



## Bertie Plays the Blues (44 Scotland Street Series)

By Alexander McCall Smith

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**Bertie Plays the Blues (44 Scotland Street Series)** By Alexander McCall Smith

### 44 SCOTLAND STREET - Book 7

**The residents and neighbors of 44 Scotland Street and the city of Edinburgh come to vivid life in these gently satirical, wonderfully perceptive serial novels, featuring six-year-old Bertie, a remarkably precocious boy—just ask his mother.**

If you haven't met the residents of 44 Scotland Street yet, there is no better time, since everyone seems to be in the midst of new beginnings.

New parents Matthew and Elspeth must muddle through the difficulties of raising their triplets Rognvald, Tobermory and Fegus—there's normal sleep deprivation, and then there's trying to tell the children apart from one another. Angus and Domenica are newly engaged, and now they must negotiate the complex merger of two households. Domenica is also forced to deal with the return of an old flame, while Big Lou has begun the search for a new one, boldly exploring the new world of online dating and coming up with an Elvis impersonator on the first try. And in Bertie's family, there's a shift in power as his father Stuart starts to stand up to overbearing mother, Irene—and then there's Bertie, who has been thinking that he might want to start over with a new family and so puts himself up for adoption on eBay. With his signature charm and gentle wit Alexander McCall Smith vividly portrays the lives of Edinburgh's most unique and beloved characters.

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## **Bertie Plays the Blues (44 Scotland Street Series) By Alexander McCall Smith Bibliography**

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### Editorial Review

From [Booklist](#)

\*Starred Review\* Bertie is a six-and-a-half-year-old boy in Edinburgh who is so unhappy with his mother-driven schedule of yoga, Italian lessons, and a weekly visit to a psychotherapist that he puts himself up for adoption on eBay. He lives with his well-meaning but weak father and domineering mother in a well-appointed but loveless flat on Scotland Street. This upscale apartment building, the setting for McCall Smith's Scotland Street series, also houses a cultural anthropologist, soon to marry a portrait painter, and it used to hold the gels, ointments, mirrors, and wardrobe used by Bruce, the beyond-handsome narcissist who fascinates the art student Pat (McCall Smith says it's like a cobra fascinating a mouse). The prolific McCall Smith, who also produces the No. 1 Ladies' Detective Agency series and the Corduroy Mansions series, writes the Scotland Street novels in serial form for *The Scotsman*, appearing daily several months a year. He moves from vignette to vignette within the flat and in greater Edinburgh, always moving his characters' fates forward bit by bit, meeting in the apartment house hallway by meeting at Big Lou's café or meeting at the wine bar. The plotlines, now spanning seven novels, are devilishly clever, but readers may well value even more McCall Smith's wit and his characters' conversations and reflections on happiness, loneliness, and love. Often droll, often touching, the Scotland Street stories are always delightful to read. --Connie Fletcher

Review

"Devilishly clever. . . . Often droll, often touching, the Scotland Street stories are always delightful to read."  
--*Booklist* (starred review)

"Eighty more bite-sized chapters bring curious readers up to date on the latest doings at 44 Scotland Street and its Edinburgh environs. . . . The neighborhood's legion of fans will devour each chapter and be sorry when they've turned the last page."

--*Kirkus Reviews*

"Full of charm, gentleness and penetrating insight."

—*The Daily Express* (Scotland)

"You see the whole extent of McCall Smith's gentle comedy of manners. . . . While it is written with abundant wit . . . there are equally large dollops of wisdom too."

—*Scotland on Sunday*

*Praise for the 44 Scotland Street Series*

"Sweet . . . Graceful . . . Wonderful. . . . Gentle but powerfully addicting fiction."

—*Entertainment Weekly*

"McCall Smith's assessments of fellow humans are piercing and profound. . . . [His] depictions of Edinburgh are vivid and seamless."

—*San Francisco Chronicle*

"Irresistible . . . Packed with the charming characters, piercing perceptions and shrewd yet generous humor that have become McCall Smith's cachet."

—*Chicago Sun-Times*

"McCall Smith's plots offer wit, charm, and intrigue in equal doses."

—*Richmond Times-Dispatch*

“The most genial of writers and the most gentle of satirists. . . . [The] characters are great fun . . . [and] McCall Smith treats all of them with affection.”

—*Rocky Mountain News*

#### About the Author

Alexander McCall Smith is the author of the international phenomenon The No. 1 Ladies' Detective Agency series, the Isabel Dalhousie series, the Portuguese Irregular Verbs series, the 44 Scotland Street series, and the Corduroy Mansions series. He is professor emeritus of medical law at the University of Edinburgh in Scotland and has served with many national and international organizations concerned with bioethics.

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**Caleb Hutto:**

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