

10th Standard - English

The Hack Driver Summary

The narrator goes to New Mullion

The narrator states that he passed his graduation with honours. Then he became a junior assistant clerk in a good law firm. He was sent to serve summons. Some beat him up. He had to go to dirty places to serve summons on people. He thought to run home as he hated his job. But he continued working. It was an unpleasant training period.

Meets delivery man (Oliver Lutkins)

One day he was sent to New Mullion. It was a town forty miles in the countryside. He had to serve summons on Mr. Oliver Lutkins. He reached New Mullion. It had muddy streets. He met the delivery man at the station. The delivery man was about forty. He had a red face and looked cheerful. He had a dirty dress but had a friendly manner.

Help from delivery man

The narrator told him that he wanted to find a man named Oliver Lutkins. He replied to the narrator that he had seen Lutkins about an hour ago. The narrator told him that he wanted to see him at any cost. The man told the narrator that he had a hack. He also told him that he knew most of the places where Lutkins would hang around.

Search for Lutkins begins

The narrator found the man to be open and friendly. He had genuine kindness.

He agreed to pay him two dollars per hour. The man with the hack told that he had to take money from Lutkins. He told the narrator about one thing. If he went to Lutkins to get money in fancy clothes, Lutkins would be suspicious and go away. So he offered to go into Fritz's. He would ask for him on his behalf. The narrator could keep himself out of sight.

More about delivery man

The narrator felt happy that the man was so helpful for him. He would get Lutkins with his help. The man told the narrator that the folks there called him Bill or Magnuson. His business was 'William Magnuson Fancy Carting and Hacking'. Bill (Lutkins himself) told the narrator that Lutkins played a lot of poker. He was good at deceiving people. He told something more about Lutkins.

At Fritz's

Both of them* went into Fritz's. Bill asked Fritz if he had seen Lutkins. Fritz looked at the narrator hiding behind Bill. He replied that Lutkins had been there a little while ago. He, perhaps, had gone to Gustaffs for a shave.

Their going to various places

They drove to Gustaffs barber shop. Bill went inside and enquired about Lutkins. He was told that they had seen Lutkins walking down the Main Street. Bill told the narrator that Lutkins had spent his credit at Gustaffs. He had, perhaps, gone to Gray's for a shave. At Gray's shop, they missed Lutkins by only five minutes. He might have gone for the poolroom. Then he went out. They followed him till it was one o'clock. It was time to eat something. But they could not meet him.

Lunch at Wade's Hill

The narrator offered to take Bill to a restaurant. But Bill wanted to go home to his wife. He told him that his wife would pack a lunch for half a dollar. Then they would go to Wade's Hill. They would enjoy seeing while eating. The narrator paid him for six hours. He charged the whole money to the firm.

Bill tells more about himself

As they sat at the Hill, Bill talked of New Mullion. He described almost everything from the minister's wife to the boys. Bill had travelled a lot of the country. He had many jobs also.

Search resumed

Bill and the narrator resumed their journey to find out Lutkins. Bill told the narrator that he knew Lutkins' mother. She was a terror. Once he went to her. But she took his skin off. She was nine feet tall and four feet thick and quick as a cat. They went to her Bill told her who they were. Bill told Lutkins' mother why the narrator had come to meet Lutkins. He also told her that the narrator had a legal right to search the place for Lutkins.

About Lutkins' mother

Hearing this, the woman went into the kitchen. She came out with an iron rod of an old stove. She shouted and laughed at them. Bill told the narrator to get out of there. That woman would murder them. They, however, searched the house fully. But Lutkins was not there.

Narrator's new way of life

It was nearly time to catch the afternoon train.

Bill drove the narrator to the station. The narrator considered returning to New Mullion to practise law. He was charmed by everything that he saw and met there. He pictured an honest and happy life there beyond the universities and law firms. He had discovered a new way of life there.

Different things at office

But everybody in the office was upset. Next morning the case was coming up in the court. And they had to have Lutkins. The narrator was shameful at not serving summons on Lutkins. The chief almost murdered the narrator for his failure. He was ordered back to New Mullion. This time a man who had worked with Lutkins went with him. He was to recognise Lutkins.

Reality discovered

The train arrived at New Mullion. The narrator saw Bill on the platform near his cart. The old tigress, Lutkins' mother was also there. She was talking and laughing with Bill. She was not quarrelling. The narrator pointed to Bill. He said that he had spent a whole day with that fine fellow. The man asked him if that man had helped him find Lutkins. The narrator replied that he had. The man told him that that man himself was Lutkins.

Narrator laughed at

The narrator served summons on Lutkins. Lutkins and his mother laughed at him as if he were a boy of seven. They begged him to have a cup of coffee in a neighbour's house.

