

# PRIDE

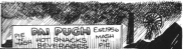
A CLASSIC STRIP by GRAHAM HIGGINS ©1989

featuring AN EXQUISITE COMMENTARY by ROZ KAVENEY

THOUGH WHY WE WASTE OUR COMBINED ELOQUENCE ON THE LIVES OF YOU WE DON'T KNOW

**MIUW PREECE, A WALKING CATALOGUE OF MISERY, UNQUALIFIED UNEMPLOYED AND WELSH.**

**HIS SATURDAY NIGHT COMPRISES TWELVE PINTS OF LAGER, A LOUD LEER AT THE PUB ENTERTAINMENT - BALL PROSSER AT THE ORGAN ACCOMPANYING DOLLY MADDOG'S DANCE OF THE SEVEN FURNAL UNDERGARMENTS - AN INFORMAL BRAYL AND...**



... FISH FINGER AN CHIPS OFF DAI PUGH. NICE AND GREASY TO GIVE YOUR BELLY SOMETHING TO GRIP HOLD OF ...

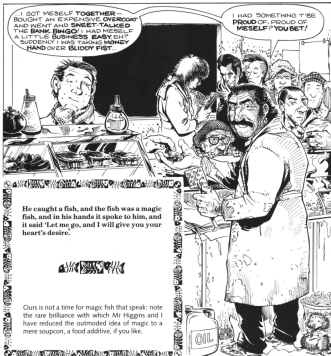
WOLD YUKKY DAI'S NEVER SHORT OF TRADE COME SAT'DY NIGHT

There was once a poor fisherman, unhappy with his lot ...

**THE FISHMAN AND HIS WIFE**

Of course, in the versions you will all know, this wonderful lecture on the perils of ambition ends up becoming a lot of misogynist nonsense. We, especially since I patiently explained the politics to Higgins, are above all that. This is not the shop to which you come for **The Story of the Fisherman and his Wife**, but a superior, purer version ... Note how, in Mr Higgins's elegant rendition, the play of light and shade captures the rancid crunch of aged batter.





He caught a fish, and the fish was a magic fish, and in his hands it spoke to him, and it said 'Let me go, and I will give you your heart's desire.'



Ours is not a time for magic fish that speak: note the rare brilliance with which Mr Higgins and I have reduced the outmoded idea of magic to a mere soupçon, a food additive, if you like.



FRESH, GRANNY OREN? FRESH? LOVELY BIT O'OOD LOVE. Y'HOUDN'T GET BETTER UP THE WEST END...



IN FACT, I THINK I'LL HAVE A BIT MESELF... THERE'S LOVELY!



LIME WEST END, LIT?

GET A LOAD OF THE GLITZ EHP GALA OPENING OF MY KNIGHTSBRIDGE EATERIE. WHO'D HAVE THOUGHT IT? A LAD FROM THE VALLEYS MIXING IT WITH TV PERSONALITIES N' THAT. AND LISTEN, THIS MOB'LL PAY THROUGH THE NOSE FOR A BIT OF REAL FOOD. MORE MONEY N' SENSE. MOST OF 'EM.

LOOK AT 'EM. COMMON AS MUCK. MOST OF 'EM. GETTING BACK TO THEIR ROOTS. IT'LL COST 'EM. MIND, CLASS. DON'T COME CHEAP.

YOU FEIN? OR WHAT?

DARLING, WHAT A HORRID LITTLE MAN!

WELL, I'D BETTER I GET FOOD.

DON'T I REMIND YOU, HENRIOT?

IT'S THE ONLY THAT PUT THE GREASY IN NOVELLE CURRIE.

SO AUTHENTIC DARLING, SO EASY TO SO (S)THING?

THREE... NO FOUR THOUSAND P'CENT OF CHIPS AND A SWEETLY

MAKES YOUR TUP BIRD UP FOR SO.



And when he had his heart's desire, he was happy for a while, and then it seemed a slight thing to him. He went out again, and again he held the fish in his hands, and it said to him ...



Here we see Higgins insisting on adding a lot of oh-so-piquant contemporary references, a veritable charivari or charabanc of caricatures, to what I had intended as a subtly stark bridge passage to the excellences to come.





# BIG FISH INTERNATIONAL

SIGNOR PREECE, THE FILM CREW ARE HERE.



TELL 'EM TO WAIT, VANESSA. I'M BUSY.  
GET RICH 'N EVERYONE WANTS TO KNOW YOU. "WHAT'S THE SECRET, NISTER PREECE?" "BLADDY PEEBLES!" NO REASON WHY ANYONE SHOULDN'T BRIDE THEIR BACKSIDES AN' MAKE THEIR FARMER HAD...  
GOOD MR. THOUGH I STAGE.



And even more quickly riches became stale to him. And this time the fish came to his hand without even a net and ...



Note how we extend the fish metaphor even in the dialogue and in the process revivify delicately the cliché of 'small fry'. In the tank, Mr Higgins indulges himself with a somewhat pjeune symbol for market capitalism; presumably the lurking tentacle is a symbol for inflation, or something.





OH I'M JUST AN ORDINARY BUREAU PERSON! I JUST FOUND WHAT I'M GOOD AT AND STUCK TO IT.

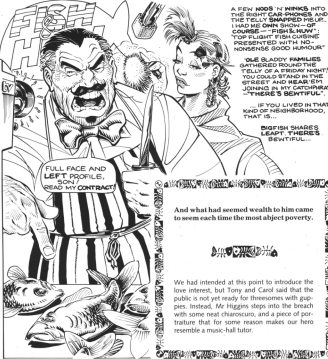


PROUD OF THE BUSINESS? QUIETLY SATISFIED I KNOW. MIND, MY OLD FATHER WOULD'VE BIN PROUD OF ME WORKED HARD ALL HIS LIFE AN DIED OF CANCER WITH THE ARSE HANGIN OUT OF HIS TROUSERS...



DA WOULD'VE SAVED OFF HIS LEGS FER YOUR JOB, BOY... MONEY FOR PISS...

HAVE SOME RED MULLET, BOY... SPECIALLY FLOWN IN FROM ST. PETERS THIS MORNIN'...



FULL FACE AND LEFT PROFILE, SON? READ MY CONTRACT

A FEW NODS 'N WINKS INTO THE RIGHT CAR-PHONES AND THE TELLY SNAPPED ME UP. I HAD ME OWN SHOW—OF COURSE — "FISH & HUN": TOP FLIGHT FISH CUISINE PRESENTED WITH NO-NONSENSE GOOD HUMOUR"

YOLK GLADY FAMILIES GATHERED ROUND THE TELLY OF A FRIDAY NIGHT! YOU COULD STAND IN THE STREET AND HEAR 'EM JOINING IN MY CATCHPHRASE — "THERE'S BEWTFUL"

... IF YOU LIVED IN THAT KIND OF NEIGHBORHOOD, THAT IS...

BIGFISH SHADES LEAPT, THERE'S BEWTFUL...

And what had seemed wealth to him came to seem each time the most abject poverty.



We had intended at this point to introduce the love interest, but Tony and Carol said that the public is not yet ready for threesomes with guppies. Instead, Mr Higgins steps into the breach with some neat chiaroscuro, and a piece of portraiture that for some reason makes our hero resemble a music-hall tutor.