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Thank you British Royal Family... Choosing a wife... Interesting conversations and observations... Denzel Washington and the wallpaper... Seeking advice from Elliott... "Your opinion is important to us"... Extended warranty offers

All, first thing that I must do is to express my thanks to the British Royal Family. They are in unending source, perhaps a bottomless source, of the sort of news that has little effect on the world, but does provide the basis for good trivia questions (from time to time).

Choosing a wife...

I want to share something Elliott Abbott taught me about choosing a wife. First, I want to tell you a little bit about Elliott Abbott. He is a very successful movie producer who put together *A League of Their Own*, *The Preacher's Wife* (with Denzel Washington) among other outstanding motion pictures.

I got to know him while I was doing licensing work for Ginger Rogers. He wanted to use her name in connection with jewelry that he created as part of the Hollywood Collection (a carefully crafted group of reproductions of jewelry that was worn by stars in major motion pictures). We worked out a deal and in the process I got to know him. A really delightful fellow who is a couple of days older than I am.

Interesting conversations and observations...

It's a real shame that Prince Harry didn't have the opportunity to chat with Elliott prior to getting married to Megan Markle, an actress. He gave me a bit of advice we were talking about marriages in Hollywood and show business generally.

At the time we spoke I was somewhat interested in a particular actress. I mentioned this to Elliott at lunch. He put down his cutlery and leaned forward to emphasize what he was about to tell me. He said, "If you have a choice between marrying an actress and a singer, always married the singer."

Somewhat surprised by this spontaneous bit of advice I asked, "Why?"

Elliott responded, "Because you always know a singer isn't singing."

Probably would've been good advice for Prince Harry. But, who knows?

Denzel Washington and the wallpaper...

Elliott produced *The Preacher's Wife*, released in 1996, a revised remake of *The Bishop's Wife*, in 1947 movie starring Cary Grant. Denzel Washington was the lead.

Elliott Abbott had nothing but praise for Denzel Washington. A complete professional. But there was one fly in the ointment. It related to the trailer that he was assigned for his use during the filming. It turns out that Denzel Washington hated the wallpaper. It was a genuine dislike. And he complained about it to Elliott quite frequently, actually very frequently.

Seeking advice from Elliott...

One day Elliott decided it would be a good idea to visit with Denzel in the trailer. The objective was to talk about the film and related topics. Denzel heard that Elliott recently completed building his own home. He wanted some useful advice from Elliott. He asked for suggestions. Elliott took that opportunity to remain silent for a moment as he looked around the trailer. Then he said, "Denzel don't use this wallpaper." That bit of advice defused what had become an uncomfortable situation. Elliott has a knack for the right approach.

"Your opinion is important to us"...

I have learned, perhaps slowly, that any message that begins by starting to tell me how important my opinion is to them is a ruse. That's the typical suck-up line used by every single candidate or organization that wants to get a donation to serve their purposes. They are more interested in my credit rating than what I think.

I really don't know how to stop the junk text messages and e-mails that want nothing more than a contribution. The only thing that I know to do is to not give them any money. That, I hope, will discourage them.

Every so often I get a telephone call from someone who's telling me how important my opinion is and they will be happy to record if I make a donation. I just hang up. But that's not as much fun as I used to have when people would be calling to offer me extended service warranties for my automobile.

Extended warranty offers...

The people pushing the extended warranty were at least real live people who wanted to engage me in a conversation. I found a foolproof way to get them off the phone. When they'd ask me what I drive, I would tell them, "A 1936 Buick." End of conversation. Much to my delight and the caller's dismay.

First yawn...

Until tomorrow...

Ken

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