

# Footprints Without Feet

(Class X – NCERT)

## Chapter 10: The Hack Driver – Sinclair Lewis

### Detailed Summary (Expanded, Exam-Oriented)

A young lawyer is sent to a small town to serve a summons on Oliver Lutkins, a key witness in a case. At the station, he meets a friendly hack (carriage) driver named Bill who offers to help find Lutkins for two dollars an hour. Bill takes him around town - to Fritz's shop, Gustaff's barber shop, Gray's barber shop, the poolroom, and finally Lutkins' mother's farm. At each place, Bill speaks to people while the lawyer waits outside. The mother chases them away with a hot iron rod. The lawyer returns to his office without serving the summons. The next day, he returns with a colleague who knows Lutkins by sight. At the station, the lawyer recognizes Bill from the previous day - and realizes with horror that Bill himself is Oliver Lutkins! Lutkins had driven him around all day, taking his money while cleverly avoiding being served. The lawyer feels foolish for being so completely deceived.

### Central Themes

#### 1. Appearance vs Reality

Bill appears helpful but is actually the person being sought. The lawyer mistakes deception for friendliness.

#### 2. Rural Simplicity and City Naivety

The lawyer romanticizes rural life while being blind to rural cunning and practical intelligence.

#### 3. Deception and Wit

Lutkins uses charm and quick thinking to outwit the educated lawyer.

#### 4. Pride Before a Fall

The lawyer's condescension toward rural people blinds him to being tricked.

### Character Sketches

#### 1. The Lawyer (Narrator)

Young, naive, and somewhat condescending toward rural people. His romantic notions about village life blind him to reality.

#### 2. Oliver Lutkins (Bill)

Clever, charming, and quick-witted. Uses friendliness as a mask while deceiving the lawyer all day.

#### 3. Lutkins' Mother

Fierce woman who plays along with the deception by chasing the lawyer away.

### Important Vocabulary (With Meanings)

- **Hack** – a horse-drawn carriage for hire
- **Summons** – legal order to appear in court
- **Witness** – person who testifies in court
- **Deceive** – to trick or mislead
- **Naive** – showing lack of experience or wisdom

### Exam-Ready Key Points

- Young lawyer sent to serve summons on Oliver Lutkins
- Meets hack driver Bill who offers to help find Lutkins
- Bill takes him around town, pretending to search
- They visit various places but never find Lutkins
- Mother chases them with hot iron rod
- Lawyer returns next day and discovers Bill is Lutkins
- Lutkins had tricked him completely, taking his money all day
- Story shows how assumptions and naivety lead to deception