. It's too exciting.

RADIO COMMENTATOR

Two Frenchmen in the lead, still, along with a Belgian. They're setting a cracking pace now as they set off up Hogarth Hill before the roundabout into Upper Mordlake.

MRS DAVIS, MRS GREEN AND MRS ABLE

They're coming, they're coming!

(They begin waving their flags as they peer into the wings.)

RADIO COMMENTATOR

But wait! We are getting reports of yet another rider ahead of even these three. I'm looking for his number, but I can't see it. As soon as I get confirmation, I'll tell you who it is.

(louder crowd noises, tooting car horns)

(pause)

(Enter MRS POMFROY, without her bike but bent forward as if cycling. She holds a banana skin and takes a last mouthful.)

MRS DAVIS

It's her, it's her!

MRS GREEN

Faster, Mrs Pomfroy, faster!

(She comes by the TRAINER at centre stage.)

TRAINER

Plan A, Mrs Pomfroy, now!

(MRS POMFROY throws the banana skin into the road and pedals off the stage.)

RADIO COMMENTATOR

This leader, whoever it is, has built up a cracking lead. I still don't know who it is, but I can tell you that the three chasers are setting a powerful pace in pursuit.

(pause)

(Enter CYCLISTS 1, 2 and 3 in a tight group. They wear sunglasses and cycling helmets. They reach the banana skin, one skids and crashes and the others fall on top of him.)

(The TRAINER makes a half-hearted effort to pull them up while actually delaying them. The CYCLISTS swear in foreign languages and wave their arms.)

RADIO COMMENTATOR

Oh dear, a dreadful crash now. I don't think...no, I can see they're getting themselves up and, on the way, again. Oh, such a shame, but these things happen in cycle racing and a fall isn't going to halt men as tough as these.

(The three CYCLISTS stand and pedal off stage.)

(MRS POMFROY and the CYCLISTS move back round the stage ready to reappear.)

MRS DAVIS

Cake, ladies, we must have cake!

MRS ABLE

No time for that. They're coming round again. Look!

(They peer into the wings.)

RADIO COMMENTATOR

Everyone still in the same position as they climb Hogarth Hill again before returning through Upper Mordlake. But astonishing reports are coming in. Let me consult the message that the judges have just passed me...Yes, unbelievable, unbelievable, they say the leading rider is A Woman!

(MRS POMFROY enters the stage again, more tired now and grumbling.)

TRAINER

Plan B, plan B, Mrs Pomfroy!

(MRS POMFROY finishes another banana and drops the skin and leaves the stage.)

(The three CYCLISTS follow, reach the banana skin and fall off again.)

RADIO COMMENTATOR

This is extraordinary. Another crash on the same bit of road. The state of the road must be awful. I'm sure the Ratepayers will complain to the council. I hope so, anyway. They're already protesting about the litter.

(The CYCLISTS pick themselves off the road with still more protests and chase after MRS POMFROY.)

(Enter the ANGRY FRENCHMAN.)

ANGRY FRENCHMAN

I don't know what you do but you must stop do. Not do. Not more. I will send you to the guillotine. You destroy the honour of France.

MRS GREEN

Not us, Gaston. We're just watching.

ANGRY FRENCHMAN

(pointing to the banana skins)

And what are those? You do it on purpose, non?

MRS DAVIS

You said it: Non!

ANGRY FRENCHMAN

Non? But I did say it. Oui!

MRS ABLE

No, you said Non.

MRS DAVIS

We heard you.

ANGRY FRENCHMAN

You did?

MRS DAVIS

Well, oui and non.

ANGRY FRENCHMAN

Vous Anglais, you are impossible.

TRAINER

We do a wicked line in Upside Down cake, though.

(The ANGRY FRENCHMAN turns to face the TRAINER and can't see the road.)

ANGRY FRENCHMAN

Upside Down cake? What is this Upside Down cake?

MRS GREEN

You really must have some. You'd like it. It was Napoleon's favourite, you know.

ANGRY FRENCHMAN

Napoleon?

MRS ABLE

He ate little else when he was in Corsica.

(Unseen, MRS POMFROY rides by, followed a few

seconds later by the CYCLISTS.)

TRAINER

Come with me, mon brave. We shall eat Upside Down cake together.

ANGRY FRENCHMAN

Quoi?

(The TRAINER guides him off stage.)

ANGRY FRENCHMAN

I have to eat it upside down? You drive on the left and eat upside down? This is ridicule.

TRAINER

Exactly that, exactly that, Gaston. Venez!

(The TRAINER leads the ANGRY FRENCHMAN off stage with an arm round his shoulders.)

MRS DAVIS

The radio, quick, the radio!

RADIO COMMENTATOR

We're at the finish now. The crowd is enormous. They've heard that an unknown has led the field since just after the start. We don't know who it is, they don't know who it is, but this is surely a new star in the cycling firmament.

(The TRAINER re-enters and gives a thumbs up to the others and smiles.)

(loud sustained cheering)

MRS ABLE

She's going to do it!

MRS DAVIS, MRS GREEN AND TRAINER

She's going to do it!

RADIO COMMENTATOR

It's a...it's a woman. The nineteenth stage of the Tour de France is about to be won by a woman. One moment, please...

(pause)

I'm told the leader is...a Mrs Pomfroy of...Upper Mordlake. She'll cross the line any moment. The crowd are going wild. They're waving their arms. They're standing on their seats! The three chasers are almost upon her but, no, Mrs Pomfroy is crossing the line...now! She's won, she's won!

(MRS DAVIS, MRS GREEN, MRS ABLE and the TRAINER hug and dance.)

RADIO COMMENTATOR

Mrs Pomfroy has won a stage of the Tour de France. History is made. But wait...She hasn't stopped! She's carried on. Mrs Pomfroy has carried on. Never have I seen such a thing. The winner of the Tour de France has carried on down the road. I can see the judges chasing after her. But...no, she's still going strong and they can't catch her. She's... she's going past Waitrose. I can see her now. She's going past Waitrose...and now I can't see her anymore. The mayor is furious.

(MRS POMFROY enters the stage, pushing her bike, staggering with exhaustion. The others hug and kiss her.)

MRS POMFROY

Oh, get off me, get off me!

MRS GREEN

But they always kiss the winner in France. I've seen it on the telly.

MRS POMFROY

I've had a hard enough day as it is. I don't need kissing, thank you very much!

TRAINER

You were magnificent, Mrs Pomfroy. We did it together.

MRS ABLE

Are you going back for your prizes?

MRS POMFROY

No, I think we'd better scarper, don't you?

TRAINER

There's still some Upside Down cake. I gave the Frenchman a few beers and he fell asleep before he finished it.

MRS POMFROY

What Frenchman?

MRS DAVIS

You'll see, dear. A Frenchman who wanted to stop you winning.

MRS POMFROY

Nothing and nobody was going to stop me winning.

MRS GREEN

Certainly not, dear. You did it for you, for us and for the greater glory of Upper Mordlake Gateau Society!

MRS DAVIS, MRS GREEN, MRS ABLE, TRAINER AND MRS POMFROY

For the glory of Upper Mordlake Gateau Society!

(They laugh and slap backs and leave the stage in a happy group.)

(pause)

(enter CYCLIST 1)

CYCLIST 1

(addressing the audience)

And so, dear sports-lovers, our tale comes to an end. Mrs Pomfroy didn't quite win the Tour de France and Alfonsina Strada didn't quite win the Tour of Italy. She was found out, but by then she was so popular that they let her carry on. She, at least, is in the record books. Search those same books for Mrs Pomfroy and I'm afraid you'll find no mention of her. Which leads you to wonder. Did all this really happen? Have we just dreamed it for an evening's entertainment? Well, my friends, as John Steinbeck once said, just because something isn't true doesn't mean it didn't happen.



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