

Charlie’s Convention – A Fractured Fable

Charlie was excited. Barry had gotten the word out after negotiating with a neighboring farm to host the convention. He had promised the publicity would bring in millions. “You shouldn’t worry. Charlie’s word is good. Check for the deposit’s in the mail. Charlie’s good for the cleanup and security. Never a problem.” There was a long pause while Farmer Brown scratched his chin.

“What about those other places. I hear Charlie’s got a string of defaults a mile long. And hey, what about that swine flu? Heard it carried off that fat sow of yours, what’s the name, JD? Yeah, JD.”

Barry squeaked, “Rumors, they don’t know what they’re talking about. As for JD, he’s taking some time off, a golf vacation. That’s how Charlie got to be in charge. JD comes back in a week, and between you and me, it’s going to be interesting watching what happens at the Orange Orchard.” Barry was now telling everyone that the farm was now registered as “Orange Orchard” in honor of JD’s hair.

“OK, I guess. And you promised I’d have exclusive rights for refreshments and lodging?”

“Yeah, contract’s in the mail with the check. Don’t worry. And we’re going to play great music. What’s your favorite?”

“A good Dixieland version of “When the Saints Go Marching In.”

Barry had to bite his lip. He wasn’t sure if Farmer B was pulling his leg. “OK. Done deal. It’ll be playing when Charlie comes in.”

He got back to the Orange Orchard the next night. Charlie was waiting impatiently at the farm gate.

“Barry, you lock it down!?! Get the word out! Tell me we’ll have the biggest convention ever, the greatest music of all times. We’ll do some Beatles – nah, let’s use that *Liverache* guy from Milwaukee. He played privately for my father once when I was a kid. Let me tell you – his coat and candelabra were to die for.”

“I’ll work on it. But how about “When the Saints Go Marching In” up front? It’d be smashing. All those Rhode Island Reds clucking “foul” but by then it’ll be too late. It’ll be twittered non-stop. JD never could’ve pulled it off.”

Barry flew off to snap bugs out of the night air, thinking he’d have to spread the word tomorrow. If he couldn’t get the crowds he promised, he’d see about making cardboard cutouts, wondering if having them wear red shirts would be a good idea. He was sure Charlie would forget what he’d said by the time of the convention. Getting people to come would be harder – word of the swine flu had already gotten out and not every farm animal had a bird brain.

Charlie puffed his feathers out and strutted around the barnyard thinking of the crowds and how he’d be marching in with the Saints. *It can’t get any better than this!*

Proving little things in life needn’t stop you, especially if it’s your brain.

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