CHAPTER 6

A Good Night's Work

He put the bag on his back, and jumped on to Kevin's bicycle. Then he rode quickly out of the garage, into the dark.

It was midnight in the Langleys' house. Alison and the children were home again. They didn't want to be in the same house as the strange Dr Bean, but the children had to go to school. David was asleep in the sitting-room. Alison was very angry with him and didn't want him in the bedroom.

Mr Bean couldn't sleep. He was very unhappy. He sat in the kitchen. He thought and thought.

'David will lose his job now!' he thought sadly.

At one o'clock, Kevin walked into the kitchen. He looked sleepy.

'Hi, Beanie.'

'Oh, hello, Kevin. Why aren't you in bed?'

'I couldn't sleep. I can't stop thinking about beautiful women with no clothes on! And you?' said Kevin.

'I can't stop thinking about *Whistler's Mother*,' answered Mr Bean.

'*Whistler's Mother*!? Boring! Come up to my room, Beanie,' said Kevin. 'I've got a great poster of Cindy Crawford up there. She's better than old *Whistler's Mother*!'

Then he got a glass of milk and some chocolate cake. 'See you in the morning, Beanie!'

Kevin went back to bed, but Mr Bean sat at the kitchen table. He started thinking again.

A poster of Cindy Crawford? Really! Young people today!

'Wait a minute!' he thought.

Mr Bean suddenly had an idea – another wonderful Mr Bean idea!

He stood up quickly and found a large bag in a cupboard. First, he ran out of the kitchen and into the bathroom with the bag in his hands. Then he went quietly into Alison's bedroom, then into the kitchen again,

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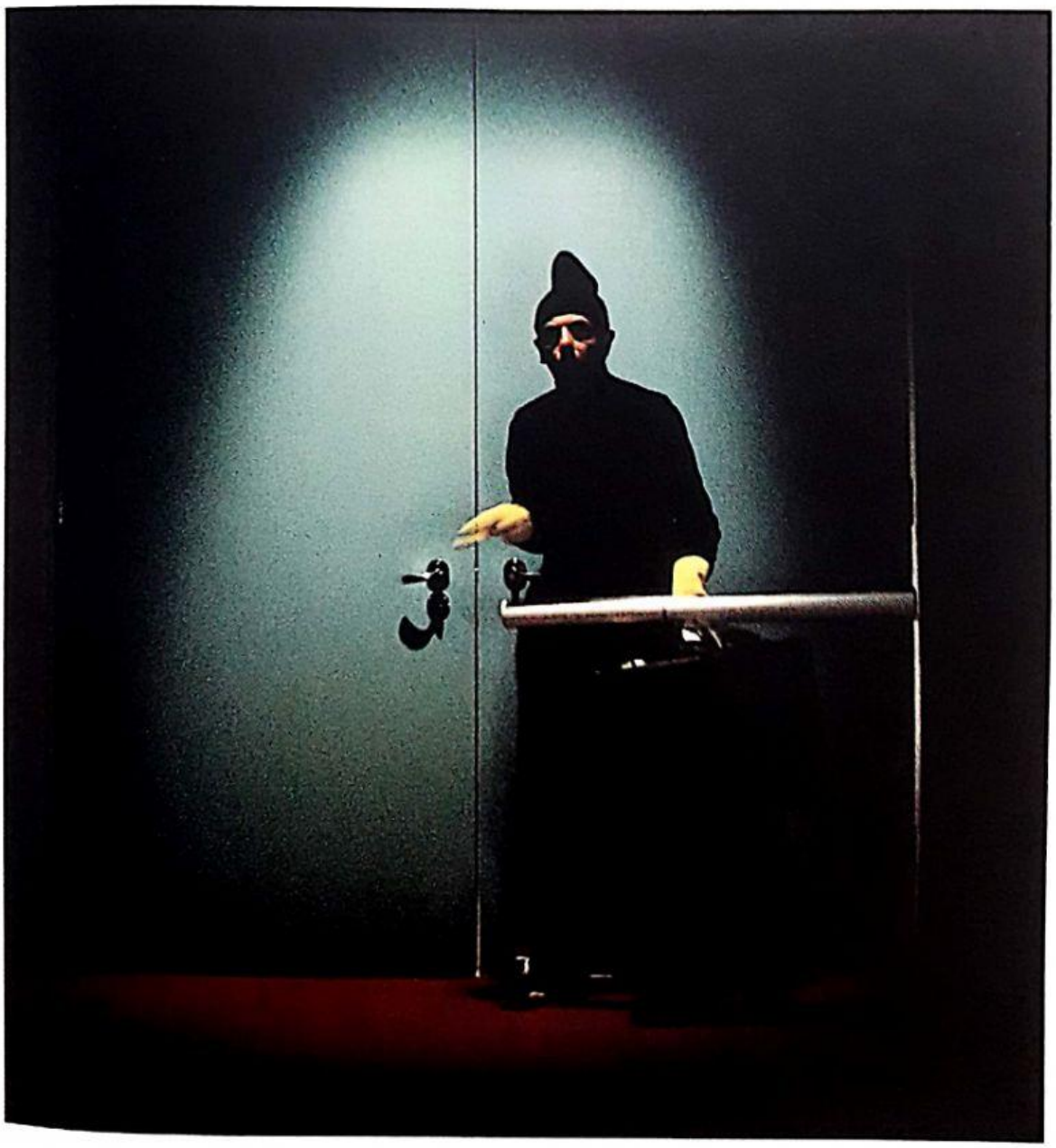
and then into the garage. After ten minutes, the bag was very heavy – there was a hairdryer in it, a bicycle light, some eggs, some small bottles, and a lot of other things.

Next, Mr Bean went into the sitting-room.

'Now, where's David's card?' he thought. 'I can't open the front door at the gallery without it.'

He found the card in David's jacket and put it in the bag with the other things.



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Then Mr Bean put on a black shirt, black jeans and a black hat. He put the bag on his back, and jumped on to Kevin's bicycle. Then he rode quickly out of the garage, into the dark.

◆

Fifteen minutes later, Mr Bean arrived at the Grierson Gallery. He opened the front door with David's card and walked quietly into the building. It was two o'clock in the morning. Nobody saw him.

'Now – where's the gallery shop?' he thought.

He found the shop on the second floor. He carefully opened the door and went in.

'Great!' he thought, when he saw a big poster of *Whistler's Mother*. He put the poster in his bag.

He then found the room with the famous painting – the painting of *Whistler's Mother* with the funny face! He put his bag down on the floor.

'Right, let's start work,' he thought.

It was dark in the room. Mr Bean took Kevin's bicycle light out of the bag and turned it on. Then he took out the poster of *Whistler's Mother*. He looked at the poster and then at the famous painting on the wall.

'I've got to put a new **surface** on the poster,' he thought. 'Then it'll be the same as the painting.'

He sat on the floor and slowly started painting a new surface on to the poster. He used the eggs from the Langleys' kitchen and things from Alison's bottles.

It was a long, difficult job. After two hours, Mr Bean stood up and looked at the poster.

'Mmm ... that's better!' he said with a smile on his face.

He took out the hairdryer from the bag, and dried the new surface. Then he carefully took the famous painting off the wall. He put the poster with the new surface on the wall in the same place.

'Nobody will know it's only a poster!' he thought.

surface /ˈsɜːfəs/ (n) The *surface* of something is the top or the outside of it. The *surface* of a picture is the front of it.

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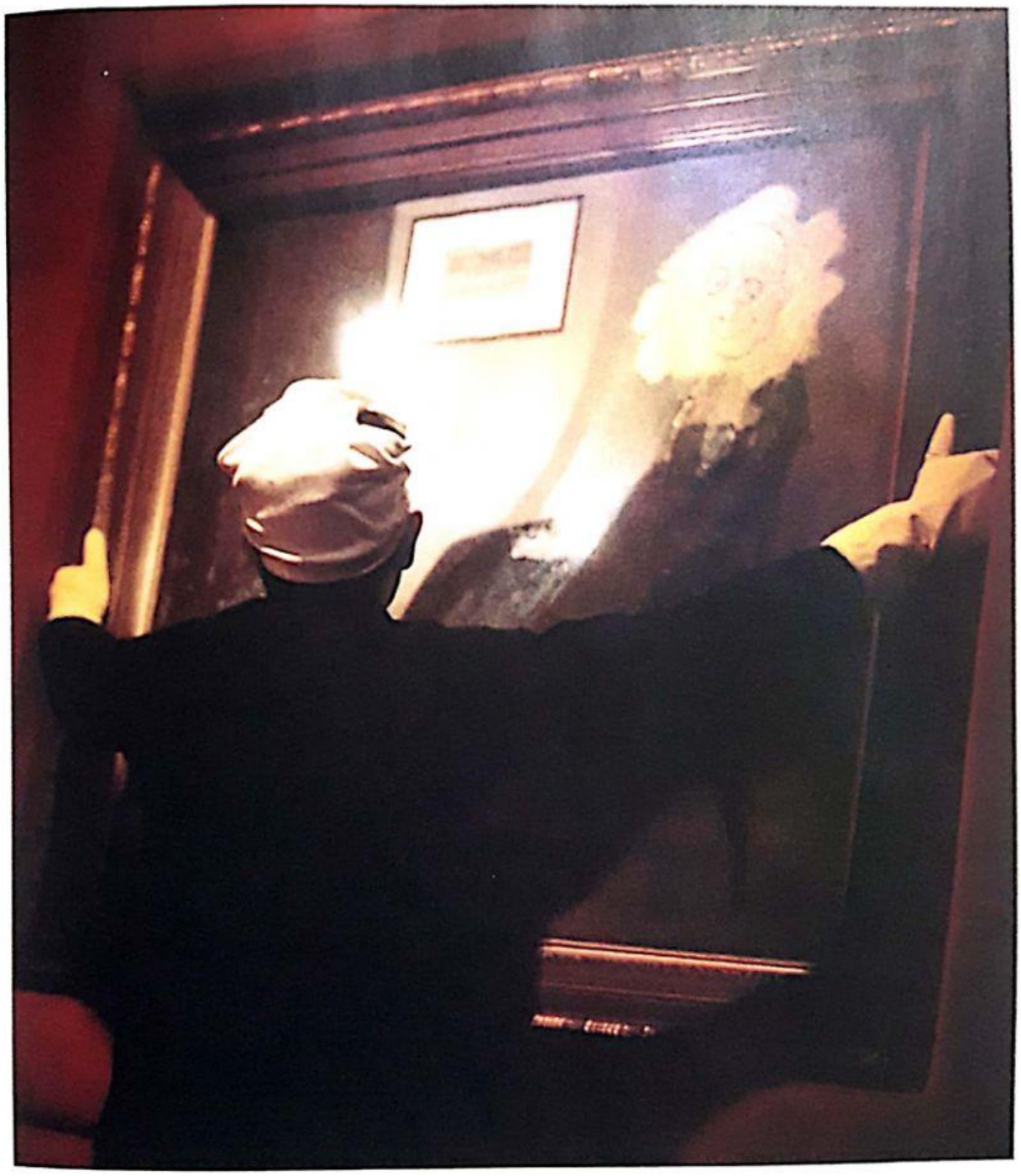

Then Mr Bean put everything back in his bag. He carried the bag and the old painting with the funny face out of the room.

Out in the street, Mr Bean jumped on to Kevin's bicycle and rode back to the Langleys' house. It was five o'clock in the morning.

'A good night's work,' he thought when he got into bed. 'David will be happy now!'

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CHAPTER 7

Clever Dr Bean!

All eyes were on the back of the painting behind Mr Grierson. He slowly turned the painting round ...

The next morning, at breakfast time, David came slowly into the kitchen. His face looked old and tired.

'It's going to be a bad day today,' he said. 'A very bad day!'

In the car, on the way to the gallery, Mr Bean tried to talk to David. He wanted to tell him about the painting.

'Um ... David ...'

'Don't talk to me! I *hate* you!' answered David angrily.

'But David ...' said Mr Bean.

'Quiet!' shouted David. 'Don't say anything! Or I'll kill you! OK?'

Outside the gallery, there were a lot of cars, people and cameras. Everybody wanted to see Whistler's famous painting of his mother. Inside, in the room with the painting, there were about a hundred important people from television and the newspapers.

Nobody could see the painting – they could only see the back of it.

David and Mr Bean walked into the room. David wanted to find Mr Grierson as quickly as possible. He had to tell him about the accident with the painting!

'Ah, David,' said Mr Grierson. 'And Dr Bean. Late again!'

'Sorry, sir. A problem at home. Please sir, I've got to talk to you. Now! It's very important!'

'Not now, David,' Mr Grierson answered. 'Everybody's waiting. We've got to show them the painting!'

'But sir,' cried David, 'it's about the painting.'

But Mr Grierson didn't listen.

Mr Bean looked at David. 'Um ... David ...'

'Bean, go away!' David said.

Mr Grierson walked to the front of the room.

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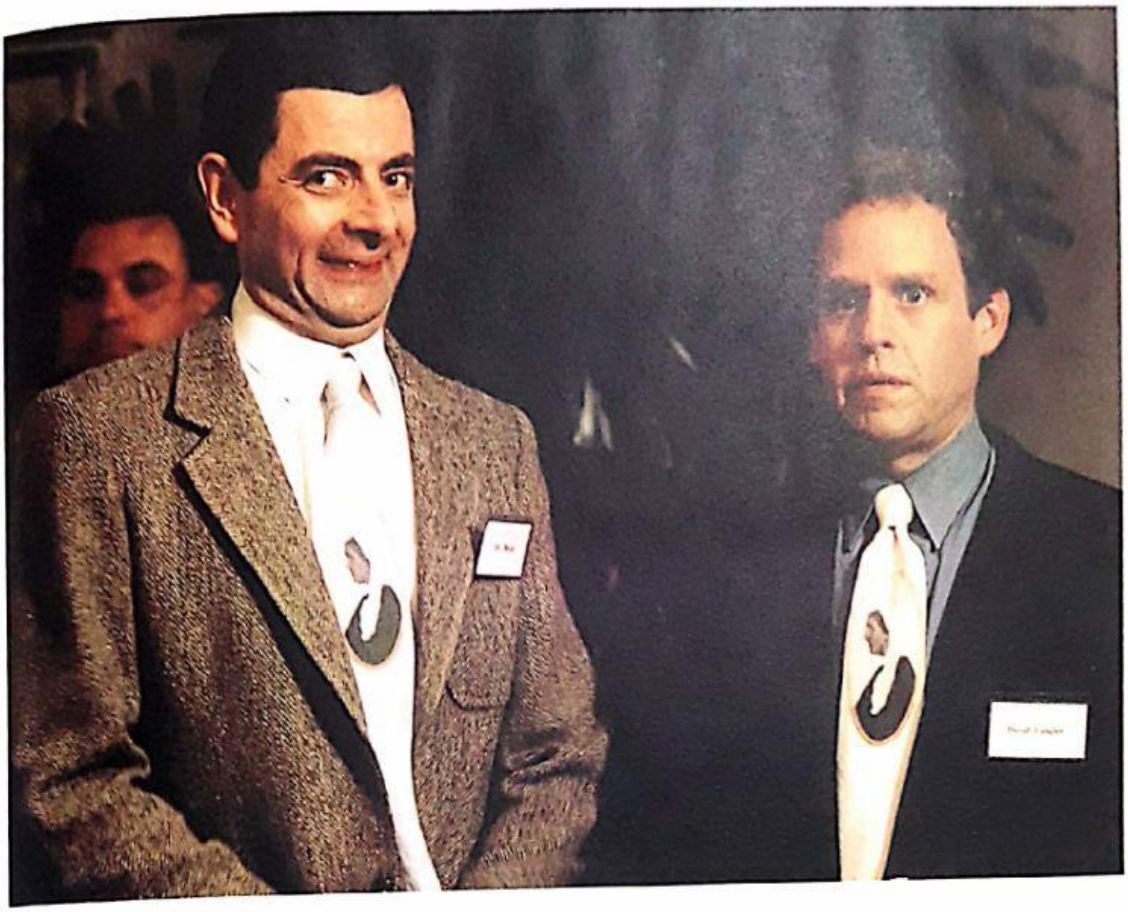

'Good morning, everybody,' he said. 'This is a great day for America – and for *Whistler's Mother*. I won't say too much because I know you all want to see our famous painting. And here it is!'

David shut his eyes. 'I'm going to be sick,' he thought.

There wasn't a sound in the room. All eyes were on the back of the painting behind Mr Grierson. He slowly turned the painting round ...

David stood at the back of the room, next to Mr Bean. He didn't understand! The painting looked wonderful! No blue ink! No funny face! There was nothing wrong with it!

'What? What did you do, Bean?' he said quietly. 'You're wonderful! I love you!'

'Easy!' said Mr Bean. 'It's a poster!'

'It's a what!!!?? But ... but ... but ...'

'Ssh! Somebody will hear!'

'But ... how did you do it?'

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'I came here in the middle of the night and took a poster from the shop,' said Mr Bean. 'I painted a new surface on it with eggs and things. Then I dried it with a hairdryer! What's the problem?'

'But ... you can't ...'

'Ssh! Don't tell anybody!' laughed Mr Bean. 'Nobody will know it's only a poster!'

'Dr Bean, are you ready?' asked Mr Grierson.

Mr Bean didn't understand.

'Ready for what?' he asked.

'You're going to say something to these people. Don't you remember?'

'What shall I talk about?'

'About the painting, of course,' laughed Mr Grierson. This man was *very* strange!

'Ah! Yes, of course,' said Mr Bean.

He went to the front of the room and smiled at the people and cameras. What did they want him to say?

'We're ready,' said Mr Grierson. 'You can start now.'

'Ahm ... um ... um .... Ahm ... thank you ... and hello, everybody.

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I'm Mr ... sorry, *Dr* Bean and I work at the National Gallery in London. I sit and look at paintings all day.'

Everybody liked that. They all smiled.

'He's very intelligent,' they thought.

'Now, what can I say about this painting?' said Mr Bean, and he looked at the famous *Whistler's Mother*. 'First ... it's ... um ... very big. I like big paintings.'

Very clever! This man from London was *really* good!

'Next ... and I'm nearly at the end now ... next is the big question. Why did this gallery pay thousands of dollars for this painting?'

Mr Bean looked at David. But David couldn't help him now.

'And ... the answer is ... ahm ... what *is* the answer? This painting is expensive because ... it's a picture of Whistler's mother. And I know ... that families are very important. I know that because I'm staying with my best friend, David, and his lovely family. Whistler's mother wasn't a beautiful woman. Look at the painting – she's an ugly old thing! But she was his mother and he loved her. And I think that's wonderful!'

Everybody stood up.

'Thank you, Dr Bean!'

'Another photo, please!'

'Look this way, Dr Bean!'

Mr Bean was famous! And David was very, very happy.

But before David and Mr Bean could leave the room, a policeman came in.

'Mr Langley?' he asked David. 'Can I talk to you, sir?'

David looked at Mr Bean. He was suddenly very afraid.

'It's OK,' he said to the policeman quickly. 'I'll tell you everything ...'

'Everything?'

'Yes, everything about the painting.'

'What painting? I don't want to talk about a painting,' said the policeman. 'I'm sorry, Mr Langley. It's your daughter. She's in hospital. A road accident, sir.'

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5.1 Were you right?

Look back at your answers to Activity 4.4. Then read the sentences below. Are they right (✓) or wrong (✗) ?

1 Mr Bean puts the painting in his bag and goes to the gallery.

2 He takes a poster of *Whistler's Mother* from David's home.

3 He uses eggs and puts a new surface on a poster.

4 At breakfast time, David is very friendly to Mr Bean.

5 People can see no problem with the painting.

6 They think that Mr Bean gives a good talk about the painting.

5.2 What more did you learn?

Answer the questions. Write the letters, A–D.

1 Who talks to Mr Bean about a poster of Cindy Crawford?

2 Who looks old and tired in the morning?

3 Who tries to tell Mr Grierson about the painting?

4 Who says that Whistler's mother is an ugly old thing?

5 Who is in hospital because of a road accident?

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