



The Unlikely Adventures of Ranulf the Unready

Adam Dumphy

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First the good news: Evelyn Waugh Anthony Hope and Arthur Conan Doyle's Brigadier Gerard are alive and well and living in the mind of Adam Dumphy. Sweet silly light as champagne bubbles sparkling with mischief or its companion innocence Dumphy's "unlikely" story intoxicates reason and delights the senses.

Ranulf the Unready also known as Viscount Linley also known as Rannie Runagate also known as Arch Duke R. von Hohenzolleran-Furstenberg cousin to Kaiser Wilhelm bumps into his childhood sweetheart Audie or Andra or Audra in a fishing hut cum jazz club on the Costa Brava in the tender years between world wars.

His insatiable curiosity about anything and everything and delight at each new discovery and that totally unpredictable mind that could make the simplest thing complex and the most complex commonplace was unchanged.

Audie latches onto Rannie—not because she likes him but because she doesn't...or does she?—and off they go in search of a fictitious poodle an innocent assassin a missing heir of Cousin Willie's and that perfect *je ne sais quoi*. "It was a lovely summer's day the sun warm the sea cerulean. A faint breeze whispered the palms and lifted the table cloths of the outside tables like girl's skirts."

Sound unlikely? There's more fun to come. Rannie also happens to be a spy for Queen and Country (of course Audie knew this all along) and the real object of his intelligence is the Annunzio Collar ("collar" apparently being a euphemism for "heavy ugly unwanted necklace) of which there are three: one authentic and two fakes. Two fake heavy ugly unwanted necklaces!

Barnstorming running barefoot across beaches disguising themselves as Fascist wannabees cheating at roulette with Countess Maggie of Hoboken and gardening with King Sweaty the pair makes their insouciant way through mystery toward romance. "Audie" Rannie says "you are the most unimpressible delightful belittling and seductive person I have ever met." And then he "caught her hand and tried to lead her astray."

Now for the bad news: Waugh Doyle and Hope had editors Dumphy doesn't. Littered with punctuation mistakes syntax gaffs capitalization faux pas personal article confusion inconsistent use of abbreviations and an utter lack of respect for the comma Dumphy's otherwise charming prose stumbles over each and every one of the errors of the self-published. However in that *The Unlikely Adventures of Ranulf the Unready* is one of already fifteen books published by Adam Dumphy there seems to be no end to the author's will. This reader can only hope that there's a way in the future—to an editor.

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