

9th Standard English

Keeping It From Harold Summary

Keeping It From Harold by P. G. Wodehouse is an interesting story based on dramatic irony. Harold was a prodigy and a perfect model of goodness and intelligence. Bill and his wife, Mrs. Bramble considered Harold as being of a superior order. They thought that Harold would not be able to bear the disgrace when he knew that his father was a 'man of wrath'. He was a professional boxer known as 'Young Porky'. Little did his parents know that being the son of 'Young Porky' would have been a matter of great pride and swanking for Harold. Bill Bramble's withdrawing from the contest against Murphy was the 'silliest idea' according to Harold. Ironically, Harold had betted two shillings that Murphy would not last ten rounds against 'Young Porky'. By biding his identity, Bill and his wife deprived Harold of that honour and pride of which he was the rightful owner.

Harold—A Prodigy

Harold was a 'young man' of ten and didn't like being addressed as a baby. He had already taken the spelling and dictation prize last term on his head. Her mother, Mrs. Bramble was highly proud of the fact that she brought such a prodigy as Harold into the world. Harold was unique and so different from ordinary children. He was totally devoted to his books. He was an admirable model of goodness and intelligence. It was Harold's 'perfection' that led his parents to sacrifice the truth. They deliberately kept it from Harold that Bill, his father, was a professional boxer, better known as 'Young Porky'.

Bill Presented: As a Commercial Traveller Bill's true identity was hidden from Harold. While he was a child, it did not matter so much. But when he started taking notice of things, Mrs. Bramble persuaded her husband that they must "keep it away from Harold". Major Percy Stokes, Mrs. Bramble's brother, also advised them not to disclose that Bill was a 'man of wrath'. He was known to Londoners as 'Young Porky'. Had Harold been an ordinary child, they would not have hidden Bill's identity. Both Bill and his wife were a little afraid of their wonderful child. Harold, defying the laws of heredity, 'had run to intellect as his father had run to muscle.' He was made to believe that his father was a commercial traveller.

Mr, Bramble—Mildest, Most Obliging; Always Yielding to Everybody

In private life, Mr. Bramble was one of the mildest and most obliging men. He was easily influenced and persuaded. He always yielded to everybody. The very naming of Harold required a sacrifice on his part. He wanted to name the child John, if a boy, after Mr. John L. Sullivan, or, if a girl, Marie, after Miss Marie Lloyd. They were famous sportspersons. But when Mrs. Bramble chose to name the child 'Harold', he withdrew his suggestion with the utmost good humour. Nobody could help liking this excellent man. He was a professional boxer. There was not a man in London, whom he could not defeat with his 'left hook' in a twenty-round contest. Now he feared his name in print or newspapers and thought it so necessary to keep it from Harold. He would become like a diffident crab in the presence of Mrs. Bramble and her brother, Major Percy.

Bill Bramble withdraws at the Eleventh Hour

Within a week, Bill was to fight a twenty round contest with American Murphy at the National Sporting Club. He was getting training at the Vffiite Hart. Jerry Fisher, his trainer, believed in publicity. He wanted the big event to get a good coverage. Bill didn't want his name to come in the newspapers. Harold read his 'Mail' regularly. So Bill decided to withdraw from the contest at the eleventh hour for Harold.

Mrs. Bramble's Reaction

Mrs. Bramble never liked Bill's profession, but she knew that as a professional boxer Bill had earned a lot of money. It made it possible for them to give Harold "as good an education as any Duke ever had". The contest would give 500 pounds to the winner. Even the loser would get 120 pounds. With that money they could give Harold a better start in life that they ever had. She didn't like her brother's foolish suggestion that Bill should withdraw from the contest.

Jerry Fisher Takes Revenge; Bill's Identity Disclosed

Jerry Fisher didn't take Bill's withdrawal from the contest very kindly. He considered that he had been badly treated. He had been proud of Bill. But now he hated Bill the most. He craved for revenge. And he did exactly that. He disclosed that Bill was not a commercial traveller as Harold was made to believe of him. He was a professional boxer, a 'man of wrath' known as 'Young Porky'. Everyone stood stunned as Jerry disclosed Bill's real identity.

Harold's Reaction at the Disclosure

Harold took a lot of interest in professional boxing. He had betted two

shillings that Jimmy Murphy would not last ten rounds against 'Young Porky'. He called it a 'rotten' decision to keep it from him that his father was 'Young Porky'. There was a fellow at school who went about swanking because he once got Phil Scott's autograph. His fellows would not have called him 'Goggles' if they had known that his father was 'Young Porky'. Withdrawing from the contest was the 'silliest idea'. He would take the picture of his father in action and swank like anything. Ironically, the thing that his parents wanted to hide from him could have been the greatest honour for Harold.

