Unit 12

Lunch and Dinner

# Reading

Luncheon

I was startled when the bill of fare was brought, for the prices were a great deal higher than I had anticipated. But she reassured me.

\I never eat anything for luncheon", she said.

\Oh, don’t say that!" I answered generously.

\I never eat more than one thing. I think people eat far too much nowadays. A little fish, perhaps. I wonder if they have any salmon?"

Well, it was early in the year for salmon and it was not on the bill of fare, but I asked the waiter if there was any. Yes, a beautiful salmon had just come in, it was the first they had had. I ordered it for my guest. The waiter asked her if she would have something while it was being cooked.

\No", she answered. \I never eat more than one thing. Unless you had a little caviar. I never mind caviar."

My heart sank a little. I knew I could not afford caviar, but I could not very well tell her that. I told the waiter by all means to bring caviar. For myself I chose the cheapest dish on the menu and that was a mutton chop.

\I think you are unwise to eat meat", she said. \I don’t know how you can expect to work after eating things like chops. I don’t believe in overloading my stomach."

Then came the question of drink.

\I never drink anything for luncheon", she said.

\Neither do I", I answered promptly.

\Except white wine", she proceeded as though I had not spoken. \These French white wines are so light. They’re wonderful for the digestion."

\What would you like?" I asked, hospitable still, but not exactly effusive.

She gave me a bright and amicable °ash of her white teeth.

\My doctor won’t let me drink anything but champagne."

From ‘‘The Luncheon’’ by W. Somerset Maugham

# Comprehension check

Complete the sentences.

* 1. The gentleman was shocked when he saw the bill of fare because *: : :*
  2. Salmon was not on the bill of fare because *: : :*
  3. He knew he could not afford caviar, so *: : :*
  4. He chose a mutton chop because *: : :*

1. The lady thought it unwise to eat meat because *: : :*
2. The lady preferred French white wines because *: : :*
3. The gentleman was not too hospitable because *: : :*

Dinner

Dinner began in silence; the women facing one another, and the men.

In silence the soup was finished | excellent, if a little thick; and fish was brought. In silence it was handed.

The fish was taken away, a fine fresh sole from Dover. And Bilson brought champagne.

Soames said: \You’ll find it dry!"

Cutlets were handed, each pink-frilled about the legs. They were refused by June, and silence fell.

Soames said: \You’d better take a cutlet, June; there’s nothing coming."

But June again refused, so they were borne away.

\Salad, sir?" Spring chicken was removed.

But Soames was speaking: \The asparagus is very poor. Bosinney, glass of sherry with your sweet? June, you’re drinking nothing!"

June said: \You know I never do. Wine’s such horrid stuff."

An apple charlotte came upon a silver dish. \Sugar, please, Bilson." Sugar was handed her, and Soames remarked: \This charlotte’s good!" The charlotte was removed.

Olives from France, with Russian caviar, were placed on little plates.

The olives were removed. Lifting her tumbler June demanded:

\Give me some water, please." Water was given her. A silver tray was brought, with German plums. In perfect harmony, all were eating them.

From ‘‘The Man of Property’’ by John Galsworthy

1. Answer the questions:
   1. How many courses did the dinner consists of? What were they? What was served for each course?
   2. What drinks were served at the dinner?
   3. What savouries were served?
2. Write the menu of the dinner.
3. Write out sentences that express the diner’s approval / disapproval of the dishes and drinks.
4. Explain what the following dishes and foods are: cutlets; asparagus.