

Chapters Fourteen to Nineteen (pp. 138 - 191) Context questions.

In all these chapters relationships between men and women keep centre stage, not least the African side of it. How did you react?

What are the other topics that interested you or entertained you or.....?

Intro: (Ch 14)

(p. 138) Alice Busang - going to Mma R is like speaking to a doctor or a priest; (sexless?)

Mma R thinks that ministers and headmasters do not carry on with other women!

‘All women in Botswana were the victims of the fecklessness of men’ (?) p. 139
(*nichtsnutz*)(useless, worthless, incompetent, inefficient, good-for-nothing, ne'er-do-well)

Men who settle down seem to be ‘a thing of the past’. Topic of nostalgia?

Who says they are lucky to have diamonds in this country?

True? Cf BBC podcast about Botswana diamonds

<https://www.bbc.co.uk/programmes/w3csvtsd>

Who says: Women being thin - nonsense for Africa.

Who thinks and why: ‘This would be a case, she thought, where she might have to waive the fee.’ (wave / waive)

Chapter 15 Mr J L B M’s Discovery pp. 143 ff

Put these quotations or references into their contextr!

‘She blamed the messenger’ Expression: Don’t shoot the messenger! What is its relevance here?

Mr M ‘was tinkering with a distributor cap’. NB Tinker = gypsy; basteln, tüfteln)

‘This little thing stopped a large truck in its tracks’.

‘He was not the sort to bear grudges’ (idiom - *Groll, missgunst, Neid*)

‘Did pilots think about it when they flew aeroplanes? It simply beggared belief’. = To make a beggar of, to exhaust the means of (Shakespeare)

‘Diamonds?’ ‘Worse than that!’

'She felt her stomach heave, as one does when confronted with a nauseous odour, a dead donkey in a ditch, the overwhelming smell of carrion.'

'It was tempting Providence to use these words and he hoped that she would not have cause to regret them'. Who is more self-assured of the two?

'Oh dear' said Mma Rawotswe.Mr J L B M: 'Oh, dear'.

Why are they both so troubled?

Chapter 16 The Cutting of Fingers and Snakes pp. 150 ff

p. 150 'In the beginning.....really means thirty years ago'.

Cf p. 151 'Then little by little, things changed.' Is the 'change' here positive?

'As the business grew, however, the supply of relatives dwindled and Hector began to employ strangers. He maintained his earlier paternalistic employment habits, though...'. Strangers?

(p. 152 'They treat us as one of their wretched Bantustans.')

'If only I had a wife, then this office would not be such a mess.'

'Few of them would survive in her profession, which required tact and perspicacity.' cf lawyers

'The boy who makes the tea, the one with a hole in his brain, he can always tell. He wouldn't take tea to him.'

'There's nobody I'd rather be knocked down by than you'

'It was a hot night and the dogs were howling throughout town, egging one another on in the darkness'. Encouraging = usually foolish

((The verb eggede, from which the phrase to **egg** someone on is derived, has been in the English language since approximately 1200. It is derived from the Old Norse word eggja, which means to incite or provoke. The idiom to **egg** someone on first appeared in the mid-1500s.))

'How very sorry she felt for white people....' (cf watch with second hand later-Gotso's man p. 180)

What is this life if, full of care, We have no time to stand and stare. No time to stand beneath the boughs. And stare as long as sheep or cows. W H Davies 1911

What is this life if, full of care,

We have no time to stand
and stare.

No time to stand beneath
the boughs

And stare as long as sheep
or cows.

No time to see, when
woods we pass,

Where squirrels hide their
nuts in grass.

No time to see, in broad
daylight,

Streams full of stars, like
skies at night.

No time to turn at
Beauty's glance,

And watch her feet, how
they can dance.

No time to wait till her
mouth can

Enrich that smile her eyes
began.

A poor life this if, full of
care,

We have no time to stand
and stare.)

Context : ' For a few moments she sat quite still, savouring the satisfaction of having revealed the fraud so quickly'. ('savour' cf sweet)

Context: 'People picked up snakes as passengers and the first thing they knew about it was when the snake bit them'. (Put this in context: She has so been enjoying the drive and the emptiness (p. 163) cf Limpopo and elephant asking about crocodiles.

Boy should stay in car cf other boy?

After the cobra affair she just thanks the man and drives off. (pp.166-7)

p. 167 Mma Ramotswe has to chat up lawyer. Originally (p. 162) author lets us inside lawyer's head and we see him as being a bit silly - wanting to use the word quantum (for what?) and to intimidate her. Doesn't like them but (p. 168) she admits he has to earn a living, too. (Do we ever get an innuendo as to why she so disloikes lawyers?)

169 crestfallen (last but one line)

170 utterly slippery - 'total' (about 8 from bottom)

171 'You are a good Christian lady...God is going to make it very easy for you in heaven.' cf witness: Jesus Christ. (P.) (Moretsi doesn't need to go to jail. Is supporting parents and HIV sister.

p. 171 bottom again statement that women can look after themselves (tho' she does not prove it!)

Ch 17 pp.173 ff The Third Metacarpal

She takes the muti to be identified. The implication is that it is from the missing boy.

p. 174 top: the nurse talks down to her and she is riled. In her father's day that wouldn't have happened. Cf 179, nostalgia etc.

'Heaven knows what awful task he had been performing.....like the office of a minor civil servant' (but medical books gave away its real purpose???)

'The police had a limited interest in pursuing crime, and certain sorts of crime interested them not at all.' Is that the case in our society at all? In other so-called developed societies?

'That was the wonderful thing about confidence - it was infectious'. True?

'Mr J L B M's appetite returned'.

Chapter 18 pp179 ff A lot of lies.

'One of the young mechanics tapped him on the shoulder, leaving a greasy fingerprint' -(Is the apprentice is to a certain extent a symbol of all the youngsters of 19 or 20 that McCall Smith goes on about not learning? cf 146).

'He had been involved in a particularly delicate operation.....it was a free advertisement in a way'

'The sort of watch worn by those who feel that seconds are important' .

'She was a fixer of lives - as so many women are.....' (p. 184)

Chapter 19 pp 186 - 191 Mr Charlie Gotso BA

The more educated a man is, the more.....

Gotso's office very simple except for showy pictures. (eg with Hastings Banda)

She offers him information about people who might endanger him. Usual blabla about women.cf beginning of chapter and he has sent away new wife.

She makes Gotso believe she would like muti too - and says as a powerful man he needs it. He gives her a map and says she'll get 20% off!