

The Comeback Kid Comes Back Again



Arthur Hoppe

GOOD MORNING, insomniacs. It's time for The Awful Late Show, featuring that awful old movie. "The Comeback Kid" — starring the beloved old exchamp, Dick, and his loyal wife, Pat, who has always wanted him to quit the fight game forever.

As you remember, The Comeback Kid hadn't won a fight for 18 years until he finally captured the title on a split decision. But then, at the height of fame and fortune and only after a long, grueling battle, he was tossed out of the ring for fighting dirty. Ever since, he's been recovering from his injuries. But now . . .

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THE KID (shadowboxing around the room): Take that for America, you dirty rats. And that! And that!

Pat (entering aghast): Kid! You should be resting.

The Kid: Don't worry, baby. The Doc says I'm back in shape. He says I can now travel anywhere in the country, even Washington. You can't keep a good man down.

Pat (pleading): But, Kid, your trials in Washington are over.

The Kid (nodding): That's another reason I'm feeling better. Like I told old Jerry when he came to visit the other day, now I'm ready to get back in the ring, striking blows for an effective foreign policy, decency in government: . . .

Pat: Why don't you just stick to foreign policy, Kid?

The Kid: Then I'm going to go around helping young comers I like, giving them advice and my invaluable public support.

Pat: You mean they want it?

The Kid: Sure. Already a post card's come flooding in. Listen to this: "If you want to help me out, why don't you go to Uganda?" That's funny, I don't remember any comers in Uganda.

Pat (wringing her hands): Don't you see, Kid? You're through. You're washed up. They don't want you any more. You're no longer the champ.

The Kid: I only lost my title on a technicality.

Pat: Kid, they've got the evidence on your own tapes. They disqualified you for a low blow.

The Kid: It sure was a low blow, disqualifying me. But I'll get the title back. First, I'll have to fight a few prelims. Line up Helen Gahagan Douglas. She's a pushover. Then I'll take on that bumbling club fighter, Brown, who knocked me out with a lucky punch. I understand he just recaptured the California title. Then . . .

Pat: No, Kid, that's his son who has it now.

The Kid (frowning): Time sure does fly. Well, it won't be easy. But I'm no quitter. And I'm not a crook either.

Pat (falling to her knees): Please, Kid, renounce the sordid fight game and remain the simple, unspoiled, rich real estate entrepreneur I have come to know and love.

The Kid: Fighting's in my blood, baby. But I'll make it back to the top. Jewels from foreign potentates, limousines, Easy street. Don't worry, this time I'm not going to make the same mistake.

Pat: What mistake, Kid?

The Kid (punching his palm with his fist): This time I'm not going to buy a tape recorder.