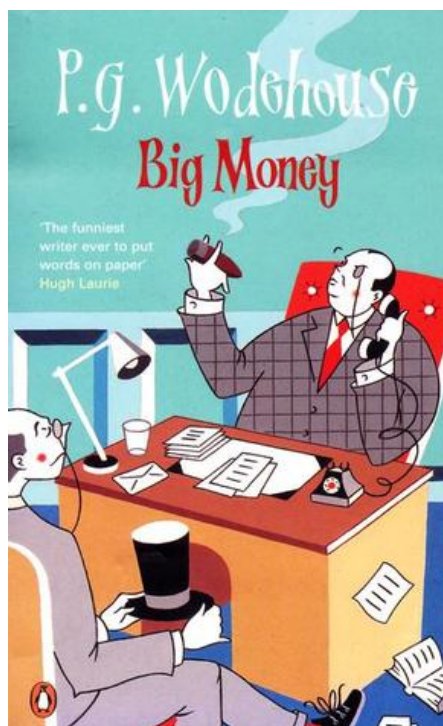




Big Money

P.G. Wodehouse

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Most of the big money belongs to Torquil Paterson Frisby, the dyspeptic American millionaire - but that doesn't stop him wanting more out of it. His niece, the beautiful Ann Moon, is engaged to 'Biscuit', Lord Biskerton, who doesn't have very much of the stuff and so he has to escape to Valley Fields to hide from his creditors. Meanwhile, his old schoolfriend Berry Conway, who is working for Frisby, himself falls for Ann - just as Biscuit falls for her friend Kitchie Valentine. In this typically hilarious novel by the master of light comedy, life can sometimes become a little complicated.

Oh, and Berry has been left a lot of shares in the Dream Come True copper mine. Of course they're worthless... aren't they?

Big Money Details

Date : Published September 3rd 1991 by Penguin Books (first published January 1st 1931)

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Author : P.G. Wodehouse

Format : Paperback 288 pages

Genre : Fiction, Humor, Classics

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From Reader Review Big Money for online ebook

Becky Cresswell says

One of the few writers who can make me laugh out loud <3

John Frankham says

A wonderfully humorous Wodehouse, from 1931. Don't stick just to Wooster and Blandings, Wodehouse stand-alone novels are just as funny. I was laughing out loud many many times at this.

Thee GR blurb:

'Most of the big money belongs to Torquil Paterson Frisby, the dyspeptic American millionaire - but that doesn't stop him wanting more out of it. His niece, the beautiful Ann Moon, is engaged to 'Biscuit', Lord Biskerton, who doesn't have very much of the stuff and so he has to escape to Valley Fields to hide from his creditors. Meanwhile, his old schoolfriend Berry Conway, who is working for Frisby, himself falls for Ann - just as Biscuit falls for her friend Kitchie Valentine. In this typically hilarious novel by the master of light comedy, life can sometimes become a little complicated.

Oh, and Berry has been left a lot of shares in the Dream Come True copper mine. Of course they're worthless... aren't they?'

Raj says

To try and explain the plot of this book would make it sound complicated and unfunny, neither of which is really true, but I couldn't do it justice. Let's just say that it has one or more of the following elements: the peerage, the suburbs, fiancés, love at first sight, formidable aunts, an old copper mine and a dyspeptic millionaire.

I really enjoyed this book. It's got a different tone to the Jeeves books, but it really came together for me. The protagonists, Lord "Biscuit" Biskerton and John Beresford "Berry" Conway are very likeable and even (gasp) competent, if in that slightly potty upper-class way that Wodehouse could capture so well. There are fiancés by the handful (and Wodehouse's fiancés usually *are* a handful), misunderstandings, plots, crosses, double crosses, and much fun to be had by all.

Wodehouse's batting average is still incredibly high with me and whilst I may just be easily pleased, it's funny, light of touch and marvellously easy to read. Both a great entry point to the world of Wodehouse and a fine addition to the collection of an existing fan.

Arthur Pierce says

Somewhat less farcical than the PG Wodehouse series books, more of a light romance. Those who think Wodehouse's books are "all the same" have probably not read enough of them to recognize the subtle

differences of style. This particular one is excellent, compelling from start to the eventful finale.

Martin Allen says

Typically Wodehouse. Fast-paced froth, full of wit, observational humour and bonhomie. Follows a similar pattern to many of his others so it's not so much the plot that matters but the description and dialogue which are always so kaleidoscopically beautiful. Not his greatest, not by a long chalk, but hugely entertaining nonetheless.

Jeremy says

I read this on vacation in St. Martin. This is the epitome of a beach read: easygoing, lighthearted, feel-good comedy where everything works out in the end. Old college pals end up with the ladies they love after some slapstick and Comedy-of-Errors-style mix-ups. Nothing deep to analyze, just an entertaining tale to enjoy.

Esteban says

Classic Wodehouse.

The story is simple, as are the characters, always count on Plum for a good laugh!

Daniel says

If you're already a Wodehouse fan, you pretty much know what to expect; a complicated comedy of errors also serving as a sort of social satire of Britain's pre-war idle-rich. It's entertaining and has some distinct laugh-out-loud moments, but I honestly thought it was too long for what it is. The plot seems to reach a perfect level of ridiculousness at about the halfway mark where it feels like it should be wrapping up somehow, but then goes on much longer and becomes more complicated. Maybe I'm just used to the punchier, shorter style of the Jeeves and Wooster stories.

Fiona says

This is a typical easy to read Wodehouse book with a farcical plot and I enjoyed it for that.

Perry Whitford says

Two old school chums meet for the first time in three years at the Drones, only to discover that each has

fallen upon hard times. Berry Conway lost his inheritance and has been working as a lowly secretary, while Lord 'Biscuit' Biskerton's family hadn't been solvent 'since the reign of Charles the Second'.

It's fortunate that rich, young and beautiful Ann Moon is holidaying in London from New York. It's unfortunate that they both fall in love with her. Also unfortunate are the methods they adopt to win her affection. More unfortunate still, one of them really does love her.

Unscrupulous businessmen pulling dirty tricks to get their hands on a copper mine, an obnoxious false beard and two sneering swans are just a few of the daffy delights in a particularly head-spinning plot, even by Wodehousian standards. The master certainly conjures up some select situations in this one!

And then, as always, there is those sublimely comic similes of his, such as:

'Lord Hoddesdon felt like a tiger which has hoped for a cut off the joint and has been handed a cheese straw', or

'he groaned slightly and winced, like Prometheus watching his vulture dropping in for lunch.'

Isn't it wonderful that P.G. Wodehouse existed?

B says

There's a weird timelessness and sense of deja vu in a Wodehouse novel. Basically all the books have the same plot, a couple of men love a couple of women, there are angry and difficult relatives, the women are, at points, paired with the "wrong men," and, after a series of ups and downs, everything works out. Even knowing that going in, there's a lot of charm and often wit that drives the reader's experience..

I think this one went on a little too long and was not funny in stretches, but was otherwise pretty good.

Question: Why does everyone get engaged immediately upon meeting another person but never get married in this book? Was that actually the social norm? The idealization?

P.S. The back of the book spoils the whole thing.

F.R. says

I chanced upon a piece the other week which said, and I paraphrase here, that if you read one of Wodehouse's major series – Jeeves or Blandings – then you're pretty much guaranteed pleasure, but if you wander off the beaten track you're taking your life into your own hands. I'm not sure I'd agree. My experience has been that, in the main, no matter which Wodehouse you pick up you are more than likely to have a pip and a dandy in your hands.

This one has impoverished members of the aristocracy, unscrupulous businessman, star crossed lovers, a copper mine which is valueless (or is it?) and some of the finest one-liners you will ever find in any book written in English.

Jeff Crompton says

My wife practically insisted that I read something light after my last couple of reads, so I pulled this off the shelf. I've read it before, as I have almost all Wodehouse, but not for a long time, and I didn't remember many details.

Well, it's prime Wodehouse. There's lots of silliness and plenty of misunderstandings, but the right young women end up with the right young men, the hero ends up with a windfall of cash, and the bad guys get what's coming to them - in a mild, Wodehousian way.

Vivek says

A classic Wodehouse comedy of errors with Berry Conway and Lord Biskerton or Biscuit as the main protagonists. No Jeeves or Wooster here but full of classic Wodehouse lines. "She gazed at Berry with stolid affection, like a cow inspecting a turnip." Overall a great light read.

QNPoohBear says

Beresford Conway is a secretary for Mr Frisby, a tyrannical American financier in London but he dreams of adventure. If he had the money, he would travel around the world on a packet steamer. Unfortunately his aunt died and left him with a thousand shares of worthless stock and an unprofitable copper mine so work he must. Godfrey, Lord Biskerton, is also in need of money but his solution to touch his friends for funds. Ideally, he should find a wealthy bride with money to fix the crumbling old ancestral estate, but he's not disposed to matrimony. He does have a solution to Berry's problem though - find some chump to buy up the copper mine "Dream Come True." Berry's employer is eager to help, for his own personal reasons of course. He's not about to part with his own money but he knows someone who would be a willing buyer. A solution to Biscuit's financial situation soon presents itself in the arrival of Ann Moon, Frisby's niece. Ann arrives in London after having rejected the most eligible (but boring) suitors in New York. She dreams of adventure and romance. If Biscuit can pull off his plan, it will benefit his whole family. However, his creditors are after him and he must go underground a bit. A situation ensues in which Berry mistakes Biscuit for the head of a cocaine ring and jumps into a young lady's car on a high speed chase out of London. Berry has never done anything like this before but the young lady is under the impression he works for the Secret Service. She disappears from his life before he can get her name but he knows he's madly in love. How can he marry a girl he doesn't know? How can he marry without money? Then there's the little matter of the lie he told about his job. As Biscuit hides out from his creditors, he discovers some very surprising things about himself and his neighbors.

This story gets off to a slow and boring start. At first it's about the two young men in need of money and I didn't see where the story was going. Then it picks up once Ann enters the picture. There are some typical wacky Wodehouse moments where I wonder how in the world he came up with such absurd situations? No one does screwball comedy like Wodehouse. There are several romances - all predictable. One is major and very sweet and the other two are more in the background. I didn't like the way the main romance concluded. It seemed strange and was very rushed. I was sort of hoping that the characters would show some growth but only one really does.

I really liked Berry. He's sweet and kind. I feel a bit sorry for him with everything he has to deal with. I was rooting for him to find happiness. Biscuit is a typical Wodehouse young aristocrat, except he has a bit more brains. I thought his solution to the financial situation towards the end very bizarre and not something I would have thought of. Ann is a bit silly and not really the kind of girl I want to be friends with. She's young and naive and I can relate to her feelings of rebellion but she doesn't really show a lot of sense. I didn't like her in the end and didn't really understand her feelings.

Though this book isn't one of Wodehouse's better known works, it's enjoyable and I think old and new fans should read it.

Dan Schwent says

Berry Conway falls in love at first sight with a girl named Ann Moon. Too bad she's already engaged to his best friend, "Biscuit" Biskerton. Fortunately, Biskerton is also engaged to a girl named Kitchie Valentine. Throw in a subplot about a penniless noble and a copper mine that may or may not be worthless and watch things come together...

For me, a P.G. Wodehouse novel is like a drive down a familiar road to a well-loved destination. You already know the way but that doesn't make it any less enjoyable. Big Money has all the usual Wodehouse plot elements, like broken engagements, misunderstandings, and mistaken identity, and still manages to craft a new and enjoyable tale. Even though I had a good idea how things were going to go down, the plot twists kept me interested. I love good usage of a fake beard.

Even though he breaks most of the supposed rules of good writing, Wodehouse clearly knows how to put pen to paper. There are so many subtly hilarious throwaway lines in his books. Like these:

He looked at her like a cow examining a turnip.

So next year you'll turn 27 and, if my figures are correct, 28 the following year.

I haven't a bean. I only know what a pound is by here-say.

As with most Wodehouse's, I can't help but think that the entire genre of romantic comedy owes old P.G. a huge debt. Wodehouse was perfecting the art before television was even around. While this isn't one of my favorite P.G. Wodehouse books by any means, it's still a good read for people who enjoy dry British humor and stories resembling musical comedies without the music.

Chas Bayfield says

I saw two guys on a tube and one was reading an extract of this to the other and they were both howling with laughter. I bought it and became the bloke howling with laughter on a train. Want to laugh out loud in public? Read this book.

Ian Wood says

In Adjacent houses in Wodehouse's suburban ideal Valley Field, Berry Conway and Lord Biskerton are

residing. Berry is in love with Ann Moon whom is engaged to Lord Biskerton who in turn is in love with Ann's friend whom also lives in Valley Field. Berry is currently employed by Lord Biskerton's uncle T. Patterson Frisby whom is keen for the Biscuit to marry the very wealthy Miss Moon but equally keen to prize Berry's shares in the Dream Come True cooper mine away from him before he realises their incredible value. Mr Hoke and his college Captain Kelley are equally keen to financially gain from the cooper mine and are willing to hold up the majority of Valley Fields up at gun point to make dreams come true.

Only Wodehouse will be able to ensure the couples are righted and that the shares ensure they will never have to do anything as squalid as work to ensure there place in this, the best of all possible worlds. A Wodehouse comedy that stand alone and doesn't rely on his more famous characters to bring home the bacon. Another Wodehouse triumph.

Individualfrog says

I was bummin' pretty hard until last week I got this book at a second-hand bookshop near my house. I'm pretty sure PG Wodehouse is feeling the keen pleasure of a job well done up in heaven, because I imagine that cheering up the bummin' on their daily commuter train is exactly what he hoped his books to accomplish. Of course his style gets under your skin, but it brings with it the whole musical comedy vision of the world, where everyone is always falling in love, having no money is no bar to enjoying the good life, even the villains get happy endings of a sort, and especially all obstacles can be overcome. I feel better about myself, about my life, about the people around me, cheered up by the silliest of goings-on in this novel.

Barakiel says

Rarely do I agree with the blurbs on the cover of books, but in this case I agree 100%:
"Light as a feather, but fabulous."

Wodehouse is at the top of his form here, with his usual methods of comparing blue bloods with barnyard animals. The way he structures his sentences is incomparable.
My favourite comedy writer, by far.
