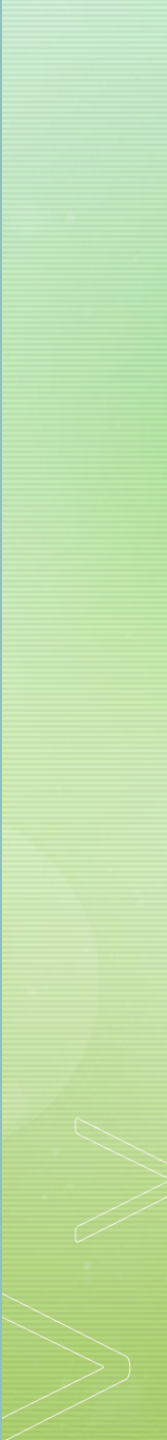




THE HACK DRIVER

Sinclair Lewis



hack: a horse-drawn vehicle

agreeable sight: pleasant sight

Unpleasant: unlikable

Summons: order, command

Witness: eyewitness

poker: a card game in which bluff is used as
players bet on the value of their cards

In this lesson, a young lawyer is made to serve summons instead of practicing law. He hates his job as sometimes he is beaten up. Once he is directed by the law firm to serve summons to one Mr. Oliver Lutkins, who lived in a village called New Mullion. The young lawyer goes to the village with some expectations of village life but he is disappointed. He meets a hack driver who is a very helpful man according to him.

It's an amusing tale that captures the views of traditional 'city folk' and 'country bumpkins.' The educated lawyer believing he is above his position gets schooled by the country fellow who is quicker and smarter. It seemed pretty clear early on that Bill was Lutkins but that the narrator was too blind to see it.

The narrator after working his way through law school finds himself working in a law office that is sending him out to serve summons, which he thinks is below him. He travels out by train to New Mullion to find this person. Upon arrival, he finds he needs to get around and find this person so he talks to the first person he encounters. He says he is looking for Oliver Lutkins and hopes the man can help him. The man, Bill Magnuson, says he saw him a brief while ago and that he would be happy to drive him around to find the man. The narrator knows the man is trying to get some money out of him and he is ok with that so long as they find Lutkins. Over the course of the next few hours, Bill brings the narrator all over town where they keep missing Lutkins by a briefer periods of times.

Eventually, Bill brings him to Lutkins mother who also spins a tale of frustration about her son. The narrator returns to the office empty handed and is sent back to the town with the help of someone who actually knows Lutkins. When they arrive in town, the narrator spots Bill with Lutkins' mother. The narrator's partner explains that Bill is in fact Oliver Lutkins. When the narrator serves the summons, Lutkins laughs and says that he was hoping they could go to a neighbor's for coffee since they were the only folks that missed him when he came by before.