

The Most of P.G. Wodehouse Study Guide

The Most of P.G. Wodehouse by P. G. Wodehouse

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The Drones Club

The Drones Club Summary

This collection of short stories set the tone for the collection, establishing that the stories told are exchanged between members of a gentleman's club in turn-of-the-century England in a witty, light-hearted tone about men with foibles that make them both entertaining and lovable. The first such short story is entitled "Fate" and concerns Freddie Widgeon, madly in love, and inspired to good works wherever he goes. His trouble begins when, on helping a person with her luggage while she is simultaneously female, he is discovered in her flat by private detectives who mistake her flat for that of their client Mr. Silvers. The rest of his trouble comes when, in an effort to show Mavis how unappealing the girl is, and so reassure her, Freddie returns to the building and mistakenly lands in the flat of the woman for whom the detectives had been hired. The detectives find Mrs. Silvers sitting on Freddie's lap, and he, being entirely too honest, gives his real name and is thus foiled, losing his fiancé and swearing off of good deeds forever.

The second story features two characters in a comedy act, Barmy and Pongo, both of whom fall for the same girl—teacher and reverend's daughter, Angelica Briscoe. Its title, "Tried in the Furnace" comes from their friendship and their comedy act, being tested as they both chase that girl. Intending to sneak away to the girl's town in secret, the two discover their mutual presence, then encounter the girl's father. Barmy is the first to get a meeting by volunteering for the school treat. While attending a particularly moving evensong, however, he is convicted about his selfishness and concedes the privilege to his friend. When he is telling Pongo about his sacrifice, he gets a note from Angelica requesting that, instead, he chauffeur the church women on their outing. Both friends have a terrible time, and when they swap stories of their travail, the barmaid reveals to the two of them that Angelica is married. The two are instantly sympathetic to each others' disappointment, and their friendship and their act is reinvigorated.

"The Amazing Hat Mystery" is a story of Providence using the importance of fashion to unite two pairs of soul mates. The main characters are the stout Percy Wimbolt and the thin Nelson Cork. Each one purchases a hat from Bodmin, the premier hat-maker in town in order to impress two ladies. Percy's date is the dainty Elizabeth Botsworth, and Nelson's the buxom and statuesque Diana Punter, and on the day of the races, the girls are both so appalled at what they say are terribly ill-fitting hats (Nelson's being too big and Percy's too small) that any attraction they had felt dissolves. The men meet at the Drones Club following their disappointing dates and swap stories about their rejections, each astonished that Bodmin hats should be rejected by society girls. Leaving, they are each inspired to go and talk to his friend's date (Percy to Diana and Nelson to Elizabeth), and see if they can smooth the way for each other, since Percy and Diana are old friends, as are Nelson and Elizabeth. Upon meeting with their old friends, they and their hats are so well received that the new pairs become engaged. Conversation in the club following the telling of the story makes it clear that the delivery boy had



switched the hats the morning of the race, and the evening at the Drones allowed for them to be switched back by the cloak room attendant, making the way for a smooth switch to the best-matched lovers in the end.

In "Noblesse Oblige", Freddie Widgeon appears again, this time in Cannes, and runs into a man who claims to have been an old school chum. In the course of their first conversation, he requests a meal from Freddie, saying he simply must have it that day. Freddie mistakes "meal" for "mille" and racks his brains trying to raise the money. Complications include his intention to woo a girl named Drusilla, having told her and her father that he never gambled, and the fact that the Peasant Mothers Baby Competition at which he thought he would be paid five hundred francs actually requires the judge to pay that sum to the winner he chose. Gambling, then, becomes his most obvious course, and shortly after Drusilla discovers his dishonesty and breaks their date, he discovers that the school chum not only wanted a meal instead of a mille, but was only identifying Freddie as a school chum by the tie Freddie had borrowed from his uncle, revealing after taking the money that they were not friends at all.

"Farewell to All Cats" is a story told at the Drones Club in response to Freddie Widgeon's having left the club abruptly upon discovering a cat there. The episode that had piqued his sensitivity to cats was the result of Freddie's having fallen in love, this time with a girl named Dahlia Prenderby, and accepted an invitation to visit her family at their estate, called Matcham Scratchings because of the proliferation of cats and dogs they raised there, a quantity that soon overwhelmed Freddie. Not having been an enemy of animals before, he arrives in his room to find a cat scratching the front of his dress dinner shirt, and so tosses the cat out the window. By sad coincidence, the cat catches the host, Lord Prenderby, on the back of the neck. Throughout the evening, Freddie remains so annoyed by the cats that he arrives in his room hoping to find none at all. Instead, he is haunted by an Alsatian and a Pekingese dog, and concludes the evening by finding a cat has died on his bed. Tossing that cat out of the same window, he hits Lord Prenderby sleeping on his hammock, and his fate is sealed. Dahlia is done with him, and he is done with cats.

The Drones Club Analysis

In the story called "Fate", Freddie is painted as a bit of a fool, giddy with love, and overestimating the giddiness of his betrothed. He supposes that as long as he focuses his good works on people to whom he could never be attracted, then he is just sprinkling his good will on humanity, and doing nothing to excite any blame. Mavis, however, being of a more jealous disposition, does not trust the purity of his motives, and Freddie goes, in an effort to quiet her suspicion, unwittingly right into the jaws of guilt-imposing circumstance.

Barmy and Pongo's motivation for good works was nothing like the pure overflowing of charity that inspired Freddie Widgeon. They reveal unabashedly to each other that they wish only to secure the affections of the pretty preacher's daughter. The one truly selfless act is when Barmy is so moved by the sermon he hears that he concedes the



privilege of helping with the school treat to his friend Pongo. The orneriness of the women on his trip is left to the imagination to some extent, as is their motivation, the reader only sure of the effect their adventures had on Barmy. The fact that their friendship is only solidified by their adventure may well be due to the fact of Barmy's original sacrifice, since it allowed both men to give it their all, and leave assured that a life of that kind of service would not have made them happy, anyway.

"The Amazing Hat Mystery" is an example of providence fixing the mistaken affections of two friends, while the reader suspects all along that they had chosen incorrectly, anyway. Wodehouse makes a point of describing the sizes of both the men and the women, and pointing out that the Percy and Diana are old friends, as are Nelson and Elizabeth, making them natural matches. The two things that were necessary for the switch to be made were reasons for each fellow to abandon his affections for his first choice, and for the opportunity to present itself for one-on-one meetings with their intended matches. The hats being switched made both of those things happen with no difficulty at all.

"Noblesse Oblige" is a cautionary tale about pretending too determinedly to remember someone one clearly does not. Freddie's uncle's tie is the only thing the friend recognizes, and the rest is improvised for the sake of flattery. His intention to get a meal from Freddie jeopardizes Freddie's entire future, since his father-in-law so ardently opposes gambling, and the reader is left to pity the gullibility and brash determination of poor Freddie throughout his adventure.

In the final story, "Farewell to All Cats", Freddie appears again, for more torment, establishing him firmly in the position as the unluckiest character in the book. Wishing to make a good impression on his affection of the moment, Miss Dahlia Prenderby, he feigns comfort in a place where the line between the charming home of animal-lovers and an indoor petting zoo with nervous guards had been blurred to obliteration. Fate fiddles with Freddie in the most ornery way when the cats he casts from his room in moments of frustration manage both times to strike the lord of the manner in the head.



Mr. Mulliner

Mr. Mulliner Summary

In the first story from Mr. Mulliner, "The Truth about George" the story is told of a stammering crossword-puzzle enthusiast who sets out to get over his trouble stammering by making it a point to speak to as many new people a day as he can, and to sing when that fails. So, he sets out on a train to begin meeting new people, and while his thoughts are in perfect order, the combination of a close encounter with an escaped mental patient and another with a beautiful woman whom he scared with songs about tea manage to keep him pretty nervous. The woman is so unnerved that she applies the train brake and soon residents from across the countryside are chasing him from the train with pitchforks. Fortune, however, guides him to the door of Susie Blake, the fellow crossword enthusiast he loves, and he is steeled by his ordeal finally to speak to her eloquently about his love for her.

In "A Slice of Life", Mr. Mulliner's brother Wilfred is a chemist designing face and skin crèmes, when he recommends his Raven Gypsy Face Cream to his beloved Angela Purdue to preserve the sun-kissed look of her skin. It is not long after making that recommendation to her that Jasper Finch-Farrowmere approaches Wilfred with the news that Angela had declared her engagement to Wilfred off. Wilfred is convinced that, because Angela had said Sir Jasper wanted her to marry his own son, Jasper is holding Angela somewhere against her will. To find her, Wilfred employs himself in disguise as Sir Jasper's valet. He finds that she is sequestered to one room. At last, Wilfred sees the opportunity in the form of a Turkish bath for him to lock Sir Jasper away long enough to see her. When he does, he discovers she is hiding to conceal her reaction to Raven Gypsy Face Cream, and he tells her, Murgatroyd, and Sir Jasper of his other ingenious treatments for all of their ills until his virtue is revealed.

Wilfred's chemistry also guides "Mulliner's Buck-U-Uppo" when the timid Augustine receives a bottle of tonic from his aunt Angela just after he learns about his fiance's father's temper. Augustine takes the tonic as ordered, and immediately notes a courage in his actions he has never been able to display, most notably saving the visiting bishop from an attacking dog. Later, he is able to settle the dispute between the Rev. Brandon and the bishop, buoyed by the bishop's testimony to his impressive display with the dog, and fueled by his wisdom now freed by his tonic. Augustine's bravery is able not only to relieve Jane's father of a nemesis in the dog and thereby earn his blessing to marry Jane, but to save the two older men from attacking each other in their tempers. In a crowning moment of diplomacy, Augustine cajoles the bishop's wife into allowing him to change to cooler clothes, inspiring him to offer Augustine the position of his secretary.

"The Reverent Wooing of Archibald" is a story about Archibald Mulliner's having disguised his sense of humor in pursuit of Aurelia Cammarleigh. Archibald falls in love with her, and learns from his friend Algy that she has a literary mind, and so must also be too serious-minded for things like his impression of a hen laying an egg. Securing an



invitation to her house for a weekend party, he determines to impress her aunt with his willingness and ability to discuss Bacon and Shakespeare. Archibald commits full force to the task, until he turns in on the first evening and overhears Aurelia talking when he is hunting down a snoring sleeper. She is talking about how disappointed she has been to learn that Archibald has none of the sense of humor he was reported to have. Determined to woo her back, he prepares to demonstrate his skill when she sneaks out of her room to put the snoring bulldog in his room. She is captivated by his performance, and they decide to stay together forever as playful, laughing companions.

"The Ordeal of Osbert Mulliner" opens with Osbert and Mabel Petherick-Soames happily in love until her admiring cousin, Mr. Bashford Braddock, explains to Osbert that he intends to have Mabel as his own, or else he will cause Osbert injury. When Osbert attempts to break off the engagement, Mabel's uncle, Major General Sir Masterman Petherick-Soames, threatens Osbert with similar harm if he suspects him of trifling with Mabel's affections. When Bashford learns that Osbert and Mabel are engaged, Osbert panics and decides to leave town. He gets his valet, Parker, to get him a disguise, and to tell the house staff that he would be on indefinite holiday. As he is shopping thus disguised for his traveling outfit, he encounters both of the men he is trying to escape purchasing the necessary implements for beating Osbert up. He gets home to discover burglars serving themselves from his kitchen, since the staff is away. The two begin to argue and come to blows, while Osbert hides behind the curtain. Just as the police arrive on the scene, so does Bashford Braddock, allowing Osbert to convince him the burglars fell at his hands. Osbert is able to talk to Bashford resting in the assurance that Bashford is too afraid to threaten him, and the Major General will no longer have reason to, since he and Mabel will be able to wed unimpeded.

"Monkey Business" is the story of Montrose Mulliner and extra Rosalie Beamish. Rosalie is currently working on a film with Captain Jack Fosdyke, who also longs for Rosalie, and thinks himself the bravest man ever to play a hero in the movies. The complication comes when Captain Jack brags about his experience with gorillas, and Montrose's friend George Pybus suggests that the two of them marry in the cage of the gorilla, an idea to which Rosalie thrills, and that terrifies Montrose. He is in despair at her disappointment in his bravery when he spots the gorilla high in a set with a baby. In a moment equally anticlimactic in that there was no heroic feat, and climactic in its clearing the way for Montrose's need to be a hero, the gorilla reveals to Montrose that he is merely a method actor in a suit, and happy to help however he can. The result is that Rosalie sees Montrose save the baby, while Captain Jack makes excuses.

In "The Smile that Wins", the main character, Adrian Mulliner, goes to the doctor following the news that his fiancée Lady Millicent Shipton-Bellinger's father, Lord Brangbolton will not hear of their marrying. Not smiling frequently up to that point, the muscles he has at his disposal for the purpose are only up to the job enough to produce a sardonic, almost sinister expression. His first experience comes when he attends a wedding reception at Grosvenor Square and smiles in the direction of a man stealing wedding presents. Adrian's smile convicts the man both to confess and to invite him to Sussex to share the weekend at his house with a party including Lady Millicent, her father, and Sir Jasper Addleton, whom her father wants Millicent to marry. It is that



fateful invitation that allows Adrian to encounter Lord Brangbolton on the train on the way there, and lose so satisfactorily at cards that he receives an invitation to solve the mystery of the missing soap. That encounter bore little fruit, but he is later able to tell Sir Jasper just how silly it would be of him to marry Millicent, happy and fat old bohunkus that he is, in a conversation that led to his smiling at a moment when Sir Jasper was considering the danger of abandoning a wife to serve time for his shady finance dealings. When Sir Jasper discovers that Adrian is a detective, he concedes Millicent with an extravagant monetary gift sending Adrian on with a smile. Wearing it into the library where Lord Brangbolton was teaching a new group his game of cards, Adrian smiles him into giving over his daughter with enthusiasm, lest Adrian reveal the secret to his success at cards.

"Strychnine in the Soup" tells the story of the tremendous effect a well-written mystery novel has on the fates of people bent on getting to the end of the story. The main character is Cyril Mulliner, an interior decorator who meets Amelia Bassett when he inadvertently uses her thigh to squeeze when he is reading another mystery novel during the intermission of a play and the two discover their mutual love for mysteries. Upon meeting Angela's mother, Cyril meets with a degree of disapproval when Lady Bassett calls him a pipsqueak. Determined to coerce her approval, Cyril follows her to the Wingham's, where Lady Bassett is spending the weekend, and Cyril has a standing invitation. Steeling himself with several drinks at dinner, he approached Lady Bassett's room thoroughly inebriated and makes a terrible impression on her as she is trying to read Amelia's copy of "Strychnine in the Soup". When he later realizes his boredom upon returning to his room, he determines his only course is to go back to Lady Bassett's room and take her copy of the book. Finding her still awake, he tells her he would like to marry Amelia, and she insists that she will marry someone who knows adventure and the wild parts of the world. Having snuck the book, but without Lady Bassett's blessing, he encounters Lester Mapledurham in the hallway, where Lester accuses him of stealing jewels. Innocent, Cyril attempts to return to his room and resume his reading, only to have the copy of "Strychnine in the Soup" commandeered by Lester Mapledurham as he is leaving. Fate smiles, though, as Lady Bassett upon realizing her loss, finds her copy in Lester's possession and writes him off as a scoundrel, transferring her blessing to Cyril.

Mr. Mulliner Analysis

Confidence is the theme of the first story in this section, as George learns he has only to speak his mind forcefully and with passion, and his words will come. The fear that chokes him in the train with the first woman is completely gone once he has outrun the angry members of the town and stands face to face with his beloved Susie Blake, and in the end, he is able to make a career out of public speaking, since the thoughts he had previously been unable to communicate were nonetheless clear and quality.

In "A Slice of Life", Wilfred's story is another guided by the confidence to offer the world what is uniquely his to offer. It is his genius as a chemist that gives him his first in with the lovely Angela, and that, in the end, allows him to offer the butler and Angela each



solutions to their insecurities, as well. Ingenuity is Wilfred's greatest weapon as he disguises himself and makes himself useful to Angela, bringing her her meals, without anyone suspecting his double life. When he reveals himself in the end, he finds he is the perfect hero for everyone's troubles in the whole house.

It is an easy parallel to the adventure Augustine has when he takes "Mulliner's Buck-U-Uppo". Augustine discovers latent in himself just the kind of wisdom and insight the people around him have needed, except that instead of requiring an opening, the thing he was requiring was the necessary gumption to speak his mind. In smiting the dog, he became Rev. Brandon's hero, in coercing the bishop's wife to relent about the winter-weight fabric she was making him wear, he became the bishop's hero, and in standing up to them both so impressively that the bishop offered him the position as his secretary, Augustine became Jane's hero.

Archibald is another character who, like Augustine, only needed the gumption to go ahead and be himself, something he got when, as in the case of Wilfred, the people around him offered him the opening in the story, "The Reverent Wooing of Archibald". He begins his course in the story suppressing his native sense of humor and play in order to impress the impressive and literary Aurelia. He is observably miserable as he tries to please the demanding aunt, Wodehouse making it clear just what a manufacture this all is, and how miserable he would be were he to continue to charade much longer. Just when he has exhausted himself, Aurelia's revealing her desire to laugh with her husband, and her disappointment that Archibald had not been what she had heard gives him the queue to step out from behind his mask and let fly all he had been pushing down in order to be what he thought Aurelia would want.

Wodehouse takes a reverse course in "The Ordeal of Osbert Mulliner", since he is, in fact, a gentle and romantic lover, happily attached to his Mabel, and it becomes necessary for him to convince Bashford and the Major General that he is a much tougher man than he is. Wodehouse allows fate to arrange circumstances for his benefit again, and as Osbert trembles and comes close to dismay, two burglars who have had too much to drink in his kitchen nearly do each other in, and allow Osbert to pull off with perfect aplomb the illusion that their destruction had been his own handiwork. And this deus ex machina is the perfect fix in that Bashford only needed to be convinced once before he was no longer a threat, and the Major General would no longer be a threat because Osbert would now marry Mabel with all his heart, which is all he wanted to do in the first place.

"Monkey Business" is another perfect example of Fate stepping in to reveal a braggart as the simpering showboat he really is, and allow an otherwise timid protagonist to claim the mantle of hero. Even the fact that Rosalie is a trifle shallow and fickle is allowed to work in Montrose's favor when he is allowed to present the illusion that he has bested the gorilla and retrieved the stolen baby without a single scratch on him. Captain Fosdyke's weak explanation that it was wombats and not gorillas he had faced in his expeditions serves as the perfect humiliation in a story in which the little guy is the good guy, and the lady wants so badly to be able to cling to her illusions.



"The Smile that Wins" is a story in which Wodehouse turns two weaknesses into life-changing strengths for the main character. Adrian's dyspepsia acts up in moments when it is absolutely necessary that he impress his current company, and his efforts to ease it convince his company that he knows all their dirty secrets. It is just fortunate for Adrian that everyone whose approval he must gain has such secrets, and such extravagant means of pacifying him. It is the gifts and the approval he gains as a result of those people acting out of their fear that allows Adrian to marry Millicent, and give her a lifestyle a less gifted detective would never have been able to provide.

Cyril similarly benefits from the bad behavior of others in "Strychnine in the Soup" when his rival for the hand of Amelia Bassett selfishly takes Lady Bassett's book from him, allowing Lady Bassett to see him as a selfish sneak, and Cyril to come off looking really quite harmless. The reader is already rooting against Lester Mapledurham, since Amelia says in the beginning of the story that she would much prefer to belong to Cyril. Lady Bassett's assessment of Cyril as a pipsqueak is demonstrated as clearly irrelevant to Cyril's ability to make Amelia happy, and a demonstration of her own selfish desire that Amelia marry a man based on what Lady Bassett determines gives him his worth.



Stanley Featherstonehaugh Ukridge

Stanley Featherstonehaugh Ukridge Summary

The first story is called "Ukridge's Dog College", in which Ukridge thinks if he can train this starter group of six Pekingese puppies and sell them to major Hollywood movie-makers, then soon Ukridge-trained dogs will be all anyone will want to own. He just has to get started, but he is without any money. Corky's plan to help is to ask George Tupper for help finding capital for Ukridge, and George's plan is to ask Ukridge's aunt. With George on the job, Corky arrives to learn that Ukridge is in overwhelming debt, and has made very little progress in his dog-training due to his landlord's having taken the dogs as collateral against his rent. Ukridge collects money from a shady-looking man at the train station, and he and Corky go to the landlord's office to pay the rent. To the landlord's horror, the dogs have been released, making it necessary for him to pay him restitution for the dogs instead of receiving rent. When Ukridge reveals coolly to Corky that he had captured the dogs himself for just that result, all seems well but for the fact that Ukridge's aunt turns out to have been the owner of the dogs, and the very helpful George Tupper had just explained to her Ukridge's whole tale.

In "Ukridge's Accident Syndicate", the group learns of a man who broke his ankle and received a fiver from a newspaper, his subscription to which came with accident insurance, and Ukridge latches on to the insurance's being offered with subscriptions to all of the papers as a good way of making money. The thing to do is to choose which of them will take the subscriptions, and so need to be injured. They choose Teddy Weeks, who is the man Bertie and Ukridge see coming out of a church on his wedding day at the opening of the story. Months go by while extravagant accidents are happening all around, and Teddy Weeks goes on unscathed, even cautious. When, at last, the group applies pressure to Teddy, insisting that they have made an investment, and he has a responsibility, he says perhaps a good meal and a lot of champagne would properly motivate him. At the dinner, the group presses Teddy further, and he scoffs that he never intended to actually get hurt. Fate steps in, however, and Teddy steps in front of a truck, breaking two ribs and an arm. When the friends go to the hospital to see him, Teddy pretends to think they are more reporters, having retained no memory of the pact, and thereby motivating Ukridge's reaction to seeing him coming out of the church.

"A Bit of Luck for Mabel" opens with Ukridge's describing how successfully he becomes a part of the social world at Onslow Square, where one Mabel lives with her family. Still living with his aunt at Wimbledon, he has been very well dressed and a favorite pet. When his aunt learns of his having stolen one of her clocks to finance the gifts he has been giving to Mabel, however, she tosses him out, and Ukridge finds himself without clothes for their next gathering. His first plan is to go see George Tupper, who says what he needs more than cash is a job, so Ukridge helps himself to George's top hat on his way out the door. When George contacts Ukridge the next day, he tells him he has a friend in need of a secretary and will meet him at the club that afternoon. Ukridge's mind is still on obtaining suitable garb, however, so that afternoon, when he sees a man



approaching his flat in formal dress and assumes this must be the man with the offer of a job, he forms a plan. He lets the man in, and before he can even introduce himself, says there is something on his jacket, and suggests he take it off so Ukridge can take a look. The man obliges, and Ukridge shoots out the door with the man's jacket and top hat, to meet Mabel. To Ukridge's dismay, however, when he finally meets Mabel, she asks him why her father had not come with him, since he had been on his way to meet Ukridge at his apartment, and he realizes the gravity of his most recent pinch.

The scheme in "Buttercup Day" might have gone off without a hitch, had it not been for Ukridge's crossing paths with an even sneakier crook. His idea is to send a pretty girl around the town with a basket of paper buttercups, selling them for contributions to a charity she won't have to name, simply telling them that it's Buttercup Day, and Ukridge will be able to pocket a huge sum. Establishing the setting at his Aunt Julia's house during a bazaar for the Local Temperance League being held there while she is away, the scheme starts out very well. But then, a stuttering curate comes to inform them that there is a woman collecting money for Buttercup Day on the wrong day. Ukridge suggests that Corky send her away, and Corky encounters Aunt Julia, back early since her event had been canceled. He can only delay her a moment, and returns to find Ukridge asleep in a chair and the curate gone, just as Julia returns annoyed with his fib. As they wonder how or why Ukridge was asleep in the chair, they are joined by another stranger, claiming to be looking for a crook posing as a stuttering curate. He suggests they go look where the valuables are, and discover that all of Julia's snuffboxes have been stolen. The man asks where else there might be anything valuable, and she says her jewels are in her bedroom, after which the group finds themselves locked in the snuffbox room. When the butler finally comes to their rescue, they learn he has been closed in the cellar downstairs, and Julia's jewels have been stolen, as well—the curate and the man from Scotland Yard revealed as burglars in cahoots. In the end, the worst part is that the stuttering curate got to the Buttercup girl, and her conscience inspired her to hand over all of the money to him.

The final story is "Ukridge and the Old Stepper", and is about Ukridge at a place called Market Deeping where there was a man with a job for which his Aunt Julia thought Ukridge might be well suited. While he is there, Ukridge falls in love with Myrtle, the daughter of the man with the job. Then, his Uncle Percy, the Old Stepper, arrives from Australia. His tastes for comfort and his ability to procure extravagant additions to the estate define his visit, including a lovely sundial Uncle Percy suggested Ukridge give to his Myrtle for her birthday. The extravagance culminates with roses for a brunch at which Ukridge hosts Myrtle and her father, and just when his appearance is at its best, there enters a man to collect all of the new furniture, purchased with a bad check. From that point, the credibility of the now absent Percy continues to unravel, inspiring Myrtle's father to assume that the scoundrel is Ukridge, a conclusion only amplified by the furniture collector's complaining of a stolen sundial whose description matches the one Ukridge has given Myrtle for her birthday, as well as roses and a summer house. Once Ukridge's guests have left, Percy returns, and on seeing what has happened, confesses that wherever he is, he scrounges, and being very sorry for the embarrassment, will leave.



Stanley Featherstonehaugh Ukridge Analysis

Ukridge's idea for the dog college introduces the big, broad, flexible outlook with which he sees the world and with which he wishes everyone else would join him in perceiving their possessions, in particular. His Aunt Julia, for example, could not be persuaded that her Pekingese puppies were seeds of a fortune for her nephew. Corky's connection with Ukridge is not at all optimistic nor guided by any illusion that Ukridge will ever make a fortune, which makes his continued friendship with him a gesture of selflessness and faith that he will never take a risk that he has not also calculated not to be too expensive. There is never any explanation offered, however, as to why whenever Ukridge comes up against trouble, Corky goes to his aide. It is only, in the end, to allow the story to be observed by its teller.

In the story of the accident syndicate, the whole story is told in explanation of why, when Corky and Ukridge are walking by a wedding, and Teddy Weeks emerges looking the part of the happy, high-society groom, Ukridge is overwhelmed with the desire to have someone pelt him publicly with a tomato. This is an example of how, whereas throughout Wodehouse's storytelling, he allows fate to intervene and help everything work out for the good of the protagonist, in the case of Ukridge, he seems to delight in the obliteration of his schemes. The same can be said of the story, "A Bit of Luck for Mabel", when in this case, fate was even a part of the plot against Ukridge, sending his would-be father-in-law to his apartment at the moment of Ukridge's greatest desire for a dress outfit.

The beauty of "Buttercup Day" is that Ukridge is finally out-schemed instead of simply foiled. The thieves who come to his Aunt Julia's house are practiced at being successful instead of at failing and making due, and so come away not only with the booty they hoisted from Julia's house, but with the profits of Ukridge's bogus charity, as well. The thief in "Ukridge and the Old Stepper" is not Ukridge again, but this time he is not successful, either. Ukridge comes close to romance again, but luck is on the side of the girl who gets away.



Lord Emsworth and The Golf Stories

Lord Emsworth and The Golf Stories Summary

The single story in the book dedicated to Lord Emsworth is entitled "Pig-hoo-o-o-ey!" and opens with the explanation that the pig's caretaker, George Cyril Wellbeloved, is incarcerated, and that since his absence, the Empress of Blandings (the pig) will no longer eat. Lord Emsworth is dismayed, since her size has exceeded show quality, and it is on that point that he is fretting when his sister, Lady Constance Keeble, enters fretting over the actions of young Angela, their niece, who has refused her fiancé in favor of a young man recently returned from America. The two talk past each other for a moment, while Angela frets over the fact that unless Lord Emsworth gives his approval to the new match, she cannot have the money her mother left her for four more years. Next follows a conversation Lord Emsworth finds himself having with a young man who turns out to be the jilted fiancé when he has run from the flurry of female frets back to the pig sty. Heacham, the young man is talking about money while he is talking about the Empress, and the young man leaves in a huff, cursing all pigs, and ensuring that Lord Emsworth would never approve of him. Determined that Angela not be permitted to marry James Bartholomew Bedford, Lady Constance orders Lord Emsworth to meet with him and tell him of their disapproval. The dinner, however, proves merry and fruitful, as Lord Emsworth learns the master word that will bring any pig to the trough no matter what. Since Wellbeloved is away, this information is gold to Lord Emsworth, but he forgets the word on the train ride home. Angela finds Lord Emsworth to see what she can learn of the meeting, and all Emsworth can talk about is the call he cannot recall. Angela strikes the bargain that if Bedford's call does the trick, Emsworth must give his blessing to their union, and Emsworth agrees. The words to a song audible from the house are enough to jog Emsworth's memory, and he tries the call to no avail. It isn't until Bedford himself arrives and demonstrates the call that the Empress comes to her trough to eat, and the marriage finally receives the blessing Angela and her Jimmy had been seeking.

The first story of the next section is called "The Coming of Gowf" and is about King Merolchazzar and his need of something to distract him while he waits for a visit from the beautiful princess from an adjoining kingdom whom he would like to marry. His Grand Vizier draws the king's attention to a gentleman captured from Scotland, and his form of worship that involves hitting a ball with a club and shouting words like "Fore!" The king loves the look of the ritual, and makes himself the student of the Scotsman, transforming his kingdom around the implementation of a place he calls the Linx, special servants he calls kaddiz, and the new position he gives to his teacher as the Promoter of the King's Happiness, or the Pro. Even when his brother tries to suggest that he has broken with the kingdom's religion by turning to a foreign god, the high priest he sends to dethrone him gets caught up in the game, as well, and the brother's plans are foiled. The hand of fate makes one final contribution when the princess arrives and proves to be a fellow worshiper of Gowf, and the two of them determine to marry and live happily ever after on the Linx.



The next golf story in line is dedicated to the thesis that golf can stir a man's passions and guide his destiny. In "The Awakening of Rollo Podmarsh", the Oldest Member narrates the tale of a young man coddled by his widowed mother, but in love with Mary Kent, who wants to marry a hero. But Rollo is depressed about the state of his game at present, and confesses to his niece, Lettice Willoughby. Hope dawns with an invitation to golf with her, and Rollo's spirits are revived. He learns that with his thoughts centered on Mary, even the rhythmic way of saying her name perfects his golf swing. He is on his way to his goal of a score under one hundred swings when he encounters his sister, Lettice's mother, on the tenth tee. She tells him of the latest funny thing Lettice has said, about wanting to put Rollo out of his misery, just as they had done with their dog. Rollo is stunned that just as he is on his way to heroism and love, his thoughts are fixated on the strange taste of his bedtime arrowroot, and the thought that sweet Letty has been poisoning him! Determined to proceed in heroic fashion, Rollo finishes all eighteen holes in fifty shots, and sweeps Mary off her feet. Eager to stop her hopes rising too high, however, Rollo tells her of his impending death, and how ardently he loves her, and just when the two are tearfully embracing, his sister comes back to tell them that the chemist would not give Letty any poison, but that Rollo's concerned mother had found something to help him stop smoking, and that that had been the strange taste in his evening arrowroot.

"The Clicking of Cuthbert" tells the story of Mrs. Smethurst's Literary Society in a town devoted to golf. The protagonist is Cuthbert Banks, who until he lays eyes on Adeline Smethurst, the daughter of Mrs. Smethurst, has taken pride in the quality of his golf game. She informs him that she will only marry someone who has done something really worthwhile, like establishing himself in the literary world. Cuthbert pledges himself to the Literary Society, where he is pitted against rival Raymond Parsloe Devine, who fancies himself a writer on par with the finest Russian novelists for Adeline's heart. When an actual Russian novelist visits their little society, however, this Vladimir Brusiloff is very down on every Russian author to which Mr. Devine gave credit for his inspiration. Just when the Literary Society is wrapping its head around his great man's rejection of the standard to which their Devine had been aspiring, Brusiloff says the highlight of his visit has been meeting two golf greats whose names were recognized only by Cuthbert Banks. Even more amazing is when Brusiloff recognizes the name of Cuthbert Banks as the winner of the French Open. The society is shocked with this reversal, and Cuthbert's marketability as a quality golfer instantly goes through the roof, both with the society, and in the eyes of Adeline Smethurst.

In "High Stakes", it is the suspense of betting big on games of golf that the Oldest Member is describing when Bradbury Fisher trades his highly prized valet, Blizzard, against Bobby Jones' baffle from the Infants' All-In Championship of Atlanta, Georgia when Gladstone Bott, an old school rival, obtains it knowing Gradbury's weakness. Blizzard is the best around, and the only way Bradbury had ever really outdone Bott until Bott obtained this exceptional baffle. With Bradbury's wife away, he has very little time to make his deed right, and decides the only course is to play Bott for Blizzard in a game of golf. The stakes are arranged, Blizzard against three railroads, and the game is scheduled. Bradbury arrives to see Bott and a group of caddies already on the course, and determines that he will play cautiously instead of taking his usual risks. Clean



playing, however, appears to keep him just behind his opponent, so he resumes his usual approach of swatting and sloshing in order to take back the edge. When sloppiness results in ball in the rough, he resorts to paying the caddy to allow him to move his ball, and then repeats the trick a while later. Much to his chagrin, the caddy turns out to be Bott's hired detective, and rats him out, making Blizzard fairly Bott's twice over. His only salvation comes when, on his wife's return from her trip, she confesses hoping for mercy that she has hired a new man named Vosper, and begs her husband to find a happy and suitable place for dear old Blizzard, and get himself a suitable gift for his trouble.

Rounding out the collection of golf stories is "The Heel of Achilles" in which the Oldest Member himself is a main character in the story, serving as personal secretary to Vincent Jopp, a famous millionaire businessman. The story revolves around Jopp's having chosen with his very calculating and logical brain a girl named Amelia Merridew to be his wife, and her certainty that he cannot golf inspiring her to tell him that if he wins the American Amateur Championship, she will be his wife. So, he sets out to learn the game instantly, reading books about it and approaching it with the same calculation with which he approaches his business dealings: simply do what he must, and win. And so he does, with disconcerting success, until Miss Merridew approaches the Oldest Member and asks him for a favor. She is so alarmed as he approaches the championship that she asks if he will shout "Boo!" if ever he looks like he is winning. When he refuses, she goes away quite upset, since the championship is to take place the following day. When the day comes, Jopp is in top form, doing business at the same time he is winning at every hole, until, near the end of the course, all of his ex wives appear, all giving him advice and just being their exaggerated selves, and he is transformed from the cool, mathematically perfect player he had been to a nervous, distracted mess, and the game is lost, proving that every player has an Achilles Heel.

Lord Emsworth and The Golf Stories Analysis

Lord Emsworth is a character written to amuse, and both his preoccupation with the Empress of Blandings and his contrast with his grumpy sister Lady Constance serve to heighten his comical appeal. Their first conversation in the story is a good case-in-point of their pronounced differences heightening their comedy together. Emsworth's slightly slower, distractable demeanor drives the comedy throughout the story, while everyone else looks lightly over-worried and self-involved by contrast. The whole conversation Bedford and Emsworth have on the subject of the different calls used around the United States to call pigs is very humorously written, as well, and inspires affection and loyalty for the character Bedford that makes the romance's blessing at the end of the story even more poignant.

The first of the golf stories, "The Coming of Gowf" is written like a fairy tale, with emphasis given to the formality of the speech and ritual throughout both the old and the new aspects of royal life in Oom. The objective of winning the princess and the attempted usurping of power by the king's brother are details that stay in keeping with a fairy tale, as well. It is evident both because of the fairy tale style of the story and the



details the characters celebrate about the sport that the objective of the story is to romanticize and inspire affection for the aesthetic and age of the sport, even if it is quite obviously a fictitious rendering of its history. There is also an element of poking fun at religious ritual as something arbitrarily begun, since golf was regarded mistakenly as an act of worship, but was still given all of the gravity and legitimacy of all of the kingdom's other religions.

Rollo Podmarsh is another story in which Wodehouse's affection for the sport of golf is evident in his description of it. The way saying the name of his beloved guides Rollo's swing, and the way it inspires Mary to romantic attachment to him are such details. There is also an element of Wodehouse's idea of masculinity and the things that neutralize it in the characterization of Rollo and of his mother, and the things Mary Kent is seeking. Cuthbert shares a bit of that, as well, but in the case of Cuthbert, it is Adeline who originally seeks a tame, indoor man and is brought around to embrace the more outdoor sportsman by the end of the story. Another important point about this story is that Adeline assumes that Cuthbert is not cultured because he is a golfer instead of a writer, but details like his comparing her to the Taj Mahal reveal that he is worldly and culturally informed long before he submits himself to the Wood Hills Literary Society. The story makes the opposite point about the people of the society, when Brusiloff mentions the golfers he was so excited to have met, and none of them save Cuthbert even knew who they were, revealing that their knowledge of culture was quite narrow.

"High Stakes" introduces an idea the Jeeves stories capitalize on later, and that is the esteem in which English butlers are held. Corky had mentioned it in "Ukridge's Dog College", as well, but the fact that these two incredibly wealthy and accomplished men were betting so extravagantly against a butler is a perfect demonstration of how highly valued good butlers are, at least in turn of the century England. Wodehouse employs one of his favorite story-telling elements in the resolution of this story, with the *deus ex machina* intervention of fate as Bradbury's wife comes home with Vosper, making it necessary to find another happy arrangement for Blizzard, the butler over which the whole business began.

The story of Vincent Jopp in "The Heel of Achilles" employs the contrast between the mind and the heart of an English businessman. While Jopp was invincible in the world of business, the thing that brought him squarely back to the realm of humanity was the appearance of all of the women to whom he had ever been close. Their stark contrasts to one another serves as an insight into the intellectual, heartless way he must have chosen them, as well, much the way he had chosen Amelia Merridew without her deliberate consent. Another clever literary tease is that Wodehouse never reveals the name of the Oldest Member, even as he becomes a main character in a story.



Jeeves

Jeeves Summary

In the first story, "The Purity of the Turf", the task is a village school treat's games, and Bingo Little's scheme to lay bets on the results. Jeeves gives the boys the tip that there is a choirboy who seems their ticket to winning big until Steggles, their shady-dealing rival sees him running, and their secret is out. Steggles puts a beetle down his shirt while he is standing in the choir at service, and he is kicked out of the race. Jeeves' next tip is the steady hand of Prudence Baxter for the egg-and-spoon race, but she finishes in fifth place. The results of the race are altered completely when the master of ceremonies announces that a manservant sounding very like Jeeves has confessed to paying the first four runners of the race, making Prudence Baxter the fair winner.

In "The Great Sermon Handicap", the group is betting on the lengths of sermons when the twins Claude and Eustace put together a list of starters and invite Bertie and Bingo to join in. Bertie has some insight into the ability of Reverend Heppenstall to give a very long sermon on Brotherly Love. The other advantage for the group is that when Claude and Eustace are arranging the handicaps, Steggles sees the sermon he delivered, and doesn't notice, like the twins did, that nearly a dozen pages fell out of his folder on his way to the pulpit, so Steggles thinks he will only speak for twenty minutes. So, with only indulgent smiles coming from Jeeves, the group decides that Bertie should ask Heppenstall to deliver his sermon on brotherly love again, since he had been so inspired by it, and they will have the day sewn up. In the end, however, it is the butlers who have the inside scoop, and while the young friends knew which would be the longest sermon, the butlers knew who would be delivering it.

In the next story, Bingo is in love with Rev. Heppenstall's niece, Miss Mary Burgess, and decides to give their Christmas play "The Metropolitan Touch" to impress her. Bingo asks Jeeves what the best strategy would be to win her over, and Jeeves' advice is to devote himself to good works. It proves to be a good strategy in the beginning, until Steggles starts laying odds against Bingo's success. Soon multiple people about town are rooting against his success at the Christmas play. Bingo wants to incorporate some of the London hits into the traditional play, so when the play finally stages, it is not only laced with shockingly inappropriate songs, but Steggles has exchanged the fruit the children were to toss to audience members for balls of mess. In the end, Mary Burgess is completely put off, and townspeople are waiting outside the theater to beat Bingo Little severely. Once again, however, Jeeves maintains his perspective throughout, and has the foresight to buy the book against Bingo's chances of success.

In "Jeeves and the Song of Songs", Bertie's Aunt Dahlia commands him to break up the romance budding between the crooning Tuppy Glossop and the opera singer Cora Bellenger, in order that Dahlia's daughter Angela may have Tuppy. Bertie takes the question of how best to proceed to Jeeves. Jeeves' strategy is to consider the psychology of the characters involved, and irritation is Jeeves' best answer, observing



that she is highly particular, and that if Tuppy ever looked really bad in public, her affection would quickly wane. He suggests that Bertie sing "Sonny Boy" at the upcoming entertainment right before Tuppy's performance of the same song, so the audience turns on him. When the night comes, however, the trick is even worse than Bertie knows. Jeeves advises, that Bertie go to a nearby pub until just before he is to sing, as do also, apparently, Tuppy and Cora, since all three of them sing the same song. The worst part is that Jeeves tells Cora that it had been Tuppy's specific request that Cora sing the song, making it look as if Tuppy had planned to turn the audience against her.

Finally, "Jeeves and the Impending Doom" finds Bingo Little employed as tutor to a notoriously misbehaving young man, and in desperate need of keeping the job. His trouble comes when a man named Mr. Filmer of the Anti-Tobacco League comes to the estate, and not only catches Thomas smoking, but reports it to Aunt Agatha, inspiring Thomas to plot a revenge for which they must all keep constant watch. Bingo reports that Thomas has been reading "Treasure Island", and so they start imagining what revenge might be inspired by Captain Jack Flint. Thomas chooses for his revenge a party during which a thunderstorm forces everyone in the party indoors, revealing the absence of Mr. Filmer. Bertie leaves to take him a raincoat, and finds him on an island without a boat to get back, Thomas having set it adrift. The real trouble starts when Mr. Filmer and Bertie are chased to the top of a building by an angry swan where Bertie goes to great trouble to assure the grumpy Right Honorable that his man Jeeves was on his way and will know what to do. Indeed he does, for when he arrives, he throws the mackintosh he has brought for Mr. Filmer over the swan's head, and the two are able to climb down unmolested. Upon returning to the house, Jeeves tells Mr. Filmer it was Bertie who set his boat adrift, not only ensuring that Bingo will be able to keep his job, but also that Bertie would be faced with no awkwardness in turning down the one with Mr. Filmer for which he had been invited for the weekend in the first place.

Jeeves Analysis

The Jeeves stories are the stories of a gentleman's hero: a man who is never surprised or ruffled, never caught off his guard, and never without a solution to a problem. He always knows who is connected to whom, and in what way his own connections can serve him, and that is why gambling in particular is so squarely within his realm. The Jeeves stories are all told from the perspective of Bertram Wooster, who is in the best position to observe the remarkable phenomenon that is Jeeves' mind. To the English mind, dignity, insight, calm thinking, and knowledge of how to benefit from one's connections are high virtues, and Jeeves has those gifts in heroic proportions. In all of the Jeeves stories but "Jeeves and the Impending Doom", there is also the element of the small village of Twing, where Bertie spent his childhood, and so Jeeves' connections run deep. It is also such a small place that entertainment is hard to come by, so gambling is the thing the friends impose on the goings-on to keep things interesting for themselves.

In "The Purity of the Turf", Wodehouse allows the character of Bingo Little, who is so engrossed in the culture of gambling, to introduce several allusions to gambling stories



whose lessons might be applicable to their present circumstances, and even when Bertie doesn't take him seriously, his insights prove helpful, as in the case of Steggles getting Harold kicked out of the race. Jeeves, in this story, intervenes in order to secure the fortunes of Bertie and his friends, whereas in "The Great Sermon Handicap", his last-minute surprise works in his favor and that of his fellow butlers. Bingo's would-be romance with Cynthia Wickhammersley is a funny detail in the second story, as well, serving very little purpose to the storyline except to establish that Bertie and Jeeves have had a long history with the village, and to devastate Bingo in the end when it turns out she has been engaged to another man all along.

"The Metropolitan Touch" is another opportunity, as was "The Coming of Gowf", for Wodehouse to comment on the idea of religious observation, only this time, he uses it as the standard to which Bingo Little's monstrously irreverent sacrilege was measured. Jeeves even offers a wise and insightful piece of advice to Bingo in his suggestion of good works to woo the girl, and had Bingo not reacted so harshly to them, they might have transformed him quite nicely as well. In the end, however, Bingo is as static a character as ever there was, and he leaves Twing Parish traumatized by his immovable ego and his taste for the bawdy.

"Jeeves and the Song of Songs" is a story without any gambling at all, and continues on the theme of music established in the previous story. Some of the best literary moments are Wodehouse's descriptions of the various and colorful ways in which the climactic moment in the song "Sonny Boy" can be murdered. Another is when Bertie introduces his aunt with the sentence, "Those who know Bertram Wooster best are aware that in his journey through life he is impeded and generally snootered by as scaly a collection of aunts as was ever assembled". A third is when Bertie describes the effect the liquor had on him when he was so nervous to sing.



Quick Service

Quick Service Summary

Quick Service is the novel at the close of the collection and features Joss Weatherby, the merry and care-free artist employed by J.B. Duff in love with Sally Fairmile. Sally is employed with her wealthy relatives from America, a former prize-fighter and his wife, Mr. and Mrs. Steptoe, and engaged to a Lord Holbeton, whom Mrs. Steptoe hopes will give some refinement to her husband. Also in the house are Mrs. Chavender, another relative whose portrait hangs in the Steptoe mansion's breakfast room, and Chibnall, the Steptoe's butler. The plot centers around Mr. Duff's desire to get the portrait of Mrs. Chavender from the Steptoes in order that he might use it in his upcoming ham advertisements. Joss is the painter of the portrait, and in love with Sally, and so remains closely involved in the quest even after Mr. Duff fires him, since he makes himself valet at the Steptoe house. Complications in the plot include Mrs. Steptoe's unwillingness to sell the painting, making it necessary for Duff and Joss to plot ways of stealing it, and the suspicion of Chibnall, whose fiancée is a mystery-reading waitress who works in the town where Mr. Duff stays during the heist efforts. Pleasant plot turns include the romance between Joss and Sally, the affection and admiration that grows in Mr. Steptoe for Joss while Joss is in his service, and the renewed romance between Mrs. Chavender and Mr. Duff, allowing ultimately for the peaceful exchange of the painting and the reinstatement and promotion of Joss in Mr. Duff's company.

Quick Service Analysis

In "Quick Service", the contrast between the very merry and light-hearted Joss Weatherby and the surly old Mr. J.B. Duff is the driving force for much of the action. Joss is never deterred from his mirth by the anger and threatening tone of his employer. Joss remains, in fact, the most consistent of the characters throughout the rises and falls in action, always in the same invincibly good spirits regardless of the status of the situation. His blissfulness is both what wins Sally over and what endears him to Mrs. Chavender, ultimately securing his promotion upon his re-entry to the Paramount Ham company.

Mr. Duff is still, however a comical character, made particularly lovable because of his vulnerable digestion and fear of women. His adopting a disguise for his time in Loose Clippings is another added element of comedy to his character, so that as grumpy as he consistently is, he is still a lovably human character, so the reader is easier to bring along as Mrs. Chavender falls in love with him again after their years of separation.

When Sally enters the story, since her first conversation with Joss is so merry and full of wit and warm affection from Joss, the sympathy of the reader is much more on the side of their romance than that of hers with Lord Holbeton. Their lively and romantically charged conversation contrasted with the conversation she has with George in which he



confesses, with very little animation or color, his fear of the man Joss handles with such merry ease is another element of the story that brings the reader into the position of cheering for Joss and Sally's romance.

Since the Steptoes are rather crass and out of place in England, treating people well or badly based on their financial situation, and from roots that earned them their money through no intellectual or business success but because of Mr. Steptoe's being able to out-animal his opponents, it is also easy for the reader to allow in imagination for the eventuality of their returning to Hollywood, and weather and culture that suits them better.

Miss Pym and Chibnall add layers and interest to the story both with their own quirky romance, and with the fact of their fascination with the entrance of Joss and Mr. Duff onto the scene being viewed through their own personal taste in novels. Since Chibnall reads romantic stories about lords refusing their fortunes and titles for the freedom of following their hearts in love, he is easily taken in by the story Joss offers to explain his taste and ill-acquaintance with the norms of servant life. Since Miss Pym reads mysteries and who-done-its, her instinct is to look for the qualities about Joss and Mr. Duff that could characterize them as crooks. Both characters' tastes motivate them to do things that drive the action of the story, as Joss's working conditions are eased by Chibnall, and Miss Pym introduces the suspicion that ultimately gets Joss and Mr. Duff tossed in the pantry.

Wodehouse uses several idiosyncratic details to turn and bring humor to a simple storyline, making it a collection of character sketches and adventures in romance and personal discovery.



Characters

Jeevesappears in Jeeves

Bertie's man in the last five of the short stories in the chapter named for him. He is a valet of the finest sort both for his social connections and for his ability to think all the way through and around a situation to find its most beneficial resolution. His reputation is known widely for this reason, and people who need advice or instructions out of a fix all go to Jeeves with confidence that he will find the way.

Stanley Featherstonehaugh Utridgeappears in Stanley Featherstonehaugh Utridge

Utridge is a ne'er do well nephew of a wealthy woman who occasionally takes him in and spruces him up until he so faithfully reminds her of his irresponsibility and tendency to cheat and to gamble. He is forever scheming ways of making his fortune quick and easy, and borrowing start-up capital from friends and strangers. He falls in love easily, and loses them all to the same revelation of his character that causes his aunt to cast him out of her home.

Mr. Mullinerappears in Mr. Mulliner

Mr. Mulliner is a man whose family is filled with exemplary individuals, all excellent illustrations of some point of ideal conduct Mr. Mulliner is desiring to explain to someone at the Drones' Club. People equally enjoy and gather around to hear his stories, and listen with some impatience, depending on their circumstances, as he launches in to what are invariably long and highly details accounts of his family's adventures.

Freddie Widgeonappears in Introducing the Gentlemen of the Drones Club

Freddie Widgeon is characterized by his falling in love quickly and completely and going to incredible lengths to please the women he chooses, usually ending in disaster and rejection. He is also prone to gambling and gullibility, which lead to their own kinds of trouble.

Cyril Barmy Fotheringay Phippsappears in Tried in the Furnace

One of two friends in a comedy act who pursue the same girl and fail terribly while having a miserable time in service to her school and church, only to learn that she is



married. Barmy is the friend who gives the privilege of the school treat to Pongo and instead accompanies the women on their outing.

Reginald Pongo Twinsleton-Twinsleton appears in Tried in the Furnace, Uncle Fred Flits By

One of two friends in a comedy act who pursue the same girl and fail terribly while having a miserable time in service to her school and church, only to learn that she is married. Pongo is the friend who attends the school treat. In "Uncle Fred", he is the nephew who watches nervously as his uncle improvises his way through adventures in escaping the rain.

Percy Wimbolt appears in The Amazing Hat Mystery

Percy is the larger of the two friends, whose hat was too small.

Nelson Cork appears in The Amazing Hat Mystery

Nelson is the thinner of the two friends, whose hat was too big.

Bingo Little appears in All's Well with Bingo

The gambling husband whose novelist wife sends him to Monte Carlo without any money with which he might gamble.

Bertram Wooster appears in Jeeves Stories

Bertie is Jeeves' employer, and his most avid admirer and trusted student.

Corcoran appears in Stanley Featherstonehaugh Ukridge

Corcoran is the friend from whose perspective the Ukridge stories are told.

Miss Poslethwaite appears in throughout

The barmaid, described with different flattering adjectives once in almost every story.



George Mulliner appears in The Truth about George

The stammering young crossword-puzzle enthusiast who finally gains his confidence after an adventurous chase and loses his stutter.

Wilfred Mulliner appears in A Slice of Life, Mulliner's Buck-U-Uppo

The chemist of the Mulliner family, who disguises himself to rescue his love, and invents the tonic that emboldens his nephew, Augustine.

Augustine Mulliner appears in Mulliner's Buck-U-Uppo

The young curate in need of the gumption he gained with the tonic to gain Jane's father's blessing, as well as gainful employment.

Archibald Mulliner appears in The Reverent Wooing of Archibald

The light-hearted impersonator of hens laying eggs who finally won the hand of Aurelia by being himself.

Osbert Mulliner appears in The Ordeal of Osbert Mulliner

The mild-mannered fiance of Mabel Petherick-Soames who is threatened with violence both for agreeing to and agreeing not to marry Mabel, and finally eliminates the threat by convincing Bashford Braddock that he bested the two burglars who fought in his kitchen himself.

Montrose Mulliner appears in Monkey Business

When his fiance, Rosalie, wanted to marry in the cage of a gorilla to test Montrose's bravery, he discovers that the gorilla is only a man in a suit, and uses the fact to convince Rosalie that he is the braver man.



Adrian Mulliner appears in The Smile that Wins

A dyspeptic detective who smiles to ease his own pain, but characteristics of the expression make people think he knows everything about them, inspiring them to confess and pay him off for not revealing them.

Cyril Mulliner appears in Strychnine in the Soup

The interior decorator who loves mystery novels and wants to marry Amelia Bassett, and gets by competitor Lester Mapledurham by allowing Lady Bassett to believe that he stole her copy of mystery novel "Strychnine in the Soup".

Aunt Julia appears in Stanley Featherstonehaugh Ukridge

Ukridge's wealthy aunt who lives in Wimbledon and occasionally allows Ukridge to join her, dressing him and swiftly dismissing him whenever she discovers his misbehaving.

Lord Emsworth appears in Lord Emsworth

The absent-minded owner of the pig named the Empress of Blandings, brother of Lady Constance Keeble, uncle of Angela, and pig-calling student of James Bartholemew Bedford.

King Merolchazzar appears in The Coming of Gowf

The king of Oom who learns golf from a captured Scotsman and transforms his kingdom to accommodate it.

Rollo Podmarsh appears in The Awakening of Rollo Podmarsh

The coddled only child of a widow who meets Mary Kent and is inspired to become a hero, pressing on through certainty of death to play a nearly perfect game of golf.

Cuthbert Banks appears in The Clicking of Cuthbert

The golf champion who submits himself to a literary society's scrutiny in order to win Adeline Smethurst, and becomes celebrated once he is lauded by a Russian novelist.



Bradbury Fisher appears in High Stakes

The golfer who lost his butler and three railroads to win Bobby Jones' baggy.

Vincent Joppa appears in The Heel of Achilles

The brainy businessman who learned golf in a day only to come unstrung at the appearance of his ex-wives.

The Oldest Member appears in The Golf Stories

The storyteller of the Golf Stories, save for "The Coming of Gowf"

Joss Weatherby appears in Quick Service

The young painter who works for Paramount Ham, falls in love with Sally Fairmile of Claines Hall, and has a short adventure as a thief and valet in the home of a wealthy American prizefighter and his socially climbing wife.

Sally Fairmile appears in Quick Service

The niece of Mr. and Mrs. Steptoe with whom Joss has fallen in love and who, by the end of the story, has also fallen in love with Joss, a fact that results in the dissolution of her engagement to Lord George Holbeton.

J.B. Duff appears in Quick Service

The owner of Paramount Ham, employer of Joss Weatherby, steward of Lord Holbeton's fortune and past and future husband of Mrs. Chavender, the subject of the painting around which the action revolves.

Mrs. Chavender appears in Quick Service

The once-wealthy ex-and-future wife of J.B. Duff, subject of the painting, and honored guest in the home of the Steptoes, who are unaware of her lost fortune.

Mr. Steptoe appears in Quick Service

Former prize fighter and aspiring actor who has a weakness for playing craps, even though he is not good, and wants always to return to Hollywood.



Mrs. Steptoe appears in Quick Service

The social climber who treats her family badly unless they are wealthy, and keeps Joss on as valet only because he helps her husband to dress well.

Chibnall appears in Quick Service

The butler who suspects Joss of future thievery and is engaged to the waitress, Miss Pym.



Objects/Places

The Fateful Apartment Building appears in Fate

The apartment building in which both the homely girl whose suitcase Freddie carried and the woman whose husband was trying to catch her in an affair lived, and in which Freddie was twice discovered in circumstances that could be interpreted as incriminating.

Bridmouth appears in Tried in the Furnace

The town in which Angelica, the lovely daughter-of-the-preacher lived, and to which Barmy and Pongo traveled in order to try to woo her.

Bodmin's Hats appears in The Amazing Hat Mystery

Hats from a London hat-maker reputed to be so perfectly tailored that their fit will be perfect every time without fail.

Freddie Widgeon's Uncle's Tie appears in Noblesse Oblige

The tie Freddie borrows from his uncle that causes the gentleman to mistake him for someone from his old school.

Matcham Scratchings appears in Goodbye to all Cats

The estate so filled with cats and people obsessed with their happiness that Freddie Widgeon is compelled after his time there never to abide the company of another cat.

Monte Carlo appears in All's Well with Bingo

The city so replete with opportunities to gamble that Bingo Little goes to nerve-fraying lengths to get himself bankrolled for a piece of the action.

Mitching Hill appears in Uncle Fred Flits By

The suburb of London to which Lord Ickenham takes Pongo to see his roots, and in which they spend a rainy afternoon assuming false identities in order to secure shelter from the rain.



Crossword Puzzles appears in The Truth About George

The uniting link between George and his love, Susan, allowing him to boldly press through his stammer and eloquently express his affection for her.

Mulliner's Raven Gypsy Face Cream appears in A Slice of Life

The cream Wilfred recommended for the lovely Angela that causes her to go into seclusion until he discovers her and tells her of a complementary product, allowing their love to bloom in freedom.

Mulliner's Buck-U-Uppo appears in Mulliner's Buck U-Uppo

The tonic designed to allow elephants to fearfully charge packs of lions, and that allowed Augustine Milliner the boldness to proceed in love and career.

Aurelia Cammerleigh's Bulldog appears in The Reverent Wooing of Archibald

The dog's gasp as it got to the cold air was the cue to Archibald of Aurelia's coming, allowing him to prepare himself for his heart-stealing impression of a hen laying an egg.

Osbert Mulliner's Kitchen appears in The Ordeal of Osbert Mulliner

The scene for the battle of the burglars that allowed Osbert to give his rival the impression that he had bested them both as penalty for breaking in to his house.

The Gorilla Suit appears in Monkey Business

The fact that the much feared gorilla was in point of fact a dedicated method actor in a gorilla suit was the thing that allowed Montrose Mulliner to give his betrothed, Rosalie Beamish, the assurance that his bravery was unequalled, even by the brash adventure actors.



Adrian Mulliner's Smile appears in The Smile that Wins

The accidentally enigmatic smile Adrian affected to help with indigestion served to convince people around him that he knew secrets they were trying to keep, inspiring them to go to great lengths to pacify him, thereby ensuring his future happiness in life and love.

Strychnine in the Soup appears in Strychnine in the Soup

The mystery novel entitled "Strychnine in the Soup" was the item so coveted by so many members of the country party that when Lester Mapledurham took it from Cyril Mulliner, he could allow Lady Bassett to believe that Lester had stolen it from her room instead of him, allowing him to earn her good favor, and the hand of Amelia.

Aunt Julia's Pekingese Dogs appears in Ukridge's Dog College

The dogs with which Ukridge dreamed of starting a dog cottage, but which he eventually used as collateral against his rent, and then recaptured from the landlord's captivity, in order to make the landlord think they had escaped and that he should pay for Ukridge's loss.

Newspaper Subscription Insurance appears in Ukridge's Accident Syndicate

The insurance promised as a part of newspaper subscriptions to pay out for accidental injury and motivated the group of friends to subscribe to all of the newspapers and arrange to have one of the members seriously injured.

Ukridge's Top Hats appears in A Bit of Luck for Mabel

The first of the top hats he wanted to wear to Ascot to meet Mabel was his own, provided by his aunt Julia, and the second he stole from Mabel's father coming to meet him, and whom he mistook to be Tuppy's secretary there to talk to him about a job, thereby sealing his fate to be without Mabel.



Paper Buttercups appears in Buttercup Day

Ukridge hired a girl to hand out paper buttercups to the people in exchange for contributions to an imaginary charity until another, smarter conman comes and scares her out of her scheme.

The Sundial appears in Ukridge and the Old Stepper

Ukridge's gift of a sundial to Myrtle was stolen by his Uncle Percy from a neighboring yard, a practice he said was quite standard in Australia, where they steal things from each other with great regularity.

the Earl of Emsworth's Black Berkshire Sow, the Empress of B appears in Pig-hoo-o-o-o-ey!

The pig the calling of whom in the end made James Belford the hero of both Lord Emsworth and the secure betrothed of young Angela.

The Linx appears in The Coming of Gowf

The name of the temple of the new god in the kingdom of Oom in which King Merolchazzar learned from the captured Scotsman.

The Arrowroot appears in The Awakening of Rollo Podmarsh

Rollo, being of a delicate constitution, took a medicinal drink of arrowroot every evening, and became convinced that it had been poisoned by his well-intended niece, inspiring him to play the end of his Mary-Kent winning game with the kind of gusto that comes from thinking it is the last game he will ever play.

Wood Hills appears in The Clicking of Cuthbert

The suburban settlement that Mrs. Smethurst was so determined to infuse with world culture that she founded the Literary Society, and set the story of Cuthbert's elevation in Adeline's eyes in motion.

James Braid's appears in High Stakes

The book that instructed the game of Bradbury Fisher as he played for the ability to retain his beloved butler Blizzard.



The American Amateur Championship appears in The Heel of Achilles

The golf tournament that millionaire Vincent Jopp set out to win in order to secure the hand of Amelia Merridew, having just learned to play the game from books.

The Refreshment Tent appears in The Purty of the Turf

The smorgasbord into which Steggles lured Mrs. Peworthy before the Mothers' Sack Race to slow her down, since she was the one sure to win, and on whom everyone had bet.

The Letter from Eustace appears in The Great Sermon Handicap

The letter to Bertie at whose conclusion Eustace spells out the handicaps of the probable starters in the competition to see which local preacher would preach the longest sermon.

Twing Village Hall appears in The Metropolitan Touch

The setting for Bingo Little's Christmas production during which Bingo so incorrectly guessed what elements of city theater might be incorporated into a children's Christmas play that he undid all of the good works to which Jeeves had encouraged him as he sought to win the heart of Mary.

Sonny Boy appears in Jeeves and the Song of Songs

The song Jeeves devised for Bertie, Tuppy Glossop, and Miss Cora Bellinger to sing all in a row in order to seal Cora against Tuppy forever, while only he knew his plan until the very end.

The Octagon appears in Jeeves and the Impending Doom

The building on the island on top of which the Right Honorable Mr. Filmer got stuck in the rain, inspiring Jeeves to another pair of genius moments.



The Painting of Mrs. Chavender appears in Quick Service

The work of Joss Weatherby and the object of Mr. Duff's desire hung in the home of the Yankee couple Mr. and Mrs. Steptoe.



Themes

Lightheartedness

Throughout the book, there are characters whose lighthearted disregard for convention and even fidelity to truth-telling is portrayed as a tremendous strength, even earning the way for the happiness of the characters possessing those qualities, as if it was the key to their very survival. The most developed case-in-point can be found in the final book of the anthology, "Quick Service" and the character of Joss Weatherby. From his employment under two very difficult, stern and temperamental men to his approach to wooing the girl he loved, his unflappable cheeriness and determination that life remain something fun and flexible is the guiding force for his actions, and the thing that allows him to find gainful employment and, ultimately, love.

Other excellent demonstrations of lighthearted abandonment of social convention and fidelity are made by Pongo's Uncle Fred Ickenham in the final book of the first section, entitled, "Uncle Fred Flits By", and by the character Stanley Featherstonehaugh Ukridge. In the first story, Uncle Fred is so focused on his own comfort and adventure that he is willing even to assume false identities in order to secure them, playing at being whatever character would serve the moment, and unburdened by the thought of consequence, buoyed by his quick wit's ability to supply him with another character and another story whenever the circumstances change. Ukridge is known throughout as a devil-may-care sort determined to play and gamble his way through life instead of ever trying his hand at any actual work.

Even the tone of Wodehouse's writing encourages the reader to hold on loosely to his or her notions of propriety and wise behavior, so even the act of reading the story becomes a sort of indulgence of the characters in the stories. The words and details he chooses to highlight as he tells his stories point one's attention to the most playful and comical aspects of each story, so lightheartedness permeates every detail.

Chivalry

Both in instances when it is demonstrated to great success and at times when it is glaringly absent, Wodehouse portrays chivalry as an absolutely essential virtue. In "Tried in the Furnace", Pongo and Barmy demonstrate their willingness to go to any lengths to come to the aid of the beautiful daughter of the reverend, and in the end still maintained their chivalry in reestablishing their fidelity to their friendship when the girl was lost. The poetry of the knight's soul and the chivalry of wooing a maiden with words is typified in the character of George in "The Truth about George" when, finally overcoming his stammer, he tells Susan of the love that has been animating his bosom for her. In "Mulliner's Buck-U-Uppo", Augustine's transformation from a retreating and timid man to a brave, wise man inspiring even his elders to more virtuous and peaceable behavior is just what is needed to secure the hand of Jane and a better post



in the church. And finally, though it also holds to the pattern of some disregard for convention, the example of Joss Weatherby in "Quick Service" demonstrates again how, when a man is willing to go to extraordinary lengths, even sacrificing his status or comfort, in order to do something heroic for his love, in this case stealing the painting when Lord Holbeton would not, a woman's heart and the smiling hand of providence are soon his rewards. There is also in Joss the quality of an outspoken lover, willing to woo unabashedly and with tender admiration the girl to whom his heart will always be faithful.

The Value of Finding One's Personal Strength

In a great many of the stories that Wodehouse tells, there are examples of some character's fate resting on his ability to tap into his own internal wellspring of confidence and individuality in order to solve his present difficulty. The most notable examples from this collection of stories are found in the section dedicated to those members of the family of Mr. Mulliner to whom he points as examples of how life ought to be lived. In "The Truth about George", George tries to overcome his stuttering by learning to speak confidently to strangers, leading to a tremendous misunderstanding that leads to a punishing chase, until at last he arrives at the home of the woman he loves and is able to tell her eloquently how ardently he loves her.

"Mulliner's Buck-U-Uppo" tells the story of Augustine's being given the boost in confidence with just a little chemistry adjustment to allow him to demonstrate the wisdom and diplomacy that had been latent in him until then, and how its revelation secured for him both the hand of Jane and his elevated place in his profession.

Archibald Mulliner got the boost he needed to display his true personality by having overheard a conversation in which the object of his desire confessed to adoring an irreverent sense of humor, when before that revelation, he had been suppressing his in order to please her in "The Reverent Wooing of Archibald", and the result was a truly happy match in which both were liberated to live in full celebration of their senses of humor.

"Monkey Business" uses the fact that the gorilla was in point of fact a fellow dressed in a gorilla suit to allow Montrose to behave as a hero to his impressionable fiancée and shame his overly proud rival for her attentions.

And finally, in "The Smile that Wins", Adrian's fate is secured by the simple fact of his smiling to aid with his indigestion that gives him the psychological edge over the people around him necessary to demand their reverent respect.

Fate

Throughout the story, but particularly in the section devoted to the tales from Mr. Mulliner, Fate arranges circumstances beyond the characters' control in order to guide them through their trials and come out with happy endings they might never have



imagined. The best few examples are Osbert, Montrose, and Adrian. In "The Ordeal of Osbert Mulliner", Osbert has no idea he is to be robbed that evening, nor does he have any plan regarding how he might get the men out of his kitchen, but while he is hiding behind curtains, Fate is deciding that the two men should fight spectacularly, allowing the police to find the men thoroughly beaten, and Osbert to use their conditions to scare away rival Bashford Braddock. In "Monkey Business", Montrose has also begun to dismay that his fiance thinks him a coward and his wanderings take him straight into the path of the gorilla who no one knows is actually a man, and a reasonable one at that. He is able to be the hero and expose the fraud of his rival simply because Fate intervenes. Adrian's gift is his dyspepsia combined with his historic hesitancy to smile in the story, "The Smile that Wins", since when he does, Fate arranges to have his efforts observed by men who suppose the expression means he knows their secrets. He thus becomes the man everyone wants to appease, and profits in love and money as a result.



Style

Point of View

Wodehouse writes from several points of view, spanning much of the membership of the Drones Club but maintaining the same omniscience regardless of who the first-person is. In the first section, *The Drones Club*, Wodehouse takes on the perspective of an omniscient narrator both humorously sympathetic with the foibles of the characters and intimately aware of the dynamics between members and history of the club, being a member himself. For "Mr. Mulliner", he opens each story from his original third person omniscient and then assumes the voice of Mr. Mulliner with the parenthetical aside, "said Mr. Mulliner" inserted at the beginning of every one of his launches into story. The voice of Mr. Mulliner is always one of admiration of the member of his family or circle of friends whose story he is telling, and so blends easily with the style of humorous commiseration in which Wodehouse tells his other stories. He takes on the perspective of Mr. Corcoran in "Stanley Featherstonehaugh Ukridge", a friend who observes his misadventures from very close seats, frequently being drug along through the adventure right alongside Ukridge. It is only in the story entitled "A Bit of Luck for Mabel" that the point of view shifts for the majority of the story to Ukridge's voice as he tells Corcoran a story he thinks he should put down on paper. In "Introducing Jeeves", the stories are told by the man Jeeves serves, whose nickname is Bertie, and so he takes on the voice of one who admires the impressive intellect of the man from up close. He puts complete faith in his man, and his stories reveal that everyone around him admires Jeeves with equally unswerving devotion. Wodehouse resumes his third-person omniscience for the novel, "Quick Service", allowing him to communicate the histories and motivations of all of the characters.

Setting

The stories are all set in turn-of-the-century England among the finer elements of society. Since the Drones Club is a gentlemen's club made up of professional men and men who come from wealthy families, all of their adventures take place either in the midst of or on the fringes of high society. The stories are geographically fairly well scattered across the countryside, at family estates, and in small rural towns and suburbs, as well as inside the city of London, although there are some, like "All's Well with Bingo", that reach as far away as Monte Carlo. The atmosphere in England in that era was defined by the play of its affluent members, making it the perfect setting for stories told with the unworried humor and playfulness of Wodehouse's storytelling, since courtship, gambling, country picnicking and frolicking across Europe were the era's most beloved pastimes. There was also present among the members of the Drones' Club an amount of shrugging off of the Victorian morality that had ruled their culture for so long, allowing for whole social groups' being built around such activities as drinking, gambling, and carousing. England and Europe made themselves playgrounds for those



with the financial wherewithal to move about them freely, and the characters in Wodehouse's books embrace the opportunities around them with enthusiasm.

Language and Meaning

Wodehouse's language is both decidedly high English in syntax and rhythm, and playfully irreverent. The variety of characters he writes are distinguished by their word choice and expressions, so that the educated use the most formal language, and the casual speaker, like Ukridge, for example, use speech festooned with colloquialisms and casual addresses made to friends. As for Wodehouse's playfulness in speech, there are examples throughout of conversations and descriptions included purely for their humor. There is a wonderful example in "High Stakes" when Gladstone Bott is left "to continue his imitation of a spavined octogenarian rolling peanuts with a toothpick". In "The Coming of Gawf", Wodehouse plays with the language of golf, imagining new and different reasons for the people and places of the sport to have been given the names they have. Throughout the book, there is also the humorous replacement of the names of the gentlemen gathered to hear the stories with the names of their drinks. Everything he does is done to heighten both the feeling of distinguished English gentlemen exchanging stories, and the sense of play with the social mores, personality quirks and funny circumstances that make up the stories.

Structure

The stories are grouped in sections based on their main characters, making for seven sections. In the first section, the purpose is to introduce the variety of men who make up the Drones Club and to acquaint the reader with their idiosyncratic styles. There is a great amount of variety, each character being both uniquely flawed and perfectly suited to the circumstances in which he finds himself. In the second, all of the stories are from those told by Drones member Mr. Mulliner about members of his remarkable family. Like characters in fables, each Mulliner teaches a different lesson, each demonstrating a point Mr. Mulliner would like to make. Next follows Ukridge, whose collections are all cautionary tales about the dangers that lurk behind greed, charade, and refusal to do any actual work for one's income. Lord Emsworth is a lovable simpleton, and his one story puts him in the role of savior to his niece's romance in spite of his simplicity of mind and the enormous force of his sister's overbearance. Golf Stories follow, ranging as widely across categories of characters as the Drones Club itself, and told from the perspective of the Oldest Member, a storyteller audiences are continuously trying to flee because of the length of the stories he tells. Jeeves follows, and ends the sections of short stories with several profiles in uncanny insight and always knowing what to do. He is a gentleman's hero, always composed, very well connected, and always ready with the smartest way of handling a problem, so rounds out the parade of characters very well. The last section of the book is dedicated to the novel entitled "Quick Service", which just gives Wodehouse's storytelling a little more room to spread out. The humor is still light, quick and engaging, the story is just more complex with more characters and twists in the storyline.



Quotes

"He assures me that it was just one of those aloof smiles which the Honorary Secretary of a Bible Class would have given the elderly aunt of a promising pupil; but it had the effect of encouraging the contents of the negligee to further conversation." Fate, p. 20

"Some purely technical point of finance, I understand — he claiming that a Mother in bombazine had had eleven rides and paid only once. It resulted in Barmy getting lugged into the brawl and rather roughly handled — which was particularly unfortunate, because the bombazined mother explained on their way down to the beach that the whole thing had been due to a misunderstanding. In actual fact, what had really happened was that she had had twelve rides and paid twice." Tried in the Furnace, pp. 37-38

"All that was required, he considered, was a suave go-between, a genial mutual pal who would pour oil on the troubled w's and generally fix things up." The Amazing Hat Mystery, p. 57

"I think, said Lord Ickenham, shoving his oar in, "that before proceeding any further we ought to go into that point. If he called you a perishing old bottle-nosed Gawd-help-us, it seems to me that the first thing to do is to decide whether he was right...." Uncle Fred Flits By, p. 122

"He decided to emerge, and, if possible, to emerge with the minimum of ostentation. Little as he knew of women, he was aware that as a sex they are apt to be startled by the sight of men crawling out from under the seats of compartments. He began his maneuvers by poking out his head and surveying the terrain." The Truth about George, p. 140

"But his relief was short-lived. What, after all, he asked himself, are cutlets to a girl who is imprisoned in a locked room of a sinister country house and is being forced to marry a man she does not love? Practically nothing. When the heart is sick, cutlets merely alleviate, they do no cure." A Slice of Life, p. 154

"Farmers in Minnesota were getting mixed up with reaping machines; peasants in India were being bisected by crocodiles; iron girders from syscrapers were falling hourly on the heads of citizens in every town from Philadelphia to San Francisco; and the only people who were not down with ptomaine poisoning were those who had walked over cliff, driven motors into walls, tripped over manholes, or assumed on too slight evidence that the gun was not loaded." Ukridge's Accident Syndicate, p. 288

"Spring, coming to London in a burst of golden sunshine, was calling imperiously to all young men to rejoice in their youth, to put on their new herringbone-pattern lounge suits and go out and give the populace an eyeful; and this I had been prevented from doing by the fact that my new suit had mysteriously disappeared. After a separation on twenty-



four hours, I had just met it in Piccadilly with Utridge inside it." Utridge and the Old Stepper, p. 336

"They had taken him at his own valuation, and had been cheated into admiring him as a man who amounted to something, and all the while he had belonged to the school of Nastikoff. You never can tell. Mrs. Smethurst's guests were well-bred and there was consequently no violent demonstration, but you could see by their faces what they felt. Those nearest Raymond Parsloe jostled to get further away. Mrs. Smethurst eyed him stonily through a raised lorgnette. One or two low hisses were heard, and over at the other end of the room somebody opened the window in a marked manner." The Clicking of Cuthbert, p. 417

"Considering that she only had about a second and a half to do it in, I must say it was a jolly fine execution. She opened her mouth and eyes pretty wide and let her jaw drop sideways, and managed to look so like a dyspeptic calf that I recognized the symptoms immediately.

"'Oh, that's alright,' I said. 'No need to be alarmed. He's simply in love with you.'" The Great Sermon Handicap, p. 479

"One of the things which discourage me about rural life is the frightful earliness with which events begin to break loose. I've stayed at places in the country where they've jerked me out of the dreamless at about six-thirty to go for a jolly swim in the lake." The Great Sermon Handicap, p. 481

"'The modern young man,' said Aunt Dahlia, 'is a pot of poison and wants a nurse to lead him by the hand and some strong attendant to kick him regularly at intervals of a quarter of an hour.'" Jeeves and the Song of Songs, p. 515

"His air was that of a music lover savoring the strains of some beautiful melody. Sally, regarding him, came to the conclusion that he looked rather nice. Crazy, apparently, but quite nice." Quick Service, chapter 3, p. 571

"She wrestled with her better self and finally succeeded in bringing it to the surface by the scruff of its neck." Quick Service, p. 636

"Lady Constance was a beautiful woman, but there were times when the charm of her face was marred by a rather curious expression; and from nursery days onward his Lordship had learned that this expression meant trouble. She was wearing it now." Pig-hoo-o-o-o-ey, p. 362



Topics for Discussion

Give an example of Wodehouse's using fate as the intervening factor in a character's story.

In what ways does Wodehouse use language to bring humor to his storytelling?

Are the stories Wodehouse tells universally entertaining, or do you think his appeal is limited to any particular demographic (age group, sex, nationality, etc.)?

What moral standards do you think Wodehouse prizes most? What stories or characters best demonstrate his ideals? Explain.

With which characters do you most identify? Why?

Which characters do you think are least believable? Explain.

Re-tell one of Wodehouse's stories in which you eliminate the last-minute twist that saves the day, and use some characteristic of the character that is already there to solve the problem that must be solved.

Wodehouse uses the language of gambling culture in a good number of his stories. Are there times when you don't know what the language means? Do you think it impedes the story, or is it necessary that the reader completely understand?

Wodehouse is obviously in favor of a perspective that doesn't take anything very seriously, but there are times in his storytelling in which things are very serious. Give an example of a time when light-heartedness was the key to the character's success, and one in which it was necessary for the character to be serious to come through his trial well in the end.