

THE HACK DRIVER

Read and Find Out (Page No. 47)

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

Answer: The lawyer is sent to New Mullion to serve summons on a man called Oliver Lutkins. Lutkins was needed as a witness in a law case and he had ignored all letters from the law firm. He thinks that New Mullion would be a sweet and simple country village.

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

Answer: Bill Magnuson, who says that he is a delivery man at the station, befriends the lawyer. Bill tells him that Lutkins is a very hard man to catch. Then he suggests to help him by going together to the places where Lutkins usually hangs out at. He takes him to Fritz's shop, where Lutkins is known to play poker games; then to Gustaf's shop; Gray's shop; poolroom; and many other places before finally taking him to Lutkins' mother's farm.

Question 3. What does he say about Lutkins?

Answer: He says that Lutkins is a hard fellow to catch and is always up to something or the other. Lutkins owed a lot of money to people and never pays them back. Lutkins plays a lot of poker game. Bill also tells the lawyer that Lutkins is very good at deceiving people.

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Question 1. What more does Bill say about Lutkins and his family?

Answer: Bill says that he knows Lutkins' mother. He says that she is a terror. He shared the incident where he had gone to her farm to deliver a trunk and she almost took his skin off because he did not carry it as tenderly as one would carry a box of eggs. He told that she was about nine feet tall and four feet thick. She was very quick and could talk a lot. He also said Lutkins must have heard about them chasing him and thus, would have come to hide behind his mother's skirts.

Question 2. Does the narrator serve the summons that day?

Answer: No, the narrator is not able to serve the summons that day.

Question 3. Who is Lutkins?

Answer: The hack driver, Bill Magnuson, himself is Lutkins. He deceives the lawyer the entire day so as to avoid receiving the summons from him to be a witness.

Think About It

Question 1. When the lawyer reached New Mullion, did 'Bill' know that he was looking for Lutkins? When do you think Bill came up with his plan for fooling the lawyer?

Answer: When the lawyer reached New Mullion, 'Bill' did not know that he was looking for Lutkins. He found it by talking to the lawyer and taking him into his confidence. Bill came up with his plan for fooling the lawyer as soon as he got to know that the lawyer was looking out for Lutkins and he does not know Lutkins by face.

Question 2. Lutkins openly takes the lawyer all over the village. How is it that no one lets out the secret? (Hint: Notice that the hack driver asks the lawyer to keep out of sight behind him when they go into Fritz's.) Can you find other such subtle ways in which Lutkins manipulates the tour?

Answer: Lutkins openly takes the lawyer all over the village but no one lets out the secret. He never lets the lawyer talk to the village people at first. It is always him who approaches them. He keeps telling the lawyer how deceiving Lutkins is and scares him of Lutkins' mother. The villagers and Lutkins' mother also join him in deceiving the lawyer.

Question 3. Why do you think Lutkins' neighbours were anxious to meet the lawyer?

Answer: Lutkins' neighbours were anxious to meet the lawyer because they were the only ones who did not get a chance to meet the lawyer, who was fooled by Lutkins for an entire day. Everybody else in the village had witnessed the lawyer being deceived by Lutkins.

Question 4. After his first day's experience with the hack driver the lawyer thinks of returning to New Mullion to practise law. Do you think he would have reconsidered this idea after his second visit?

Answer: No, I don't think he would have considered this idea after his second visit. After his first visit, he was quite positive about the people of New Mullion. He thought that Bill was so nice and helpful to a stranger and so would be the rest of the villagers. On the second visit to New Mullion, he realizes that he was deceived by 'Bill' for an entire day. He kept searching for Lutkins with Lutkins' himself. He was now a matter of fun for the people of the village. He would never think of visiting New Mullions again.

Question 5. Do you think the lawyer was gullible? How could he have avoided being taken for a ride?

Answer: Yes, the lawyer was a gullible and an inexperienced man. There are multiple things that he could have done to avoid being taken for a ride and made fun of. He could have tried to find out how the witness he was going in search of i.e. Lutkins looks. He could have spoken to other people at the station and interrogated about Lutkins rather than believing one person who appeared to be overly friendly being a total stranger to the lawyer. Also, he should have been the one to interrogate about the whereabouts of Lutkins while visiting the places Lutkins mostly hangs out at.

