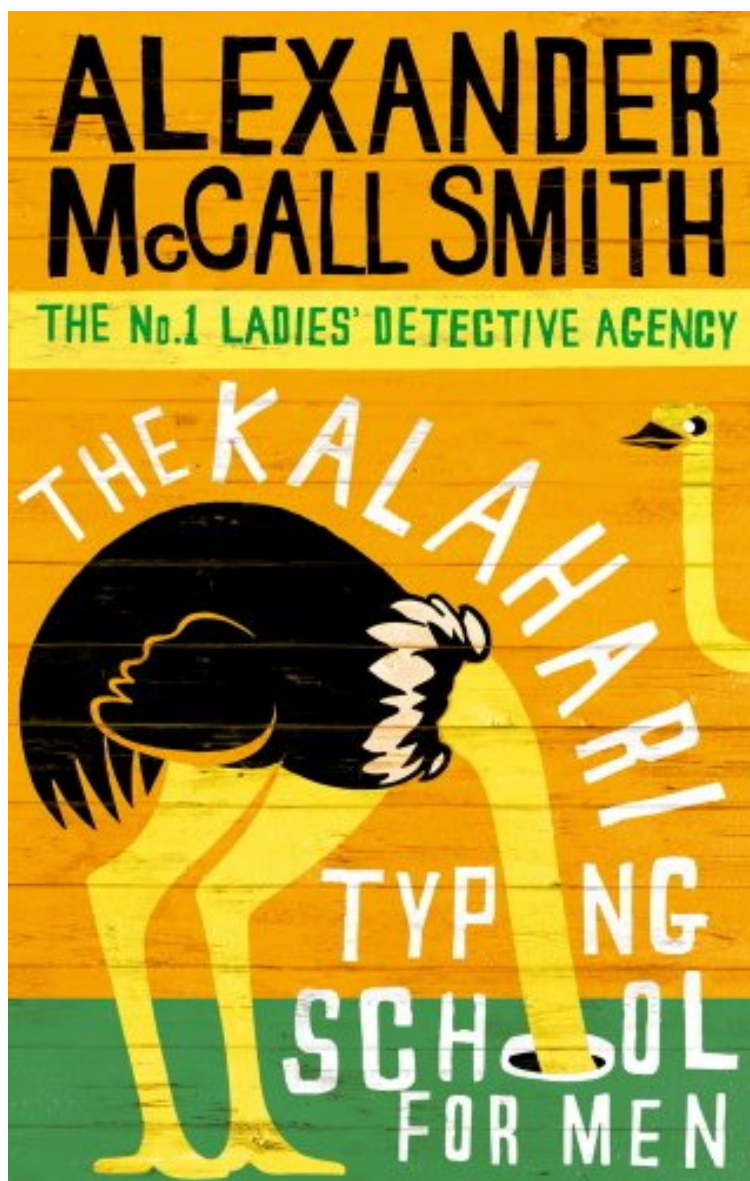


[Free] File size: 53.Mb

The Kalahari Typing School For Men



Par Alexander McCall Smith
DOC / *audiobook / ebooks / Download
PDF / ePub

Dtails sur le produit Rang parmi les ventes : #131629 dans eBooksPubli le: 2008-10-02Sorti le: 2008-10-02Format: Ebook Kindle

[Free] The Kalahari Typing School For Men

Par Alexander McCall Smith : The Kalahari Typing School For Men before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised The Kalahari Typing School For Men:

Download

Read Online

Description : Description du produitTHE NO. 1 LADIES DETECTIVE AGENCY. FOR ALL CONFIDENTIAL MATTERS AND ENQUIRIES. SATISFACTION GUARANTEED FOR ALL PARTIES. UNDER PERSONAL MANAGEMENT.A beguiling mystery and lyrical novel of Africa -- the fourth in a series that the L.A. Times calls thoroughly engaging and entertaining.Now that The No. 1 Ladies Detective Agency (the only detective agency for ladies and others in Botswana) is established, its founder, Precious Ramotswe, can look upon her life with pride: shes reached her late thirties (the finest age to be), has a house, two children, a good fianc -- Mr. J. L. B. Matekoni -- and many satisfied customers. But life is never without its problems. It turns out that her adopted son is responsible for the dead hoopoe bird in the garden; her assistant, Mma Makutsi, wants a husband and needs help with her idea to open the Kalahari Typing School for Men; yet Mma Ramotswes sexist rival has no trouble opening his Satisfaction Guaranteed

Detective Agency across town. Will Precious Ramotswe delightfully cunning and profoundly moral methods save the day? Follow the continuing story of Botswana's first lady detective in the irresistible *The Kalahari Typing School for Men*. From the Hardcover edition.

Presentation de l'auteur Ex-CID. Ex-New York. Ex-cellent' reads the sign outside the Satisfaction Guarantee Detective Agency. Cephas Buthelezi certainly talks the talk, Precious discovers, but would he have the wherewithal to deal with her current case - a man who has been attacked by ostrich rustlers, and is eager to reassess his life? Meanwhile, there are difficulties at the Tlokweng Road Speedy Motors, where one of the apprentices has discovered the Lord, problems at home with the mysterious death of a hoopoe, and romantic complications when Mma Makutsi sets up a typing school for men . . .

Extrait CHAPTER ONE How to Find a Man I must remember, thought Mma. Ramotswe, how fortunate I am in this life; at every moment, but especially now, sitting on the verandah of my house in Zebra Drive, and looking up at the high sky of Botswana, so empty that the blue is almost white. Here she was then, Precious Ramotswe, owner of Botswana's only detective agency, The No. 1 Ladies' Detective Agency--an agency which by and large had lived up to its initial promise to provide satisfaction for its clients, although some of them, it must be said, could never be satisfied. And here she was too, somewhere in her late thirties, which as far as she was concerned was the very finest age to be; here she was with the house in Zebra Drive and two orphan children, a boy and a girl, bringing life and chatter into the home. These were blessings with which anybody should be content. With these things in one's life, one might well say that nothing more was needed. But there was more. Some time ago, Mma. Ramotswe had become engaged to Mr. J.L.B. Matekoni, proprietor of Tlokweng Road Speedy Motors, and by all accounts the finest mechanic in Botswana, a kind man, and a gentle one. Mma. Ramotswe had been married once before, and the experience had been disastrous. Note Mokoti, the smartly dressed jazz trumpeter, might have been a young girl's dream, but he soon turned out to be a wife's nightmare. There had been a daily diet of cruelty, of hurt given out like a ration, and when, after her fretful pregnancy, their tiny, premature baby had died in her arms, so few hours after it had struggled into life, Note had been off drinking in a shebeen somewhere. He had not even come to say good-bye to the little scrap of humanity that had meant so much to her and so little to him. When at last she left Note, Mma. Ramotswe would never forget how her father, Obed Ramotswe, whom even today she called the Daddy, had welcomed her back and had said nothing about her husband, not once saying I knew this would happen. And from that time she had decided that she would never again marry unless--and this was surely impossible--she met a man who could live up to the memory of the late Daddy, that fine man whom everybody respected for his knowledge of cattle and for his understanding of the old Botswana ways. Naturally there had been offers. Her old friend Hector Mapondise had regularly asked her to marry him, and although she had just as regularly declined, he had always taken her refusals in good spirit, as befitted a man of his status (he was a cousin of a prominent chief). He would have made a perfectly good husband, but the problem was that he was rather dull and, try as she might, Mma. Ramotswe could scarcely prevent herself from nodding off in his company. It would be very difficult being married to him; a somnolent experience, in fact, and Mma. Ramotswe enjoyed life too much to want to sleep through it. Whenever she saw Hector Mapondise driving past in his large green car, or walking to the post office to collect his mail, she remembered the occasion on which he had taken her to lunch at the President Hotel and she had fallen asleep at the table, halfway through the meal. It had given a new meaning, she reflected, to the expression sleeping with a man. She had woken, slumped back in her chair, to see him staring at her with his slightly rheumy eyes, still talking in his low voice about some difficulty he was having with one of the machines at his factory. "Corrugated iron is not easy to handle," he was saying. "You need very special machines to push the iron into that shape. Do you know that, Mma. Ramotswe? Do you know why corrugated iron is the shape it is?" Mma. Ramotswe had not thought about this. Corrugated iron was widely used for roofing: was it, then, something to do with providing ridges for the rain to run off? But why would that be necessary in a dry country like Botswana? There must be some other reason, she imagined, although it was not immediately apparent to her. The thought of it, however, made her feel drowsy again, and she struggled to keep her eyes open. No, Hector Mapondise was a worthy man, but far too dull. He should seek out a dull woman, of whom there were legions throughout the country, women who were slow-moving and not very exciting, and he should marry one of these bovine ladies. But the problem was that dull men often had no interest in such women and fell for people like Mma. Ramotswe. That was the trouble with people in general: they were surprisingly unrealistic in their expectations. Mma. Ramotswe smiled at the thought, remembering how, as a young

woman, she had had a very tall friend who had been loved by an extremely short man. The short man looked up at the face of his beloved, from almost below her waist, and she looked down at him, almost squinting over the distance that separated them. That distance could have been one thousand miles or more--the breadth of the Kalahari and back; but the short man was not to realise that, and was to desist, heartsore, only when the tall girl's equally tall brother stooped down to look into his eyes and told him that he was no longer to look at his sister, even from a distance, or he would face some dire, unexpressed consequence. Mma. Ramotswe felt sorry for the short man, of course, as she could never find it in herself to dismiss the feelings of others; he should have realised how impossible were his ambitions, but people never did. Mr. J.L.B. Matekoni was a very good man, but, unlike Hector Mapondise, he could not be described as dull. That was not to say that he was exciting, in the way in which Note had seemed exciting; he was just easy company. You could sit with Mr. J.L.B. Matekoni for hours, during which he might say nothing very important, but what he said was never tedious. Certainly he talked about cars a great deal, as most men did, but what he had to say about them was very much more interesting than what other men had to say on the subject. Mr. J.L.B. Matekoni regarded cars as having personalities, and he could tell just by looking at a car what sort of owner it had. "Cars speak about people," he had once explained to her. "They tell you everything you need to know." It had struck Mma. Ramotswe as a strange thing to say, but Mr. J.L.B. Matekoni had gone on to illustrate his point with a number of telling examples. Had she ever seen the inside of the car belonging to Mr. Motobedi Palati, for example? He was an untidy man, whose tie was never straight and whose shirt was permanently hanging out of his trousers. Not surprisingly, the inside of his car was a mess, with unattached wires sticking out from under the dashboard and a hole underneath the driver's seat--so that dust swirled up into the car and covered everything with a brown layer. Or what about that rather intimidating nursing sister from the Princess Marina Hospital, the one who had humiliated a well-known politician when she had heckled him at a public meeting, raising questions about nurses' pay that he simply could not answer? Her car, as one might expect, was in pristine condition and smelled vaguely of antiseptic. He could come up with further examples if she wished, but the point was made, and Mma. Ramotswe nodded her head in understanding. It was Mma. Ramotswe's tiny white van that had brought them together. Even before she had taken it for repair at Tlokweng Road Speedy Motors, she had been aware of Mr. J.L.B. Matekoni, as a rather quiet man who lived by himself in a house near the old Botswana Defence Force Club. She had wondered why he was by himself, which was so unusual in Botswana, but had not thought much about him until he had engaged her in conversation after he had serviced the van one day, and had warned her about the state of her tyres. Thereafter she had taken to dropping in to see him in the garage from time to time, exchanging views about the day's events and enjoying the tea which he brewed on an old stove in the corner of his office. Then there had come that extraordinary day when the tiny white van had choked and refused to start, and he had spent an entire afternoon in the yard at Zebra Drive, the van's engine laid out in what seemed like a hundred pieces, its very heart exposed. He had put everything together and had come into the house as evening fell and they had sat together on her verandah. He had asked her to marry him, and she had said that she would, almost without thinking about it, because she realised that here was a man who was as good as her father, and that they would be happy together. Mma. Ramotswe had not been prepared for Mr. J.L.B. Matekoni to fall ill, or at least to fall ill in the way in which he had done. It would have been easier, perhaps, if his illness had been one of the body, but it was his mind which was affected, and it seemed to her that the man she had known had simply vacated his body and gone somewhere else. Thanks to Mma. Silvia Potokwani, matron of the orphan farm, and to the drugs which Dr. Moffat gave to Mma. Potokwani to administer to Mr. J.L.B. Matekoni, the familiar personality returned. The obsessive brooding, the air of defeat, the lassitude--all these faded away and Mr. J.L.B. Matekoni began to smile again and take an interest in the business he had so uncharacteristically neglected. Of course, during his illness he had been unable to run the garage, and it had been Mma. Ramotswe's assistant, Mma. Makutsi, who had managed to keep that going. Mma. Makutsi had done wonders with the garage. Not only had she made major steps in reforming the lazy apprentices, who had given Mr. J.L.B. Matekoni such trouble with their inconsiderate way with cars (one had even been seen to use a hammer on an engine), but she had attracted a great deal of new customers to the garage. An increasing number of women had their own cars now, and they were delighted to take them to a garage run by a lady. Mma. Makutsi may not have known a great deal about engines when she first started to run the garage, but she had learned quickly and was now quite capable of carrying out service and routine repairs on most makes of car, provided that they were not too modern and too dependent on temperamental devices of the sort which German car manufacturers liked to hide in cars to confuse

mechanics elsewhere. "What are we going to do to thank her?" asked Mma. Ramotswe. "She's put so much work into the garage, and now here you are back again, and she is just going to be an assistant manager and assistant private detective once more. It will be hard for her." Mr. J.L.B. Matekoni frowned. "I would not like to upset her," he said. "You are right about how hard she has worked. I can see it in the books. Everything is in order. All the bills are paid, all the invoices properly numbered. Even the garage floor is cleaner, and there is less grease all over the place." "And yet her life is not all that good," mused Mma. Ramotswe. "She is living in that one room over at Old Naledi with a sick brother. I cannot pay her very much. And she has no husband to look after her. She deserves better than that." Mr. J.L.B. Matekoni agreed. He would be able to help her by allowing her to continue as assistant manager of Tlokweng Road Speedy Motors, but it was difficult to see what he could do beyond that. Certainly the question of husbands had nothing to do with him. He was a man, after all, and the problems which single girls had in their lives were beyond him. It was women's business, he thought, to help their friends when it came to meeting people. Surely Mma. Ramotswe could advise her on the best tactics to adopt in that regard? Mma. Ramotswe was a popular woman who had many friends and admirers. Was there not something that Mma. Makutsi could do to find a husband? Surely she could be told how to go about it? Mma. Ramotswe was not at all sure about this. "You have to be careful what you say," she warned Mr. J.L.B. Matekoni. "People don't like you to think that they know nothing. Especially somebody like Mma. Makutsi, with her ninety-seven percent or whatever it was. You can't go and tell somebody like that that they don't know a basic thing, such as how to find a husband." "It's nothing to do with ninety-seven percent," said Mr. J.L.B. Matekoni. "You could get one hundred percent for typing and still not know how to talk to men. Getting married is different from being able to type. Quite different." The mention of marriage had made Mma. Ramotswe wonder about when they were going to get married themselves, and she almost asked him about this but stopped. Dr. Moffat had explained to her that it was important that Mr. J.L.B. Matekoni should not be subjected to too much stress, even if he had recovered from the worst of his depression. It would undoubtedly be stressful for him if she started to ask about wedding dates, and so she said nothing about that and even agreed--for the sake of avoiding stress--to speak to Mma. Makutsi at some time in the near future with a view to finding out whether the issue of husbands could be helped in any way with a few well-chosen words of advice. During Mr. J.L.B. Matekoni's illness they had moved the No. 1 Ladies' Detective Agency into the back office at Tlokweng Road Speedy Motors. It had proved to be a successful arrangement: the affairs of the garage could be easily supervised from the back of the building, and there was a separate entrance for agency clients. Each business benefited in other ways. Those who brought their cars in for repair sometimes realised that there was a matter which might benefit from investigation--an errant husband, for example, or a missing relative--while others who came with a matter for the agency would arrange at the same time for their cars to be serviced or their brakes to be checked. From Publishers Weekly

The fourth appearance of Precious Ramotswe, protagonist of *The No. 1 Ladies' Detective Agency* and two sequels, is once again a charming account of the everyday challenges facing a female private detective in Botswana. In his usual unassuming style, McCall Smith takes up Ramotswe's story soon after the events described in *Tears of the Giraffe*. Precious and her fiancé, Mr. J.L.B. Matekoni, still have not set a wedding date, but they continue to nurture the sibling orphans in their care, as well as the entrepreneurial ambitions of Precious's assistant, Mma Makutsi, who sets out to open a typing school for men. Along the way, Ramotswe handles a few cases and negotiates the arrival of a rival detective in Gaborone. The competition, a sexist detective who boasts of New York City street smarts, proves a delicious foil to his distaff counterpart. A moral component enters the story in the person of a successful engineer who wishes to atone for his past sins. He enlists Ramotswe to help him find the woman he has wronged, and this case comes to a satisfying yet hardly sentimental conclusion. But the real appeal of this slender novel is Ramotswe's solid common sense, a proficient blend of folk wisdom, experience and simple intelligence. She is a bit of a throwback to the days of courtesy and manners, and casts disapproving glances at the apprentices in her fiancé's auto shop who obsess about girls instead of garage protocol. A dose of easy humor laces the pages, as McCall Smith throws in wry observations, effortlessly commenting on the vagaries his protagonist encounters as she negotiates Botswana bureaucracy. This is another graceful entry in a pleasingly modest and wise series. Copyright 2003 Reed Business Information, Inc.