Do Assumptions and Images Matter?

**10 Postscript: Thinking with a Clear Heart**


Arthur and Patsy riding. They stop and look. We see a castle in the distance, and before it a peasant is working away on his knees trying to dig the earth with his bare hands and a twig. Arthur and Patsy ride up, and stop before the peasant.

Arthur: Old woman!
Dennis: (turning) Man.
Arthur: Man. I’m sorry. Old man, what knight lives in that castle?
Dennis: I’m thirty-seven
Arthur: What?
Dennis: I’m only thirty-seven… I’m not old.
Arthur: Well—I can’t just say: “Hey, Man!”
Dennis: You could say: “Dennis.”
Arthur: I didn’t know you were called Dennis.
Dennis: You didn’t bother to find out, did you?
Arthur: I’ve said I’m sorry about the old woman, but from behind you looked…
Dennis: What I object to is that you automatically treat me as an inferior…
Arthur: Well… I am King.
Dennis: Oh, very nice. King, eh! I expect you’ve got a palace and fine clothes and courtiers and plenty of food. And how d’you get that? By exploiting the workers! By hanging onto outdated imperialistic dogma, which perpetuates the social and economic differences in our society! If there’s ever going to be any progress…

An old woman appears.

Old woman: Dennis! Have you seen the cat’s front legs? Oh! How d’you do?
Arthur: How d’you do, good lady… I am Arthur, King of the Britons… can you tell me who lives in that castle
Old woman: King of the who?
Arthur: Britons.
Old woman: Who are the Britons?
Arthur: All of us are… we are all Britons.

Dennis winks at the old woman.

…And I am your King…
Old woman: Oooooh! I didn’t know we had a king. I thought we were autonomous collective…
Dennis: You’re fooling yourself. We’re living in a dictatorship, a self-perpetuating aristocracy in which the working classes..
Old Woman: There you are bringing class into it again…
Dennis: That’s what it’s all about… If only—
Arthur: Please, please, good people, I am in haste. What knight lives in the castle?
Old woman: No one lives there.
Arthur: Well, who is your lord?
Old woman: We don’t have a lord.
Arthur: What?
Dennis: I told you, we’re an anarcho-syndicalist commune, we take it in turns to act as a sort of executive officer for the week.
Arthur: Yes…
Dennis: …but a two-thirds majority…
Arthur: Be quiet! I order you to shut up.
Old woman: Order, eh? Who does he think he is?
Arthur: I am your king.
Old woman: Well, I didn’t vote for you.
Arthur: You don’t vote for kings.
Old woman: Well, how did you become king, then?
Arthur: The Lady of the Lake, her arm clad in purest shimmering samite, held Excalibur aloft from the bosom of the waters to signify that by Divine Providence… I, Arthur, was to carry Excalibur… that is why I am your King…
Dennis: Look, strange women lying on their backs in ponds handing over swords… that’s no basis for a system of government. Supreme executive power derives from a mandate from the masses not from some farcical aquatic ceremony.
Arthur: Be quiet!
Dennis: You can’t expect to wield supreme executive power just because some watery tart threw a sword at you.
Arthur: Shut up!
Dennis: I mean, if I went around saying I was an Emperor because some moistened bint had lobbed a scimitar at me, people would put me away.
Arthur: (Grabbing him by the collar) Shut up, will you. Shut up!
Dennis: Ah! Now… we see the violence inherent in the system.
Arthur: Shut up!

People (i.e other peasants) are appearing and watching.

Dennis: (calling) Come and see the violence inherent in the system. Help, help, I’m being repressed!
Arthur: (aware that people are now coming out and watching) Bloody peasant! (pushes Dennis over into mud and prepares to ride off)
Dennis: Oooooh! Did you hear that! What a give-away.
Arthur: Come on, Patsy.
They ride off.
Dennis: (in background as we pull out) Did you see him repressing me, then? That’s what I’ve been on about…