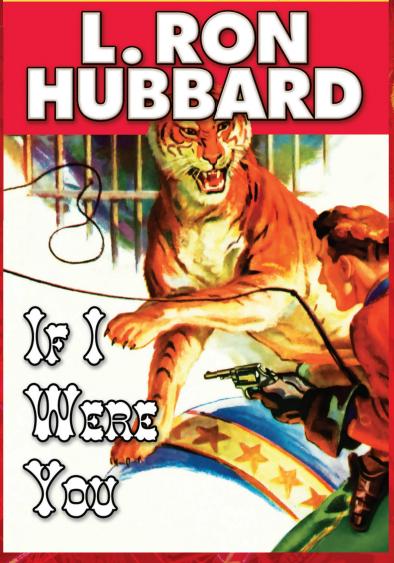
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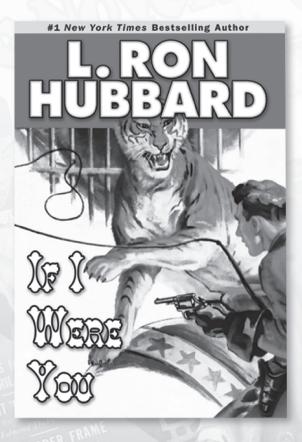
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### About If I Were You

(ORIGINALLY PUBLISHED IN THE FEBRUARY 1940 ISSUE OF FIVE-NOVELS MONTHLY) Circus midget Little Tom Little learns from a set of ancient books on black magic how to switch bodies. When he jumps into the body of a lion tamer, he finds himself caught in the center ring surrounded by dozens of savage cats and quickly realizes that his craving for height just may have led him to a gruesome death.



# *If I Were You* Activity Guide Contents

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For this section circle the correct answers to fill in the blanks.

#### 1. MAIN IDEA



What is the main idea of the story?

- Circuses have a lot of freaks and animals in them.
- It takes a large man to be a wild animal trainer in a circus.
- The circus is not a good place for women to work.
- A circus midget discovers that bravery and integrity are more important than his body.

#### 2. SEQUENCE

What belongs in the middle?

- a) Tommy switches from his own body to Schmidt's body.
- b) \_\_\_\_\_
- c) Tommy switches back to his own body from Schmidt's body.
- Tommy (as himself) is accused of being the one who has been stealing the money.
- The Professor leaves his books and papers to Tommy.
- Maizie, Tommy's girlfriend, is upset about the books he's reading.
- Tommy has to fight the 40 big cats in Gordon's body.

#### 3. CAUSE AND EFFECT

Tommy switches bodies with Schmidt, but is not used to being that big, so \_\_\_\_\_

- he gets a new girlfriend who is closer to his new height.
- he immediately switches back to his own body where he feels safe.
- he has trouble walking and gauging distances correctly.
- he jumps up and down with joy and makes everyone laugh.

#### 4. CAUSE AND EFFECT

Tommy realizes he has sent an innocent man to his death, \_\_\_\_\_

- so he cries on Maizie's shoulder and explains why he did it.
- so he decides he won't play around with swapping bodies after this.
- and he is happy that he is not the one in there with the lions and tigers.
- so he goes back into the cage despite his fear and saves Gordon's life.

#### **5. CONTEXT CLUES**

The Professor was a \_\_\_\_\_, so his job was to read people's palms and tell their fortunes.

- circus owner
- wild animal trainer
- mitt reader
- ringmaster

#### **6. CONTEXT CLUES**

The big top is a tent in a circus where \_\_\_\_\_

- the circus people eat.
- all the main circus acts are performed.
- the midgets sleep at night.
- the animals of the circus are housed.

#### 7. PREDICTION OR INFERENCE

Why do you think the Professor left Little Tom Little his books on the black arts?

- He thought Little Tom Little was really a warlock.
- He felt bad for all the evil things he'd done and was trying to make amends.
- He really had always liked the little guy.
- He intended for him to use the knowledge to get himself into trouble.

#### 8. PREDICTION OR INFERENCE

What do you think happens with Tommy's new job of ringmaster?

- Maizie talks him out of keeping it because she is jealous of his new fame.
- He realizes swapping bodies is more fun and does that instead.
- Mrs. Johnson makes him go back to the sideshow where he belongs.
- The crowds love him and he keeps the job for a long time.

#### 9. FACTS AND DETAILS

When Schmidt first becomes Tommy the plan he quickly makes is \_\_\_\_\_

- to grab the money he's stolen and run, leaving Tommy-as-Schmidt to face the music.
- to go tell Mrs. Johnson what has happened and let her handle it.
- to go after Tommy and convince him to switch their bodies back.
- to make the best of his new situation and do the midget's job.

#### **10. FACTS AND DETAILS**

Why does Tommy want Schmidt's body back immediately after he's switched back to his own?

- Jerry Gordon's body wasn't available yet.
- He really likes Mrs. Johnson and wants to be the one to marry her.
- He still hates being a midget and would rather take the trouble than be small again.
- Schmidt has now made it seem that Tommy is the one who stole the money.

#### **11. FACTS AND DETAILS**

That Schmidt doesn't really love his fiancé is obvious when he calls her \_\_\_\_\_

- Mrs. Johnson.
- Honey Pie.
- Marilyn.
- My Love.

#### **12. FACTS AND DETAILS**

A rubber mule is \_\_\_\_\_

- a mallet for banging in the tent stakes.
- a lady's rain shoe.
- a mule made of rubber.
- a work elephant.

#### **13. FACTS AND DETAILS**

Schmidt gets Betty to say she'll divorce Gordon and run away with him by \_\_\_\_\_

- complaining that no one has ever really loved him.
- threatening their jobs in the circus if she doesn't.
- convincing her that he truly loves her.
- promising her money and diamonds.

#### **14. FACTS AND DETAILS**

As Tommy-as-Gordon is led to the wild animals by Schmidt, Maizie \_\_\_\_\_

- blocks their way.
- tries to go into the cage with him and help.
- claps and urges him to do a good job.
- reaches for Tommy but is thrown back by Schmidt.

#### **15. FACTS AND DETAILS**

Tommy makes sure Schmidt is caught for his crimes by \_\_\_\_\_

- giving the evidence to Mrs. Johnson.
- making a citizen's arrest.
- announcing it from the microphone in the arena.
- switching back to Schmidt's body and confessing.

# Characters

#### CHARACTERS

Write about the following characters, and be sure to explain their relationships to the other characters.

LITTLE TOM LITTLE

HERMANN SCHMIDT

Mrs. Johnson

Jerry Gordon

### Summary/SBQ

#### **SUMMARY**

Write a summary of the book on a separate piece of paper. You may prepare for an oral summary if you prefer.

#### **SBQ (STORY-BASED QUESTIONS)**

Answer the following questions in short sentences.

- 1. What does the Professor leave Tommy when he dies?
- 2. What does Tommy learn to do from the books?
- 3. What reason does Hermann Schmidt give to Mrs. Johnson for putting off their wedding?
- 4. What does Tommy-as-Schmidt remind Schmidt-as-Tommy of when he finds himself looking at a very large gun?
- 5. Who does Tommy accidentally swap bodies with?
- 6. Why is Tommy so afraid of the big cats?
- 7. Why do the big cats go through their routine even though Tommy-as-Gordon has never worked with them?
- 8. What happens to Tommy at the end?

# Story-Based Discussion

#### SBD (STORY-BASED DISCUSSION)

While you are reading the book, find the answers to the following questions. You don't have to write down the answers.

- 1. Why is Little Tom Little so eager to switch bodies with a normal sized person?
- 2. Why does Tommy feel disturbed by the reaction of people around him when he first swaps bodies with Schmidt?
- 3. What does Tommy-as-Gordon realize as he is being led to the arena to face the big cats by Schmidt?

#### SAW (STORY-APPLIED WRITING)

Pick one topic below and write a complete response.

- 1. Write the next chapter of the book, explaining what happens now that Little Tom Little is the ringmaster.
- 2. Compare and contrast Little Tom Little with a character you have read about in another book.
- 3. Choose a few scenes from the book and rewrite them from Schmidt's perspective.

### Find the Meaning

### For the following section circle the correct answers.

#### 1. savor means

- feel grateful
- show one's age
- fade slowly
- enjoy

#### 2. *affront* means

- show anger
- slide down
- openly offend
- to face forward

#### 3. purveyed means

- ground thoroughly
- spun around
- advertised or circulated
- panned for gold

#### 4. denizen means

- small cage
- a hidden place
- darkness
- inhabitant; resident

#### 5. conspicuous means

- easily seen
- very hungry
- unchanging
- badly frightened

#### 6. egress means

- beam of light
- circus headdress
- a large bird
- a way out; an exit

#### 7. debase means

- take without asking
- speak softly
- at the bottom
- to lower in character

#### 8. constraint means

- animal trainer
- restriction
- type of knot
- pull hard

#### 9. *impudently* means

- sadly
- quickly
- thoroughly
- rudely

#### 10. valiant means

- special
- smaller than average
- brave
- incompetent

# Complete the Sentences

#### COMPLETE THE SENTENCES

1. He found himself in a dark room that seemed to have no \_\_\_\_\_ constraint.

- conspicuous
- valiant
- purveyed
- egress

2. She had \_\_\_\_\_\_ so many rumors throughout the office that no one believed her anymore.

- purveyed
- affront
- debase
- savor

3. Do not speak to your parents so \_\_\_\_\_

- valiant.
- denizen.
- conspicuous.
- impudently.

4. Bruce wanted to \_\_\_\_\_\_ the moment when he got his diploma.

- conspicuous
- purveyed
- savor
- constraint

5. The strict rules of the boarding school were such a \_\_\_\_\_\_ that he felt suffocated.

- impudently
- savor
- egress
- constraint

### Complete the Sentences

6. Rock stars sometimes \_\_\_\_\_\_ themselves by doing illegal or immoral acts.

- conspicuous
- debase
- constraint
- denizen

7. The man who helped to save that boy was so \_\_\_\_\_ that he received an award from the local police department.

- egress
- debase
- affront
- valiant

8. The little girl thought she had hidden well but was actually very \_\_\_\_\_

- conspicuous.
- purveyed.
- constraint.
- savor.

9. The neighborhood children do not dare to \_\_\_\_\_ the grouchy man who lives on the corner.

- impudently
- denizen
- constraint
- affront

10. My grandmother is so happy to finally be a \_\_\_\_\_ of the United States.

- denizen
- affront
- egress
- conspicuous

### Quiz: Answers



#### 1. MAIN IDEA

• A circus midget discovers that bravery and integrity are more important than his body.

#### 2. SEQUENCE

• Tommy (as himself) is accused of being the one who has been stealing the money.

#### **3. CAUSE AND EFFECT**

• he has trouble walking and gauging distances correctly.

#### 4. CAUSE AND EFFECT

• so he goes back into the cage despite his fear and saves Gordon's life.

#### **5. CONTEXT CLUES**

mitt reader

#### 6. CONTEXT CLUES

• all the main circus acts are performed.

#### 7. PREDICTION OR INFERENCE

• He intended for him to use the knowledge to get himself into trouble.

#### 8. PREDICTION OR INFERENCE

• The crowds love him and he keeps the job for a long time.

#### 9. FACTS AND DETAILS

• to grab the money he's stolen and run, leaving Tommy-as-Schmidt to face the music.

#### **10. FACTS AND DETAILS**

• Schmidt has now made it seem that Tommy is the one who stole the money.

#### **11. FACTS AND DETAILS**

• Mrs. Johnson.

#### **12. FACTS AND DETAILS**

• a work elephant.

#### **13. FACTS AND DETAILS**

• threatening their jobs in the circus if she doesn't.

#### 14. FACTS AND DETAILS

• reaches for Tommy but is thrown back by Schmidt.

#### **15. FACTS AND DETAILS**

• giving the evidence to Mrs. Johnson.

### Characters: Answers

#### LITTLE TOM LITTLE

Little Tom Little, or Tommy, is a sideshow midget in a circus. He entertains partially by mimicking the palm reader who is an evil man. As the palm reader is dying, he leaves all his books and papers to Tommy who soon discovers that he can use what he has learned to switch bodies with another person. Tommy hates his small size and has always wanted to be a ringmaster—a job that would never be given to a midget. Life becomes one adventure after another as Tommy switches bodies with the ringmaster, Hermann Schmidt, only to discover he is in big trouble from actions done by Schmidt and of which Tommy has no memory. He swaps back to his own body, but he's in even more trouble as himself. When he tries to switch with Schmidt once more he accidentally becomes Jerry Gordon, the wild animal trainer! He finds himself in the cage with all the big cats and a slip-up causes them to turn on him. He finds that, in the end, it's not his size that matters after all, but him and his bravery.

#### HERMANN SCHMIDT

Hermann Schmidt is the ringmaster of the circus. He is a bad-tempered man who turns out to be stealing from the circus as well as cheating on his fiancé, Mrs. Johnson, the boss of the show! His is the body that Tommy switches with and Schmidt loses no time in figuring out how he can take the money he's stolen and get out while leaving Tommy (as Schmidt) to take the heat. Tommy eventually manages to get him back into the correct body and exposes his lies and thievery to everyone—and gets his job in the bargain.

#### Mrs. Johnson

Mrs. Johnson is the boss of the circus show and the fiancé of Hermann Schmidt. She believes Schmidt's lies that he is putting off their marriage until he can take care of her financially, but that the circus is losing money. She also has no idea that he is cheating on her with the high-wire walker and wife of the wild animal trainer, Betty. When Tommy exposes the truth, she has Schmidt arrested and taken away.

#### Jerry Gordon

Jerry Gordon is the wild animal trainer who works with 40 big cats, both lions and tigers. He is also the husband of the girl Schmidt is cheating with, Betty. When Tommy tries desperately to get out of Schmidt's body and back into his own, it's Gordon's that he accidentally ends up in. Tommy/Gordon then has to take on the cats while Gordon/Tommy can only watch from the side until Tommy manages to get everyone back to the right body. By then, it's too late and the cats will not respond to Gordon. Tommy, as himself, has to overcome his fear of the large cats and help to save Gordon.

### Story-Based Questions: Answers

#### SBQ (STORY-BASED QUESTIONS)

Answer the following questions in short sentences.

- What does the Professor leave Tommy when he dies?
   He leaves Tommy his books and papers on the black arts.
- What does Tommy learn to do from the books?
   He figures out how to switch bodies with another person.
- 3. What reason does Hermann Schmidt give to Mrs. Johnson for putting off their wedding? That the circus isn't showing a profit and he won't marry her until he can show his worth.
- 4. What does Tommy-as-Schmidt remind Schmidt-as-Tommy of when he finds himself looking at a very large gun?He reminds him that if he shoots he will be messing up his own body.
- 5. Who does Tommy accidentally swap bodies with? He accidentally swaps with Jerry Gordon when he finds it is too dangerous to be Schmidt.
- 6. Why is Tommy so afraid of the big cats? He was nearly killed by a lion once.
- 7. Why do the big cats go through their routine even though Tommy-as-Gordon has never worked with them? They were very well trained by Gordon and Tommy looks and smells like Gordon.
- 8. What happens to Tommy at the end? He gets the job that he's always wanted—ringmaster.

### • SBD/Find the Meaning: Answers

#### SBD (STORY-BASED DISCUSSION)

While you are reading the book, find the answers to the following questions. You don't have to write down the answers.

- 1. Why is Little Tom Little so eager to switch bodies with a normal sized person? He feels that he is a freak and he wants to be ringmaster.
- 2. Why does Tommy feel disturbed by the reaction of people around him when he first swaps bodies with Schmidt?

These same people were friendly toward him as Tommy, but as Schmidt he receives scowls and looks of fear.

3. What does Tommy-as-Gordon realize as he is being led to the arena to face the big cats by Schmidt?

That Schmidt understood and knew it was Tommy rather than Gordon going into the arena.

#### FIND THE MEANING

- 1. savor means enjoy
- 2. affront means openly offend
- 3. purveyed means advertised or circulated
- 4. denizen means inhabitant; resident
- 5. conspicuous means easily seen
- 6. egress means a way out; an exit
- 7. debase means to lower in character
- 8. constraint means restriction
- 9. *impudently* means rudely
- 10. valiant means brave

# Complete the Sentences: Answers

#### **COMPLETE THE SENTENCES**

- 1. He found himself in a dark room that seemed to have no egress constraint.
- 2. She had *purveyed* so many rumors throughout the office that no one believed her anymore.
- 3. Do not speak to your parents so *impudently*.
- 4. Bruce wanted to *savor* the moment when he got his diploma.
- 5. The strict rules of the boarding school were such a *constraint* that he felt suffocated.
- 6. Rock stars sometimes *debase* themselves by doing illegal or immoral acts.
- 7. The man who helped to save that boy was so *valiant* that he received an award from the local police department.
- 8. The little girl thought she had hidden well but was actually very conspicuous.
- 9. The neighborhood children do not dare to *affront* the grouchy man who lives on the corner.
- 10. My grandmother is so happy to finally be a *denizen* of the United States.

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