



The Perils of Morning Coffee & at the Reunion Buffet

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In these two warm, engaging, and intelligently observed novellas, Alexander McCall Smith's sharp-eyed heroine Isabel Dalhousie is reminded to avoid jumping to hasty conclusions about the lives of others and to value friendship wherever it's found, and learns valuable lessons about inviting the past into your life. *The Perils of Morning Coffee* sees Isabel's peaceful summer idyll broken when a single meeting over coffee with fellow philosopher Dr. George McLeod brings an irate phone call from his wife, Roz, who implacably accuses Isabel of conducting an affair with her husband. Wounded by the injustice of Roz's wild allegation and concerned both for her standing among the gossipy group of her scholarly peers and for Roz's apparent state of hysteria, Isabel is minded to discover more about the McLeods and set the record straight before the bitterness in their marriage poisons her reputation. She turns to Millie, an old acquaintance and a university colleague of George's, for insight. Then Isabel takes on the mammoth task of hosting her school reunion. In the hours before twenty-five former classmates descend on her home, and the caterers arrive to set up a buffet, Isabel has time to reflect. She is mindful of the fact that reunions can bring up all sorts of uncomfortable feelings. Later that night, with the party in full swing, Isabel realizes that the pull of the past remains as strong as ever. Some people are interested in fuelling disagreements, while others are hoping to make amends. As hostess of the party, Isabel feels compelled to help them on the path to mercy and forgiveness. But what if the reasons for forgiveness are murky and suspect? And what if long-held secrets threaten to derail Isabel's efforts?

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