

Ch 8 - The Hack Driver

1. Why is the lawyer sent to New Mullion? What does he think first think about the place?

A The lawyer was sent to New Mullion to serve summons on Olive Lutkins, who was needed as a witness in a law case.

He first thinks that the place must be a sweet and a simple ~~more~~ simple country village.

2. Who befriends lawyer? Where does he take him?

A A hack driver at the station, who called himself Bill Mgr Magnuson, befriends him. He told the lawyer that he knew Lutkins and would help in finding him. Bill took him to all the places where Lutkins was known to hang out. He took the lawyer to Fritz's shop, where Lutkins played a lot of poker; to Gustaff's barber shop and then to Gray's barber shop; to the poolroom and several other places before finally taking him to Lutkin's mother's farm. However, Olives Lutkins was not found.

3. What does Bill say about Lutkins?

A Bill told the lawyer that Lutkins was a hard person to find as he was always busy in ~~set~~ some activity or the other. He owed money to many people, including Bill, and had never paid back anybody. He also said that Lutkins played a lot of poker and was good at deceiving people.

4. What does Bill say about Lutkins and his family?

A Bill told the lawyer that he knew mother of Lutkins. He said that she was a terror. He narrated an incident when he took a trunk to her once and she almost took his skin off because he did not carry it carefully.

He also said that she was very talk and bulky. She was very quick and could talk a lot. He said that Lutkins must have heard that somebody was chasing him and consequently would have gone into hiding at his mother's place.

5. Does the narrator serve the summons that day?

A No, the narrator did not serve the summons that day.

6. Who is Lutkins?

A The hack driver himself is Lutkins but pretends to be Bill Magnuson. He tricks the lawyer to avoid the summons to be a witness in a case.

7. When the lawyer reached New Mullion, did 'Bill' know that he was Lutkins? When do you think 'Bill' came up with his plan for fooling the lawyer?

A No, 'Bill' did not know initially that the lawyer was looking for him. He must have made his plan for fooling the lawyer when the lawyer told him that he was looking for Lutkins, as he knew that he was required as a witness but did not want to give his testimony.

8. Lutkins openly takes the lawyer all over the village. How is that no one lets out the secret? Can you find other such subtle ways in which Lutkins manipulates the tour?

A Lutkins never allows the lawyer to reach the place where the imaginary Lutkins is supposed to be present at a given time. The way he weaves stories about Lutkins vagabond nature and the way he scares the lawyer about Lutkins mother are ways of fooling the lawyer devised by the hack driver. Everywhere he does not allow the lawyer to ask about Lutkins but he himself pretends to ask about him, which the

villagers are knowing is a pretence. So the villagers also join in the whole drama.

9. Why do you think ~~taff taff~~ Lutkins neighbours were anxious to meet the lawyer?

A Almost the entire village had enjoyed Lutkins making a fool of the lawyer. Only Lutkins' neighbours had not seen the lawyer but had come to know what happened. They wanted to see the gullible man who Lutkins had taken for a ride. That is why they wanted to meet him.

10. After his first day's experience with the hack driver the lawyer thinks of returning to New Mutton to practice law. Do you think he would have reconsidered this idea after this second visit?

A No, absolutely not. After knowing how Lutkins had made a fool of him, he would never return to New Mutton to practice law.

11. Do you think the lawyer was gullible? How could he have avoided being taken for a ride?

A Yes, the lawyer was gullible. He believed every word of what Oliver Lutkins said. He should have asked about Lutkins from other villagers. Instead, he depended completely on the hack driver.

12. Do we come across persons like Lutkins only in fiction or do we encounter them in real life as well? You can give examples from fiction, or narrate an incident that you have read in the newspaper, or an incident from real life.

A Persons like Lutkins are found in real life as well. They do not just appear in stories. They are very much real. Newspapers are very much full of reports of such tricksters. There is a famous

con man in 'David Copperfield' written by Charles Dickens. His name is Uriah Heep. He traps a gullible, rich old man. The old man depends on him entirely. He takes advantage of all his trust and takes all his money. He makes the old man an addict to alcohol. Then he forces the old man to marry his daughter to him.

13. Who is a 'con man', or a confidence trickster?

A A 'con man' or a confidence trickster is a person who makes a fool out of other people. He wins their trust first then, he gets from them whatever he wants.

14. I was sent, not to prepare legal briefs, but to serve summons, like a cheap deaf detective.

(a) At what post was 'I' working?

(b) Why was he not given legal briefs to prepare?

(c) Find a word meaning 'court order' from the given extract.

A (a) 'I' was working as a junior assistant clerk.

(b) Probably because he was inexperienced, he was not given legal briefs to prepare.

(c) 'Summons' from the extract means 'court order'.

15.i) He was so open and friendly that I glowed with the warmth of his affection. I knew, of course, he wanted business, but his kindness was real.

(a) Who is 'he' in these lines?

(b) Give an instance of his kindness.

(c) Find a word from the extract which means 'a gentle felling of fondness'.

(d) What is the opposite of kindness?

- A (a) 'He' in these lines is Bill Magnuson, the Hack Dives.
- (b) He offered to take the narrator through the village and find Lutkins
- (c) 'Affection' from the extract means 'a gentle feeling of fondness'?
- (d) 'Gruelty' is the opposite of 'kindness'.

ii) So we pursued him, just behind him, but never catching him, for an hour till it was past one o'clock.

- (a) Who are 'we' in these lines?
- (b) Who was pursuing whom?
- (c) Why did they pursue him?
- (d) What is the opposite of 'behind'?

A (a) The narrators and Bill were pursuing Lutkins.

- (b) They were pursuing him because the lawyer had to serve him a summons.
- (c) 'pursuing' is the synonym of 'followed'.
- (d) 'ahead' is the opposite of 'behind'.

16. What really hurt me was that when I served the summons, Lutkins and his mother laughed at me as though I was a bright boy of seven.

- a) Who is me referred in the given lines?
- b) What hurt the narrator?
- c) Why did the two laugh?
- d) Which word in the extract is the synonym of 'delivered'?
- e) What is the opposite of bright?

- (a) (b) The Laughter of Lutkins and his mother hurt the narrator.
- (c) They laughed because they had been successful in fooling him.
- (d) 'served' from the extract is the synonym of 'delivered'.
- (e) Its opposite is 'dull'.

17. I had to go to dirty and shadowy corners of the city to seek out my victims. Some of the larger and self-confident ones even beat me up.

- (a) Who is 'I'?
- (b) What is the nature of 'I's job?
- (c) Find the word from the extract which means 'find'?
- (d) While what is the opposite of 'dirty'?

A (a) 'I' is the young lawyer who is the narrator of the story.
(b) The nature of his job was to serve summons on people who required to present themselves in court.
(c) 'Seek out' from the extract means 'find'.
(d) Opposite of 'dirty' is 'clean'.

18. When I got to New Mullion, my eager expectations of a sweet and simple country village were severely disappointed. Its streets were rivers of mud, with rows of wooden shops, either painted a sour brown, or bare of any paint at all.

- (a) Who is 'I'?
- (b) Why was 'I' disappointed?
- (c) What does the word 'expectation' mean?
- (d) What is the opposite of disappointed?

A (a) 'I' is the young lawyer who is the narrator of the story.
(b) 'I' was disappointed because he did not like the muddy streets and unpainted looks of the shops.
(c) 'Expectations' mean 'a brief thought by someone about how something will be'.
(d) Opposite of 'disappointed' is 'pleased'.

Character Sketch

Oliver Lutkins

Oliver Lutkins is a crook who lives in the country town of New Mullion. Though he lives in a small time town, he easily cheats the lawyer who comes to serve a summons on him. He pretends to be Bill Magnuson, the hack driver and manages to cheat the narrator of his money. He managed to convey the Lawyer that it is very difficult to trace Lutkins. He takes the lawyer to many shops but does not allow the lawyer to directly talk to him people. Over the next few hours, Lutkins Bill takes the narrator all over the town where they keep missing Lutkins by small periods of time. He is also a friendly person. When the lawyer comes to New Mullion for a second time, Lutkins invites the lawyer for a cup of coffee in his friends house. Bill painted Lutkins as a dishonest person. He owed money to a lot of people. He had a talent for dishonesty. Though, he lived in a rural town he managed to trick and mislead a lawyer belonging to a city.

Narrator

The narrator is a lawyer who hates city life. He thinks of pursuing a career in a small town. He goes to New Mullion to serve a summons to Oliver Lutkins. He finds him gullible and he is easily misled by Lutkins himself, who poses as the hack driver, Bill. Bill takes money from the lawyer and gives misleading information about Lutkins. He visits a number of places in New Mullion with Bill but is not able to meet Lutkins. Since he visited New Mullion for an important matter, he failed to be careful in carrying out his job. The narrator appears to be a novice and not a seasoned legal mind. He had a romantic view of country (rural) life but was easily conned by crooked in New Mullion.