

Reading 'Starving' from Olive Kitteridge (pp 91 - 127) :

When you start to read this story it is easy to get frustrated by the number of characters who all crowd in on you.

- 5 Either a) look at my helpful list below (-:-)
or b) take your time and possibly make notes.

10 Harmon - he is the main character so keep your eye on him. He is a man with four adult sons (Kevin married to Martha, Derrick) and a wife, Bonnie. He has a hardware store - nothing to do with computers - *Eisenwarenhandlung*.

15 A boy who is a cousin (or nephew) of Kathleen Burnham who lives in this town. The boy is called Tim Burnham and is only important in as far as he is at this moment the girl's boyfriend. He has rented somewhere to live from Les Washburn (who is no more important than that he rents out a place.)

A girl of 23 who plays an important role in the story and is called Nina White. (She refers to Victoria who is unimportant.)

20 The young Coombs boy seems to be the son of somebody in the town with a store.

Daisy Foster is a woman whom we met in the 'Pharmacy'. (Do you remember what we know about her?) Harmon visits her often. Her husband was called Copper but has been dead for three years.

25 Cliff Mott lives in the town, too. (Has a weak heart but isn't really important.)

Olive.

30 'Muffin' Luke seems to be the nurse who ran the clinic where Nina had been.

p. 91 The story starts at the marina - so we as readers are beginning to get accustomed to things happening by the sea.

Flat as a coin -

35 p. 92 a whole different ball game = quite different
ruminative - thinking, reflecting (*wiederkauend*)

smell: you smell the roses but you also smell if you are unwashed. The same active verb but a different aspect of meaning.

p. 93 The world was their oyster = they had the whole world at their feet

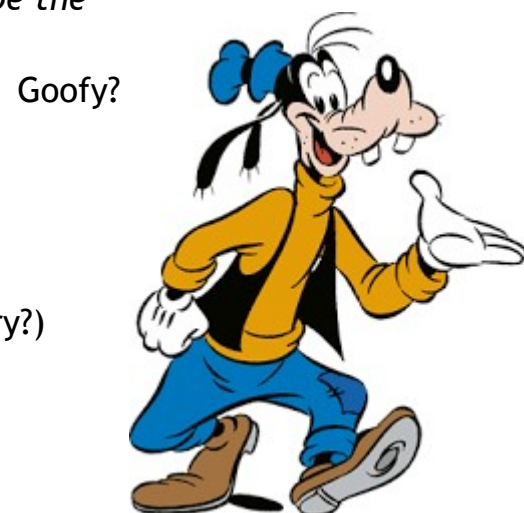
40 p. 94 Harmon buys 2 donuts. That has been the whole 'action' so far in a way. Everything else was on the side. Now he takes them with him to visit Daisy.
bridal wreaths - a kinds of plant or flower.

shrub - *Staude*

- p. 95 bumper sticker - sticker on the back of the car. Swirl = *wirbeln*
 45 p. 96 scatter - usually = *streuen*
 parking lot - *Parkplatz*
 p. 97 *How refreshing of Harmon!* (steer - *lenken, steuern*)

- So Bonnie has waited for her doughnut while Harmon and Daisy were 'upstairs'?
 50 p. 98 out-of-staters are, presumably, tourists from elsewhere
Now is the time to assess the state of Harmon and Bonnie's marriage relationship.
 (pp. 98 - 101 in particular)
 p. 99 bewildered - confused
 a bushel - is a measurement of weight (or volume?) that I gather is called
 55 'Scheffel' . About fifty pounds.
 p. 100 blank - empty (fill in the blanks)
 p. 101 *Is it a compliment to call somebody the 'central heating' of your life?*
 The rack of drill bit - rack = *Regal/Gestell*; drill bits = parts of a drill, I assume.
 forthright - direct
 60 p. 104 Harmon is thinking about aging - *but where do you think the story as a whole is going? I wasn't at all sure while I was reading.*
 an old fart - rude way of referring to somebody old (fart = *Pups*)
 What does Harmon phone Daisy about? (bottom of p. 104) What is 'fine'?
 p. 105 When you do exchange memories with other people?
 65 p. 106 God being like a piggy bank ? (:-)
Why does he feel drugged?

- Assault = attack
 ball bearing - *Kugellager*
 70 toilet plunger - brush for cleaning the toilet - or the thing you use to try to clear the pipe?
 p. 107 We as readers get important information about Nina but on the side we take another look at Bonnie and Harmon's relationship.
 p. 108 died?
 75 p- 109 Inestimable - something you cannot estimate - a lot; boulder = a large rock)
How do you react to Harmon's relationship to the two women?
 p. 110 ludicrous - laughable
Is Harmon 'negative'? Do you know what it feels like to be the person who always seems to be nagging?
 80 p. 111 to perk up - to cheer up
 furtive - secret, hidden
 distraught - desperate
 p. 113 *Do you ever use cotton handkerchiefs?*
 What is a muffin cutter? (goofy - *albern, trottelig?*)
 85 p. 115 ravenously - very hungrily (are ravens always hungry?)
 Enter Olive.



Why does Nina spit the doughnut out because Olive comes? Why does she have the energy to question Olive?

pp. 116 - 117 *What does Olive mean by 'starving' and why does she cry?(Does anybody happen to remember the word being used in 'The Giver'? The boy gets into trouble for using this word to express simply being hungry.)*

"I can't help it" = I am doing something I don't want to do.

p. 118 'It's hopeless' ?

pathetic - (we've come across it several times now) - *this time is it erbärmlich, miserabel, kläglich.....?*

Ball of lightning again.cf p. 96

Why doesn't Harmon speak about this experience to Bonnie?

p. 119 *I would suggest that this is the beginning of the final section of the story. Do you agree?*

100 Cold, damp, unlit.....

(Visitors or relatives)

p. 122 the dictionary says *Tefuelsbraten* for 'hellion'. *I've never heard the word. What could Harmon want to rent the Washburn place for?*

p. 123 *Or is this where the ending begins?*

105 p. 124 'Your being so blue....And I don't *feel* like feeling awful.'

p. 125 *Do you think Bonnie had called Kevin?*

Old maid - a woman who has lived alone all her life (often an object of ridicule)

p. 126 labor pains - the pain of giving birth (customarily a woman :-)

shaft - *Stiel* (of Amor's arrow), *Strahl* (of sunshine)

110 undeniable - cannot be denied, *nicht zu leugnen*

inside out - if you wear your clothes inside out it is called '*links*' in German

Harmon feels his heart beating very hard. The doctor doesn't see any 'sign of trouble'. The doctor's movement impresses Harmon.

115 (no telling him anything = he refused to be told anything)

Is the ending open?

Writing :

120 I have the feeling that of the main characters only Daisy is the writing type and that she might sometimes write a diary.

On the other hand Bonnie reads novels, so perhaps a book she reads might connect with Harmon's behaviour and she might write about it.

Bessie Davis has lived her life independently so she will surely notice the difference in Harmon now and earlier in the year. She hates the time of year but is probably sensitive to other people's feelings and moods, too.

I wonder what the doctor says to his wife when he goes home after Harmon has been in his surgery for a consultation. He seems to think that Harmon's heart is physically in good shape, but.....?