

R421 Aspects of the Novel
OLLI Spring Session 2014 – Reston
Kay Menchel

Class 6– Thursday 4/30

Irony

***Persuasion* Jane Austen**

“This is always my luck! If there is any thing disagreeable going on, men are sure to get out of it, and Charles is as bad as any of them. Very unfeeling! I must say it is very unfeeling of him, to be running away from his poor little boy; talks of his being going on so well! How does he know that he is going on well, or that there may not be a sudden change half an hour hence?”

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“I hope I am as fond of my child as any mother – but I do not know that I am of any more use in the sick room than Charles, for I cannot always be scolding and teasing a poor child when it is ill...”

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“To be sure I may just as well go as not, for I am no use at home – am I? and it only harasses me. You, who have not a mother’s feelings, are a great deal the properest person. You can make little Charles do anything; he always minds you at a word. It will be a great deal better than leaving him only with Jemima.”

Comedy

***Scoop* Evelyn Waugh**

Algernon Stitch went to his office in a sombre and rather antiquated Daimler; Julia always drove herself, in the latest model of mass-produced baby car; brand-new twice a year, painted an invariable brilliant black, tiny and glossy as a midget’s funeral hearse. She mounted the kerb and bowled rapidly along the pavement to the corner of St. James’s, where a policeman took her number and ordered her into the road.

“Third time this week,” said Mrs. Stitch. “I wish they wouldn’t. It’s such a nuisance for Algy.”

Once embedded in the traffic block, she stopped the engine and turned her attention to the crossword.

“It’s ‘detonated’”, she said, filling it in.

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Eight minutes close application was enough to finish the puzzle. Mrs. Stitch folded the paper and tossed it over her shoulder into the back seat; looked about her resentfully at the stationary traffic. "This is too much," she said; started the engine, turned sharp again on to the kerb and proceeded to Picadilly, driving before her at a brisk pace, until he took refuge on the steps of Brook's, a portly, bald young man; when he reached safety, he turned to remonstrate, recognised Mrs. Stitch and bowed profoundly to the tiny black back as it shot the corner of Arlington Street. "One of the things I like about these absurd cars," she said, "is that you can do things with them that you couldn't do in a real one."

Country of the Blind Christopher Brookmyre

After the break, the day's "other main stories" were shunted out as it emerged that the police were holding four men in connection with the deaths, and by the end of an extended programme, it was stated with bass-toned gravity that a terrorist motive "had not been ruled out". Nicole had noticed that the situation was deemed to be so serious and the mood so sombre that Trevor didn't even try to revive the viewers' spirits with an amusing *And Finally...* clip. This meant the scheduled report from Wigan about a hamster who could play "Waltzing Matilda" by farting into a series of colour-coded test tubes would presumably be held over until the next night, when the last story might be about a plane crash in Zambia which, despite claiming 230 lives, had pathetically failed to turn up one corpse holding a British passport and was therefore not important.