

Владимирский государственный университет

LET US DISCUSS THE STORIES

ОБСУЖДАЕМ АНГЛИЙСКИЕ РАССКАЗЫ

Учебно-практическое пособие по домашнему чтению

Владимир 2025

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«Владимирский государственный университет
имени Александра Григорьевича и Николая Григорьевича Столетовых»

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Электронное издание



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Содержит 13 адаптированных рассказов британских авторов с комментариями и биографическими справками, а также систему подготовительных упражнений и целевых речевых заданий, которые входят в программу самостоятельной подготовки к аудиторному обсуждению прочитанного.

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ПРЕДИСЛОВИЕ

Многолетний преподавательский опыт авторов пособия подсказывает, что при обучении домашнему чтению комплексов упражнений всегда недостаточно, поэтому издание уместно и полезно не только для работы на аудиторных занятиях, но и для самостоятельной работы студентов.

При создании пособия авторы руководствовались современными методическими принципами обучения устной речи на английском языке: принципами коммуникативной и профессиональной направленности.

Пособие рассчитано на 13 учебных занятий. Оно включает в себя девять адаптированных рассказов британских авторов с комментариями и биографическими справками, а также систему подготовительных упражнений и целевых речевых заданий, которые входят в программу самостоятельной подготовки к аудиторному обсуждению прочитанного. Задания, отмеченные звёздочкой, снабжены ключами для самопроверки. Дозировку материала и темп его прохождения определяет преподаватель в зависимости от условий обучения и уровня языковой подготовки студента.

Assignment 1

Ronald Duncan

WHEN WE DEAD AWAKEN?

Ronald Duncan (1914 – 1982) was a British writer, playwright and poet. His plays were staged both in Britain and abroad. Among his other works there are film-scripts, biographies, novels and short stories.

Ronald Duncan wrote from a young age, and his first book of plays (*The Dull Ass's Hoof*), was published when he was 26. Ronald Duncan was born in 1914, was brought up in Switzerland and got his education at Cambridge. For some years he was engaged in farming in the west of England, in a place between Devon and Cornwall, where some of his stories are set. The story 'When Will We Dead Awaken?' was first published in 1971.

He is best known for a number of plays that express his sense of the decline of moral values and the growth of skepticism in contemporary society.

I do not think I am greedier than most men; but the chance of obtaining something for nothing has always appealed to me. Especially when I could pick it with my own hands; blackberries, for these I will tear my clothes to pieces, nettle my face and hands, all for pleasure of reaching something for nothing, and the pleasure of holding the plump fruit in my fingers. So, too, with mushrooms: as a child I began the search, and as a man, with less energy, I continue it. I will walk my friends' feet off to find a few more of those delicacies; and always there is a hope at the back of my mind that I will again find a complete mushroom ring. Such frail chances are strong ropes tying many of us to hobbies which, were we to consider the time we devote to them*, would prove to us that it is impossible to obtain anything for nothing. And, as my wife has often reminded me, there is little profit in obtaining three pounds of wild fruit at the cost of a torn shirt and a large cleaning bill.

* ...were we to consider the time we devote to them – если бы нам пришлось учесть время, затрачиваемое на них.

As the spring came round, I looked greedily across the beach to the great gaunt Cornish rocks where I knew gulls would soon nest and lay their mottled blue and black eggs; to my taste a gull's egg is a delicacy, whereas a hen's egg is just an egg.

And so, with my wife's blessing and a pair of old rubber shoes on, I set off with her precious basket to the rock.

I knew every inch of the way and was soon scaling the precipitous surface which, being dry, seemed safe even to my nervous eye. Gulls scissored the air and sliced the sky and then would stay poised, and then fall and then rise. I kept my eyes to the rock. The top of the rock was relatively flat. I climbed on to my feet and eyed the ground for the precious eggs. To my disappointment, I found only three where I had expected at least three dozen. I could not allow myself to return with only three eggs; for there would be six of us to luncheon and I promised my wife that I could provide the delicacy for that meal. On descending the rock, I noticed that a great number of gulls circled a ledge of the main cliff some thirty metres above me. It was there, I supposed, that a friend of mine went for his eggs; for he always returned with a full basket. The cliff looked easy, that is, as easy as the rock I had already climbed. So, with my basket in my teeth, I began the ascent. Within ten minutes I was at the top, my basket full, it had been easy. I smoked a cigarette and admired the view, meditating on the pleasure the eggs would give my wife and wondering whether she would be able to preserve some for the winter. I had something for nothing, I was happy. I picked up my basket and then looked for my way down. But I could not see how I had managed to climb to where I now stood; I stood on a ledge of cliff little more than a metre wide; at the back of me was an overhanging precipitous cliff* which I knew it was impossible to scale. And each side of me – a sheer drop of thirty metres with the rocks and the sea's snarl at the bottom. In front, the ledge narrowed till it was thirty centimetres wide – no more than a plank – and on each side a sheer drop with nothing to hold on to.

Instantly sharp panic spread over me and the sick fear of what lay before me settled in my throat as I realized what I had done. I had walked

* an overhanging precipitous cliff – нависающая отвесная скала.

this narrow ledge, this thirty-centimetre plank, without noticing it with my eyes searching for something for nothing. But now it was a different matter. My nerve had gone. I could not even stand where the ledge was comparatively wide. So I crawled inch by inch to where it narrowed and peered over. Each side was a sheer descent of slate-smooth rock... The ledge was less than thirty centimetres wide and more than five metres long. I must have crossed this without noticing it*.

I knew I could not do it again.

I knew that I must do it again.

There was no other way, no other alternative. If only I could regain my nerve. I lit another cigarette and lay flat out, my hand holding a crack in the rock. My only chance was to make a run for it, with my eyes on some distant point, some imagined gull's nest. It could soon be over and, when it was, I swore in my panic to keep so many resolutions. I thought of my own wife waiting for the eggs, and our laughing over my present predicament. Standing up, I threw my cigarette away and, with my eyes on a fixed point on the other side, began to run towards the ledge, the sea almost meeting underneath it, the gulls flying over it. I was on the ledge, my eyes still fixed on the point beyond it. In two seconds I would be across. A gull flew towards me, my eyes lost their fixed objective, I hesitated...

Then later I found myself sitting on the beach; I do not know how long I had sat there, I cannot tell: I may have dozed, I may have slept. The tide may have turned or the year turned. I do not know. I picked up my basket and walked up the path from the beach to the cottage. I thought of my wife waiting, the table laid, the guests' chatter.

I put my basket behind my back and opened the door. The room was empty, there was no table laid. I went upstairs still carrying the basket of eggs. My wife lay on the bed. She was sobbing. I asked her what was wrong, she made no reply. Sobbing, she looked away from me. I begged her to tell me why she was crying. She made no answer. I put out my hand and touched her smooth, hot forehead. Instantly she screamed, rose from

* I must have crossed this without noticing it. — Должно быть, я прошел все это, не заметив.

the bed and ran down the stairs out into the night. I followed, but could not find her. I returned to the empty house and went to my study and lay there, miserable and bewildered.

How long I slept there I do not know. The day may have drunk the night a dozen times for all I knew; but when I awoke the stream still ran by the cottage. And I listened. My study is next to the sitting-room. Through the door I could hear voices and a fire crackling. It could not be the luncheon party, for we seldom light fires during May. I listened. My sister was there; she was serving coffee. My wife was there and there were two men with them; one was my neighbour, the other a friend of the family. Both people who would often drop in for an evening. I listened; my wife was no longer crying, the wireless was on. I opened the door slowly and went in; my neighbour sat in my chair, so I went over to the divan.

Nobody looked at me and nobody spoke to me and nobody passed me any coffee. They went on talking with the music playing.

My wife looked pretty; she went on knitting. What had I done to be left unnoticed?

I stood up and went to my wife's chair and on her lap placed the basket of gulls' eggs. Her eyes rose slowly from her knitting and she screamed. 'Take them away, take them away!' she screamed, and ran from the room crying. My sister followed her. Then my friend said to my neighbour: 'Poor woman, she is still unnerved. That's the second time she's thought she's seen her husband carrying gulls' eggs... She must go away.'

I went into the study. So I was dead. Was I? When will we dead awaken?

Active vocabulary

1) greedy (a), greed (n); 2) for nothing; 3) to pick (vt), to pick smth up; 4) delicacy (n); 5) at the back of one's mind; 6) at the cost of smth; 7) precious (a); 8) to climb (vt); 9) disappointment (n,) to disappoint (vt), to be disappointed in smb / with smth; 10) to provide smth for smb/smith, to provide smb with smth; 11) at the top; 12) nerve (n), to regain one's nerve, to be unnerved; 13) predicament (n); 14) to hesitate (vi), hesitation (n); 15) bewildered (a); 16) to drop in on smb / at some place / for smth; 17) to leave unnoticed.

Vocabulary tasks

Task 1. Arrange the words into pairs of antonyms: *at the top, to climb, to drop in, at the bottom, bewildered, to leave, calm, for nothing, to descend, greedy, panic, unpossessive, at the cost of smth, to pick up, nerve, to drop.*

Task 2. Find the synonyms for the phrase '*to climb a mountain*' in the story.

Task 3. Point out the verbs which go with '*for nothing*' in the story.

Task 4. Study the word combinations; add a combination of your own to each group.

at the cost of *one's life* (*great loss of time, one's disappointment*);

a precious *ring* (*metal, recollection*);

to drop in for *a friendly chat* (*a cup of tea, good advice*);

a bewildered *child* (*student, look*);

a greedy *man* (*eye, impulse*);

to provide delicacies for *the party* (*meat for dinner, money for the family*);

to our disappointment (*surprise, great joy*).

Task 5. Study the sentences. Make up sentences of your own with the parts in italics.

1. Mother read the letter and *gave* us all *a bewildered look*.

2. I *obtained* this book from a second-hand bookseller *almost for nothing*.

3. *At the back of his mind* the doctor knew that the case was hopeless.

4. There was a white church *at the top of the* hill.

5. Tom *was about to leave* the last remark *unnoticed*, but the speaker's tone *bewildered* him.

6. The dog looked at the sausage *greedily*.

7. Don't cry, you are sure to forget this *predicament* in a day or two.

8. Cats can *climb* trees easily, but they seldom go down *without hesitation*.

9. – What made you change so many jobs? – My chiefs *were disappointed in* me.

Task 6.

a) Bring out the difference in meaning of the underlined words.

1. Granny used to go to the woods to pick mushrooms, but now her eyesight is too poor for that. 2. Steve picked up his suitcase and went out of the station. 3. The boy picked up small stones and put them in his pocket. 4. In hospital Fred picked up a lot of English from an American pilot. 5. Where did you pick up that terrible phrase? – I heard Daddy use it.

b) Give the situations where the author uses the verbs ‘to pick’ and ‘to pick up’.

Task 7. Point out the new vocabulary that the author uses in the story: a) once; b) more than once.

Give the situations from the story with the vocabulary of Group ‘a’.

Task 8*. Translate the following sentences. Use the active vocabulary.

1. Он лишен мужества. 2. Заглядывая к нам на лакомство. 3. В глубине души он понимал, что они находятся в затруднительном положении. 4. Подбери этот клочок бумаги. 5. Они не замечают (игнорируют) меня. 6. Он без колебаний забрался на дерево. 7. На вершине скалы он потерял самообладание. 8. Твоя жадность не может помочь тебе достать драгоценную вещь даром. 9. Кто обеспечивает вас книгами? 10. Он разочаровался в своей девушке. 11. В этой битве англичане нанесли поражение французам ценою жизни Нельсона. 12. Что с ним? – Он в замешательстве. 13. Жадные люди рвут цветы в садах соседей. 14. Он снова обрел присутствие духа и больше не колебался. 15. Разочарование – плохой знак.

Discussion of the story

Task 1. Answer the questions.

1. Where is the story set? What season was it?
2. What chances of obtaining anything for nothing did the man have?
3. What made the man set off to the rocks on that spring day?
4. What disappointment made the man continue the search?
5. What feelings spread over the man when his basket was full?
6. Which is easier: to climb a rock or to descend it?

7. What predicament did the man find himself in?
8. Did he choose the way out of the predicament correctly?
9. Why did the gull swoop toward the man at a most dangerous moment?
10. What happened to the man after his hesitation?
11. How much time passed between his death and his first awakening?
12. Did the man realize that he was dead?
13. Did the man's second awakening happen in the same season?
14. Why was he left unnoticed by the party?
15. Why could his wife see more than the other people?
16. How did the friend of the family explain the wife's screaming and running out? Was his explanation correct?

Task 2. Enlarge on the cues from the story; don't use the first person.

1. The chance of obtaining something for nothing has always appealed to me.
2. As spring came round, I looked greedily across the beach ...
3. I knew every inch of the way ...
4. On descending the rock I noticed that a great number of gulls circled a ledge of the main cliff.
5. But I could not see how I had managed to climb to where I stood now.
6. Instantly sharp panic spread over me.
7. My only chance was to make a run for it ...
8. Then later I found myself sitting on the beach.
9. I put my basket behind my back and opened the door.
10. ... when I awoke the stream still ran by the cottage.
11. I stood up and went to my wife's chair ...

Task 3. Find proof in the text that:

- 1) the man loved his wife;
- 2) his wife did not believe in obtaining anything for nothing;
- 3) the man had the same reactions and feelings before and after his death;
- 4) the dead man's second awakening might have happened in the same season in a year.

Task 4. Imagine what happened in the man's family on the day of his search for gulls' eggs.

Task 5. Retell the story from the point of view of: a) his wife; b) his friend.

Task 6. Think of the cause of the man's death. Choose the idea you support among those listed below. Give your reasons.

the man's carelessness

his greed

the gull swooping towards him

the man's loss of nerve

that day's luncheon party

his wife's blessing

Task 7. Point out the conditions of after-life as imagined by the author (the sensation of death; a dead man's dwelling place, sleep and awakenings, etc.).

Task 8. Give your opinion on:

1. Margaret Thatcher once said: 'For nothing you can get only a piece: of cheese in a mousetrap'. Do you agree with it? Have you ever obtained anything for nothing?

2. The importance of not losing one's nerve in a predicament.

3. Do you believe in after-life?

Assignment 2

John Wain

THE LIFE GUARD (Part I)

John Barrington Wain (1925 – 1994) was an outstanding British, novelist, and literary critic, associated with the literary group known as “The Movement”. He worked for most of his life as a freelance journalist and author, writing and reviewing for newspapers and the radio.

His first novel *Hurry On Down* placed him at the head of “the Angry Young Men” group of writers whose heroes rose in spiritual rebellion against the British Establishment and conservative elements of society at that time. Among his other novels the best known are *The Contenders* (1958), *Strike the Father Dead* (1962), *The Small Sky* (1967), *A Winter in the Hills* (1970), *Young Shoulders* (1982) and some others.

John Wain is a distinguished short story writer. *The Life Guard* published in 1971 gave the title to his third short story collection.

PART I

‘Hey, see that one go by?’ said Hopper. He leaned forward, staring with all his might through the window of the hut. ‘The tall one in the white bathing dress?’

‘Yes,’ said Jimmy. He flicked a few times with a duster at the clean paintwork.

‘The dress was too small for her, did you notice?’ said Hopper. ‘You could see plenty. Plenty.’

‘I don’t give much thought to it.’

‘Of course, you must get used to it, it’s boring,’ said Hopper. ‘You get your chances here, all right.’

‘I don’t give much thought to it.’

‘All day and every day,’ said Hopper. He went to the door, opened it and stared after the girl in the white bathing dress. ‘I’ll wait till she starts sunbathing, then I’ll go and look her over.’

‘Suit yourself,’ said Jimmy.

Nobody knew why Hopper was called Hopper. It was neither his surname nor his Christian name. But he had been called Hopper at school, as far back as Jimmy could remember, and he could remember back to pretty well their first day there, at the age of five. And now Hopper was an apprentice and Jimmy was the Life Guard of Red Rocks. Everybody was growing up.

‘Girls,’ said Hopper. ‘They’re all waiting for it. Just waiting for it, they are. I soon found that out, at our place.’

‘There’s all sorts,’ said Jimmy vaguely. He was beginning to tire of the conversation. ‘There’s only one sort,’ said Hopper. He shot Jimmy a crafty look. ‘They don’t think about anything but boys.’

‘I think I’ll have a swim,’ said Jimmy. He began to take off his shirt.

‘Give the birds a look at that manly torso of yours,’ said Hopper. ‘You’ll get a tan, doing this job.’

Jimmy wished that Hopper would not examine him so closely. He took his trousers off and hung them neatly over the back of one of the hut’s two chairs.

‘Swimming trunks on already,’ said Hopper.

‘What else?’ Jimmy asked. ‘I’ve a job to do.’

‘Your job is to walk round and make the birds feel good. You’ll never have to rescue anybody,’ said Hopper.

‘I’m going swimming now,’ said Jimmy. ‘I have to keep in practice.’

‘I’m not stopping you,’ said Hopper.

‘Yes, but the hut,’ said Jimmy. ‘I have to leave it empty. It’s a regulation’.

Hopper stopped looking cunning and looked sulky. ‘You mean nobody’s allowed in the hut?’

‘Not without me,’ said Jimmy.

Hopper got to his feet. ‘What kind of a regulation is that?’ he asked.

‘One of Mr Prendergast’s.’

‘Oh, him.’

‘He’s my boss,’ said Jimmy. He watched Hopper out and then closed the door of the hut. ‘Why don’t you come in swimming if you want something to do?’ he asked.

‘I’ve got something to do. I’m going to find that girl in the bathing dress that’s too small for her and see if there’s anything doing.’

They parted, Jimmy towards the sea and Hopper along the beach. As he walked briskly towards the water, Jimmy thought briefly about Hopper and the girl. He was quite certain that when Hopper located the girl he would never have the nerve to go up and speak to her. He would just sit himself down, about twenty-five yards away, and look at her and think her thoughts. Hopper had always talked about girls in that way, from the time he was eleven years old, but really he was very shy with them. At least as shy as Jimmy himself, which was saying a lot. Hopper would never find a girl to do all those things with; he was thin and flat-chested, he had greasy hair that came down so close to his eyebrows that there was hardly room for his pimples, he had bad teeth, and he was not even clever.

The waves came creaming along the sand towards Jimmy’s feet. The day was overcast but not at all cold, and the sea looked green as a meadow. Jimmy ran forward until the water was up to his knees, then dived under and began to swim with strong, easy strokes.

Red Rock is a struggling little place. Also straggling. Along road leads down to the sea, running straight across the sandhills because there are no trees and nothing to turn aside for, and along this road there are a few houses, some in clusters as if afraid of the loneliness, a few bigger ones sturdily on their own. There is also the High Hat Ballroom, which used to be the Rialto Cinema, and there is Owen’s Fish and Chip Saloon. Further up, at the T-junction*, there is the older and more settled part of the village. Fifty or sixty houses, two pubs and a red-brick church.

For a hundred years or more, Red Rocks has been trying to establish itself as a summer resort. It has the clean, salt sea, it has fresh Atlantic air, and in the little bay it has a half-circle of smooth pale sand. At the northern edge of the bay rises the cluster of rocks that gives the place its name, high enough and rough enough for the adventurous big boys of fourteen and

* at the T-junction – у развилки дороги.

fifteen to climb and shout to one another and feel that they're really climbing something. Yes, the place has the makings of a resort. But no more than the makings. A few visitors come in August, but at the beginning of September it all dies down again. Once that cold wind starts whipping across the sandhills**, nobody wants to come near the place. And even in the short season of hot weather, when the sea winks in the sunlight and the rocks feel warm to your hand, most visitors go to the larger resorts down the coast. Red Rocks keeps in business by holding prices down, offering simple food and not many amusements. The families who take their holidays there are usually lower-income-bracket*.

Most people in Red Rocks were pretty well resigned to these facts before Mr. Prendergast came. In fact, some of them positively liked things the way they were. The pushing, enterprising young ones had all gone off to the towns anyway, and the older ones liked a quiet life.

Even some of the young people found it not too bad. Jimmy Townsend, for instance. You wouldn't have said that anything could worry Jimmy, a strongly-built boy with a round face and not too much up top.** Most of Jimmy's life, except for the tiresome interruptions of morning and afternoon school, was spent either bicycling or swimming. He would have liked to be a P.T. instructor***, but that was just the trouble, you had to have training for that, and to get the training you had to pass your exams and go on a special course, and Jimmy could never get on well enough at school to pass any exams. He just couldn't give his mind to it. So when he turned fifteen he just left school and hung about at home. There wasn't any work to do. Sometimes, in the afternoons, he helped out with a bit of potato-peeling for Mr. Owen, or dug the Vicar's garden, but it was a rare week when he earned more than ten shillings, and with his big appetite it cost more than that to feed him for a day. After six months of this, it was clear that the time was coming when Jimmy would have to go away to one of the nearby big towns, and live in a hostel and get a job. And this was

** Once that cold wind starts whipping across the sandhills... – Как только холодный ветер станет хлестать по песчаным холмам...

* ... are usually lower-income-bracket – обычно с низкими доходами.

** not too much up top – не из очень умных.

*** a P.T. instructor – учитель физкультуры.

what worried him. He didn't want to go away. He liked Red Rocks even in the winter, when the salty wind made his eyes fill with tears and sometimes made him get off his bicycle and push it, against the wind's great roaring weight, down the road to the beach. Even the short, dull winter days, when the cold fog lay still on the water, and all you could hear was the muffled rattle of waves pushing the shingle about, and sometimes the cry of a sea-bird, suited him. Jimmy had plenty of patience; he knew how to wait. He would lean on his bicycle and look at the sea and reckon up how many weeks would have to pass, before he could go swimming.

Swimming was Jimmy's great happiness. He could do any stroke. His arms were so powerful, his big chest held so much air, the salty sting of the water sent his blood racing so fast, that he felt more fully alive in the water than on land. Mr Rogers, the school master, had made jokes about it. 'One of the larger mammals reversing the evolutionary process,' he used to say of Jimmy. 'Townsend is evolving backwards into a marine animal. If he has offspring, they'll probably be gill-breathers.' And he called Jimmy the Amphibian, taking care to explain the derivation from two Greek words so as to make his joke educational for the class.

Jimmy didn't know what reversing the evolutionary process was, but he took it all in good part and waited for school to end so that he could go swimming. And when he got too old to go to school he went swimming more than ever, to get away from his worried feeling. Even on a winter day he would take a plunge if it wasn't too freezing cold, moving rapidly through the water for ten or fifteen minutes before running out and toweling himself in the lee of the rocks. A seal, people said. He ought to come back to earth next time as a seal. But his father grumbled about the cost of keeping him at home, and his mother said nothing but set her lips and began to make enquiries about a nice hostel for clean-living boys* in Barrow-in-Furness or Fleetwood or even as far away as Preston. No wonder Jimmy worried. In a place like that, there would be no sea, no sea, no rocks, no sand. He would have to spend all the week working, and do his swimming on crowded Saturday afternoons in municipal baths that stank of chlorine.

* for clean-living boys – для добропорядочных юношей.

That was where Mr. Prendergast stepped in, with his Development Group. Mr. Prendergast really changed Jimmy's life, He was a young and forceful man in rimless glasses who had opened a pharmacy in Red Rocks to sell sun-tan lotion and denture powder to the visitors, and he wanted a lot more customers. He was always talking about Changing the Image. Red Rocks would begin to thrive straight away it could only Change its Image, He formed a Development Group because he despaired, and quite rightly, of getting any action out of the old Rural District Council.

One evening Mr. Prendergast was over in Morecambe and he got talking to a man in the lounge bar of a hotel. This man told him that visitors stayed away from Red Rocks because the bathing was dangerous. The man said that there were dangerous currents that swept people out into the Atlantic. This had happened to three people in one season – about 1920, the man thought – and the fact had been widely mentioned in the newspapers. Ever since then, Red Rocks had been known to everyone in the north-west as a place where it was unsafe to bathe.

Mr. Prendergast, his glasses flashing angrily, continued to insist that the idea was preposterous and that Red Rocks was a bather's paradise, and he parted on bad terms with his informant. But as he drove home through the night, he worried about this important part of the Image. It nagged at him all the way home, and just as he was turning into his own gateway he got the answer. A Life Guard. A brawny life-saver to be on duty on the beach every day during the season, and not to leave his post until the last bather had gone. He could have a little hut to keep his things in, and to shelter in when it rained, and the hut could have a flag flying above it with a conspicuous colour and the words 'Life Guard'. As he stopped the engine and got out of his car. Mr. Prendergast even knew who the life-guard would be and how much, or how little, they could get him for. That Jimmy Townsend – he and the job were made for each other. What a piece of luck!

The other members of the Development Group, when Mr. Prendergast told them his idea at the next meeting, made only one stipulation: that Jimmy Townsend should go and get a diploma in the approved methods of life-saving. So Jimmy went to Morecambe and took

some tests. He swam better than the people who were testing him and got his diploma the first time. The hut was built in June. There was a little delay in getting the flag with the words 'Life Guard' on it, so Jimmy's mother embroidered one, and Jimmy fixed it up on a pole himself. Everybody said it looked very nice, and Mr. Prendergast and his Group sent out a brochure which mentioned 'Excellent Bathing for all the Family. Fully Qualified Life Guard and Swimming Instructor Permanently in Attendance'.

Jimmy's father was annoyed at that, and said that if he was going to give swimming lessons to every Tom, Dick and Harry that chose to ask for them, as well as being Life Guard, he ought to get two wage-packets*. But Mr. Prendergast said it would keep Jimmy from getting bored, because the bay was perfectly safe and there would be nothing for him to do as Life Guard.

All through that summer, the sea danced for joy and Jimmy swam like a glistening porpoise. He practised until he could stay under water for a minute at a time, and when he broke the surface and came blinking up into the sunshine, water poured off his sleek head and the gulls wheeled and cried as if they had seen a walrus. In the early summer, nobody came to the beach except at week-ends, so for five days on end Jimmy was lord and owner of the sea and the shore, king of birds, master of crabs, director of shells and seaweed. He knew that it would only last for the summer. But for the summer, it was something he could share with the kind of sparkling sea. Every time he went into the water, he felt his troubles fall away from him and was conscious of nothing but the strength of his body. And every time he came out, with his face towards the straggling village and the sand dunes, he felt wariness gather round him like a wet towel.

Not that there seemed anything he need be wary of. Mr. Prendergast, on behalf of the Development Group, gave him his small wage, every Saturday night, and seemed quite satisfied with the bargain. He did nothing to interfere with the arrangements, beyond coming down to the hut one Saturday morning and tacking a typewritten notice on it. The notice was in capital letters and was protected from the weather by a sheet of transparent

* to get two wage packets – получать две зарплаты.

plastic. It announced that swimming lessons would be given free of charge on application to the Life Guard. Jimmy was pleased to see himself referred to, in capital letters, as the Life Guard, and he smiled at Mr. Prendergast.

‘Give the people any help they seem to want, Jimmy,’ said Mr. Prendergast, looking seriously at Jimmy through his glasses. ‘Bring them into it. Specially the shy ones. Keep a look out for the ones who look lonely and go up and talk to them. Ask them if they want a swimming lesson.’

‘Yes, sir,’ said Jimmy. ‘If they can’t swim here they never will. The water’s lovely.’

‘I must try it myself one day,’ said Mr. Prendergast, turning to walk back to his car. Personally he preferred to give his energy to thinking of ways of increasing his income. Swimming was all right for animals that lived in the water. ‘If I ever do,’ he added, ‘I’ll make sure you’re all ready to save me if I get out of my depth. ‘He chuckled good-humouredly and Jimmy produced an answering chuckle.

‘Well, keep at it,’ said Mr. Prendergast. ‘Not that there seems to be much to keep at’*, he added as he moved away.

‘The sea’s always there, sir,’ said Jimmy quickly.

‘Yes,’ Mr. Prendergast agreed. ‘Even if the bathers aren’t.’

He got into his car. Jimmy felt slightly anxious as he went back into the hut. He hoped Mr. Prendergast would not begin to regret that he had made him Life Guard and Swimming Instructor. He looked through the window of the hut: it was ten o’clock and the first visitors were just arriving with their beach balls and picnic baskets. He must find someone among this lot, or among one of these lots one of these days, who wanted to be taught to swim. Or, better still, needed to have their life saved.

Time melted away, between joy and anxiety. Now it was August. It was high season and the weather was good, so that when all the younger visitors crowded together onto the HighHat Ballroom or queued for Owen’s Fish and Chips, you would have thought that Red Rocks was a

* Not that there seems to be much to keep at – Не кажется, однако, что здесь будет много работы.

thriving resort at last. But even now the boarding houses were only half full.

One Saturday morning, Jimmy managed to get into conversation with a fat woman who was sitting on the beach by herself. He could see that she had a bathing costume and a towel with her and he asked her if she liked swimming. The fat woman said that she liked bathing but she couldn't swim. She just splashed about. This was Jimmy's opportunity and he at once offered to teach her to swim. Two or three lessons, he said, and she'd be swimming and then she need never fear getting out of her depth. The fat woman said that she never went out of her depth anyway, and she was too old to start learning to swim now. Jimmy privately agreed with this, but he persisted. There were quite a lot of people on the beach that morning and it would be good publicity if they saw him teaching somebody to swim. So he shifted from one foot to the other and bent over the fat woman as she sat on the sand, and said that bathing was much more fun if you could swim, and doctors all said how good swimming was for you, and the lessons would be free of charge.

'I'm paid by the Development Group,' he urged. 'It's a free service to visitors.'

He felt a fool, bending over the fat woman, and it annoyed him to see out of the corner of his eye that Hopper was standing a few yards away, watching him and grinning. With Hopper was his younger sister, a scrawny girl of ten or eleven with her hair in a ponytail. Her name was Agnes and she was always making fun of someone or something. Jimmy had never heard her voice except raised in mockery. He did not remember ever hearing her say anything in a normal tone.

Blushing, he turned his back on Hopper and Agnes, and continued to press the fat woman to let him teach her to swim. It was a sultry day; there was a grey haze over the sea and the sun glared down through a hot mist. Jimmy felt himself sweating.

'I'll just start you off,' he said to the fat woman. 'Then you can carry on and practise by yourself till you feel ready to go on the next stage.'

To his surprise, the fat woman suddenly agreed to let him start her off. She gathered up her things and went off to one of the bathing huts to

get changed. Jimmy stood waiting, his arms crossed on his chest, trying to look grave and responsible. But he could not help being aware that Hopper and Agnes were coming towards him and Agnes was giggling.

‘Is that the best you can do, then?’ Hopper asked, grinning and jerking his thumb in the direction of the fat woman. ‘There’s some good-lookers here today. Be a pleasure to hold them up in the water.’

‘Jimmy’s too shy for that,’ said Agnes in a high affected voice. ‘He’s frightened of girls, everybody knows that.’

‘She wants to learn to swim,’ said Jimmy off-handedly.

‘Come off it,’ said Hopper. ‘She wants to get near a nice young feller and it’s her only chance to.’

‘Jimmy’s her last chance,’ said Agnes. ‘Last chance Jimmy, last chance Jimmy, oh, oh, oh,’ she sang to the tune of ‘If you knew Susie’*.

‘If she starts drowning will you rescue her?’ Hopper jeered. ‘I bet she’d like that. Ow, hold me tight. I’m going under,’ he mimed the fat woman, holding out his arms and writhing to and fro.

‘It’s too hot to argue,’ said Jimmy.

‘The water’ll rise when she gets in,’ said Hopper. ‘High tide’ll be two hours early.’ ”

‘Jimmy picked the fattest one on purpose,’ said Agnes. ‘He can hide behind her so the girls can’t see him in his little briefs.’

Jimmy longed for the fat woman to come back. Then he saw her approaching. She wore a flowered one-piece bathing costume and a rubber cap. Everything about her was thick and white.

‘Here she comes,’ said Hopper. ‘Get the lifeboat out.’

‘Right then,’ Jimmy greeted the fat woman. He smiled at her. She looked nervous. ‘Let’s just get in and used to the water first,’ he said.

‘It’s the first time I’ve bathed this year,’ she said tensely.

‘You’ll find the water very nice,’ said Jimmy.

‘Last chance, Jimmy, last chance, Jimmy,’ Agnes sang in the background. ‘Oh, oh, oh.’

* *‘If you knew Susier’* – название популярной песни, вышедшей в 2025 году. В песне мужчина поет о том, что он знает, что женщина по имени Сьюзи на самом деле более страстная, чем считают люди.

Jimmy and the fat woman walked towards the sea. 'We'll just do a nice easy breast-stroke,' he said to her. It embarrassed him slightly to say the word 'breast' to a woman. He kept his eyes carefully to the front. The thundery air seemed to be pressing down on his forehead. When they reached the water, Jimmy ran ahead and lightly ducked below the surface. The fat woman advanced step by step, letting the water creep-up her pale thighs. 'It's cold, isn't it?' she said plaintively. Finally, she sank to her knees, with the water at waist-level, and stayed there.

'Well, here's the first Task,' said Jimmy. 'What we do, we take the legs first.' He showed her how to rest her palms on the sea-floor and hold her chin up while doing a simple frog-like movement with her legs.

But the fat woman was hopeless. She got down as if she meant to do some press-ups, but she seemed unable to move her legs, and every time a tiny wave splashed round her chin she gasped and threw her head up like a frightened mare.

'Look, kick your legs like this, nice and easy,' Jimmy urged.

'I'd rather learn at the baths,' she puffed.

'You'll soon get confidence,' said Jimmy. He sat down on the sea-bottom, with his head and shoulders out of the water, and looked at her helplessly. He felt sure everyone must be watching them and laughing. Ought he to get hold of the fat woman's legs and show her the movements? He just did not know. Perhaps that was what real swimming instructors did: but the fat woman's legs looked so white and pulpy that to touch them seemed obscene.

They splashed about for another five minutes, getting nowhere at all, and then the fat woman said she was cold and was going to get out and dress. Jimmy splashed by her side and they walked up the beach together with water pouring down their legs and arms.

'You'll soon get the hang of it', he said to her, smiling so that the people could see.

'I'll never swim the Channel, that I do know,' she said.

She went off to dress and Jimmy towelled himself inside the hut. The door opened and there were the grinning faces of Hopper and Agnes.

* You'll soon get the hang of it. – Вы скоро этому научитесь.

‘Hey, you stopped too soon,’ said Hopper. ‘She was just getting in the mood.’

‘Jimmy was frightened even of her,’ said Agnes. Her narrowed eyes were as green as a cat’s. She put out her tongue and it was like a thin poisonous wafer.

‘Kindly get out of my hut,’ said Jimmy, swinging round to face them. Agnes disappeared at once, but Hopper stayed where he was and said, ‘You used to be able to take a joke’.

Jimmy looked out of the window. The beach was fairly full but it could have been much fuller. The sea was a wonderful cool refuge from the sticky, headachy day but there were only a couple of dozen people splashing about in it. At the big resorts, they would be jostling one another in the sea, stepping over each other on the beach. Suddenly he felt as Mr. Prendergast must feel. It was just not working. Next summer the Life Guard’s hut would be taken down and he, Jimmy, would be sent off to the city and shut up all week in an engineering works. He felt desperate.

‘Hopper,’ he said, ‘come in and shut the door.’

Hopper obeyed. ‘Want a private talk?’ he said. ‘Don’t say anything I might regret.’

‘I want you to do something for me,’ said Jimmy. ‘Stage a little demonstration.’ His heart was thumping heavily.

‘A demonstration what of?’ Hopper asked.

‘Life-saving.’

‘I don’t know anything about life-saving.’

‘No,’ said Jimmy. ‘But I do.’

He had dried himself by now and he began to put his clothes on, turning his back to Hopper. But he could feel Hopper watching him. When he turned round, dressed, Hopper’s eyes were small and calculating.

‘A fake rescue?’ he said.

‘No fake. I know how to rescue people and I’d like a chance to show what I can do.’

‘You’ve got a certificate, isn’t that enough?’

‘It isn’t. I want to pull off a good big rescue at a crowded time like Saturday or Sunday afternoon, right where everyone can see it. Then they’ll know the bathing is safe.’

‘How will they know the bathing’s safe if someone pretends to be drowning?’

‘They’ll see me rescue him. Then they’ll know they’re being looked after.’

‘I see,’ said Hopper slowly. ‘Nobody wants to learn to swim, so you want somebody to get into trouble and get rescued so everybody’ll see you’re a big shot*.’

‘Not somebody. You. I want you to go in swimming, pretend to get into trouble, wave to me and give a shout, and I’ll swim out and tow you back to shore.’

‘What d’you think I am, daft?’

‘It’ll be no trouble, the whole thing’ll be over in ten minutes, and I don’t expect you to do it for nothing. There’s five quid in it for you.’

‘Not enough,’ said Hopper.

‘It’s more than I earn in a week.’

‘That’s your problem. If I’m going to look a fool in front of everybody, the kind of fool that goes out swimming and can’t stay in his depth, I want ten quid at least.’

‘Ten...? You won’t look a fool; it might happen to anybody to get caught up in a dangerous current.’

‘It might, but it doesn’t. I’d be the first and I’d look a fool. I need five pounds for doing the job and another five for looking a fool, in front of birds and all. You’re lucky I don’t make it fifteen.’

‘You’ll do it then?’

Hopper paused for a long moment and then he said, ‘Cash down first**.’

‘I can’t give you cash down. I haven’t got it – I’ll have to save it up and it’ll take me the whole season.’

‘How much have you got?’

* a big shot (разг.) – влиятельный человек (важная шишка).

** Cash down first. – Сперва наличные.

‘Three-ten.’

‘Right, give me that and an IOU* for the rest.’

He tore a page from his notebook and showed Jimmy how to write out an IOU. ‘You’ve got to pay me now,’ he said. ‘I can take you to court if you don’t. And what about the three-ten?’

‘I’ve got it at home. You can have it tonight.’

‘Right.’

‘But you must do the job tomorrow afternoon.’

‘Right.’

Active vocabulary

1) cunning (a); 2) to rescue (vt), rescue (n); 3) sulky (a); 4) resort (n); 5) to have the makings of smb/smith; 6) to hang about; 7) to annoy (vt), to be (feel, look) annoyed; 8) free of charge; 9) to keep a look out for smb/smith; 10) to get out of one’s depth; 11) by oneself; 12) to be (feel, look) anxious, 13) out of the corner of one’s eye; 14) responsible (a); 15) to feel (be, look) desperate; 16) to regret (vt), regret (n); 17) to stage a demonstration of smth; 18) to get into trouble, 19) to get caught up in smth.

Vocabulary tasks

Task 1. Give the corresponding nouns: *to annoy, cunning, desperate, anxious, sulky, responsible*.

Task 2. Give the synonyms for: *free of charge, to rescue, to be anxious, to regret, to keep a look out for smth*.

Task 3. Copy out of the story verbs denoting actions associated with mockery.

Task 4. Arrange into pairs of antonyms: *responsible, sulky, to get into trouble, to get out of one’s depth, free of charge, to fall on one’s feet*,

Task 5. Study the following word combinations, translate them. Point out the one (in each group of three) dealing with a situation from the story. Reproduce that situation.

* IOU (I Owe You) – (‘Я должен тебе’) письменное признание денежного долга, выдаваемое должником.

to stage a demonstration of *a new method* (life-saving, good taste);
 to have dinner (sit on the beach, do a bit of gardening) by oneself;
 to keep a look out for *lonely bathers* (sparrows in the orchard, hooligans in the crowd);
 a cunning *enemy* (act, look);
 a *summer* (health, seaside) resort;
 a responsible *position* (decision, look);
 to have the makings of *a leader* (despot, resort);
 to rescue a *child* (cat in the road, swimmer);
 to regret *one's promise* (having come at all, something one heard);
 to be (feel, look) sulky;
 to get caught up in a *current* (thunderstorm, heavy rain).

Task 6. Note that 'free of charge' and 'free' are synonyms, the former is chiefly used as an adverbial modifier, the latter as an attribute.

Arrange the expressions below in two columns as in the pattern:
 Pattern: *to give lessons: to give lessons free of charge – to give free lessons*
to send booklets, to give education, to provide tickets, to show films,
to give a concert, to serve meals, to provide lodging

Task 7. Translate the sentences; make up sentences of your own with the underlined parts.

1. The car did not obey the man, and after trying to get the hang of it for half an hour, he felt desperate. 2. Out of the corner of her eye the girl saw a dark figure behind the tree and walked faster. 3. Our headmaster has all the makings of the president of a banana republic, don't you think so? 4. You know, Jack, you started to hang about the kitchen too early, it's not dinnertime yet. 5. This place is no health resort, and you can hardly drink the tap water here. 6. The heat and the flies annoyed the animals in the Zoo. 7. Just wait and see, you will get into trouble with those new friends of yours.

Task 8*. Translate the sentences. Use the active vocabulary.

1. Краем глаза она заметила, что он выискивает их в толпе.
 2. Почему он выглядит таким обеспокоенным? – Его сын попал в беду. 3. Я сожалею, что устроил тогда эту демонстрацию (показательное выступление). 4. Вы ответственны за их спасение. Они уже не доста-

ют ногами до дна. 5. Взгляни на это лакомство! У него все задатки повара. 6. В глубине души он понимает, что они попали в сильное течение. 7. Что означает фраза «даром»? – Когда вы получаете что-то бесплатно. 8. Они меня раздражают, вечно здесь слоняются. 9. Он был доведен до отчаяния и выглядел угрюмым. 10. Я встретил этого хитрого человека на каком-то курорте. 11. У него все задатки музыканта. 12. Он зашел на глубину и попал в течение. 13. Краем глаза он заметил драгоценное кольцо. 14. Они вошли в здание бесплатно и слонялись там три часа. 15. Они устроили демонстрацию спасения. 16. Не дуйся! Пусть он съест это лакомство (деликатес). 17. Он был в затруднительном положении и чувствовал отчаяние. 18. Ты ответственен за безопасность на курорте. 19. Ты меня раздражаешь. Тебе не нужно выискивать ее на пляже. 20. Я сожалею, что у меня такой хитрый друг.

Discussion of the story

Task 1. Answer the questions.

1. Where is the scene laid? Who are the characters? What is their age?
2. What makings of a resort did Red Rocks have?
3. Why did people prefer other resorts?
4. What were Mr. Prendergast's plans for changing the image of Red Rocks? What were his motives?
5. What was Jimmy's part in Mr. Prendergast's plans?
6. Did Jimmy have the makings of a life guard?
7. What is the importance of comparing Jimmy to marine animals?
8. Why was Jimmy's first attempt at teaching to swim his last?
9. What was Jimmy's greatest fear?
10. Why did Jimmy decide to stage a demonstration of life-saving?
11. What was Hopper's reaction to the idea?

Task 2. Give as much information as possible on the situations suggested by the quotations.

1. Hopper had always talked about girls in that way from the time he was eleven years old.
2. Red Rocks is a struggling little place. Also straggling.

3. Swimming was Jimmy's great happiness.
4. That Jimmy Townsend – he and the job were made for each other.
5. It (the notice) announced that swimming lessons would be given free of charge on application to the Life Guard.
6. On Saturday morning Jimmy managed to get into conversation with a fat woman.
7. Her name was Agnes and she was always making fun of someone or something.
8. 'Hopper', he said, 'come in and shut the door.'

Task 3. State whose utterances these are and what each speaker meant.

1. 'You get your chances here all right')
2. 'Keep a look out for ones who look lonely')
3. 'Jimmy's her last chance')
4. 'The sea is always there, sir'.

Task 4. Stage a dialogue between the fat woman and Jimmy insisting on swimming lessons.

Task 5. Find proof in the text:

- 1) that Hopper was a cynical and calculating fellow;
- 2) that Jimmy and Hopper judged other people by their own standards;
- 3) that Jimmy was not very clever;
- 4) that Jimmy disliked Agnes.

Task 6. Give your opinion of:

- 1) Jimmy as a teacher;
- 2) Jimmy called a demonstration of life-saving what Hopper called a fake rescue. Which was right?
- 3) Jimmy's motives of staging a demonstration.

Task 7. Characterize: Jimmy, Hopper, Agnes.

Assignment 3

John Wain

THE LIFE GUARD (Part II)

PART II

Jimmy waited a long time on Sunday afternoon before Hopper came down the road and on to the beach. Hopper was carrying a towel but no bathing costume.

‘Are you ready to go in?’

‘Yes,’ said Hopper. ‘Don’t be so anxious. I’ve got my trunks on under my clothes. Let me come in the hut and change.’

‘You’d better go to one of the cubicles like everyone else. It’ll look funny if you don’t.’

‘All right.’

Changed, Hopper looked thin, a pathetic land animal with small blue veins in his legs.

‘Let’s get it over,’ he said, shivering already in the cool breeze.

‘I’ve got it worked out,’ said Jimmy. ‘We’ll go in together and swim out till I say. Then we’ll stop and I’ll swim back to the shore. You wait a bit, then go out a bit further, and when you’re not too close to anyone else, wave your arm and shout for help. I don’t want anyone else rescuing you.’

‘No,’ said Hopper, ‘else they’d have to give me ten quid too, wouldn’t they?’

He grinned derisively, then looked miserable again.

‘Oh, let’s get it over. I hate the bloody sea.’

‘You do bathe sometimes. I’ve seen you.’

‘Well, I wasn’t going to bathe to-day, so let’s get it over.’

They walked into the sea, pretending to chat like two friends. When the water came up to waist-level, Jimmy got down and began to swim.

‘Come on,’ he said.

‘It’s cold,’ said Hopper sourly. He stood with the water lapping his bathing shorts, as if he was beginning to have second thoughts about the whole thing.

Jimmy swam round him in a circle. ‘Come on, think of the ten quid.’

‘That’s safe anyway. I’ve got your IOU.’

‘But you wouldn’t,’ said Jimmy. ‘You wouldn’t be a rotten cheat.’

‘What are you being? Faking a rescue.’

‘It’s not a fake. It’s a demonstration. If you don’t do it I shan’t give you ten quid and I don’t care what they do to me.’

Hopper suddenly flopped into the water and began to swim slowly and clumsily. Jimmy swam beside him at the same pace. They went on in silence for a few minutes and then Jimmy said, ‘Right, stop.’

Hopper let his feet down to the bottom and stood on them. The water came up to his nipples.

‘A bit further on,’ said Jimmy.

‘No,’ said Hopper. ‘This is as far out as I’m going.’

‘Don’t be silly. You can’t look as if you’re in trouble when you’ve got your head and shoulders out of the water.’

‘Well,’ said Hopper. He considered. ‘I’ll wait here while you go back to the shore and then I’ll swim a bit further out and call for help from there.’

‘All right,’ said Jimmy. ‘Only do a good job. Think of the ten quid.’

‘I ought to have said twenty.’*

Without answering, Jimmy swam back to the shore and stood up with his feet still in the water. Folding his arms, he walked up and down for a few moments, turning his head and body in a leisurely, graceful way so as to survey the whole scene. He conveyed that the bay was his province and that he wanted to be satisfied that everybody was safe and having a good time. The salt water ran down his tanned body and began to dry off. He was covered with a very fine dust of greyish-white salt.

The sea was dotted with heads where people were swimming about. Here and there, little groups stood in the water; parents and two or three children, sometimes swinging the youngest child up and down by its wrists

* I ought to have said twenty. – Мне следовало бы запросить двадцать (фунтов).

so as to duck it in and out of the water, squealing and gaining confidence. Red Rocks was a wonderful place to spend a happy day. As a resort it was surely coming into its own. Long-legged boys crawled up and down the rocks, imagining themselves in wonderful danger, and two ice-cream vans were selling fast.

Jimmy counted a hundred, quite slowly, before he even allowed himself to look out to sea in Hopper's direction. Hopper was standing in the water, exactly where he had been. When he saw Jimmy look towards him, he began to swim slowly away from the shore, turning his head every few strokes to see if Jimmy was watching. Jimmy pretended not to be looking at Hopper, turning his head slightly away from him but keeping his eyes steadily on his slowly bobbing head. This was it. At any moment, Hopper's arm would go up and his cry for help would come to Jimmy across the water.

Jimmy turned once more, moving his feet and going round in a complete circle. The Life Guard's hut stood proudly at the upper edge of the beach, a sign that Red Rocks meant business and that there was enough work there for any honest young man who had no wish to go off to the city and be apprenticed and live in a hostel. As Jimmy's eyes rested on the hut, Hopper's sharp cry came suddenly to his ears. 'Help.' It was a single, high stab of sound. If Jimmy had not been listening for it he would probably never have heard it among all the other sounds that littered the water, the laughter and the shouts of children and the insistent barking of a small dog that ran along the beach. But he did hear it, he whipped round and there was good old Hopper with his arm up, waving. None of the other bathers seemed to have noticed Hopper's distress signals, but that did not matter. He, Jimmy, the Life Guard, had noticed them. He ran forward for a few yards, then did a running dive into the water and began to swim fast, cutting past family groups and a fat pale man floating on his back in striped trunks.

Jimmy swam easily, saving his strength for the rescue, but still nearly at racing speed. He did not want Hopper to have time to get tired of pretending and let his feet down to the bottom. That would make them both look ridiculous. He kept his eyes on Hopper and presently he saw the arm

go up again. Then Hopper's head disappeared, for a second or two, right under the surface. Good, he was making a real, convincing job of it. Jimmy increased his speed, taking great controlled breaths every time his mouth came clear of the water. Soon have him out of that now.

As he swam on, he realized that Hopper must be further out than he had seemed to be, from the shore. It was taking him quite some time to reach the spot. Jimmy increased his speed again, going full out now, his heart pounding with effort and excitement. For a few strokes his head was under water, and when he lifted it again he saw that he was quite close to Hopper. Then he saw the expression on Hopper's wild white face. It made his inside go cold.

Hopper's eyes were turned upward as if help might come from the sky. He did not see Jimmy close to him, but took a great struggling gasp and shouted up into the air.

'Drowning...'

Water slopped into his mouth and he coughed and went down again.

'Hopper,' Jimmy called. 'I'm here, I've got you.'

He propelled himself forward and got hold of Hopper from behind, putting his arm round Hopper's chest so as to pull him on to his back. Then it would be easy for him to breathe as he was pulled along. But Hopper struggled like a person in a nightmare. He tried to beat Jimmy off as if Jimmy were an octopus.

Jimmy tried to call out to Hopper, to calm him, but they were fighting too fiercely. If he opened his mouth, water poured into it. So he concentrated on pulling Hopper over on to his back and kicking out for the shore. After one of these struggles, Jimmy managed to get Hopper into the right position and begin to move him along, but after a while he sensed that there was something wrong, and lifting his head he saw that they were going the wrong way and had moved some distance further out to sea. He tried to swing Hopper round in the water, but Hopper resisted again and began to thrash wildly with his arms.

'Drowning,' he said.

'I've got you,' Jimmy spluttered.

Hopper went down again. Jimmy pulled him up at the cost of going under himself. When he surfaced, their faces were close together and Hopper was looking straight into his eyes. But Jimmy could not tell whether Hopper recognized him or not.

‘Help me,’ Hopper groaned, right into Jimmy’s face.

‘I’ve got you.’

They struggled and swayed in the water. Then Hopper seemed to get cramp or something. He doubled up and his head went right under again. Jimmy pulled him out and started to kick back towards the shore. Thank goodness, Hopper was quiet now. He had him in the correct grip and everything was going to be all right.

Jimmy was beginning to feel tired but he did not slacken his efforts. There would be time to rest when they were on dry land. He kicked steadily, and held Hopper tight, and used his free arm in a backward crawl stroke. This went on for a long time, until Jimmy began to think that they must be getting in to shore. There must surely be other bathers round them. Perhaps he could call out and get a bit of help from someone. There would be nothing to be ashamed of in that, now he had brought Hopper out of danger. He lifted his head from the water, but could not see anyone close by. Still holding Hopper carefully out of the water, he twisted his body round to look towards the shore. It was no nearer. In fact, the people walking about seemed like dots, and the bathing huts like dog kennels.

They were not getting any nearer to the shore. They must be in a current.

Jimmy kept calm. He had known these currents for years. This very one, he supposed, was the one he had planned to keep Hopper clear of. He had told Hopper exactly what part of the sea to go to, and Hopper had done as he said, but they were in the current all the same. That was because the currents were so unpredictable. They seemed to wander about the bay. This one was much further over than it usually came.

Hopper jerked up and down in the water. He got his face clear and gave a scream, up towards the clouds. It was as if he no longer cared about the land and had pinned all his hopes on being lifted up into the sky. He went under in mid-scream and it was obvious that his lungs had filled with

water. Jimmy felt he ought to beat him on the back, but if he turned his face downwards to beat him on the back his face would be under water and his lungs would fill up faster than ever. Jimmy felt that stab of cold again. He had been afraid for some minutes, but this was different, this was panic. He wanted to shout for help himself.

Then a gull came flapping slowly overhead, flying very low, examining the surface of the sea for traces of things to eat. It passed over Jimmy's head at a height of no more than three or four feet. At once Jimmy felt his panic leave him. The bird's presence seemed to domesticate the sea. Jimmy and Hopper were fighting for their lives, but to the gull this was just an ordinary afternoon and the sea was where it lived and where its food came from. The gull could at any time settle on the water and rest till it wanted to fly again. Well, so could a man. Jimmy turned over on his back and floated, taking deep breaths and holding onto Hopper's arm: Hopper thrashed about a few more times, but Jimmy held on to his arm and let him get on with it. I'm the engine of this ship, he said to himself. If I rest a minute and get my strength back, I can get us out of this.

The water felt cold, and the strength took a long time to come back to Jimmy's muscles. But his brain was clear and he used the interval to think what to do. He knew from experience that the way to get clear of one of these currents was not to swim head-on against it, as he had been trying to do, but to swim diagonally through it, aiming at the shore but only indirectly, at an angle of thirty or forty degrees. When he felt able to start again, he steered at this angle, pulling Hopper with him. But at once he noticed a change in Hopper. He was not struggling. He was simply floating on the water, offering no resistance. Jimmy lifted his head up and tried to look at Hopper's face, but it was difficult from that angle. Hopper seemed to have his eyes open: was that a good sign? Had he calmed down, trusting in Jimmy and waiting for them to get back to shallow water?

The current was dragging at them; Jimmy could feel it. He stopped thinking and put every atom of his strength into swimming steadily backwards at the angle he had chosen. His arms and legs worked like small, potent machines. Hours seemed to go by. He did not dare raise himself and look towards the shore in case it was no nearer, or even further

off. He knew that if it was he would despair and give up. But he must keep on, not only for his own sake but for Hopper's. He even thought, briefly, of Mr. Prendergast and the Development Group, who had shown confidence in him.

Hopper would never forgive him. Ten pounds would not compensate him for a fright like this. He had passed out. Jimmy slammed shut the steel door of his mind against any other thought. Hopper had fainted, he was floating peacefully. He would soon come round when they got to shore. Jimmy understood about artificial respiration and the kiss of life. All he had to do was keep going, not faint himself. The only thing that could possibly make him faint was fear, the horrible suggestion that kept leaking out like gas through the steel doors. Has he died? Are you swimming on and on without hope, towing a lump of dead meat through the water?

And if he has died, wouldn't it be better to let the current carry you out to sea with him, both of you lost forever, beyond recovery and beyond questioning?

Jimmy kept the steel doors shut and summoned up all the strength that remained to him. Soon he must either get to shore or be drowned. Suddenly, out of the corner of his eye, he saw a white, floating shape with a striped patch in the middle. It was the fat floating man whom he had passed on the way out, in what now seemed another life. He was lying on his back in the water as peacefully as Hopper. Jimmy reared up and looked round, letting Hopper float free for a moment. The shore was only about ten yards away, the Life Guard's hut was quite close, there were people playing and standing about in the water, he was there and nobody had noticed them struggling for their lives.

Jimmy was mistaken on this last point. In the usual patchy way in which things happen, some people had noticed that something was wrong and others had not. The fat man who was floating by himself was one of those who had not. But other people had seen Jimmy and Hopper and had called to one another and swum towards them. As Jimmy came in to the shore, they began to call to friends on the beach, who came hurrying up. They gave instructions to each other and one tall man declared himself to be a doctor.

Jimmy bumped on the sand. They were safe. He stood up and found that the water came only to his knees. He bent over Hopper, who was floating like a wet log in the mild surf. Hopper's face was very stiff and his eyes were wide open. The salt water was washing in and out of his eyes: you would think he would have to shut them. Jimmy let go of Hopper and fell on to his hands and knees in the water and started vomiting.

Now he and Hopper were surrounded by a small crowd of people, wet swimmers and dry non-swimmers. They left Jimmy alone with his spreading patch of vomit that floated on the water, and pulled Hopper on to the sand. The doctor bent over him and everybody else stood by, jostling a little to see what was happening, but not talking much. Some children who were trying to see between the legs of the grown-ups were sent off to look for a policeman, partly because a policeman would be useful for taking statements and partly to stop them looking at Hopper.

Jimmy could hear nothing but his own vomiting, which was so loud that it seemed to fill the sky and press down on the sea. Between spasms he tried to tell God that he would do anything if only God would let Hopper not be dead. After a while he stopped vomiting and stood up. No one took any notice of him and he began to walk out of the water, past the stiff shape of Hopper and the bending and peering people. Then his way was blocked by the dark immovable bulk of the policeman.

Of course Jimmy knew the village policeman of Red Rocks; it was Mr. Walker, there was nothing to be afraid of. But this was a new Mr. Walker, stab-faced, hard, a taker of statements.

‘I shall want your account of how this happened,’ he said.

‘Is he —’, said Jimmy. He could not say the word ‘dead’.

‘You were on duty and you saw that he was getting into difficulties?’

‘I was in the sea. He called out,’ said Jimmy.

‘Let the boy get dressed,’ said the doctor, looking up from where he knelt beside Hopper. ‘We don’t want a pneumonia case on our hands as well as a death’.

A death?

‘Go and get dry and I’ll take your statement in the hut,’ said policeman Walker to Jimmy.

They can't prove anything, said Jimmy inside himself as he moved away. His legs were unsteady; his knees were very loose and everything else was very tight. He thought he would never stop shivering. They can't prove that Hopper did it because I offered to pay him. The current caught him, it might have happened to anybody. It was true what they said about the current. You could just manage it if you were on your own, a strong swimmer, but not with somebody else to hold up, it hadn't been his fault.

'I did my best,' he said aloud. His voice was carried away down the beach by the unnoticing wind. 'Nobody could have saved him,' he said loudly. 'He went too far out.'

Then he began to cry. Tears blurred the outline of the hut as he went towards it. Fumbling for the door handle, he got safely inside. A few people who came and stood near the hut could hear him sobbing.

'He's upset, poor lad.'

'No wonder he's upset. He's supposed to stop this kind of thing happening, that's what he's there for.'

Agnes, who was listening among the others, said nothing.

After about ten minutes, policeman Walker came up and rapped on the door of the hut.

'Are you ready to talk now, lad?' he called through the wood.

Jimmy opened the door. He was still not dressed or even dried.

'Come on, come on, lad,' said the policeman not unkindly. 'Try not to go to pieces. You needn't give your evidence till later on if you don't feel up to it*. Get along home and ask your mother to give you a cup of tea with a drop of whisky in it. I'll step up to the house later on.'

'Is he –', Jimmy said again.

'They've done what they can for him,' said the policeman. 'But they haven't started him breathing and they never will now. His heart can't have been strong**. There'll be a post mortem of course. If it does turn out that his heart was weak, that'll let you out of course.'

'Let me out?'

* ...if you don't feel up to it – ...если чувствуешь, что ты не в состоянии это сделать.

** His heart can't have been strong. – Не может быть, что у него было здоровое сердце.

‘No dereliction of duty,’ said policeman Walker heavily. ‘A man with a weak heart might die any time.’

I didn’t know he had a weak heart, God. He didn’t even know himself. He’d have said so, wouldn’t he? Then I’d never have suggested the idea. Is God angry with me? Am I wicked, a murderer? Thou shalt not kill*. Tell that to the sea, God. It was the sea killed him, sucked him under. Help me, he said. I’ll see his face every night. Help me.

‘I tried to,’ he said to the place where Hopper had stood. ‘I tried to help you.’

‘Get along home now,’ said policeman Walker.

As Jimmy walked up the long road between the straggling houses, he met two or three families walking the other way, towards the sea. They were carrying bathing costumes and towels and the children had buckets and spades. These people had relaxed, holiday faces. They did not know that the afternoon had been darkened. They thought the sparkling waves were still innocent.

Jimmy’s house was near the T-junction of the village. He had to walk the whole length of the road before he could go to his bedroom and be out of the sound of voices and the look of eyes. He would tell his mother he was exhausted from rescuing somebody and needed to rest. That would make her leave him alone, and later, when policeman Walker came to get his statement, he could pretend to be surprised that Hopper had died. He could say he thought the doctor was with him and that he would be all right. After all, though policeman Walker had said Hopper would never breathe again, he did not know. The doctor was still working on Hopper and perhaps it would all come right. Oh, God, make it come right.

Light footsteps pattered quickly after him. He turned, and it was Agnes who came running up. Jimmy stopped. There was a gap in the houses where they stood, and no one was near them.

‘I s’pose you think you can walk away,’ said Agnes. ‘Well, you can’t. I know it was your fault Len got drowned.’

Yes, that was Hopper’s name, Len. At least that had been his name when he was alive.

* Thou shalt not kill. – Не убий (библейская заповедь).

‘I tried to rescue him. The current’s strong just there,’ said Jimmy.

‘You killed him,’ said Agnes calmly.

‘I – ’ he choked, ‘it was an accident.’

‘You gave him ten pounds to go swimming and get out of his depth.’

‘I never told him to get out of his depth.’

‘How could he pretend to be drowning if he wasn’t? You killed him, Jimmy Townsend, it was you and nobody else.’

‘You can’t prove it.’

‘I know where that piece of paper is. The one that says IOU’.

‘Why aren’t you upset?’ he asked her, suddenly curious about her calm blankness. ‘Don’t you care about Hop – about Len?’

‘I do care,’ she said. ‘I’m going to tell everybody that you killed him and then they’ll hang you. Then that’ll be fair.’

‘They won’t hang me.’

‘They will when they know you killed him.’

‘They don’t hang people anymore.’

‘They’ll lock you up in prison, Jimmy Townsend, forever, and that’s just as bad.’

‘It isn’t,’ he said, thinking of the rope and the trap door.

‘I’m going to take that piece of paper to Mr. Walker.’

‘How d’you know about it anyway?’ he asked dully.

‘I was listening through the door of the hut.’

Little spy. She was as horrible as the most horrible side of Hopper. Jimmy glanced quickly to right and left, along the village street. There was no one about. He shot out his hand and grabbed Agnes’s thin wrist. His fingers were very strong and he held the wrist in a fierce, pain giving grip.

‘Oh. Let me go. Let go of me.’

‘Listen,’ Jimmy breathed. ‘If you tell anybody what you heard, I’ll kill you. You say I killed Hopper, well, if I can be a murderer once I can be one twice.’

‘You’re hurting me – you’re breaking my –’

‘They won’t believe you anyway. It’ll only be your word against mine because that paper doesn’t say what the money was for and they can’t prove anything. But I’ll kill you just the same, I’ll kill you, I’ll kill you.’

Without letting go of Agnes's wrist, he moved his other hand and gripped her by the shoulder. He had her backed against the churchyard wall now, holding her by the left wrist and right shoulder, hurting her in both places. Her bones felt as small and thin as a rabbit's. Suddenly it came to him that he was enjoying squeezing her in his hands. The strength of his fingers on Agnes's light bones was a pleasure to him because she was a girl. Even to hurt her was a pleasure. To hurt a boy would have been nothing.

At the thought, he took his hands off as if she had become electrified, and stood back. She was crying, but calmly.

'That's something else you've done,' she whispered. 'Cruelty to children. I'm only ten.'

Jimmy looked down at his hands. They seemed to him like the hands of a murderer. How had this happened to him? His nature had changed. All summer, till this, he had been as innocent as a seagull.

He stepped backward again, putting more space between himself and Agnes, as if to let her see that he was not going to attack her.

'Listen, he said. I didn't mean it. I won't kill you. Tell them everything, see? I won't even be angry. I don't care anymore. I shan't care when they take me away from here.'

He could not explain, could not find words for his need to escape from his terrible, unrecognizable new self, and she said nothing. In the silence, Jimmy could hear the swish and boom of the waves on the beach. Turning his back on the sound, he walked rapidly away towards the village. Whatever happened, he knew that he would soon be leaving.

Active vocabulary

1) pathetic (a); 2) to have second thoughts about smth; 3) cheat (n), (v); 4) ridiculous (a); 5) convincing (a); 6) to bring smb out of danger; 7) to come clear of smth; 8) unpredictable (a); 9) to pin one's hopes on smth; 10) to resist (v); 11) to faint (v); 12) to summon smth up; 13) to go to pieces; 14) innocent (a); 15) to be exhausted (from, after).

Vocabulary tasks

Task 1. Give the corresponding:

a) nouns: *to resist, to faint, innocent, to cheat, ridiculous*;

b) verbs: *convincing, sulky, ridiculous, exhausted*.

Task 2. Form adjectives with the prefix *un-* and the suffix *-able* from the verbs listed below. Translate the adjectives.

Pattern: *to predict* – *unpredictable* (непредсказуемый)

to forget, to think, to speak, to obtain, to forgive, to recognize, to rely, to reach, to bear, to prove.

Task 3. Study the word combinations, translate them. Point out those used by the author in the story. Reproduce the situations.

a pathetic *figure* (*land animal, bather*);

a *silly* (*cunning, rotten*) cheat;

a convincing *job* (*argument, speech*);

an unpredictable *result* (*current, behavior*);

to summon up one's *courage* (*strength, common sense*);

to come clear of *the water* (*the shore, the smoke*);

a ridiculous *situation* (*scene, hat*);

to pin one's hopes *on a lucky chance* (*on being lifted up into the sky, on the life-boat*).

Task 4. Study the sentences; make up sentences of your own using the words in italics and the same sentence pattern.

1. There is nothing *innocent* about that joke. 2. You are sure *to go to pieces* if you work at night. 3. The cliff was steep, and we began *to have second thoughts about* climbing it. 4. Girls *used to faint* much oftener in the previous century. 5. Any boat may *bring us out of danger* now. 6. Drowning people always *resist* when being rescued. 7. The students *are exhausted* after that long test.

Task 5. Note that different verbs may combine with 'clear (of)' to form the meaning 'удаляться', 'отрываться', 'отделяваться', 'освобождаться'. For instance, the author uses the following combinations: *to come/get/bring (smb) clear of...* Find the situations in the story and reproduce them.

Make up a situation of your own using those or other verbs as in the situation below.

Two robbers broke into a summer cottage through one of the windows in the absence of the lady owning the house who went shopping. To their great surprise, the lady's cat gave out a howl and sprang on the taller man using its claws and teeth expertly. When the man tore himself clear of the cat, he saw his own blood dripping to the floor, the cat swinging its body before the second attack and his fellow robber escaping through the window. The man rushed to the window too, followed by the victorious cat trying to get him at the heels. When the lady returned, she found the open window, the floor covered with blood and her pet washing itself clear of the robber's smell.

Task 6*. Translate the sentences. Use the active vocabulary.

1. Ты должен мобилизовать свою волю, а то совсем расклеишься (раскиснешь). 2. В глубине души он понимал, что они возлагают на него все свои надежды. 3. Остерегайся их компании, ты можешь попасть в беду, а я не смогу выручить тебя из нее. 4. Почему он не сопротивлялся? – Он невиновен. 5. Я так измучена (устала) после работы, я сейчас упаду в обморок. 6. Многие люди теряют присутствие духа (лишаются мужества) в затруднительном положении. 7. Нелепо думать, что слова этого мошенника могли показаться кому-то убедительными. 8. Он заглянул на чашечку чая и пообещал помочь. Но я полагаю, он теперь уже начал сомневаться (передумал). 9. Его будущее невозможно предвидеть (непредсказуемо). 10. Я разочаровалась в Вас. Вы оказались жадным и пронырливым (хитрым) человеком. 11. Если я не отделаюсь от запаха рыбы, я упаду в обморок. 12. К нашему разочарованию, он даже ни о чем не сожалел. 13. Не будь жадным. Это не драгоценное кольцо. 14. Он выглядел жалко и нелепо. 15. Он вызволил их из беды ценой собственной жизни. 16. Он собрал все свои силы и взобрался на холм. 17. Мошенник (обманщик) выглядел сбитым с толку. 18. Если вы зайдете на глубину, мы придем к вам на помощь. 19. Он пообещал обеспечить (снабдить) нас деликатесами бесплатно. 20. Мы были в отчаянии, так как мы попали в грозу.

Discussion of the story

Task 1. Answer the questions.

1. What made Hopper have second thoughts about the whole thing on Sunday?
2. Was Hopper a good swimmer?
3. Was Hopper's first distress signal false?
4. Why did Hopper begin struggling when Jimmy caught him?
5. What unpredictable things made it impossible for Jimmy to rescue Hopper quickly and expertly?
6. What helped Jimmy to regain his nerve when he was rescuing Hopper?
7. How did the people on the beach react to what had happened?
8. How did Jimmy react to Hopper's death?
9. Do you think it was the sea that betrayed Jimmy or Jimmy who betrayed the sea?
10. What new things did Jimmy come to know about Hopper after his death?
11. What was Hopper's real name? What difference did it make for Jimmy? for the reader?
12. Did the policeman feel sympathy for Jimmy at once?
13. What made Agnes speak to Jimmy on his way home?
14. How was Jimmy's new self different from the old one? When do you think Jimmy began to change and what changed him?

Task 2. Group the new vocabulary round the topics below and retell the story using it.

1. Hopper's state of mind on the appointed day.
2. Hopper sends out a distress signal.
3. Jimmy tries to rescue Hopper (a brief summary).
4. Jimmy comes to the shore with Hopper's body.
5. The people on the beach react to Hopper's death.
6. Agnes threatens Jimmy.

Task 3. Find proof in the text:

- 1) that money was Hopper's chief motive;
- 2) that Jimmy risked his own life too when rescuing Hopper;

- 3) that Agnes was not a typical girl of her age;
- 4) that a person having a low opinion of himself may be dangerous to other people.

Task 4. Confirm or disprove relying on your arguments:

1. Hopper was just a pathetic teenager with a wicked tongue, otherwise harmless.
2. Something was wrong in Agnes and Hopper's family.
3. When rescuing Hopper, Jimmy behaved heroically.
4. Hopper died a miserable pathetic death he deserved.
5. Jimmy felt a cheat only after Hopper's death.
6. The IOU is a mighty piece of evidence against Jimmy.
7. Agnes was a fighter for truth.
8. The bay at Red Rocks might give Jimmy a real chance of rescuing somebody.

Task 5. Give convincing arguments for or against the two opposite views:

1. Jimmy Townsend was Hopper's murderer.
2. Jimmy Townsend was innocent of Hopper's death.

Task 6. Give your ideas of the future developments at Red Rocks (Note the use of the Future-in-the-Past Indefinite).

1. Would Agnes tell the policeman all she knew?
2. Would the policeman bring the matter to court?
3. Would Jimmy have to go to prison?
4. Why would Jimmy have to leave Red Rocks anyway?
5. Would Red Rocks change its image?
6. What would become of the Development Group?

Task 7. Try and formulate the author's message. If you find it difficult, look through the ideas listed below and choose the one you think correct. Substantiate it.

1. Life is too unpredictable to be planned by fools or cheats.
2. Selfish or mean motives may produce bad or tragic effects.
3. It is immoral to risk or to manipulate somebody's life.
4. Heroic deeds are necessary to compensate somebody's carelessness, foolishness or irresponsibility.

Assignment 4

David Garnett

LETTING DOWN THE SIDE*

David Garnett (1892 – 1981) is a British novelist, short story writer, translator and publisher. He became famous after publishing his novel *Lady into Fox* in 1922, where as well as in his succeeding novel *A Man in the Zoo* (1924) he masterfully combines the fantastic and the realistic. Later Garnett turned to realism, to ‘the old tradition’. *The Golden Echo* (1954 – 1962) is one of the best modern literary autobiographies. The story *Letting Down the Side* was published in the collection *Purl and Plain and Other Stories* in 1973.

Mary was like a large dark moth. She had the same texture of softness, and when she looked at you with her large dark eyes they spoke of the night: of the night hours in the Rectory garden, of night-scented flowers, the starry heavens above and the nightjars in the New Forest close at hand. A rectory in the New Forest – that was where she was brought up. It was an English setting: but Mary and her brother Simon never seemed very English, and it was scarcely a surprise to discover that their mother had been a Persian.

The Reverend George Watson had spent ten years as a missionary in Qazvin**. He had married an educated Persian lady and after her death had returned to England with his two children.

Yes, Mary was like a large dark moth, and you might suspect that if she lifted her wings to fly she would uncover brilliant red or purple underwings in contrast to the ashy pair which she exhibited when at rest. A fantastic idea – but possibly it conveys her quality.

Her brother Simon was a big man, very dark and strong and silent, with the same big eyes as his sister. He had heavy black eyebrows also,

* Letting down the side – подводить свою сторону, свою команду и т. д. (спорт).

** Qazvin /kæz'vi:n/ – город на северо-западе Ирана, столица провинции.

like the faces painted on Persian tiles. He went to Oxford, studied engineering and played rugger*.

That was how Mary came to meet her husband, Nelson. He was at Oxford with Simon, played rugger and took Holy Orders**. He was almost a neighbour – a curate in a Bournemouth parish. He was invited to the Rectory, and a terrible afternoon followed when they played tennis on the lawn. Mary played badly and felt ashamed of herself. However, the young curate came back three days later, and she partnered him brilliantly in a game of croquet, winning easily against her brother and her father, although Nelson had the wrong temperament for that testing game. He was a big man, as big as Simon, but with sandy hair and blue eyes. His guiding rule in life was to play safe.

A few months later he proposed and was accepted. Mary was not in love, indeed not much attracted, but she found it impossible to refuse him and her indefinite murmurs were interpreted as consent. She was no longer herself – a lonely girl with only one intimate friend, and she in Dublin – but a part, a very small part, of we. ‘Now we can really get a move on. We’ll have a lot of planning to do.’

Nelson had asked Mary’s father’s consent before proposing and told them afterwards that Mary had agreed to their engagement. He asked his blessing, and while Mr. Watson was giving it, Mary found it impossible to say: ‘Wouldn’t it be better to wait a little?’ Nor could she say anything to Nelson, for he left at once on his motorbike. He was holding a meeting within half an hour.

That evening after supper Mary slipped out into the garden in great agitation. A voice was saying: ‘You have done for yourself, my girl. What do you know of this man?’

When I say ‘a voice’, I mean that the words came from a source outside herself; not that they could have been heard by anyone else. She had often heard these ‘voices’. On this occasion her reaction was to pull her jacket tighter and to reply, this time in spoken words: ‘Well, anyway, if

* rugger (разг.) = rugby – регби.

** to take Holy Orders – стать священником, принять духовный сан.

it hadn't been him it would have been somebody else'*. But it seemed odd to her that Nelson had never kissed her.

The stipend of a young curate is not sufficient on which to marry, and Mary looked forward to an engagement of several months, or even years. But Nelson did not believe in letting the grass grow under his feet and applied for the headmastership of a Mission School that was being started in New Guinea. There was a decent salary and it was a great opportunity. Owing to his excellent sports record at Oxford, he got the job. Mary had to agree to an early wedding, and after the ceremony they set off in one of the new liners to call at Port Moresby. They had a first-class stateroom. There was a Japanese captain and a Filipino crew.

Years later, when her second husband asked her about the first weeks of her honeymoon, she said: 'You know what it is like. It is all so strange for a girl,' and she lifted her heavily ringed hand and dropped it, unable to add another word.

But she did tell him later that she had been surprised by the contrast between Nelson's attitude to foreigners and that of her father. He had always shown a great interest in the ideas and culture, not only of the Persians, but also of the Turks, Armenians, Arabs and Georgians. She was accustomed to hearing discussions about them. But to Nelson all the races of the Middle East were 'wogs'**, Italians were 'eye-ties'*** and all of them but little superior to the Papuan head-hunting 'fuzzy-wuzzies'**** who were to be his pupils in New Guinea.

Nelson was on stiff formal terms with the fat little Japanese captain at whose table Mary and he dined. It was over this that their worst quarrel arose.

One day Mary, who had been drooping in the heat, was slow in dressing and had only just started making up her face when the bell for dinner rang. Nelson watched her with annoyance. He was not sure whether he altogether approved of mascara and eye-shade. Of course, lipstick was

* Well, anyway, if it hadn't been him it would have been somebody else. – Так или иначе, если не он – был бы кто-нибудь другой.

** wogs – презрительная кличка индусов и арабов.

*** eye-ties – презрительная кличка итальянцев.

**** fuzzy-wuzzies – презрительное прозвище чернокожих.

all right and a touch of powder. Suddenly he said: 'I can't bear to see you so slow. Didn't you hear the bell? We shall be late at that little brown man's table. You are letting the side down. I like to be on the dot.'

Then, as Mary did not reply, he exploded. 'You are being slow on purpose.' Mary said nothing and Nelson added, as though to himself but for Mary to hear: 'I ought to have known what it would be when the old man confessed that you had a touch of the tar brush'*.

It took Mary some time to realize that this was a reference to her mother.

Well, there was this honeymoon couple on board the small liner in the middle of the Indian Ocean. During the day they played a lot of games on deck, and Nelson won the table tennis tournament with ease. There was a fancy-dress dance, and Mary won the second prize: a box of chocolate creams.

* * *

It was night. The sea smooth as glass. Slowly Mary woke up, struggling to the surface through sleep made heavier by the heat. There was a lot of noise, and the ship was stopping. She realized that something unusual was going on. She lay there for some time in the dark. There had been no stateroom with a double bed, so she and Nelson occupied different bunks. She didn't want to disturb her husband. However, after a while she asked him what was happening. He did not reply and she was afraid of waking him. But the ship had stopped, and there was some shouting. She was awake and switched on her bedside light. Nelson was not in his bunk. She lay there with the light on, wondering. Then, as Nelson did not return, she rang the bell for the stewardess. Nobody answered it. The noises had stopped and the ship was silent. Mary got out of her bunk, put on a dressing-gown, put a scarf round her head, her feet into a pair of slippers, opened the door and looked out. There was nobody. She wandered down the corridor to the saloon. There was no one to be seen.

The salon on the lowest deck was always empty because the passenger preferred the decks above.

* a touch of the tar brush (презр.) – примесь чёрной крови (о нечистокровных белых).

Then, as Mary could not find anybody to ask in that dreary place what the matter was; she went slowly up the stairs on to the main deck. There was nobody. Nobody to be seen. The saloon on the main was not as depressing as the one below. However, the saloon was never so popular as the one above on the boat deck, which could serve as a ballroom and where a band played at rare intervals. Even when it wasn't playing it was cheering to see the drums with cymbals on top. They were there as usual. But there was no one there. It was a dead calm. The ship was floating idly on a motionless sea. When Mary stepped out on to the deck, she saw that the boats had gone. Mary thought: 'I've been left behind', and felt the resentment of a child when it is left out of a game. There had been boat drill the week before and she supposed this was a full-scale Task. But somebody must have been left in charge. Perhaps she could find the Captain, or the Purser. Neither of them was in their offices. There was no one on the bridge. She thought there would be a look-out man and made her way to the bows of the ship with difficulty, and the sea looked curiously close to where she was standing. She called out 'Hullo!' There was no answer. She felt cold in nothing but her nightdress and the light wrap, and with the shiver of cold she felt fear.

'It's too silly. I must not panic,' she said to herself. Then: 'Of course there's an explanation.'

She made her way back to the boat and then, for the first time, saw some lights, low down in the sea. 'They will be the boats,' she decided. She was shivering, but she was afraid of going back to her stateroom. For if the ship sank suddenly – and this was when she admitted that it might be something serious – if the ship sank, she would be trapped down below. If she stayed on deck she might survive for a little while. She could swim. Perhaps she could swim as far as the boats.

INSTRUCTIONS FOR THE USE OF LIFE JACKETS was framed inside a door opening on the deck. Mary read them carefully. She wondered whether she should put one on, or whether it would hamper her while swimming. Then she remembered the sharks. Two had been caught a couple of days earlier. They were big whitish grey things with teeth. She shivered again. It needed courage to go below, but the sharks settled it and

enabled her to go all the way down to her stateroom and dress. She had not the nerve to have a hot bath, for the desire to get back on to the boat deck was extreme. She was surprised to find her hands trembling so that she could not make up her face. Then she noticed that her husband's clothes were lying where he had left them when he had undressed. He had gone off in his pajamas leaving her asleep.

She looked inside his suitcase where he kept a secret bottle of whisky and swallowed a gulp of it neat. It made her feel much better: the whisky ran through her and restored a sense of her own body to her.

She forced herself to be slow and deliberate in her movements as she put the bottle back where she had found it, then took her bag and her book – the first volume of Prescott's History of Mexico – and went down the corridor and up the stairs. This time she went farther past the notice of NO ADMITTANCE up the companion-way on the bridge. All the lights were on and an engine was gently throbbing somewhere in the ship. There was impenetrable darkness all round. Then she caught sight again of lights low down on the surface of the sea. They must certainly be those of the ship's boats. She supposed that she must be in great danger: everyone on board wouldn't have pushed off unless there was a reason. The ship must be expected to sink, or blow up or something. But, apart from being deserted, it couldn't have been more ordinary and reassuring. Brass shone in the electric light. The wood was polished and full of dark reflection. The bridge itself was in apple-pie order. It seemed so funny.

Suddenly a voice said: 'He ran off and left you asleep.' The words annoyed her and she said aloud: 'Of course, there's a perfectly simple explanation.'

She was hungry. She waited for some time and then forced herself to go down to the bar where she explored. She was disgusted when she opened a cupboard and switched on a light to see cockroaches scampering over everything. However, she found some sealed packets of potato crisps which they could not have touched, a bottle of lager beer and in the icebox a salami sausage. Armed with these, she climbed up to the boat deck and casually looked over the side. It was dark but she could see little waves breaking on the steps of the companion ladder. They were much nearer to

her than she expected. The bottom steps went down deep into the water. This was disturbing, though she did not at once understand why it should be so.

She climbed up again to the bridge where she felt for some reason safer. If the ship sank, she would have some warning. She didn't want to be taken by surprise.

She opened Prescott's *The History of Mexico* at the page she had reached the day before. The first line read: 'He ran off and left you asleep...' What nonsense! She looked again and read the words, then put the book aside, cut herself some slices of salami and ate.

Suddenly she noticed the wireless set and switched it on. There was a crackle and an English voice announced: 'Those of our listeners who have missed this performance will be able to listen at 1.45 Central Pacific Time on Thursday next. This is Radio Papua. After the Time Signal, the News, Colin Buchanan reporting. The war in Vietnam: North Vietnamese forces are reported to be within three miles of Saigon. American bombers have made the heaviest raid of the war. We are interrupting our programme to announce that the Panamanian liner *Rose of Sharon* has been abandoned in mid-ocean having sprung a leak after a slight explosion in number two hold and is expected to founder. Captain Outamaro Susuki reports that all on board have taken to the boats and are lying at a safe distance from the liner expected to founder at any moment. The North German Lloyd liner *Blume von Sachsen* has diverted course to rescue and the *Itaharo Maru* is also racing to the scene. We now return to our normal programme...' Mary switched it off. Instantly a series of voices replaced that of the announcer. One reported: 'Expected to founder at any moment, expected to founder at any moment, expected to...' Another voice broke in: 'Your husband, Husband, husband, ran off leaving you asleep and jumped into one of the boats.' A reasonable voice argued: 'He might at least have woken you up and told you to follow.'

Mary said aloud: 'There must be an explanation.'

A voice said: 'Everyone for himself. That is the explanation.'

Mary said firmly: 'He must have thought it was boat drill. He didn't wake me up because he was considerate.'

The voice replied: 'Has he shown you much consideration since your marriage?' The reasonable voice asked: 'Why didn't he come back for you? He ran off and left you asleep. He was frightened. He panicked.'

Mary said: 'That's ridiculous. Nelson wouldn't do that. He's a rugger blue*. Rugger blues don't panic.'

A crescendo of voices all speaking at once, began ringing in Mary's head.

'Ran away and left you asleep.

Blow up at any moment.

Jump and swim for it.

Sharks. Sharks, sharks.

Put on a life jacket anybody. Do something.'

Mary said aloud: 'It's an accident that might have happened to anybody.' She shut her eyes. When she opened them it was to see the polished fittings of the bridge and to realize fully that she was alone. She made a great effort and said: 'There's nothing to be done about it anyway.' But the words did not comfort her. She could not bear it and began tearing at her hair. She went down to the boat deck and began to run in an effort to escape from voices. But they were now reduced to one whose message was more important than those reproaching Nelson for abandoning her. It shrieked at her without intermission: 'Expected to blow up, expected to blow up, expected to blow up...' But Mary put her fingers in her ears and ran and ran. Then, as she could not outdistance her pursuer, she began to scream so as to drown his message. The wind caught her hair and blew it in all directions.

She collapsed onto the deck.

The sky had become lighter, much lighter. Suddenly the sun rose. Mary got up from where she had been lying. The ship's boats were clustered only a few hundreds of yards away. Mary ran and then stopped running to look overboard. The surface of the sea did not seem any nearer. The wavelets still broke about a yard or so above the bottom steps of the ladder. She thought she could see men in the boats pointing at her. Then

* a rugger blue – спортсмен, отстаивавший честь своего университета в команде регбистов.

the boats were moving in on the ship. They were coming dangerously close.

Mary began shouting at the top of her voice: 'Keep away. Keep clear! The ship may founder at any moment. Keep away.'

Then, as they paid no attention, she waved her arms. The nearest boat came straight at the ship. A seaman with a boathook laid hold of the ladder.

Making a great effort to be calm, Mary began explaining that the ship was expected to founder at any moment. She had heard it on the wireless. She was still explaining when the first seaman came aboard. She tried again to tell him that they were in great danger. If the ship foundered, the boats might be sucked down. No one would listen.

Suddenly Nelson was beside her with his face contorted with rage.

'What on earth are you doing here? Why weren't you in your place in the boat? And for God's sake go below and stop making an exhibition of yourself.' For a moment it seemed that he was going to hit her. Then he snarled: 'Go along. Get below. You've done enough harm already. Letting the side down.' Mary walked down the stairs. No voices came to her aid while she waited for her husband's recriminations in the stateroom.

Active vocabulary

1) to bring up, to be well brought up; 2) to exhibit, exhibition, to make an exhibition of oneself; 3) to propose to smb; 4) to believe in smth; 5) superior (to); 6) on board a liner; 7) to be on formal terms with smb; 8) to disturb (vt); 9) to leave smb behind; 10) to survive (vi); 11) deliberate (a); 12) to be in great danger; 13) to disgust (vt); disgusting (a); 14) considerate (a); 15) ridiculous (a); 16) to reproach smb for smth; 17) at the top of one's voice.

Vocabulary tasks

Task 1. Give the corresponding nouns: *to bring up*, *to propose*, *superior*, *to disturb*, *to survive*, *deliberate*, *to disgust*, *considerate*, *to reproach*.

Task 2. Arrange into pairs of synonyms: *to exhibit, to leave behind, deliberate, to show publicly, unhurried, considerate, to desert, at the top of one's voice, thoughtful for others, very loudly.*

Task 3. Arrange into pairs of antonyms: *superior, to survive, deliberate, to be in danger, considerate, at the top of one's voice, to die, impulsively quick, in a low voice, inconsiderate, to be in safety, inferior.*

Task 4. Find in the text the synonyms of 'to shout', contextual synonyms including.

Task 5. Study the word combinations, choose one in each group of three to make up a sentence with:

to bring up *four children (a lovely girl, two younger brothers);*
to exhibit *a good taste (a collection of precious stones, one's knowledge);*

a deliberate *manner (way of thinking, speech);*

to leave behind *a dog (one's documents, a basket);*

a superior *smile (voice, race);*

to disturb *one's family (neighbor, headmaster);*

a disgusting *scene (role, smell);*

to believe in *doctors (fresh air, getting up with the sun);*

an inconsiderate *remark (visit, question);*

to reproach *a boy for his being noisy (careless, naughty);*

to shout *(give orders, speak on the phone) at the top of one's voice*

Task 6. Paraphrase using the new vocabulary:

1. I don't find long speeches useful. 2. There is something eccentric about her manner. 3. Tom asked the girl to marry him and was accepted. 4. Only one person remained alive after that street accident. 5. The girl found her new companion tactful and helpful. 6. That noise kept the family awake all through the night. 7. Please wash your face immediately, or people will look at you in disgust.

Task 7. Complete the sentences using the new vocabulary.

1. I regret to say that the boy is lazy and irresponsible; I don't think he ... very well. 2. Take off that ridiculous hat of yours, don't make ... 3. There was an accident on the train, but all the passengers ... 4. The doctor was unnerved because Jim's life ... 5. What a ... face, it can stop

the clock. 6. The child has all the makings of a family despot, and his father ... his wife ... it. 7. Most lecturers speak ... even at home. 8. Gilbert is always looking down at us, he is so...

Task 8.

a) Bring out the difference in meaning of the word '*deliberate*'.

1. The actress made a *deliberate* pause before the final phrase.
2. Granny was *deliberate* in speech more than usual. 3. Andy walked with *deliberate* steps: the hill was steeper than he had thought. 4. Now that the plane was in danger, only the pilot's *deliberate* actions could save it.

b) Reproduce the situation in the story where '*deliberate*' is used by the author.

Task 9. Answer the questions.

1. Do you believe in going to bed early? 2. What do men say when they propose? 3. Are you afraid of making an exhibition of yourself? 4. When people are in danger, some of them act deliberately, others impulsively. What about you? 5. Do you believe in superior or inferior races? 6. What animals do you find disgusting, if any?

Task 10*. Translate the sentences. Use the active vocabulary.

1. Вы будете в большей опасности на борту лайнера. 2. Он считает себя выше нас и держится с нами официально. 3. Он очень хорошо воспитан, всегда внимателен и никогда не говорит громким голосом. 4. Он теперь жалеет, что сделал ей предложение. 5. Я считаю очень полезным читать перед сном. 6. Она выставила себя на посмешище, и он упрекнул ее за это. 7. Он тщательно подбирал слова (он был осторожен, нетороплив в речи). 8. Он оставил ее. – Как отвратительно! 9. Спасите нас (придите к нам на помощь) или мы не выживем. 10. В глубине души она понимает, что он обеспечивает ее.

Discussion of the story

Task 1. Group the new vocabulary round the topics and discuss them.

- a) Mary's family and upbringing;
- b) Mary's engagement;
- c) The episode with Mary's making up;

- d) Mary is left behind on board the liner;
- e) Mary comes to know that she is in great danger;
- f) The boats return.

Task 2. Find proof in the text:

- 1) that Mary was passive by nature;
- 2) that Nelson treated Mary badly from the very start;
- 3) that Nelson believed in superior and inferior races;
- 4) that the young couple quarreled more than once before than make-up episode;
- 5) that Nelson left behind his wife deliberately;
- 6) that Nelson kept silent about it in the boat;
- 7) that Nelson had to lie in public to save his image;
- 8) that Mary's second husband loved her.

Task 3. State whose utterances these are, under what circumstances they were made and how they characterize the speakers.

- 1. 'We shall be late at that little brown man's table'.
- 2. 'Keep away. Keep clear! The ship may founder at any moment'.
- 3. 'You've done enough harm already. Letting down the side'.

Task 4. Answer the questions.

- 1. Why was Mary compared to a moth?
- 2. What was Nelson's guiding principle in life?
- 3. Why did Nelson marry Mary?
- 4. Was Nelson much of a clergyman?
- 5. What did Mary feel when Nelson mentioned '*a touch of the tar brush?*' What is the importance of this episode?
- 6. What is the true meaning of Nelson's behavior in great danger?
- 7. How many crises did Mary have to live through when she was alone on board the liner?
- 8. Why did the boats return?
- 9. Did Mary believe in the principle '*Everyone for himself?*'

Task 5. Give a character sketch of: a) Mary; b) Nelson.

Task 6. Imagine: a) their talk in the stateroom after the return of the boats; b) their immediate future.

Task 7. Give your interpretation of the title of the story.

Assignment 5

James Joyce

EVELINE

James Joyce (1882 – 1941) is an Irish writer who exerted a tremendous influence on modern European literature. His world fame rests on his novel *Ulysses* (1922) which placed its author at the head of modernism. However, Joyce started his literary career as a realist writer. *Eveline* is a story from the collection *The Dubliners*, his earliest work (written in 1905 and published in 1914). The stories of the collection, all set in Dublin, from a succession reflecting the stages of human life: childhood, youth, maturity, old age. *Eveline* opens the sequence devoted to youth.

She sat at the window watching the evening invade the avenue. Her head was leaned against the window curtains, and in her nostrils was the odour of dusty cretonne. She was tired.

Few people passed. The man out of the last house passed on his way home; she heard his footsteps clacking along the concrete pavement and afterwards crunching on the cinder path before the new red houses. One time there used to be a field there in which they used to play every evening with other people's children. Then a man from Belfast bought the field and built houses in it – not like their little brown houses, but bright brick houses with shining roofs. The children of the avenue used to play together in that field – the Devines, the Waters, the Dunns, little Keogh* the cripple, she and her brothers and sisters. Ernest, however, never played: he was too grown up. Her father used often to hunt them in out of the field with his blackthorn stick; but usually little Keogh used to keep nix** and call out when he saw her father coming. Still they seemed to have been rather happy then. Her father was not so bad then; and besides, her mother was alive. That was a long time ago; she and her brothers and sisters were all

* Keogh /kjoʊ/ – ирландская фамилия.

** to keep nix – to stay alert, to be on the lookout – не участвовать в игре, а стоять «на шухере».

grown up; her mother was dead. Tizzie Dunn was dead too, and the Waters had gone back to England. Everything changes. Now she was going to go away like the others, to leave her home.

Home! She looked round the room, reviewing all its familiar objects which she had dusted once a week for so many years, wondering where on earth all the dust came from. Perhaps she would never see again those familiar objects from which she had never dreamed of being divided. And yet during all those years she had never found out the name of the priest whose yellowing photograph hung on the wall above the broken harmonium. He had been a school friend of her father. Whenever he showed the photograph to a visitor her father used to pass it with a casual word:

‘He is in Melbourne now.’

She had consented to go away, to leave her home. Was that wise? She tried to weigh each side of the question. In her home anyway she had shelter and food; she had those whom she had known all her life about her. Of course she had to work hard, both in the house and at business. What would they say of her in the Stores when they found out that she had run away with a fellow? Say she was a fool, perhaps; and her place would be filled up by advertisement. Miss Gavan would be glad. She had always had an edge on her, especially whenever there were people listening.

‘Miss Hill, don’t you see these ladies are waiting?’

‘Look lively, Miss Hill, please.’

She would not cry many tears as leaving the Stores.

But in her new home, in a distant unknown country, it would not be like that. Then she would be married – she, Eveline. People would treat her with respect then. She would not be treated as her mother had been. Even now, though she was over nineteen, she sometimes felt herself in danger of her father’s violence. She knew it was that what frightened her. When they were growing up he had never gone for her, like he used to go for Harry and Ernest, because she was a girl; but latterly he had begun to threaten her and say what he would do to her only for her dead mother’s sake. And now she had nobody to protect her. Ernest was dead and Harry, who was in the church decorating business, was nearly always down somewhere in the

country. Besides, the invariable squabble for money on Saturday nights had begun to weary her unspeakably. She always gave her entire wages – seven shillings – and Harry always sent up what he could, but the trouble was to get any money from her father. He said she used to squander the money, that she had no head, that he wasn't going to give her his hard-earned money to throw about the streets, and much more, for he was usually fairly bad on Saturday night. In the end he would give her the money and ask her had she any intention of buying Sunday's dinner. Then she had to rush out as quickly as she could and do her marketing, holding her black leather purse tightly in her hand as she elbowed her way through the crowds and returning home late under her load of provisions.

She had hard work to keep the house together and to see that the two young children who had been left to her charge went to school regularly and got their meals regularly. It was hard work – a hard life – but now that she was about to leave it she did not find it a wholly undesirable life.

She was about to explore another life with Frank. Frank was very kind, manly, open-hearted. She was to go away with him by the night-boat to be his wife and to live with him in Buenos Ayres, where he had a home waiting for her. How well she remembered the first time she had seen him; he was lodging in a house on the main road where she used to visit. It seemed a few weeks ago. He was standing at the gate, his peaked cap pushed back on his head and his hair tumbled forward over a face of bronze. Then they had come to know each other. He used to meet her outside the Stores every evening and see her home. He took her to see *The Bohemian Girl** and she felt elated as she sat in the theatre with him. He was awfully fond of music and sang a little. People knew that they were courting, and, when he sang about the lass that loves a sailor**, she always felt pleasantly confused. First off all it had been an excitement for her to have a fellow and then she had begun to like him. He had tales of distant countries. He told her the names of the ships he had been on and the names of the different services. He had sailed through the Straits of Magellan and

* 'The Bohemian Girl' – «Цыганочка», известная опера ирландского композитора Майкла Уильяма Балфа (1808 – 1870).

** the lass that loves a sailor – слова из песни «Подружка моряка» английского композитора Чарльза Дибдина (1745 – 1814).

he told her stories of the terrible Patagonians*. He had fallen on his feet in Buenos Ayres, he said, and had come over to his country just for a holiday. Of course, her father had found out the affair and had forbidden her to have anything to say to him.

‘I know these sailor chaps,’ he said.

One day he had quarrelled with Frank, and after that she had to meet her lover secretly.

The evening deepened in the avenue. The white of two letters in her lap grew indistinct. One was to Harry; the other was to her father. Ernest had been her favourite, but she liked Harry too. Her father was becoming old lately, she noticed; he would miss her. Sometimes he could be very nice. Not long before, when she had been ill for a day, he had read her out a ghost story and made toast for her at the fire. Another day, when their mother was alive, they had all gone for a picnic. She remembered her father putting on her mother’s bonnet to make the children laugh.

Her time was running out, but she continued to sit by the window, leaning her head against the window curtain, inhaling the odour of dusty cretonne. Down far in the avenue she could hear a street organ playing. She knew the air. Strange that it should come that very night to remind her of the promise to her mother, her promise to keep the home together as long as she could. She remembered the last night of her mother’s illness; she was again in the close, dark room at the other side of the hall and outside she heard a melancholy air of Italy. The organ-player had been ordered to go away and given sixpence. She remembered her father coming back into the sick-room saying:

‘Damned Italians! Coming over here!’

The pitiful vision of her mother’s life laid its spell on the very quick of her being – that life of commonplace sacrifices closing in final craziness.

She stood up in a sudden impulse of terror. Escape! She must escape! Frank would save her. He would give her life, perhaps love, too. But she wanted to live. Why should she be unhappy? She had a right to happiness. Frank would take her in his arms, fold her in his arms. He would save her.

* the Patagonians – общее название индейцев трех языковых групп, живших на юге Аргентины и истребленных в XIX веке.

She stood among the crowd in the station at the North Wall. He held her hand and she knew that he was speaking to her, saying something about the passage over and over again. The station was full of soldiers with brown baggages. Through the wide doors she caught a glimpse of the black mass of the boat, lying in beside the quay wall, with illumined portholes. She answered nothing. She felt her cheek pale and cold and, out of maze of distress, she prayed to God to direct her, to show her what was her duty. The boat blew a long mournful whistle into the mist. If she went, tomorrow she would be on the sea with Frank, steaming towards Buenos Ayres. Their passage had been booked. Could she still draw back after all he had done for her? Her distress awoke a nausea in her body and she kept moving her lips in silent fervent prayer.

A bell clanged upon her heart. She felt him seize her hand:

‘Come!’

All the seas of the world tumbled about her heart. He was drawing her into them: he would drown her. She gripped with both hands at the iron railing.

‘Come!’

No! No! No! It was impossible. Her hands clutched the iron in frenzy. Amid the seas she sent a cry of anguish.

‘Eveline! Evvy!’

He rushed beyond the barrier and called to her to follow. He was shouted at to go on, but he still called to her. She set her white face to him, passive, like a helpless animal. Her eyes gave him no sign of love or farewell or recognition.

Active vocabulary

1) to consent (vi), consent (n); 2) wise (a), wisdom (n); 3) to weigh each side of the question; 4) manly (a), manliness (n); 5) elated (a), to elate (vi), elation (n); 6) to treat smb (with respect, badly, etc)); 7) to remind smb of smth; 8) to keep the house/the home together; 9) to leave one to smb’s charge; 10) undesirable (a); 11) to fall on one’s feet; 12) to forbid (vt); 13) distress (n), to distress (vt), distressed (a); 14) recognition (n), to recognize (vt).

Vocabulary tasks

Task 1. Arrange the words into pairs of antonyms: *wise, unmanly, elated, to allow, to forbid, distressed, to consent, desirable, unwise, to refuse, manly, undesirable*.

Task 2. Copy out of the story the synonyms of 'to take hold of'.

Task 3. Give the three forms of the verbs: *to forbid, to consent, to remind, to weigh, to treat, to fall, to distress, to recognize*.

Task 4. Study the word combinations and translate them into Russian:

to treat children *well (badly, carelessly, with loving kindness)*;

to forbid *tobacco (ice-cream in winter, smoked meat and fish)*;

an undesirable *visitor (result, effect)*;

to remind the soldier of his *duty (hometown, family)*;

a wise *man (action, decision)*;

a manly *sailor (face, behavior)*.

Task 5. Study the use of the new vocabulary in the sentences below, translate them. Make up sentences of your own using the underlined parts.

1. At the age of 5 Stella was left to her grandparents' charge.
2. The doctor forbade the girl to read in bed. 3. I don't know why but this sort of people always fall on their feet. 4. It is Granny who keeps the home together, we feel it now that she is ill. 5. – Have you come to any decision? – Not yet. – It is high time to weigh each side of the question and say 'yes' or 'no'. 6. The sight of the beautiful building in flames distressed the people in the street. 7. I could hardly recognize that village after seven years. 8. Treat people as you wish them to treat you. 9. This street reminds me of my childhood.

Task 6. Answer the questions.

1. Why do doctors forbid tobacco? 2. Why do they say that people are wiser in the morning? 3. Who keeps the home together in your family? 4. What can an old photo remind you of? 5. What do you do when somebody visits you at a most undesirable moment?

Task 7. Translate the sentences. Use the active vocabulary.

1. Я думаю, разумнее рассмотреть этот вопрос со всех сторон.
2. Он относится к ней очень плохо. Неудивительно, что она страдает.

3. Надеюсь, она согласилась принять участие в соревнованиях. – Нет, она даже своему брату запретила об этом упоминать. 4. Я едва могу узнать его. Он стал таким мужественным. 5. Эмма оставила своего ребенка на попечении своей тети, и та воспитала его. 6. Почему ты такой угрюмый? – Твои слова напомнили мне о том дне, когда я выставил себя на посмешище. 7. Нежелательно сейчас беспокоить его. 8. Он очень хитрый, всегда выходит сухим из воды. 9. Кто ведет хозяйство? – Я, а мой муж обеспечивает меня и детей. 10. Ваше приподнятое настроение сбило его с толку.

Discussion of the story

Task 1. Answer the questions.

1. What do you know about the author of the story?
2. Where is the story set? What words convey the local colour?
3. What were Eveline's family name, age and social status?
4. How large was the girl's family?
5. What sort of life did Eveline lead at home?
6. What made her plan running away with Frank?
7. Did Eveline trust Frank?
8. Whom did she address her farewell letters? Why?

Task 2. Enlarge on:

1. One time there used to be a field there
2. Home! She looked round the room...
3. Of course, she had to work hard, both in the house and at business.
4. She sometimes felt herself in danger of her father's violence.
5. She was about to explore another life, with Frank.
6. Down far in the avenue she could hear a street organ playing.
7. She stood among the crowd in the station at the North Wall.

Task 3. State why this happened:

1. She sat at the window... She was tired.
2. Her father used often to hunt them in out of the field..
3. ...the Waters had gone back to England. ...'He (the priest) is in the Melbourne now'. Now she was going... like the others to leave her home.

4. She had consented to go away.
5. ...latterly he (her father) began to threaten her.
6. He (Frank) had fallen on his feet in Buenos Aires.
7. One day he (her father) had quarrelled with Frank...
8. ... She stood up in a sudden impulse of terror. Escape! She must escape!
9. All the seas of the world tumbled about her heart.
10. Her eyes gave him (Frank) no sign of love or farewell or recognition.

Task 4. Find proof in the text that:

- 1) the other shop-assistants might know that Frank was courting Eveline;
- 2) as the moment of escape approached, Eveline saw her father and her home life in a new light;
- 3) Eveline's reliance on God was strong.

Task 5. Dwell on what made Eveline draw back on her consent to run away with Frank. Choose your arguments from those listed below or add your own if necessary: *moral purity, God's answer to her fervent prayer, lack of energy, fear of her future, love of her own country, love for her family, a sense of duty, no love for Frank, Frank's unreliability, fear of the sea voyage.*

Task 6. Imagine:

1. Eveline's state of mind: a) when she came back home that night;
b) when she resumed her work at the Stores.
2. Eveline's future in in Buenos Aires if Frank was not honest.
3. Eveline's future at home.

Task 7. Make up a dialogue the following situation:

A shop-girl working together with Eveline at the Stores catches up with her on the way home after work and asks her about Frank. Quite unexpectedly for herself, Eveline has a heart-to-heart talk with the girl.

Task 8. Give your opinion of:

- 1) Eveline; 2) Frank; 3) Eveline's final decision; 4) the story.

Assignment 6

Rudyard Kipling

WEE WILLIE WINKIE*

Rudyard Kipling (1865 – 1936), a British journalist, poet, novelist and short-story writer, was born in Bombay, India. At the age of 23 he came to Britain where within a few months he won recognition as a man of great talent after publishing several collections of short stories (*Plain Tales from the Hills* and some others). But real fame was brought to him by his novel *The Light that Failed* (1890 – 91) and by *The Barrack Room Ballads* (1892), although the latter book was met with considerable criticism for its outspoken imperialist ideology. R. Kipling wrote books for youngsters and adults (*Just So Stories*, *Captains Courageous*, *the Jungle Books*, *Kim* and others). The story *Wee Willie Winkie* gave its title to one of Kipling's earliest collections of short stories set in India (1888).

‘An officer and a gentleman.’

His full name was Percival William Williams, but he picked up the other name in a nursery-book. His father was the Colonel of the 195th, and as soon as Wee Willie Winkie was old enough to understand what Military Discipline meant, Colonel Williams put him under it. There was way of managing the child. When he was good for a week, he got a good-conduct badge; and when he was bad, he was deprived of it. Generally, he was bad, for India offers so many chances to little six-year-olds of going wrong.

Children dislike familiarity from strangers, and Wee Willie Winkie was a very particular child. Once he accepted an acquaintance, he was

* Wee Willie Winkie – детское стихотворение, написанное Уильямом Миллером (1810 – 1872):

Wee Willie Winkie runs through the town,
Upstairs and downstairs in his night-gown,
Rapping at the window, crying through the lock,
‘Are the children all in bed, for now it’s eight o’clock?’

graciously pleased to thaw*. He accepted Brandis, a subaltern of the 195th, Wee Winkie entered on sight. Brandis was having tea at the Colonel's strong in the possession of a good-conduct badge won for not chasing the hens round the compound. He looked at Brandis for at least ten minutes, and then voiced his opinion.

'I like you,' said he slowly, getting off his chair and coming over to Brandis. 'I like you. I shall call you Coppy, because of your hair. Do you mind being called Coppy? It is because of your hair, you know.'

Here was one of the most embarrassing of Wee Willie Winkie's peculiarities. He would look at a stranger for some time, and then, without warning or explanation, would give him a name. And the name stuck. So Brandis was christened 'Coppy', and rose, therefore, in the estimation of the regiment.

If Wee Willie Winkie took an interest in anyone, the fortunate man was envied alike by the officers and the soldiers. 'The Colonel's son' was idolized on his own merits entirely**. Yet Wee Willie Winkie was not very lovely. His face was permanently freckled, and his legs were permanently scratched, and in spite of his mother's almost tearful protests he had insisted upon having his long yellow locks cut short in the military fashion.

Three weeks after his acquaintance with Lieutenant Brandis – henceforward to be called 'Coppy' – Wee Willie Winkie was to see strange things and far beyond his comprehension.

Coppy returned his liking with interest***. Coppy had let him wear for five minutes his own big sword – just as tall as Wee Willie Winkie. Coppy had promised him a terrier puppy; and Coppy had permitted him to watch the operation of shaving. Moreover – Coppy had said that even he, Wee Willie Winkie, would have a box of shiny knives and a silver soap-box. Decidedly, there was no one except his father, half so wise, strong, au

* Once he accepted an acquaintance, he was graciously pleased to thaw. – И уж если ему нравился новый знакомый, благосклонность к нему была самой сердечной.

** The Colonel's son' was idolized on his own merits entirely. – «Полковничий сын» был кумиром благодаря только его собственным достоинствам.

*** Coppy returned his liking with interest. – Коппи отвечал ему взаимностью с лихвой.

brave as Coppy with the Afghan and Egyptian medals* on his breast. Why, then, should Coppy be guilty of the weakness of kissing – vehemently kissing a ‘big girl’, Miss Allardyce? In the course of a morning idle Wee Willie Winkie had seen Coppy so doing, and, like the gentleman he was, had promptly turned round and cantered back to his groom, lest the groom should also see**.

Under ordinary circumstances he would have spoken to his father, but he felt instinctively that this was a matter on which Coppy ought first to be consulted.

‘Coppy’, shouted Wee Willie Winkie, stopping outside that subaltern’s bungalow early one morning – ‘I want to see you, Coppy!’

‘Come in, young ‘un,’ returned Coppy, who was at early breakfast in the midst of his dogs. ‘What mischief have you been getting into now?’

‘I’ve been doing nothing bad,’ said the boy, curling himself into a long chair. He buried his freckled nose in a teacup and asked: – ‘I say, Coppy, is it pwoper to kiss big girls?’

‘By Jove! You’re beginning early. Who do you want to kiss?’

‘No one. My muvver’s always kissing me if I don’t stop her. If it isn’t pwoper, how was you kissing Major Allardyce’s big girl last morning, by ve canal?’

Coppy’s brow wrinkled. He and Miss Allardyce had managed to keep their engagement secret for a fortnight. There were urgent and imperative reasons why Major Allardyce should not know how matters stood for at least another month, and this small boy had discovered a great deal too much.

‘I saw you,’ said Wee Willie Winkie calmly. ‘But the groom didn’t see. I said, ‘Hut jao’***.

‘Oh, you had that much sense’, groaned poor Coppy, half amused and half angry. ‘And how many people may you have told about it?’

* ... the Afghan and Egyptian medals – медали, полученные за участие в англо-афганской войне (1878 – 1879) и военной акции в Египте (1882).

** ... lest the groom should also see – ...чтобы конюх не увидел (этой сцены).

*** ‘Hut jao’ (хинди, груб.). – Проваливай отсюда. (Возможно, ребенок не всегда понимает смысловые оттенки произносимых им фраз на чужом языке).

‘Only me myself. You didn’t tell when I twied to wide ve buffalo; and I fought you wouldn’t like.’

‘Winkie,’ said Coppy enthusiastically, shaking the small hand, ‘you’re the best of good fellows, look here, you can’t understand all these things. One of these days – hang it. How can I make you see it! – I’m going to marry Miss Allardyce, and she’ll be Mrs. Coppy, as you say. If your mind is so scandalized at the idea of kissing big girls, go and tell your father.’

‘What will happen?’ said Wee Willie Winkie, who firmly believed that his father was almighty.

‘I shall get into trouble,’ said Coppy.

‘Ven I won’t,’ said Wee Willie Winkie. ‘But my faver says it’s unmanly to be always kissing, and I didn’t fink you’d do vat, Coppy’

‘I’m not always kissing, old chap. It’s only now and then, and when you’re bigger you’ll do it too. Your father meant it’s not good for little boys.’

‘Ah!’ said Wee Willie Winkie, now fully enlightened.

There was a long pause, broken by Wee Willie Winkie.

‘Are you fond of vis big girl, Coppy?’

‘Awfully!’ said Coppy.

‘Fonder van you are of me?’

‘It’s in a different way,’ said Coppy. ‘You see, one of these days Miss Allardyce will belong to me, but you’ll grow up and command the Regiment and – all sorts of things. It’s quite different, you see.’

‘Very well,’ said Wee Willie Winkie, rising. ‘If you’re fond of ve big girl, I won’t tell any one. I must go now.’

Coppy rose and escorted his small guest to the door, adding: – ‘You’re the best of little fellows, Winkie. I tell you what. In thirty days from now you can tell if you like – tell any one you like.’

Thus the secret of the Brandis-Allardyce engagement was dependent on a little child’s word. Coppy, who knew Wee Willie Winkie’s idea of truth, was at ease, for he felt that he would not break promises.

The idea that he had shared a great secret in common with Coppy kept Wee Willie Winkie unusually well-behaved for three weeks. Then the

Old Adam* broke out, and he made what he called a ‘camp fire’ at the bottom of the garden. How could he have foreseen that the flying sparks would have lighted the Colonel’s little hayrick and consumed a week’s store for the horses? Sudden and swift was the punishment- deprivation of the good-conduct badge and, most sorrowful of all, two days’ confinement of barracks – the house and veranda.

He took the sentence like the man he wanted to be, drew himself up, saluted, and, once clear of the room ran to weep bitterly in his nursery – sole the culprit.

‘I’m under awwest,’ said Wee Willie Winkie mournfully,’ ‘and I didn’t ought to speak to you’. Coppy came in the afternoon and tried to console the culprit.

Very early the next morning he climbed on to the roof of the house – that was not forbidden – and saw Miss Allardyce going for a ride.

‘Where are you going?’ cried Wee Willie Winkie.

‘Across the river,’ she answered, and trotted forward.

Now the cantonment in which the 195th lay was bounded on the north by a river – dry in the winter. From his earliest years, Wee Willie Winkie had been forbidden to go across the river, and had noted that even Coppy – the almost almighty Coppy – had never set foot beyond it. Wee Willie Winkie had once been read to, out of a big blue book, the history of the Princess and the Goblins** – a most wonderful tale of a land where the Goblins were always warring with the children of men until they were defeated by one Curdie. Ever since that date it seemed to him that the be black and purple hills across the river were inhabited by Goblins and truth, everyone had said that there lived the Bad Men. Even in his own house the lower halves of the windows were covered with green paper on account of the Bad Men who might fire into peaceful drawing-rooms and comfortable bed-rooms. Certainly, beyond the river, which was the end of all the earth, lived the Bad Men. And here was Major Allardyce’s big girl, Coppy’s property, preparing to ride into their borders! What would Coppy say if

* The Old Adam – грешная натура прародителя Адама.

** The history of the Princess and the Goblins – сказка шотландского автора Джорджа Макдональда «Принцесса и гоблины» (1872).

anything happened to her? If the Goblins ran off with her as they did with Curdie's Princess? She must be turned back.

The house was still. Wee Willie Winkie reflected for a moment on the very terrible anger of his father; and then – broke his arrest! It was a crime unspeakable. The low sun threw his shadow, very large and very black, on the trim garden-paths, as he went down to the stables and ordered his pony. It seemed to him in the hush of the dawn that all the big world stood still and looked at Wee Willie Winkie guilty of mutiny. The groom handed him his pony, and, since the one great sin made all others less important, Wee Willie Winkie said that he was going to ride over to Coppy Sahib, and went out at a footpace, stepping on the soft flower-borders.

He turned into the road, leaned forward, and rode as fast as the pony could put foot to the ground in the direction of the river.

But the liveliest of ponies can do little against the long canter of a Waler*. Miss Allardyce was far ahead, had passed the Police-post, when all the guards were asleep, and her horse was scattering the pebbles of the river-bed as Wee Willie Winkie left the cantonment and British India behind him. Wee Willie Winkie could just see Miss Allardyce a black speck, flickering across the stony plain. The reason for her wandering was simple enough. Coppy, in a tone of authority, had told her over night that she must not ride out by the river. And she had gone to prove her own spirit and teach Coppy a lesson.

Almost at the foot of the inhospitable hills, Wee Willie Winkie saw the Waler blinded and come down heavily. Miss Allardyce struggled clear, but her ankle had been severely twisted, and she could not stand. Having thus demonstrated her spirit, she burst into tears, and was surprised by the white, wide-eyed child on a nearly spent pony.

‘Are you badly, badly hurt?’ shouted Wee Willie Winkie, as soon as he was within hearing.

‘I don't know,’ said Miss Allardyce. ‘Good gracious, child, what are you doing here?’

‘You said you was going across ve wiver,’ panted Wee Willie Winkie, throwing himself off the pony. And nobody – not even Coppy –

* a Waler – уэльсец (порода лошадей).

must go across ve wiver, and I came after you ever so hard, but you wouldn't stop, and now you've hurted yourself, and Coppy will be angry with me, and – I've broken my awwest! I've broken my awwest!'

The future Colonel of the 195th sat down and sobbed. In spite of the pain in her ankle the girl was moved.

'Have you ridden all the way from the cantonments, little man? What for?'

'You belonged to Coppy. Coppy told me so!' cried Wee Willie Winkie 'I saw him kissing you, and he said he was fonder of you van me. And so I came. You must get up and come back, Vis is a bad place, and I've bwoke my awwest.'

'I can't move, Winkie,' said Miss Allardyce, with a groan. 'I've hurt my foot. What shall I do?'

She showed a readiness to weep afresh, which steadied Wee Willie Winkie, who had been brought up to believe that tears were the depth of unmanliness. Still, when one is great a sinner as Wee Willie Winkie, even a man may be permitted to break down.

'Winkie,' said Miss Allardyce, 'when you've rested a little, ride back unmanliness. Still, when one is as great a sinner as Wee Willie Winkie, and tell them to send out something to carry me back in. It hurts fearfully.'

The child sat still for a little time and Miss Allardyce closed her eyes; the pain was nearly making her faint. She was roused by Wee Willie Winkie setting the pony with his whip. The little animal headed towards the cantonments.

'Oh, Winkie! What are you doing?'

'Hush!' said Wee Willie Winkie, 'Vere's a man coming – one of ve Bad Men. I must stay with you. My faver says a man must always look after a girl. Jack will go home, and then they'll come and look for us, Vat's why I let him go.'

Not one man, but two or three had appeared from behind the rocks of the hills, and the heart of Wee Winkie sank within him, for just in in this manner the Goblins used to steal out. Thus had they played in Curdie's garden, he had seen the picture, and thus had they frightened the Princess's nurse. He heard them talking to each other, and recognized with joy the

bastard Pushto* that he had picked up from one of his father's grooms lately dismissed. People who spoke that tongue could not be the Bad Men. They were only natives after all.

They came up to the bowlders on which Miss Allardyce's horse be blundered.

Then rose from the rock Wee Willie Winkie, child of the Dominant Race, aged six and three-quarters, and said briefly and emphatically 'Jao?' The pony had crossed the river-bed.

The men laughed. He asked them what they wanted and why they did not go away. Other men with most evil faces and guns crept out of the shadows of the hills, till, soon, Wee Willie Winkie was face to face with an audience of about twenty men. Miss Allardyce screamed.

'Who are you?' said one of the men.

'I am the Colonel Sahib's son, and my order is that you go at once. You black men are frightening the Miss Sahib. One of you must run into cantonments and take the news that the Miss Sahib has hurt herself, and that the Colonel's son is here with her.'

'Put our feet into the trap?' was the laughing reply. 'Hear this boy's speech!'

'Say that I sent you – I, the Colonel's son. They will give you money.'

'What is the use of this talk? Take up the child and the girl, and we can at least ask for the ransom,' said a voice in the background.

These were the Bad Men – worse than Goblins – and it needed all Wee Willie Winkie's training to prevent him from bursting into tears. But he felt that to cry before a native would be worse than any mutiny. Moreover, he, as future Colonel of the 195th, had that grim regiment at his back.

'Are you going to carry us away?' said Wee Willie Winkie, very pale and uncomfortable.

'Yes, my little Sahib Behadur,' said the tallest of the men, 'and eat you afterwards.'

'That is child's talk,' said Wee Willie Winkle. 'Men do not eat men.'

* the bastard Pushto – ломаный язык пушту.

A yell of laughter interrupted him, but he went on firmly, – ‘And if you do carry us away, I tell you that all my regiment will come up in a day and kill you all without leaving one. Who will take my message to the Colonel Sahib?’

Another man joined the conference, crying: ‘O foolish men! What this babe says is true. He is the heart’s heart of those white troops. For the sake of peace let them go both, for if he be taken, the regiment will break loose and gut the valley. Our villages are in the valley, and we shall not escape. That regiment are devils. If we touch this child they will fire and rape and plunder for a month, till nothing remains. Better to send a man back to take the message and get a reward. I say that this child is their God, and that they will spare none of us, nor our women, if we harm him.’

It was Din Mahommed, the dismissed groom of the Colonel, who made the speech, and an angry and heated discussion followed. Wee Willie Winkie, standing over Miss Allardyce, waited the result. Surely his ‘wegiment,’ his own ‘wegiment,’ would not desert him if they knew of his distress.

The riderless pony brought the news to the 195th, though there had been panic in the Colonel’s household for an hour before. The little beast came in through the parade-ground in front of the main barracks, where the men were settling down to play cards till the afternoon. Devlin, the Color Sergeant* of E Company, glanced at the empty saddle and shouted: ‘Up, ye beggars! Something happened to the Colonel’s son! Let’s go over the river.’

The cantonment became alive with the men of the 195th hunting for Wee Willie Winkie, and the Colonel finally overtook E Company struggling in the pebbles of the river-bed.

Up the hill under which Wee Willie Winkie’s Bad Men were discussing the wisdom of carrying off the child and the girl, a lookout fired two shots.

‘What have I said?’ shouted Din Mahommed. ‘There is the warning! They are coming across the plain! Get away! Let us not be seen with the boy!’

* the Colour Sergeant – сержант-знаменосец.

The men waited for a moment, and then, as another shot was fired, withdrew into the hills, silently as they had appeared.

‘The wegiment is coming,’ said Wee Willie Winkie confidently to Miss Allardyce, ‘and it’s all wight. Don’t cwy!’

He needed the advice himself, for ten minutes later, when his father came up, he was weeping bitterly with his head in Miss Allardyce’s lap.

And the men of the 195th carried him home with shouts and rejoicings; and Coppy, who had ridden a horse into a lather, met him, and, to his intense disgust, kissed him openly in the presence of the men.

But there was balm for his dignity. His father assured him that not only would the breaking of arrest be pardoned, but that the good-conduct badge would be restored as soon as his mother could sew it on his sleeve. Miss Allardyce had told the Colonel a story that made him proud of his son.

‘She belonged to you, Coppy,’ said Wee Willie Winkie, indicating Miss Allardyce with a forefinger. I knew she didn’t ought to go acwoss the wiver, and I knew ve wegiment would come to me if I sent Jack home.’

‘You’re a hero, Winkie,’ said Coppy – ‘a pukka* hero!’

‘I don’t know what vat means.’ said Wee Willie Winkie, ‘but you mustn’t call me Winkie any more. I’m Percival Will’am Will’ams.’

And in this manner did Wee Willie Winkie enter into his manhood.

Active vocabulary

1) to deprive smb of smth; 2) embarrassing a, to embarrass; 3) peculiarity n, peculiar a; 4) to be guilty of smth; 5) to be at ease; 6) to break a promise; 7) to weep bitterly; 8) to set foot beyond some place; 9) sin n, v, sinner n; 10) to teach smb a lesson; 11) to break down; 12) to burst into tears; 13) to get a reward; 14) to spare vt.

Vocabulary tasks

Task 1. Give the corresponding nouns, translate them: *to deprive, embarrassing, guilty, to promise, to sin, evil.*

* pukka (хинди) – настоящий, истинный.

Task 2. Arrange into pairs of:

a) synonyms: *embarrassing, to spare peculiar to weep to break down, to cry, special, to dispossess, confusing, to go to pieces, to deprive, not to kill or hurt.*

b) antonyms: *to break a promise to be guilty, to be at ease, to be ill at ease, to keep a promise, to be innocent.*

Task 3. Study the word combinations. Make up a sentence of your own with one of each group of three:

an embarrassing *situation (question, position)*;

to burst into *tears (sobs, laughter)*;

to set foot beyond *one's house (the nearest street, the centre of the city)*;

to be guilty of *murder (a sin, breaking a promise)*;

to teach *the hooligan (the greedy man, the guilty child)* a good lesson

to deprive people of *hope (ideals, their property)*;

to spare *the children (old people, women)*;

a peculiar *moment (child, interest)*.

Task 4. Insert prepositions if necessary:

1. Mother asked the boy never to set foot ... the neighbourhood.
2. When the girl was brought ... danger, she broke down and bust ... tears.
3. – Shall I tell you what happened ... me yesterday? Suit yourself, only spare ... me ... the details.
4. ... his great disgust he found a lot of unwashed plates ... his writing-table.
5. You can't deprive the whole nation ... accurate information, can you?
6. ... great difficulty the hunter struggled clear ... the trap he had set himself.
7. The tourists were ... the way home when they got caught up ... a storm, and they kept a look out ... shelter.
8. – Bill, will you help me to teach Mr. Jones ... a lesson?' – What is the poor chap guilty...? – He is always hanging ... all ... the place when the girls are busy working.

Task 5. Reproduce the situations in the story where the author uses the vocabulary: *to deprive smb of smth, to be guilty of, peculiarity, to be at ease, sinner, to break down, to get a reward, to spare.*

Task 6. Translate the sentences. Use the active vocabulary.

1. Она расплакалась, когда он сделал ей предложение. 2. Вы виновны, потому что лишили их надежды. 3. Она нарушила свое обещание не выходить за пределы нашего района. 4. Почему она горько плачет? – Ее муж очень плохо к ней относится. 5. Его никто не замечал, и он почувствовал смушение. 6. Он не мог сопротивляться греху. 7. Он особенный ребенок. Он везде чувствует себя свободно и непринужденно. 8. Он вызволил их из беды и получил награду. 9. Пощадите/Пожалейте нас. Мы ужасно устали. 10. Он бросил их. – Не беспокойся, я проучу его. 11. Не лишай их награды. 12. Когда она расплакалась, он почувствовал себя неловко (не в своей тарелке). 13. Он согласился оставить собаку на попечении своего отчима. 14. Его особенности раздражают меня. 15. Он уже пожалел, что пощадил их. 16. Краем глаза она заметила, что обезьяна взбирается на дерево. 17. Его жалкий вид смутил ее. 18. В чем разница между «расклеиться» и «раскиснуть»? 19. Он не сопротивлялся течению, в которое попал. 20. «Он виновен в преступлении?» – спросила она невинно.

Discussion of the story

Task 1. Answer the questions.

1. Where is the story set? What words convey the local colour?
2. What were the British military troops doing in India?
3. What was Wee Willie Winkie's full name? What was his age?
What do you know about his family?
4. Why did his father put him under Military Discipline so early?
5. What do you think made the child like Brandis after ten minutes' looking at him?
6. What was Wee Willy Winkie's most embarrassing peculiarity?
Who found it embarrassing?
7. Why was the Colonel's son idolized in the cantonment?
8. How did Brandis treat the child?
9. Why was the child's mind scandalized once?
10. What was Wee Willie Winkie's confinement caused by?
11. What made him break his arrest?

12. Why couldn't the boy leave Miss Allardyce alone beyond the river?

13. What signal did the boy send to the cantonment?

14. In what manner did the boy speak to the natives?

15. What was the reaction in the cantonment to the pony's return with an empty saddle?

16. Why was the child sure of being rescued by the regiment?

17. Why wasn't the boy punished for his 'mutiny'?

18. How early did the boy's manhood start?

Task 2. Give as much information as you can on the suggestions from the story:

1. His full name was Percival William Williams but he picked up the other name in the nursery book.

2. He accepted Brandis, a subaltern of the 195th, on sight.

3. The Colonel's son' was idolized on his own merits entirely.

4. Coppy returned his liking with interest.

5. Why should Coppy be guilty of the unmanly weakness of kissing?

6. Then the Old Adam broke out.

7. Very early the next morning he climbed on to the roof of the house – that was not forbidden – and saw Miss Allardyce going for a ride.

8. ...Wee Willie Winkie saw the Waler blunder and come down heavily.

9. 'I have broken my arrest'.

10. Not one man, but two or three had appeared behind the rocks of the hills...

11. Then rose from the rock Wee Willie Winkie, child of the Dominant Race aged six and three quarters

12. 'O foolish men! What this babe says is true'.

13. The cantonment became alive with the men of the 195-th hunting for Wee Willie Winkie.

14. And the men of the 195-th carried him home with shouts and rejoicings.

Task 3. Give a brief summary of the story.

Task 4. Find proof in the text:

- a) that the local Indians led a partisan war against the British troops;
- b) that the British troops could treat their enemy very cruelly;
- c) that some reliable natives were given jobs in the cantonment;
- d) that Wee Willie Winkie picked up local dialects easily;
- e) that the author believes in superior and inferior races;
- f) that the story opens and ends with the theme of a proper name.

Task 5. Dwell on:

- a) what the boy regarded as manly and unmanly;
- b) the military Code of Honour as shown in the story;
- c) the boy's attitude to the natives;
- d) the boy's behavior in danger.

Task 6. Characterize:

- a) Wee Willie Winkie; b) Brandis; c) Miss Allardyce.

Task 7. Give your opinion on:

- a) Wee Willie Winkie's upbringing;
- b) Boys and girls should be brought up differently from the very start;
- c) The role of an example in the upbringing of a child.

Assignment 7

Alfred Edgar Coppard

THE WATERCRESS GIRL (Part I)

Alfred Edgar Coppard (1878 – 1957) was an English author, noted for his poetry and short stories. He was born in a poor family, and his childhood and youth were spent in want. He started his literary career as a poet, but it was his short stories that brought him recognition and later an honorable place in English literature. From 1916 he published a lot of stories in newspapers and magazines; not all of them found their way to his collections, about ten in number. Most of his characters belong to ‘the lower orders’ and his stories are set in provincial towns and villages. Among his last works was the autobiographical novel *It's me, O Lord!* (1957).

The Watercress Girl came out in the collection *Fishmonger's Fiddle* in 1925.

PART I

When Mary McDowall was brought to the court the place was crowded, Mr. O’Kane said, ‘inside out. ‘It was a serious trial, as everybody – even the prisoner – well knew; twelve tons of straw had been thrown down on the roads outside the hall to deaden the noise of carts passing and suchlike pandemoniums, and when the judge drove up in his coach, a couple of young trumpeters blew a terrible fanfare up into heaven. ‘For a sort of a warning, I should think,’ said Mr. O’Kane.

The prisoner’s father, having been kicked by a horse, was unable to attend the trial, and so he had asked Mr. O’ Kane to go and fetch him the news of it; and Mr. O Kane suffered annoyances and was abused in the court itself by a great fat geezer of a fellow with a long staff.* ‘If you remained sitting when the judge came in,’ complained Mr O’Kane, ‘you

* ...was abused in the court itself by a great fat geezer of a fellow with a long staff – ... был оскорблен в самом здании суда огромным толстым старым чудаком с длинным жезлом.

were poked up, and if you stood up to get a look at the prisoner when *she* came in you were poked down. Surely to God we didn't go to look at the judge!'

Short was her trial, for the evidence was clear, and the guilt not denied. Prisoner did not sorrow for her crime; passive and casual she stood there at the willing of the court for a thing she had done, and there were no tears now in Mary McDowall. Most always she dressed in black, and she was in black then, with masses of black hair, a pale face with a dark mole on the chin, and rich red lips, a big girl of twenty-five, not coarsely big, and you could guess she was strong. A passionate girl, caring nothing or not much for this justice, for all that passion concerns with is love – or its absence love that gives its only gift by giving all. If you could have read her mind, not now but in its calm before the stress of her misfortune, you would have learned this much, although she herself could not have formulated it; I will give to love all it is in me to give; I shall desire of love all I can ever dream of and receive.

And because another woman had taken what Mary Mc Dowall wanted, Mary had flung a corrosive acid in the face of her enemy, and Elizabeth Plantney's good looks were gone, gone for certain and forever. So here was Mary McDowall and over there was Frank Oppidan, not a very fine one to mislead the handsome girl in the dock, but he had done it, and he too had suffered and the women in court had pity for him, and the man – envy. Tall, with light oiled hair and pink sleepy features (a pink heart, too, you might think, though you could not see it), he gave evidence against her in a nasal tone with a confident manner, and she did not waste a look on him. A wood-turner he was, and for about four years had 'kept company' with the prisoner, who lived near a village a mile or two away from his home. He had often asked her to marry him, but she would not, so a little while ago he told her he was going to marry Elizabeth Plantney. A few evenings later he had been strolling with Elizabeth Plantney on the road outside the town. It was not yet dark, about eight o' clock, but they had not observed the prisoner, for she came slyly up and passed by them, turned, splashed something in his companion's face, and then walked on.

She didn't run; at first she thought it was some stupid joke, and he was for going after the prisoner, whom he had recognized.

'I was mad angry,' declared Oppidan, 'I could have choked her. But Miss Plantney began to scream that she was blinded and burning, and I had to carry and drag her some ways back along the road until we came to the first house, Mr. Blackfriar's, where they took her in and I ran off for the doctor. 'The witness added savagely: 'I wish I *had* choked her.'*

There was full corroboration, prisoner had admitted guilt, and the counsel briefed by her father could only plead for a lenient sentence.**

'Accused,' he said, 'is the only child of Fergus McDowall. She lives with her father, a respectable widower, at a somewhat retired cottage in the valley of Trinkel, helping him in his business – a small holding by the river where he cultivates watercress, and keeps bees and hens and things of that kind. The witness Oppidan had been in the habit of cycling from his town to the Mc Dowalls' home to buy bunches of watercress, a delicacy of which, in season, he seems to have been-um-very fond, for he would go twice, thrice, and often four times a week. His visits were not confined to the purchase of watercress, and he seems to have made himself agreeable to the daughter of the house, but I have no information as to the nature of their intercourse beyond that given by the witness Oppidan. Against my advice the prisoner, who is a very reserved, even a remarkable, woman, has insisted on pleading guilty.***

While the brutal story was being recounted, the prisoner had stood and dreamed of what she had not revealed:

Of her father, Fergus McDowall; his child she was, although he had never married. That much she knew, but who her mother had been he never told her, and it did not seem to matter; she guessed rather than knew that at her birth she had died, or soon afterwards, and the man had brought her up. He and she had always been together, alone, ever since she could

* I wish I had choked her. – Жаль, что я не задушил её.

** ... the counsel briefed by her father could only plead for a lenient sentence – ... адвокат по поручению её отца мог только просить о смягчении наказания.

*** to plead guilty – признать вину.

remember, always together, always happy, he was so kind; and so splendid in the great boots when he worked in the watercress beds. And there were beehives, her flock of hens, the young pigs, and a calf. Save for a wildness of mood that sometimes flashed through her, Mary was content, and loved the life that was lonely with her father beside the watercress streams. He was uncommunicative, like Mary, but as he worked he hummed to himself or whistled the soft tunes that at night he played on the clarinet. Tall and me man. Sometimes he would put his arms around her and say: Well, my dear. 'And she would kiss him. She had promised herself that she would never leave him, but then-Frank had come.

He was not the first man or youth she could or would have loved, but he was the one who had wooed her: first-love's enlightening delight, in the long summer eyes! How easily she was won! All his offers of marriage she had put off with the answer: 'No, it would never do for me, 'or' I shall never marry' but then, if he angrily swore or accused her of not loving him enough, her fire and freedom would awe him almost as much as it enchanted. And she might have married Frank if she could only have told him of her dubious origin, but whether from loyalty to her father, or some other reason, she could not bring herself to do that Often these refusals enraged her lover and after such occasions he would not seek her again for weeks, but in the end he always returned, although his absences grew longer as their friend. ship continued. Ah, when the way to your lover is long, there's but a short cut to the end. Came a time when he did not return at all and then, soon, Mary found she was going to have a child. 'Oh, I wondered where you were, Frank, and why you were there, wherever it was, instead of where I could find you. After a while she took no further care or thought for Oppidan, for she feared that like her own mother she would die of her child. Soon these fears left her and she rejoiced. Certainly she need not fear to tell him of her own origin now, he could never reproach her now. Had he come once more, had he come then, she would have married him*. But although he might have been hers for the lifting of

* Had he come once more, had he come then, she would have married him. – Если бы он пришел снова, пришел тогда, она вышла бы за него.

a finger, as they say, her pride kept her from calling him into the trouble** and she did not call him and he never sought her again. When her father realized her condition he merely said ‘Frank?’ and she nodded.

The child was early born, and she was not prepared; it came and died. Her father took it and buried it in the garden. It was a boy, dead. No one else knew, not even Frank, but when she recovered, her pride wavered and she wrote a loving letter to him, still keeping the secret. Not until she had written three times did she hear from him, and then he only answered that he should not see her any more. He didn’t tell her why, but she knew. He was going to marry Elizabeth Plantney, whose parents had died and left her five hundred pounds. To Mary’s mind, that presented itself as a treachery to their child, the tiny body buried under a beehive in the garden. That Frank did not know about the difference to the girl’s mood; it was treachery. Maternal anger stormed in her breast, it could only be allayed by an injury a deep injury to that treacherous man.

So then she got some vitriol*. Rushing past her old lover on the night of the crime, she turned upon him with the lifted jar, but the sudden confrontation dazed and tormented her; in momentary hesitation she had dashed the acid, not into *his* faithless eyes, but at the creature linked to his arm. Walking away, she heard the crying of the wounded girl. After a while she had turned back to the town and given herself up to the police.

To her mind, as she stood leaning against the dock rail, it was her story set in its order. The trial went on beside her grief like a dull stream neighbouring a clear one, two parallel streams that would meet in the end, were meeting now, surely, as the judge began to speak. She heard the judge deliver her sentence: for six calendar months she was to be locked in a jail ‘Oh Christ!’ she breathed, for it was the lovely spring; lilac, laburnum, and father wading the brooks in those boots

They took her away. ‘I wanted to come out then,’ said Mr. O’Kane, ‘and I tried to get out of it, but if I did that geezer with the stick poked me

** ...her pride kept her from calling him into the trouble – ... гордость не позволяла ей звать его во время беременности.

* vitriol /'vit.ri.əl/ (устар.) – серная кислота.

down and said I'll not go out till the court rose, I said to him I'll kill him but there was a lot of people about so I suppose he didn't hear it.'

Active vocabulary

1) evidence n, to give evidence; 2) misfortune n; 3) to mislead vt; 4) respectable a; 5) brutal a; 6) to recount a story; 7) to reveal vt; 8) uncommunicative a; 9) to accuse smb of smth; 10) origin n; 11) to bring oneself to do smth; 12) to hear from smb; 13) treachery n; 14) to torment vt.

Vocabulary tasks

Task 1. Arrange into pairs of:

a) synonyms: *misfortune, to recount a story, uncommunicative, to hear from smb, treachery, to torment, brutal, to reveal, disclose, savagely cruel, unsociable, betrayal, to make smb suffer, distress, to tell a story, to receive information or letters.*

b) antonyms: *uncommunicative, treachery, misfortune, to reveal, respectable, loyalty, to conceal, notorious, good luck, communicative.*

Task 2. Give the corresponding:

a) adjectives: *evidence, misfortune, treachery;*

b) nouns: *brutal, respectable, to reveal, to accuse, to torment, communicative;*

c) verbs: *respectable, communicative, origin.*

Task 3. Form verbs by adding the prefix *mis-* to the ones given by low. Translate the verbs with the prefix *mis-*

Pattern: *to lead – to mislead (сбуть с пути истинного)*

to interpret, to judge, to govern, to inform, to call, to place, to pronounce, to understand, to use, to translate.

Task 4. Paraphrase the underlined parts using the new vocabulary.

1. It took the boy two minutes to tell us the whole story. 2. Dear Ann, I was so happy to receive your letter yesterday. 3. The witness recounted the facts in a confident manner. 4. This act of disloyalty made the children change their opinion of their classmate. 5. The speaker pointed out some

facts that made evident the mismanagement of the factory. 6. At supper Roger was reserved and hardly spoke: he his mouth only to put some food into it. 7. Somebody in the crowd found Jimmy guilty of neglecting his duty. 8. George's treatment of Matilda was savagely cruel.

Task 5. Point out the difference in the use of the underlined verbal phrases.

1. Bob could not bring himself to see the dentist again. 2. The girl could hardly bring herself to take a cold shower in the morning. 3. Who made you take part in the concert? 4. The policeman made the boy recount the story again.

Task 6. Study the word combinations. Point out the one in each group of three used by the author in the story. Reproduce the situation.

dubious (clear, honest) evidence;
the day (the stress, the reminder) of one's misfortune;
to mislead the jury (a girl, a teenager);
a respectable family (occupation, widower);
of Latin (dubious, aristocratic) origin;
to accuse the girl of cruelty (of being silly, of not loving the young man enough);
a treacherous man (step, behavior);
an uncommunicative group (man, family);
to recount the brutal story (only facts, the details);
to hear from one's friend (young man, parents);
to be tormented by one's fears (sleepless nights, the sudden confrontation);
brutal story (crime, man).

Task 7. Translate the sentences. Use the active vocabulary.

1. Его показания ввели нас в заблуждение. 2. Я никак не могу заставить себя написать другу письмо, хотя не получал от него известий уже два месяца. 3. Мысли об их предательстве мучают его. 4. Он обвинил их в том, что они нарушили обещание. 5. Несмотря на это несчастье, вы должны вновь обрести силу духа/мужество. 6. Он необщительный человек. Вы не сможете заставить его рассказать по-

дробно эту историю. 7. Мы сможем раскрыть тайну происхождения этого странного предмета. 8. Мужественный человек не может быть жестоким. 9. Мы возлагаем на них надежды. Надеемся, они смогут противостоять врагу. 10. У него здатки бизнесмена. Он может достать драгоценную вещь даром/бесплатно.

Discussion of the story

Task 1. Paraphrase or explain:

1. Prisoner did not sorrow for her crime; passive and casual she stood there at the willing of the court...

2. Tall, with light oiled hair and pink sleepy features (a pink heart, too, you might think, though you could not see it), he gave evidence against her...

3. Ah, when the way to your lover is long, there is but a short cut to the end.

4. Maternal anger stormed in her breast, it could only be allayed by an injury, a deep injury to that treacherous man.

Task 2. Answer the questions.

1. Where is the scene laid?
2. Who are the characters of the story?
3. Are the events of the story recounted in their chronological order?
4. How did she behave at the trial?
5. In what manner did Frank Oppidan give his evidence?
6. Why did the women pity Frank and the men envy him?
7. What was dubious about Mary's origin?
8. What sort of man brought Mary up?
9. Why did Mary refuse to marry Frank?
10. Did Frank have a good reason to look for a wife elsewhere?
11. Why didn't he answer Mary's two letters?
12. Why didn't anybody know about Mary's baby?
13. Why couldn't Mary bring herself to fling the vitriol at Frank?
14. Was Elizabeth Plantney an innocent victim?
15. Did Mary realize her guilt?

Task 3. Find proof in the text:

- a) that Mary wept after her arrest;
- b) that Mary was attractive;
- c) that Mary's father had brought his daughter up giving her much freedom.

Task 4. Recount the story:

- a) setting the events in their chronological order;
- b) speaking as Mary; her father; Frank Oppidan; Elizabeth Planter; Mr O'Kane.

Task 5. Give your opinion on:

- a) Was Frank's behavior really treacherous?
- b) Was Mary's origin a matter for reproach?
- c) Was Mary's way of thinking always logical?
- d) Do you find Mary's crime brutal?
- e) Was Mary's punishment just or too lenient?

Assignment 8

Alfred Edgar Coppard

THE WATERCRESS GIRL (Part II)

PART II

Towards the end of the year Oppidan had made his mind what he would do to Mary McDowall when she came out of prison. Poor Liz was marred for life, spoiled, cut off from the joys they had intended together. Not for all the world would he marry her now; he had tried to bring himself to that decency, but it was impossible; he had failed in the point of grace*. No man could love Elizabeth Plantney now. Frank could not visit her without shuddering, and she herself, poor thing, had given him back his promise. Apart from his ruined fondness for her, they had planned to do much the five hundred pounds; it was to have set him up in a secure and easy way of trade. All that chance was gone, no such chance ever came twice in a man's lifetime, and he was left with Liz upon his conscience. He would have to be kind to her for as long as he could stand it. That was a disgust to his mind, for he wanted to be faithful – but to which woman he is never quite sure. And then that Mary McDowall would come out of her prison and be a mockery to him of what he had forgone, of what he had been deprived. Savagely he believed in the balance by an act of vengeance – he too! – eye for eye, tooth for tooth. The McDowall girl, so his fierce meditations ran, stayed in prison for six months and then came out no worse than when she went in. It was no punishment at all, they did not hurt women in prison; the court hadn't set wrong right at all, it never did; and he was a loser whichever way he turned. But there was still a thing he could do.

On an October evening, then, about a week after Mary McDowall's release, Oppidan set off towards Trinkel. Through Trinkel he went and past until he came to their lane. Down the lane too, and then he could hear the

* ... he had failed in the point of grace. – ему не хватило милосердия.

rutling over the cress-beds. Not yet in winter, the year's decline harbouring splendour everywhere** The man walked quietly to a point where, unobserved, he could see the McDowall dwelling. The house was heavy and small, but there were signs of grace in the garden, of thrift in the orderly painted sheds. Oppidan crept along the hedges until he was in a field at the back of the house, a hedge still hiding him. He was trembling. There was a light already in the back window; the window stood open and he saw their black cat jump down from it into the garden and run away under some shrubs. From his standpoint he could not see into the lighted room, but he knew enough of Fergus's habits to be sure he was not within it was his day for driving into the town. Thus it could only be Mary who had lit that lamp. Trembling still!

'Wait till it's darker,' he muttered, and turning back to the lane he walked sharply for half a mile. Then, slowly, he returned. Unseen, he reached the grass that grew under the lighted window, and stooped against the wall; one hand rested on the wall, the other in his pocket. For some time, he hesitated but he knew what he had to do and what did it matter! He stepped in front of the window.

In a moment, and for several moments longer, he was rigid with surprise. It was Mary all right, washing her hair, drying it in front of the kitchen fire, the thick locks pouring over her face. Her bodice hung on the back of a chair beside her, and her only upper clothing was a loose chemise that did not hide her bosom. Then, gathering the hair in her hands, she held the tresses closer to the fire, her face showing through, and to herself she was smiling. Dazzling fair were her arms, and the one breast he astonishingly saw. It was Mary; but not the Mary, dull ugly creature, whom his long rancour had conjured for him. Lord! what had he forgotten! Absence and resentment had pared away her loveliness from his recollection, but this was the old Mary of their passionate days, transfigured and marvellous.

Stepping back from the window into shadow again, he could feel his heart beat. In those breathless moments Oppidan gazed as it were at

** Not yet in winter, the year's decline was harboring splendor everywhere. — Зима еще не наступила, и увядание природы повсюду сохраняло великолепие.

himself, or at his mad intention, gazed wonderingly, ashamed and awed. Fingering the thing in his pocket, he was aware of a revulsion; gone revenge; gone rancour, gone all thought of Elizabeth, and there was left in his soul what had not gone and could never go. A brute she had been – it was bloody cruelty – but, but – but what? Seen thus, in her innocent occupation, the grim fact of her crime had somehow thrown a glamour over her hair the pale pride of her face, the intimacy of her bosom. Her very punishment was a triumph; on what account had she suffered if not for love of him? She had suffered for his love.

There and then shrill cries burst upon them. The cat leaped from the garden to the window-sill; there was a thrush in its mouth, shrieking. The cat paused on the sill. Without a thought Oppidan ran forward, seized the cat, and with his free hand clutched what he could of the thrush. In a second the cat released it and dropped into the room, while the crushed bird flew away to the darkened shrubs, leaving its tail feathers in the hand of the man.

Mary sprang up and rushed to the window ‘Is it you?’ was all she said. Hastily she left the window, and Oppidan with a grin saw her shuffling into her bodice. One hand fumbled at the buttons. The other unlatched the door ‘Frank.’ There was neither surprise nor elation. He walked in. Only then did he open his fist and the thrush’s feathers floated in the air to the floor. Neither of them remembered any more of the cat or the bird.

In silence they stood, not looking at each other.

‘What do you want?’ at length she asked. ‘You’re hindering me.’

‘Am I?’ He grinned. ‘Well, I’ll tell you.’ His hat was cumbering his hands, so he put it carefully on the table.

‘I came here wanting to do a bad thing. I had it in my mind to serve you same as you served her – you know who I mean. Directly I knew you had come home, that’s what I meant to do. I been waiting out there a good while until I saw you. And then I saw you. I hadn’t seen you for a long, long time, and somehow, I dunno, when I saw you –’

Mary was standing with her hands on her hips; the black cascades of her hair rolled over her arms; dark weeping hair.

‘I didn’t mean to harm her!’ she burst out. ‘I never meant that for her not what I did. Something happened to me that I’d not told you of then, and it doesn’t matter now, and I shall never tell you. It was you I wanted to put a mark on, but directly I was in front of you I went all wavy, and I couldn’t. But I had to throw it, I had to throw it.’

He sat down on a chair, and she stared at him across the table. ‘All along it was meant for you, and that’s God’s truth.’

‘Why?’ he asked. She did not give him an answer then. At last she put question:

‘Did you get married soon?’

‘No,’ he said.

‘Aren’t you? But of course it’s no business of mine.’

‘I’m not going to marry her.’

‘Not?’

‘No, I tell you I wouldn’t marry her for five thousand pounds, not for fifty thousand, I wouldn’t.’ He walked up and down before the fire. ‘She’s – aw! You don’t know, you don’t know what you done to her! She’d frighten you. A veil on indoors and out, has to wear it always. She doesn’t often go out, but whether or no, she must wear it. Ah, it’s cruel.’

There was a shock of horror as well as tears in her passionate compunction. ‘And you’re not marrying her!’

‘No, he said bluntly, I’m not marrying her’.

Mary covered her face with her hands and stood under her dark weeping hair.

‘God forgive me, how pitiful I’m shamed!’ Her voice rose in a sharp cry. ‘Marry her, Frank! Oh, you marry her now, you must!’

‘Not for a million, I’d sooner be in my grave.’

‘Frank Oppidan, you’re no man, no man at all. You never had the courage to be strong, nor the courage to be evil; you’ve only the strength to be mean.’

‘Oh, dry up!’ he said testily; but something overpowered her and she went leaning her head sobbing against the chimney-piece.

‘Come on, girl!’ he was instantly tender, his arms were around her, he had kissed her.

‘Go your ways!’ She was loudly resentful. ‘I want no more of you.’

‘It’s all right, Mary. Mary, I’m coming to you again, just as I used to.’

‘You...’ She got out of his embrace. ‘What for? D’ye think I want you now? Go off to Elizabeth Plantney...’ ‘She faltered. ‘Poor thing, poor thing, it shames me pitiful; I’d sooner have done it to myself. Oh. I wish I had.’

With a meek grin Oppidan took from his pocket a bottle with a glass stopper. ‘Do you know what that is?’

It looked like a flask of scent. Mary did not answer. ‘Sulphuric,’ continued he, ‘same as you threw at her.’

The girl silently stared while he moved his hand as if he were weighing the bottle. ‘When I saw what a mess you’d made of her, I thought you’d got off too light, it ought to have been seven years for you. I only saw it once, and my inside turned right over, you’ve no idea. And I thought there’s she – done for*. Nobody could marry her, less he was blind. And there’s you, just a six months and out you come right as ever. That’s how thought and I wanted to get even with you then, for her sake, not for mine so I got this, the same stuff, and I came thinking to give you a touch of it.’

Mary drew herself up with a sharp breath. ‘You mean – throw it at me?’

‘That’s what I meant, honour bright, but I couldn’t – not now.’ He went on weighing the bottle in his hand.

‘Oh, throw it, throw it!’ she cried in bitter grief, but covering her face with her fingers – perhaps in shame, perhaps fear.

‘No, no, no, no.’ He slipped the bottle back into his pocket. ‘But why you do it? She wouldn’t hurt a fly. What good could it do you?’

‘Throw it,’ she screamed, ‘throw it, Frank, let it blast me!’

‘Easy, easy now. I wouldn’t even throw it at a rat. See!’ he cried. The bottle was in his hand again and he went to the open window and withdrew the stopper. He held it outside while the fluid bubbled to the grass: the empty bottle he threw into the shrubs.

* ... there’s she – done for. – ...вот она – и её жизнь загублена.

He sat down, his head in his hands, and for some time neither spoke. Then he was aware that she had come to him, was standing there, waiting 'Frank,' she said softly, 'there's something I got to tell you.' And she told him about the babe.

At first he didn't believe her. No, no, that was too much for him! Very stupid and ironical he was until the girl's pale sincerity glowed through the darkness of his unbelief: 'You don't believe! How could it not be true!'

'But I can't make heads or tails of it yet, Mary. You a mother, and I were a father!' Eagerly and yet mournfully he brooded. 'If I'd'a' known* – I can't hardly believe it, Mary – so help me God, if I'd'a' know -'

'You could done nothing, Frank'

'Ah, but I'd'a' known! A man's never a man till that's come to him'

'Nor a woman's a woman, neither; that's true, I'm different now.'

'I'd'a' been his father, I tell you. Now I'm nothing. I didn't know of his coming, I never see, and I didn't know of his going, so I'm nothing still.'

'You kept away from me. I was afraid at first and I wanted you, but you was no help to me, you kept away.'

'I'd alright to know, didn't I? You could 'a' wrote and told me.'

'I did write to you.'

'But you didn't tell me nothing.'

'You couldn't 'a' come and see me.' she returned, 'then you'd known. How could I write down a thing like that in a letter as anybody might open? Any dog or devil could play tricks with it when you was drunk or something'

'I ought 'a bin told, I ought 'a bin told.' Stubbornly he repeated it.

'"Twasn't fair, you.'

'"Twasn't kind, you. You ought to 'a' come; I asked you, but you was sick o'me, Frank, sick o'me and mine. I didn't want any help, neither,

* 'If I'd 'a' known – здесь и далее (особенности речи малообразованных людей) = If I had known – Если бы я знал.

Also: 'You could 'a' wrote...' – Ты могла бы мне написать.

‘wasn’t that I wanted.’ ‘Would you ‘a’ married me then?’ Sharply but persuasively, he probed for what she neither admitted nor denied. ‘Yes, yes, you would, Mary.’

‘Twould ‘a’ bin a scandal if I’d gone and married someone else.’

When at last the truth about her own birth came out between them, oh, how ironically protestant he was! ‘God a’mighty, girl, what did you take me for! There’s no sense in you. I’ll marry you now, for good and all (this minute if we could), honor bright, and you know it, for I love you always and always. You were his mother, Mary, and I were his father! What was he like, that little son?’

Sadly, the girl mused. ‘It was very small.’

‘Light hair?’

‘No, like mine, dark it was.’

‘What colour eyes?’

She drew her fingers down through the long streams of hair. It never opened its eyes. And her voice moved him so that he cried out: ‘My love, my love, life’s before us. When shall us marry?’

‘Let me go, Frank. And you’d better go now, you’re hindering me, and father will be coming in, and – and – the cakes are burning!’

Snatching up a cloth, she opened the oven door and an odour of caraway rushed into the air. Inside the oven was a shelf full of little cakes.

‘Give us one,’ he begged, ‘and then I’ll be off.’

You shall have two,’ she said, kneeling down by the oven. ‘One for you – mind, it’s hot!’ He seized it from the cloth and quickly dropped it into his pocket. ‘And another, from me,’ continued Mary. Taking the second cake, he knelt down and embraced the girl.

‘I want another one,’ he whispered.

A quick intelligence swam in her eyes: ‘For?’

‘Ah, for what’s between us, dear Mary.’

The third cake was given him, and they stood up. They moved towards the door. She lifted the latch.

‘Good night, my love.’ Passively she received his kiss. ‘I’ll come again tomorrow.’

‘No, Frank, don’t ever come any more.’

‘Aw, I’m coming right enough,’ he cried cheerily and confidently as he stepped away.

And I suppose we must conclude that he did.

Active vocabulary

1) to shudder vi; 2) faithful a; 3) to set wrong right; 4) release n,v; 5) resentment n, resentful a; 6) marvellous a; 7) revenge n; 8) compunction n; 9) to make a mess of smb/smith; 10) to get off light; 11) to get even with smb; 12) grief n; 13) stubbornly adv; 14) to move smb.

Vocabulary tasks

Task 1. Give the corresponding:

a) adverbs: *faithful, marvellous, resentful, respectable, brutal*;

b) verbs: *resentment, grief, revenge*.

Task 2. Think of the synonyms of the words and expressions below (some of the synonyms may be found in the text of the story):

to shudder, faithful, to release, marvellous, to revenge, to make a mess of smb/smith, grief, resentment.

Task 3. Study the word combinations, translate them. Add to each group a combination dealing with a situation in the story.

Pattern: to release a prisoner (murderer, the accused man).

Addition: to release a bird (a thrush).

to shudder with cold (fear, panic);

a faithful husband (woman, lover);

marvellous weather (a child, a spring);

to make a mess of smb’s life (one’s work, marriage);

to get even with a hooligan (one’s enemy, former friend);

a deep (tearful, sincere) compunction;

to insist (reproach, give evidence) stubbornly;

in deep (secret, great) grief.

Task 4. Study the sentences. Make up your own sentences with the underlined parts.

1. After a month they will release the prisoner. Where will he go, what will he do for his living?

2. The boy stubbornly refused to answer his parents' questions.

3. What a marvellous picture! Where did you manage to obtain it?

4. You have made a mess of our house and are trying to get off light!

5. Ted heard his friend's joke and decided to get even with him next time.

6. Dear Helen, I can't tell you how I feel for you in your great grief.

7. Children resent familiarity from strangers.

Task 5. Bring out the difference in the meaning of the underlined words in the sentences from the story.

1. a) He had tried to bring himself to that issue of chivalry, of decency, but it was impossible; he had failed in the point of grace.

b) The house was heavy and small, but there were signs of grace in the garden.

2. a) Dazzling fair were her arms.

b) 'I ought 'a bin told, I ought 'a bin told.' Stubbornly he repeated it. 'Twasn't fair, you.'

Task 6*. Translate the sentences. Use the active vocabulary.

1. Она вздрогнула, когда увидела тот отвратительный предмет.
2. Я собираюсь расквитаться с вами и восстановить справедливость.
3. Он сделал это намеренно. Он хотел им отомстить.
4. Мы возмущены тем фактом, что они освободили преступников.
5. Он испортил нашу работу, но вышел сухим из воды.
6. История, которую она нам рассказала, тронула меня.
7. Она не жалеет, что потеряла свое драгоценное кольцо на борту лайнера.
8. Он верный друг, он помогает нам в беде и горе.
9. «Какой превосходный замок!» – повторял он упрямо.
10. Я хочу напомнить тебе, что в прошлый раз ты легко отделался.

Discussion of the story

Task 1. Paraphrase or explain:

1. Poor Liz was marred for life, spoiled, cut off from the joys they had intended together.
2. Savagely he believed in the balance wrought by an act of vengeance – he, too! – eye for eye, tooth for tooth.
3. Her very punishment was a triumph; on what account had she suffered if not for love of him?
4. ‘It was you I wanted to put a mark on, but directly I was in front of you I went all swavy, and I couldn’t.’
5. ‘Oh, dry up!’ he said testily...

Task 2. State whose utterances these are and what motives the phrases stand for.

1. ‘I come here wanting to do a bad thing.’
2. ‘I didn’t mean to harm her!’
3. ‘And you are not marrying her!’
4. ‘I wouldn’t even throw it at a rat.’
5. ‘God almighty, girl, what did you take me for!’
6. ‘Good night, my love. I’ll come again tomorrow.’

Task 3. Group the new vocabulary round the topics below and speak on them:

1. Frank Oppidan feels a loser.
2. Frank Oppidan makes up his mind to get even with Mary.
3. Frank sees Mary and changes his mind.
4. The young people discuss the motives of Mary’s crime and Frank’s intended revenge.
5. Mary discloses two great secrets of her life.

Task 4. Discuss Elizabeth Plantney’s way of life after Mary’s crime and Frank’s refusal to marry her.

Task 5. Agree or disagree. Give your reasons.

1. Mary returned from prison unchanged.
2. Resentment and rancour paint their object blacker than it is.
3. Frank intended to repeat Mary’s crime and get away with it.

4. Mary and Frank had much in common: they even went mad in the same way.

5. Either of the young people failed to throw acid at the other for the same reason.

6. Both Mary and Frank were simple uneducated people.

7. Frank was much nobler at heart than he seemed.

8. By being faithful to Mary Frank was treacherous to Elizabeth.

9. Frank and Mary would make an excellent couple.

Task 6. Comment on:

1. No man could love Elizabeth Plantney now.

2. 'Frank Oppidan, you're no man, no man at all. You never had the courage to be strong, nor the courage to be evil; you've only the strength to be mean.'

3. 'A man's never a man till that's come to him.'

Task 7. Give your opinion of the principle 'eye for eye, tooth for tooth.' What do you know of its origin?

Task 8. Characterize:

a) Mary; b) Frank; c) Mary's father; d) Elizabeth Plantney.

Task 9. Discuss the author's message as expressed in the story.

Assignment 9

Muriel Spark

THE PORTOBELLO ROAD (Part I)

Muriel Spark (1918 – 2006) was a British writer best known for the satire and wit with which the serious themes of her novels are presented. She was born in Edinburgh, Scotland. She started her career as poet and literary critic, but she won her fame as novelist and short-story writer.

Her first published work was devoted to Mary Shelley (1951) and was followed by her books about the English poet John Masefield, the writer Emily Bronte and the poet William Wordsworth. In the 50 – 60-ies three collections of her stories came out as well as her novels ‘Robinson’ (1958), ‘Memento Mori’ (1959), ‘The Prime of Miss Jean Brodie’ (1961), ‘The Girls of Slender Means’ (1963) and some others. Later she turned to dramaturgy and wrote plays for radio and television. The story ‘The Portobello Road’ was first published in the collection ‘The Go-Away Bird and Other Stories’ in 1958.

PART I

One day in my young youth, lolling with my lovely companions upon a haystack I found a needle. Already for some years I have been guessing that I was set apart from the other people, but this of the needle attested the fact to my whole public, George, Kathleen, and Skinny. I sucked my thumb, for when I had put my idle hand deep into the hay, the thumb was where the needle had stuck.

When everyone had recovered George said, ‘She put in her thumb and pulled out a plum.’* Then away we were into our merciless laughter

*‘She put in her thumb and pulled out a plum.’ – немного искаженная строка из детского стихотворения:

Little Jack Horner
Sat in the corner
Eating a Christmas pie;
He put in his thumb and
pulled out a plum
And said, ‘What a good boy am I!’

again. The needle had gone fairly deep into the cushion and a small red river flowed and spread from this tiny puncture. So that nothing of our joy should be lost, George put in quickly,

‘Mind your bloody thumb on my shirt.’*

Then again we laughed into the hot Borderland** afternoon. Really I should not care to be so young of heart again. That is my thought every time I turn over my old papers and come across the photograph. Skinny, Kathleen, and myself are in the photo atop the haystack. Skinny had just finished analyzing the meaning of my find.

‘It couldn’t have been done by brains.*** You haven’t much brains but you are a lucky wee thing.’

Everyone agreed that the needle promised extraordinary luck. As it was becoming a serious conversation, George said,

‘I’ll take a photo.’

I wrapped my hanky round my thumb and got myself organized. George pointed up from his camera and shouted, ‘Look, there is a mouse!’

Kathleen screamed and I screamed although I think we knew there was no mouse. But this gave us an extra session of laughter. Finally, we three composed ourselves for George’s picture. We look lovely and it was a great day at the time, but I would not care for it all over again. From that day I was known as Needle.

One Saturday in recent years I was walking down the Portobello Road, threading among the crowds on the narrow pavement when I saw a woman. She had a haggard careworn wealthy look. I had not seen her for nearly five years. How changed she was! But I recognized Kathleen, my friend; her features had already begun to sink and protrude in the way that mouths and noses do in people who look old for their years. When I had last seen her, nearly five years ago, Kathleen barely thirty, had said,

‘I have lost all my looks, it’s in the family. All the women are handsome as girls, but we go off early, go brown and nosey.’

* ‘Mind your bloody thumb on my shirt.’ – Здесь обыгрываются два значения слова ‘bloody’: 1) окровавленный; 2) проклятый (груб.).

** Borderland – пограничная полоса между Англией и Шотландией.

*** ‘It couldn’t have been done by brains.’ – Не может быть, чтобы это имело отношение к уму.

I stood silently among the people, watching. As you will see, I wasn't in a position to speak to Kathleen. I saw her rushing from stall to stall. She was always fond of antique jewellery. I wondered that I had not seen her before in the Portobello Road on my Saturday mornings. Her long fingers selected a ring from the jewellery on the stall.

'What d'you think of this?' she said.

I saw then who was with her. I had been half-conscious of the huge man following her, and now I noticed him.

'It looks all right,' he said. 'How much is it?'

I took a good look at this man accompanying Kathleen. It was her husband. The beard was unfamiliar, but I recognized his enormous mouth, the bright sensuous lips, the large brown eyes forever brimming with pathos.

It was not for me to speak to Kathleen, but I had a sudden inspiration which caused me to say quietly,

'Hallo, George.'

The giant of a man turned round to face the direction of my voice. There were so many people – but at last he saw me.

'Hallo, George,' I said again.

Kathleen had started to discuss with the stall-owner the price of the ring. George continued to stare at me, his big mouth parted so that I could see the red lips and white teeth between the fair growths of beard and moustache.

'My God!' he said.

'What's the matter?' said Kathleen.

'Hallo, George!' I said again, quite loud this time, and cheerfully.

'Look!' said George. 'Look who's there, over beside the fruit stall.'

Kathleen looked but didn't see.

'Who is it?' she said impatiently.

'It's Needle,' he said. 'She said 'Hallo, George'.'

'NEEDLE,' said Kathleen. 'Who do you mean? You don't mean our friend NEEDLE who –'

'Yes. There she is. My God!'

He looked very ill, although when I had said ‘Hallo, George’ I had spoken friendly enough.

‘I don’t see anyone looking like poor Needle,’ said Kathleen. She was worried.

George pointed straight at me. ‘Look there. I tell you that is Needle.’

‘You’re ill, George. Heavens, you must be seeing things. Come on home. Needle isn’t there. You know as well as I do, Needle is dead.’

I must explain that I departed this life nearly five years ago. But I did not altogether depart this world. There were a lot of things still to be done. Papers to be looked over, even after the executors have torn them up. Lots of business, except, of course, on Sundays and holidays. I take my recreation on Saturday mornings. When Saturdays are fine I go to the Portobello Road where formerly I would walk with Kathleen on our grown-up days. The goods do not change much, apples, silver plate, trays and teapots, Georgian spoons, rings, ear-rings, patch-boxes with miniature paintings.

That is how I came to be in the Portobello Road that Saturday morning when I saw George and Kathleen. I would not have spoken if I had not been inspired to it*. Indeed it’s one of the things I can’t do now – to speak out, unless inspired. And most extraordinary, on that morning as I spoke, I became partly visible. I suppose from George’s point of view it was like seeing a ghost when he saw me standing nearby repeating in so friendly a manner, ‘Hallo, George!’

We were ready to start for the south. When our education, what we could get of it from the north, was finished, one by one we were sent to London. John Skinner whom we called Skinny went to study more archeology, George to join his uncle’s tobacco farm, Kathleen to stay with her rich relatives and to work from time to time in the Mayfair hat-shop which one of them owned. A little later I also went to London to see life, for it was my ambition to write about life, which first I had to see.

‘We four must stick together,’ George said very often in that yearning way of his. He was always afraid of neglect. We four looked

* I would not have spoken if I had not been inspired to it. — Я заговорила только по наитию свыше.

likely to set off in different directions and George was not sure the other three of us would not forget him. More and more as the time came for him to go to his uncle's tobacco farm in Africa he said,

‘We four must keep in touch.’

And before he left he told each of us anxiously, ‘I’ll write regularly, once a month. We must keep together for the sake of the old times.’ He had three prints taken from the negative of that photo on the haystack, wrote on the back of them, ‘George took this the day that Needle found the needle’ and gave us a copy each. I think we all wished he could become a bit more callous.

During my lifetime I was a drifter, nothing organized. It was difficult for my friends to follow the logic of my life. By the normal way of thinking I should have come to starvation and ruin, which I never did. Of course, I did not live to write about life as I wanted to do. Possibly that is why I am inspired to do so now in these circumstances.

I taught in a private school in Kensington, for almost three months, very small children. I did not know what to do with them but I was kept busy escorting little boys to the lavatory and telling little girls to use their handkerchiefs. After that I lived a winter holiday in London on my small capital, and when that had run out I found a diamond bracelet in the cinema for which I received a reward of fifty pounds. When it was used up I got a job, writing speeches for industrialists. So it went on. I got engaged to Skinny, but shortly after that I was left a small legacy, enough to keep me for six months. This somehow decided me that I didn’t love Skinny so I gave him back the ring.

But it was through Skinny that I went to Africa. He was engaged with a party of researchers to investigate King Solomon’s mines. I accompanied the party as a sort of secretary. Skinny vouched for me, he paid my fare, he sympathized by his action with my life although when he spoke of it he disapproved. A life like mine annoys most people; they go to their jobs every day, attend to things, give orders, and get two or three weeks off every year, and it vexes them to see someone else not bothering to do these things and yet getting away with it, not starving, being lucky as they call it. Skinny, when I had broken off our engagement, lectured me

about this, but still he took me to Africa knowing I should probably leave his party in a few months.

We were there a few weeks before we began inquiring for George who was farming about four hundred miles away to the north. We had not told him of our plans.

‘If we tell George to expect us in his part of the world he’ll come to pester us the first week. After all, we’re going on business,’ Skinny had said.

Before we left Kathleen told us, ‘Give George my love and tell him not to send cables every time I don’t answer his letters right away. Tell him I’m busy in the hat-shop and being presented*. You would think he hadn’t another friend in the world.’

We had settled first at Fort Victoria. There we made inquiries about George. It was clear he hadn’t many friends. The older settlers were the most tolerant about the half-caste woman he was living with, as we found, but they were furious about his methods of raising tobacco which we learned were most unprofessional and in some mysterious way disloyal to the whites. We could never discover how it was that George’s style of tobacco farming gave the blacks opinions about themselves, but that’s what the older settlers said. The newer immigrants thought he was unsociable and, of course, his living with that nig made visiting impossible.

I must say I was myself a bit put off by this news about the brown woman. I was brought up in a university town to which came Indian, African, and Asiatic students. I was brought up to avoid them for reasons connected with local reputation and God’s ordinances. You cannot easily go against what you were brought up to do.

Anyhow, we visited George eventually. He had heard about our arrival in Rhodesia and though he was glad, almost happy to see us, he preferred to look sulky, the first hour.

‘We wanted to give you a surprise, George.’

‘How were we to know that you’d get to hear of our arrival, George? News here must travel faster than light, George.’

‘We did hope to give you a surprise, George.’

* Tell him I’m ... being presented.’ – Скажи ему, что меня ... представляют ко двору.

We flattered and ‘Georged’ him until at last he said, ‘Well, I must say it’s good to see you. All we need now is Kathleen. We four must stick together. You find when you’re in a place like this, there’s nothing like old friends.’

After a while he said, ‘Come in for a drink and meet Matilda.’

She was dark brown. We said pleasant things as we drank before dinner, but we found George difficult. For some reason he began to criticize me for breaking off my engagement to Skinny, saying what a dirty trick it was after all those good times in the old days. I turned to Matilda. I supposed, I said, she knew this part of the country well?

‘No,’ said she, ‘I been a-sheltered my life. I not put out to working. Me nothing to go from place to place is allowed like dirty girls does.’ In her speech she gave every syllable equal stress.

George explained, ‘Her father was a white magistrate in Natal. She had a sheltered upbringing, different from the other coloureds, you realize.’

‘Me no black-eyed Susan,’ said Matilda ‘no, no.’

On the whole George treated her as a servant. She was about four months advanced in pregnancy, but he made her go up and fetch for him, many times.

She never spoke another word to Skinny nor to me, and we never saw her again.

Some months later I said to Skinny,

‘I’m fed up with being a camp-follower.’

He was not surprised that I was leaving his party, but he hated my way of expressing it.

‘Don’t talk like that. Are you going back to England or staying?’

‘Staying, for a while.’

‘Well, don’t go too far off.’

I was able to live on the money I got for writing in a local weekly, which wasn’t my idea of writing about life, of course.

I met George once more in a hotel in Bulawayo. We drank wine and spoke of war. Skinny’s party were just then deciding whether to remain in the country or return home. I had half a mind to marry Skinny; perhaps, I thought, when his studies were finished. The impending war was in our

bones: so I remarked to George as we sat drinking wine in the hotel in the hard bright sunny July winter of that year. George inquired me about my relations with Skinny. He tried to pump me for about half an hour and when at last I said, 'You are becoming aggressive, George,' he stopped. He became quite pathetic. He said, 'War or no war. I'm clearing out of this.'

'It's the heat does it,' I said.

'I'm clearing out in any case. I've lost a fortune in tobacco. My uncle is making a fuss.'

'What about Matilda?' I asked.

He said, 'She'll be all right. She's got hundreds of relatives.'

I had already heard about the baby girl. Coal black, with George's features. And another on the way, they said*.

'What about the child?'

He didn't say anything to that. He ordered more wine. 'Why didn't you ask me to your twenty-first?' he said then.

'I didn't have anything special, no party, George. We had a quiet drink among ourselves, George, just Skinny and the old professors and two of the wives and me, George.'

'You didn't ask me to your twenty-first,' he said. 'Kathleen writes to me regularly.'

This wasn't true. Kathleen sent me letters fairly often in which she said, 'Don't tell George I wrote to you as he will be expecting word from me and I am too busy.'

'But you,' said George, 'don't seem to have any sense of old friendship, you and Skinny.'

'Oh, George!' I said.

'Remember the times we had,' George said. 'We used to have times.' His large brown eyes began to water.

'I'll have to be getting along,' I said.

'Please don't go. Don't leave me just yet. I've something to tell you.'

'Something nice?' I laid on an eager smile. All responses to George had to be overdone.

'You don't know how lucky you are,' George said.

* And another on the way, they said. – И говорили, что ожидается второй ребенок.

‘How?’ I said. Sometimes I got tired of being called lucky by everybody. There were times when, writing about life, I knew the bitter side of my fortune. When I failed again and again to reproduce life in some satisfactory and perfect form, I was the more imprisoned, for all my carefree living, within my craving for this satisfaction*. Sometimes, in my impotence and need I secreted a venom which infected all my life for days on end and which fell on Skinny or on anyone who crossed my path.

‘You aren’t bound by anyone, George said. ‘You come and go as you please. Something always turns up for you. You’re free, and you don’t know your luck.’

‘You’re more free than I am,’ I said sharply. ‘You’ve got your rich uncle.’

‘He’s losing interest in me,’ George said. ‘He’s had enough.’

‘Oh well, you’re young yet. What was it you wanted to tell me?’

‘A secret,’ George said. ‘Remember we used to have those secrets.’

‘Oh, yes we did.’

‘Did you ever tell any of mine?’

‘Oh no, George.’ In reality, I couldn’t remember any particular secret out of the dozens we must have exchanged from our schooldays on.

‘Well, this is a secret, mind. Promise not to tell.’

‘Promise.’

‘I’m married.’

‘Married, George! Oh who to?’

‘Matilda.’

‘How dreadful!’ I spoke before I could think, but he agreed with me.

‘Yes, it’s awful, but what could I do?’

‘You might have asked my advice,’ I said.

‘I’m two years older than you are. I don’t ask advice from you. Needle, little beast.’

‘Don’t ask for sympathy then.’

‘A nice friend you are,’ he said, ‘I must say after all these years.’

* ... I was the more imprisoned, for all my carefree living, within my craving for this satisfaction. – Меня все больше сковывало стремление к этой удовлетворенности, не смотря на внешнюю беззаботность моей жизни.

‘Poor George!’ I said.

‘There are three white men to one white woman in this country,’ said George. ‘An isolated planter doesn’t see a white woman and if he sees one she doesn’t see him. What could I do? I needed the woman.’

I was nearly sick. One, because of my Scottish upbringing. Two, because of my horror of phrases like ‘I needed the woman,’ which George repeated twice again.

‘And Matilda got tough’, said George, ‘after you and Skinny came to visit us. She had some friends and she packed up and went to them.’

‘I went after her,’ George said. ‘She insisted on being married, so I married her.’

‘That’s not a proper secret, then,’ I said. ‘The news of a mixed marriage soon gets about.’

‘I took care of that,’ George said. ‘Crazy as I was*, I took her to the Congo and married her there. She promised to keep quiet about it.’

‘Well, you can’t leave her now, surely,’ I said.

‘I’m going to get out of this place. I can’t stand the woman and I can’t stand the country. I didn’t realize what it would be like. Two years of the country and three months of my wife has been enough.’

‘Will you get a divorce?’

‘No, Matilda’s Catholic. She won’t divorce.’

He told me how he had written to tell his uncle of his trouble. ‘Except, of course, I didn’t say we were married, that would have been too much for him. I only said I’d had a child by a coloured woman and was expecting another, and he perfectly understood. He came at once by plane a few weeks ago. He’s made a settlement on her, providing she keeps her mouth shut about her association with me.’

‘Will she do that?’

‘Oh, yes, or she won’t get the money.’

‘Only, you won’t be able to marry again, will you?’

‘Not unless she dies’**’, he said. ‘And she’s as strong as an ox.’

‘Well, I’m sorry, George,’ I said.

* Crazy as I was ... – Хотя я потерял рассудок...

** Not unless she dies. – Только в случае ее смерти.

‘Good of you to say so, he said, ‘But I can see that you disapprove of me. Even my old uncle understood.’

‘Oh, George, I quite understand. You were lonely, I suppose.’

‘You didn’t even ask me to your twenty-first. If you and Skinny had been nicer to me, I would never have lost my head and married the woman, never.’

‘You didn’t ask me to your wedding,’ I said.

‘You’re catty, Needle, not like what you were in the old times when you used to tell us your wee stories.’

‘I’ll have to be getting along,’ I said.

‘Mind you keep the secret,’ George said.

‘Can’t I tell Skinny? He would be very sorry for you, George.’

‘You mustn’t tell anyone. Keep it a secret. Promise.’

‘Promise,’ I said. I understood that he wished to enforce some sort of bond between us with this secret, and I thought, ‘Oh, well, I suppose he’s lonely. Keeping his secret won’t do any harm.’

I returned to England with Skinny’s party just before the war.

I did not see George again till just before my death, five years ago.

Active vocabulary

1) to be set apart from smb; 2) extraordinary a; 3) haggard a; 4) visible a; 5) to stick together; 6) to keep in touch with smb; 7) callous a; 8) to disapprove of smb/smith; 9) to raise (tobacco, etc), 10) to be fed up with smb/smith; 11) to make a fuss (over smth); 12) to turn up; 13) to get a divorce; 14) to keep one’s mouth shut; 15) to lose one’s head.

Vocabulary tasks

Task 1. Arrange into pairs of antonyms: *visible, callous, to keep in touch, to keep one’s mouth shut, to disapprove (of), to lose one’s head, to be out of contact, to keep one’s head, to make no secret of smth, invisible, sensitive, to approve (of).*

Task 2. Express the same idea using the active vocabulary: *to be sick and tired of smth, to grow wheat, far from ordinary, to be in contact or correspondence, to happen, to get legally separated from one’s husband or wife, to keep smth secret, to become confused, to be controlled by fate in a peculiar way.*

Task 3. Study the word combinations, add one of your own to each group of three.

to raise *cotton* (*sugar-beet, cucumbers*);
to disapprove of smb's *taste* (*method, children*);
to make a fuss over one's *clothes* (*children, a trifle*);
to keep in touch with one's *parents* (*friend, best girl*);
a visible *effort* (*pleasure, plane*);
a haggard *face* (*man, soldier*);
an extraordinary *situation* (*dog, idea*);
a *callous answer* (*doctor, reaction*).

Task 4. Complete the sentences using the new vocabulary.

1. Yesterday my brother brought a homeless dog, and Mother said...
2. The neighbors above were giving a party, there was a terrible noise and finally...
3. It takes a lot of work to...
4. The teacher shook his head to show that...
5. The girl has been ill for a week, and now she looks...
6. We made great friends at the institute, and after our graduation...
7. Bob told us a secret and asked us...
8. You made us all unnerved because of your lost key. There is nothing to worry about. Please, don't...
9. From the very start Mary and Nelson led a cat and dog's life. Mary was sure to...
10. This painter has genius, that's why he...

Task 5. In the second episode of the story you may find the sentence: The giant of a man turned round to face the direction of my voice. Translate the underlined part as well as the similar examples below. Note the use of determinatives in the underlined parts.

Her baby of a husband knows nothing about it. A devil of a sea rolls in that bay (Byron). That aristocrat of a cat never catches mice.

Make up three examples of your own of the same kind.

Task 6. Pick out the new vocabulary used in the story in reference to George and Needle, Reproduce the situations.

Task 7. Translate the sentences. Use the active vocabulary.

1. Он потерял голову и испортил нашу работу. 2. Я сыта им по горло и не хочу поддерживать с ним контакт. 3. Я не вижу никаких видимых причин запрещать это. 4. До его предательства они всегда держались вместе. 5. Не беспокой его, что-то обязательно подвернет-

ся. 6. Давайте выращивать хлопок! – Какая удивительная/странная мысль. 7. Я не одобряю его поведения. Он бессердечный человек. 8. Она получила развод и оставила детей на попечение бывшего мужа. 9. Почему он такой изнуренный/измученный? – Ничего удивительного, вечно он суетится по пустякам. 10. Я вышел за пределы нашего лагеря. – Не говори никому./Держи язык за зубами.

Discussion of the story

Task 1. Paraphrase or explain:

1. I've lost all my looks, it's in my family.
2. Skinny vouched for me, he paid my fare, he sympathized by his action with my life although when he spoke of it he disapproved.
3. ... it vexes them to see someone else not bothering to do these things and yet getting away with it.
4. We could never discover how it was that George's style of tobacco farming gave the blacks opinions about themselves.
5. We flattered and 'Georged' him.
6. He tried to pump me for about half an hour...
7. 'Remember the times we had,' George said. We used to have times.' His large brown eyes began to water.
8. All responses to George had to be overdone.
9. Sometimes, in my impotence and need I secreted a venom ... which fell on Skinny or on anyone else who crossed my path.

Task 2. Answer the questions.

1. In what places is the story set? Can you specify the period of time?
2. Are the events of the story given in chronological order?
3. Who is the story-teller? Can you guess her age? What features does she have in common with the author?
4. What is peculiar about the story-teller's condition? Why is the reader shocked to find it? In what other story have you read about the same?
5. Who were the friends? How did each of them earn a living? Which of them is the central character, in your opinion?

6. Which of the friends always insisted on their sticking together? Point out the phrases he repeated to this effect. How did the others respond to them?

Task 3. Find proof in the text:

- a) that the story was written by Needle after her death;
- b) that Needle did not like her youth and would not agree to return it;
- c) that the friends found George too sensitive;
- d) that George had good reasons to be afraid of neglect;
- e) that George took special interest in Kathleen;
- f) that George enforced his secret on Needle.

Task 4. Divide the portion of the story you have read into episodes, give each episode a title; reproduce the episodes briefly.

Task 5. Reproduce in the form of a dialogue the scene when George spoke to Needle about his secret marriage.

Task 6. Dwell on Needle. Include the information suggested by the questions.

- 1. Why is Needle chosen by the author to be the story-teller?
- 2. Can you imagine Needle's appearance? Does the author give any hints at it?
- 3. What jobs did Needle do to earn her living? Did she take her profession seriously?
- 4. What was her professional ambition?
- 5. Why was it necessary for her to see the World? What Parts of the world did she visit?
- 6. What did Needle mean by saying that she was set apart from others?
- 7. How did other people treat her profession?
- 8. Why was she vexed when her friends called her lucky?
- 9. What did each of them mean? Did she think she was lucky?
- 10. What were the hardest moments of her professional life invisible to others?
- 11. What was her attitude to religion?
- 12. How did she treat people of other races? Why?
- 13. What were her relations with Skinny?

14. Do you think she liked George? Why did she have to 'George' him?

15. Why did she find his marriage dreadful?

Task 7. Dwell on George. Discuss the items suggested below:

- a) his appearance;
- b) the way he earned his living and the result of it;
- c) his ideas of friendship, the phrases he kept repeating;
- d) his manner of speaking; the way he changed the subject he disliked;
- e) his African marriage and the way he got rid of his wife and children.

Task 8. Agree or disagree with:

- a) George did not care about people's races.
- b) George's African marriage was disgusting.
- c) George felt responsible for what he did and how.
- d) George was the best friend of all the four.
- e) Whatever George did ended in ruin.
- f) His friends had a good reason to wish he were more callous.
- g) George chose Needle to discuss his African marriage with just to see her reaction.

Task 9. Discuss the conditions of afterlife as shown in this story and in 'When Will we Dead Awaken?'

Assignment 10

Muriel Spark

THE PORTOBELLO ROAD (Part II)

PART II

After the war Skinny returned to his studies. He had two more exams, over a period of eighteen months, and I thought I might marry him when the exams were over.

‘You might do worse than Skinny’*, Kathleen used to say to me on our Saturday morning excursions to the antique shops and stalls.

She too was getting on in years. Our families in Scotland were hinting that it was time we settled down with husbands. Kathleen was a little younger than me, but looked much older. She knew her chances were diminishing but at that time I did not think she cared very much. As for myself, the main attraction of marrying Skinny was his expeditions to Mesopotamia in future. My desire to marry him had to be stimulated by the continual reading of books about Babylon and Assyria; perhaps Skinny felt this, because he supplied the books.

Kathleen was more interested in marriage than I thought. During the war she had actually been engaged to an officer in the U.S. navy, who was killed. Now she kept an antique shop near Lambeth, was doing very nicely, lived in a Chelsea square, but for all that she must have wanted to be married and have children**. She would stop and look into all the prams which the mothers had left outside shops.

‘The poet Swinburne used to do that,’ I told her once.

‘Really? Did he want children of his own?’

‘I shouldn’t think so. He simply liked babies.’

* You might do worse than Skinny. – Ты могла найти себе кого-нибудь хуже Скинни.

** ... for all that she must have wanted to be married and have children. – ... несмотря на все это, она, должно быть, хотела выйти замуж и иметь детей.

Before Skinny's final exam he fell ill and was sent to a sanatorium in Switzerland.

'You're fortunate after all not to be married to him,' Kathleen said. 'You might have caught T.B.'

I was fortunate, I was lucky...so everyone kept telling me on different occasions. Although it annoyed me to hear, I knew they were right, but in a way that was different from what they meant. It took me very small effort to make a living; book reviews, odd jobs for Kathleen, speeches about literature, art, and life for industrialists. I was waiting to write about life and it seemed to me that the good fortune lay in this. And until then I was assured of my charmed life*, the necessities of existence always coming my way and I with far more leisure than anyone else. I thought of my type of luck after I became a Catholic and was being confirmed. The Bishop touches the candidate on the cheek, a symbolic reminder of the sufferings a Christian is supposed to undertake. I thought, how lucky, what a feathery symbol to stand for the hellish violence of its true meaning**.

I visited Skinny twice in the two years that he was in the sanatorium. He almost recovered and expected to be home in a few months. I told Kathleen after my last visit.

'Maybe I'll marry Skinny when he's well again.'

'Make it definite, Needle, and not so much of the maybe. You don't know when you're well off,' she said.

This was five years ago, in the last year of my life, Kathleen and I had become close friends. We met several times each week, and after our Saturday morning excursions in the Portobello Road very often I would accompany Kathleen to her aunt's house in Kent for a long week-end.

One day in the June of that year I met Kathleen specially for lunch because she had phoned me to say she had news.

'Guess who came into the shop this afternoon,' she said.

'Who?'

'George.'

* And until then I was assured of my charmed life. — И до того времени я была уверена в своей неуязвимости.

** I thought, how lucky, what a feathery symbol to stand for the hellish violence of its true meaning. — Я подумала: как удачно, какой воздушно-легкий символ дьявольского насилия в его подлинном смысле.

We had half imagined George was dead. We had received no letters in the past ten years. Early in the war we had heard rumors of his keeping a nightclub in Durban, but nothing after that. We could have made inquiries if we had felt moved to do so*.

At one time, when we discussed him, Kathleen had said, 'I ought to get in touch with poor George. But then I think he would white back. He would demand a regular correspondence again.'

Skinny said, 'He's probably gone native. With his coffee concubine and a dozen kids.'

'Perhaps he's dead,' Kathleen said.

I did not speak of George's marriage, nor of any of his confidences in the hotel at Bulawayo. As the years passed we never mentioned him except in passing, as someone more or less dead so far as we were conceded.

Kathleen was excited about George's turning up. She had forgotten her impatience with him in former days; she said, 'It was so wonderful to see old George. He seemed to need a friend, feels neglected, out of touch with things.'

'He needs mothering, I suppose.'

Kathleen declared, 'That's exactly the case with George. It always has been. I can see it now.'

She seemed ready to come to any happy conclusion about George. In the course of the morning he had told her of his wartime nightclub in Durban. It was clear he had not mentioned Matilda. He had put on weight, Kathleen told me, but he could carry it**

I was curious to see this version of George, but I was leaving for Scotland next day and did not see him till September of that year just before my death.

While I was in Scotland I gathered from Kathleen's letters that she was seeing George very often, finding enjoyable company in him, looking after him, 'You'll be surprised to see how he has developed.' Apparently

* We could have made inquiries if we had felt moved to do so. – Мы могли бы навести справки, если бы нам действительно хотелось.

** He had put on weight, ... but he could carry it. – Он стал тучнее, ... но ему это шло.

he would come to help Kathleen in her shop most days, 'it makes him feel useful' as she maternally expressed it. He had an old relative in Kent whom he visited at week-ends; this old lady lived a few miles from Kathleen's aunt, which made it easy for them to travel down together on Saturdays, and go for long country walks.

'You'll see such a difference in George,' Kathleen said on my return to London in September. I was to meet him that night, a Saturday. Kathleen's aunt was abroad, the maid on holiday, and I was to keep Kathleen company in the empty house.

George had left London for Kent a few days earlier. 'He's actually helping with the harvest down there!' Kathleen told me lovingly.

Kathleen and I planned to travel down together, but on that Saturday she was unexpectedly delayed in London on some business. It was arranged that I should go ahead of her in the early afternoon to see the provisions for our party; Kathleen had invited George to dinner at her aunt's house that night.

'I should be with you by seven,' she said. 'Sure you won't mind the empty house? I hate arriving at empty houses, myself.'

I said no, I liked an empty house.

So I did, when I got there. I had never found the house more likeable. I discovered that I wouldn't need to go shopping. Kathleen's aunt had left many and delicate supplies. A house in which there are no people can be a most quiet good place. As I wandered through the house, opening windows to let in the pale yellow air of September, I was not conscious that I, Needle, was taking up any space at all, I might have been a ghost.

The only thing to be fetched was the milk. I waited till after four when the milking should be done, then set off for the farm which lay across two fields at the back of the orchard. There, when the milkman was handing me the bottle, I saw George.

'Hallo, George,' I said.

'Needle! What are you doing here?' he said.

'Fetching milk,' I said.

'So am I. Well, it's good to see you, I must say.'

As we paid the farm-hand, George said, 'I'll walk back with you part of the way. But I mustn't stop, my old cousin's without any milk for her tea. How's Kathleen?'

'She was kept in London. She's coming on later, about seven, she expects.'

We had reached the end of the first field. George's way led to the left and on to the main road.

'We'll see you tonight, then?' I said.

'Yes, and talk about old times.'

'Grand,' I said.

But George got over the stile with me.

'Look here,' he said. 'I'd like to talk to you, Needle.'

'We'll talk tonight, George. Better not keep your cousin waiting for the milk.' I found speaking to him almost as if he were a child.

'No, I want to talk to you alone. This is a good opportunity.'

We began to cross the second field. I had been hoping to have the house to myself for a couple more hours and I was rather annoyed.

'See,' he said suddenly, 'that haystack.'

'Yes,' I said absently.

'Let's sit there and talk. I'd like to see you up on a haystack again. I still keep that photo. Remember that time when –'

'I found the needle,' I said very quickly, to get it over.

But I was glad to rest. The stack had been broken up, but we managed to find a nest in it. I put my bottle of milk in the hay for coolness. George placed his carefully at the foot of the stack.

'My old cousin has lost her memory, poor soul. She hasn't the least sense of time. If I tell her I've only been gone ten minutes she'll believe it.'

I giggled, and looked at him. His face had grown much larger, his lips full, wide, and with a ripe colour that is strange in a man. His brown eyes were abounding as before with some inarticulate plea*.

'So you're going to marry Skinny after all these years?'

'I really don't know, George.'

* His brown eyes were abounding as before with some inarticulate plea. – Как и прежде, его карие глаза были преисполнены какой-то немой мольбой.

‘You played him up properly*.’

‘It isn’t for you to judge. I have my own reasons for what I do.’

‘Don’t get sharp,’ he said, ‘I was only funning.’ To prove it, he lifted a tuft of hay and brushed my face with it.

‘D’you know,’ he said next, ‘I didn’t think you and Skinny treated me very decently in Rhodesia.’

‘Well, we were busy, George. And we were younger then, we had a lot to do and see. After all, we could see you any other time, George.’

‘A touch of selfishness**,’ he said.

‘I’ll have to be getting along, George.’ I made to get down from the stack.

He pulled me back. ‘Wait, I’ve got something to tell you.’

‘O.K, George, tell me.’

‘First promise not to tell Kathleen. She wants it kept a secret so that she can tell you herself.’

‘All right. Promise.’

‘I’m going to marry Kathleen.’

‘But you’re already married.’

Sometimes I heard news of Matilda from the one Rhodesian family with whom I was in correspondence. They referred to her as ‘George’s Dark Lady’ and of course they did not know he was married to her.

‘I married Matilda in the Congo,’ George was saying.

‘It would still be bigamy,’ I said.

He was furious when I used that word bigamy. He lifted a handful of hay as if he would throw it in my face, but controlling himself meanwhile he fanned it at me playfully.

‘I’m not sure that the Congo marriage was valid,’ he continued. ‘Anyway, as far as I’m concerned, it isn’t.’

‘You can’t do a thing like that,’ I said.

‘I need Kathleen. She’s been decent to me. I think we were always meant for each other, me and Kathleen.’

‘I’ll have to be going,’ I said.

* You played him up properly. – Ты уже достаточно им наигралась.

** A touch of selfishness – эгоистичная нотка.

But he put his knee over my ankles, so that I couldn't move. I sat still and gazed into space.

He tickled my face with a wisp of hay.

'Smile up, Needle,' he said; 'let's talk like old times.'

'Well?'

'No one knows about my marriage to Matilda except you and me.'

'And Matilda,' I said.

'She'll hold her tongue so long as she gets her payments.'

'Let me go, George.'

'You promised to keep it a secret,' he said, 'you promised.'

'Yes, I promised,'

'And now that you're going to marry Skinny, we'll be properly coupled off as we should have been years ago*. We should have been – but youth! – or youth got in the way, didn't it?'

'Life got in the way,' I said. 'But everything's going to be all right now. You'll keep my secret, won't you? You promised.' He had released my feet. I moved a little farther from him.

I said, 'If Kathleen intends to marry you, I shall tell her that you're already married.'

'You wouldn't do a dirty trick like that, Needle? You're going to be happy with Skinny, you wouldn't stand in the way of my –'

'I must, Kathleen's my best friend,' I said swiftly.

He looked as if he would murder me and he did, he stuffed hay into my mouth until it could hold no more, kneeling on my body to keep it still, holding both my wrists tight in his huge left hand. I saw the red full lines of his mouth and the white slit of his teeth last thing on earth. Not another soul passed by as he pressed my body into the stack, as he made a deep nest for me. Then George climbed down, took up his bottle of milk, and went his way. I suppose that was why he looked so unwell when I stood, nearly five years later, by the barrow in the Portobello Road and said in easy tones, 'Hallo, George!'

* ...we'll properly coupled off as we should have been years ago. – ...мы станем семейными парами, как нам давно уже следовало быть.

The Haystack Murder was one of the notorious crimes of that year. My friends said, 'A girl who had everything to live for.'

After a search that lasted twenty hours, when my body was found, the evening papers said, 'Needle' is found in haystack!''

Kathleen, speaking from that Catholic point of view which takes some getting used to, said, 'She was at Confession only the day before she died – wasn't she lucky?'

The poor farm-hand who sold us the milk was questioned hour after hour by the local police, and later by Scotland Yard. So was George. He admitted walking as far as the haystack with me, but he denied stopping there.

'You hadn't seen your friend for ten years?' the Inspector asked him.

'And you didn't stop to have a chat?'

'No. We'd arranged to meet later at dinner. My cousin was waiting for the milk, I couldn't stop.'

The old soul, his cousin, said that he hadn't been gone more than ten minutes in all, and she believed it to the day of her death a few months later. There was the microscopic evidence of hay on George's jacket, of course, but the same evidence was on every man's jacket in the district that fine harvest year. Unfortunately, the milkman's hands were even mightier than George's. The marks on my wrists had been done by such hands, so the laboratory charts indicated. But the wrist-marks weren't enough to pin down the crime to either man!*

Kathleen, to prove that George had absolutely no motive, told the police that she was engaged to him. George thought this a little foolish. They checked up on his life in Africa, right back to his living with Matilda. But the marriage didn't come out – who would think of looking up registers in the Congo? Not that this would have proved any motive for murder. All the same, George was relieved when the inquiries were over without the marriage to Matilda being disclosed. He was able to have his nervous breakdown at the same time as Kathleen had hers, and they

* But the wrist-marks weren't enough to pin down the crime to either man. – Но следы на запястьях не были достаточны для того, чтобы обвинить в преступлении того или другого.

recovered together and got married. The Haystack Murder was one of the unsolved crimes that year.

Shortly afterwards the farm-hand emigrated to Canada to start afresh, with the help of Skinny who felt sorry for him.

After seeing George taken away home by Kathleen that Saturday in the Portobello Road, I thought that perhaps I might be seeing more of him in similar circumstances, The next Saturday I looked out for him, and at last there he was, without Kathleen, half-worried, half-hopeful.

I dashed his hopes. I said, ‘Hallo, George!’

He looked in my direction. I thought to myself, ‘He looks as if he had a mouthful of hay.’ It was the new bristly maize-coloured beard and moustache surrounding his great mouth that suggested the thought, gay and lyrical as life.

‘Halo, George!’ I said again.

I might have been inspired to say more on that agreeable morning, but he didn’t wait. He was away down a side-street and along another street and down one more, zig-zag, as far as he could take himself from the Portobello Road.

Nevertheless he was back again next week. Poor Kathleen had brought him in her car. She left it at the top of the street, and got out with him, holding him tight by the arm. She took no notice of the wares, clinging close to George, and, poor Kathleen – I hate to say how she looked.

And George was haggard. His eyes seemed to have got smaller as if he had been recently in pain. He advanced up the road with Kathleen on his arm.

‘Oh, George!’ I said. ‘You don’t look at all well, George!’

‘Look!’ said George. ‘Over there by the hardware barrow. That’s Needle.’

Kathleen was crying. ‘Come back home, dear,’ she said.

‘Oh, you don’t look well, George!’ I said.

They took him to a nursing home. He was fairly quiet, except on Saturday mornings when they had a hard time of it to keep him indoors and away from the Portobello Road.

But a couple of months later he did escape. It was a Monday.

They searched for him in the Portobello Road, but actually he had gone off to Kent to the village near the scene of the Haystack Murder. There he went to the police and gave himself up, but they could tell from the way he was talking that there was something wrong with the man.

‘I saw Needle in the Portobello Road three Saturdays running,’ he explained, ‘and they put me in a private ward but I got away while the nurses were seeing to the new patient. You remember the murder of Needle – well, I did it. Now you know the truth, and that will keep bloody Needle’s mouth shut.’

Dozens of poor mad fellows confess to every murder. The police obtained an ambulance to take him back to the nursing home. He wasn’t there long. Kathleen gave up her shop and devoted herself to looking after him at home. But she found that the Saturday mornings were difficult. He insisted on going to see me in the Portobello Road and would come back to insist that he’d murdered Needle. Once he tried to tell her something about Matilda, but Kathleen was so kind, I don’t think he had the courage to remember what he had to say.

Skinny had always been rather reserved with George since the murder. But he was kind to Kathleen. It was he who persuaded them to emigrate to Canada so that George should be well out of reach of the Portobello Road.

George has recovered somewhat in Canada but of course he will never be the old George again, as Kathleen writes to Skinny. ‘That Haystack tragedy did for George,’ she writes. ‘I feel sorrier for George sometimes than I am for poor Needle. But I do often have Masses said for Needle’s soul.’

I doubt if George will ever see me again in the Portobello Road. He broods much over the snapshot he took of us on the haystack. Kathleen does not like the photograph, I don’t wonder. For my part, I consider it quite a jolly photo but I don’t think we were any of us so lovely as we look in it. Skinny with his humorous expression, I secure in my difference from

the rest, Kathleen with her head prettily perched on her hand, each reflecting fearlessly in the face of George's camera the glory of the world, as if it would never pass.

Active vocabulary

1) to get on in years; 2) to settle down; 3) leisure n; 4) rumour n; 5) maternal(ly), a, adv; 6) decent a; 7) to stand in the way of smth; 8) notorious, a; 9) to admit v; 10) crime n, criminal a,n; 11) agreeable a; 12) to brood vt.

Vocabulary tasks

Task 1. Give the corresponding:

a) adverbs: *decent, notorious, agreeable, maternal, callous, visible.*

b) nouns: *decent, to admit, notorious, to disapprove, visible, callous, to divorce.*

Task 2. Arrange into pairs of antonyms: agreeable, to admit, notorious, decent, leisure, to deny, famous, work, disagreeable, indecent.

Task 3. Point out the parts of speech the underlined words belong to. Translate the sentences.

1. For common decency's sake, stop making so much noise. 2. The airport is closed down: visibility has been nil for days. 3. She felt elated, she could hardly conceal her maternal pride. 4. Nick hated the idea that he might be rumoured into a marriage. 5. This is one of the places where the leisured people of Paris spend their week-ends. 6. When the man was speaking aggressively, the stewardess only smiled agreeably in response. 7. Look, the cat has a criminal intention: he is going to steal that fish. 8. Brooding over the accident won't help matters, Mum.

Task 4. Study the word combinations, point out the one in each group of three that was used by the author. Reproduce the situations.

rumors of *his success (marriage, keeping a nightclub);*

to look after the children (to care for them, to express it) maternally;

to treat people (to behave, to speak of others) decently;
to be (to get, to stand) in the way of one's happiness;
a notorious general (poem, crime);
to admit one's mistake (seeing the girl home, walking as far as the haystack);
a deliberate (recent, unsolved) crime;
an agreeable excursion (morning, child);
to brood over the past (the snapshot, one's fate).

Task 5. Translate the sentences. Make up sentences of your own with the underlined parts.

1. His mother was visibly getting on in years. 2. It's high time for Tom to marry a decent girl and settle down: he is over thirty. 3. Breaking the arrest was a crime unspeakable. 4. Francis Drake was a famous seaman in England and a notorious pirate in Spain. 5. Most of his leisure was devoted to his hobby. 6. The girl admitted meeting Tom at the theatre but denied speaking to him. 7. Now that nothing stands in the way of our research we must work fourteen hours a day. 8. The doctor asked the lady never to brood over disagreeable things.

Task 6. Recall the situations:

- a) when you suddenly noticed somebody getting on in years;
- b) when something stood in the way of your progress;
- c) when an odd rumour reached you;
- d) when an agreeable morning turned into a disagreeable afternoon;
- e) when you had to admit being wrong.

Task 7. The sentences below are taken from the story. Bring out the difference in the meaning of the verb 'to do' in them by translating the sentences.

1. 'You might do worse than Skinny'. 2. Now she (Kathleen) kept an antique shop near Lambeth, was doing very nicely. 3. 'You would not do a dirty trick like that, Needle'. 4. He looked as if he would murder me and he did.' 5. 'That Haystack tragedy did for George.'

Task 8*. Translate the sentences. Use the active vocabulary.

1. Ходят слухи, что он наконец-то остепенился. 2. Она всегда относилась к нему по-матерински. 3. Ему пришлось признать, что он освободил преступника. 4. – Какой милый, порядочный молодой человек! – Не позволяй его внешности ввести тебя в заблуждение. Он пользуется дурной славой. 5. – О чем ты размышляешь? – Мне интересно, почему мы так быстро старимся. 6. Не мешай ему. Он жесток и бессердечный, он тебя не пощадит. 7. Вы можете приготовить это лакомство, не спеша, в свободное время (на досуге). 8. Он не смог скрыть своего разочарования, когда взобрался на гору. 9. Он нежелательный гость. Брауны не смогли почувствовать себя свободно в его присутствии. 10. Она потеряла самообладание и расплакалась. Она горько плакала в течение часа, а потом взяла себя в руки.

Discussion of the story

Task 1. Paraphrase or explain:

1. You don't know when you are well off.
2. As the years passed we seldom mentioned him (George) except in passing, as someone more or less dead so far as we were concerned.
3. ...at last there he was, without Kathleen, half-worried, half-hopeful. I dashed his hopes. I said, 'Hallo, George!'

Task 2. Give as much information as possible round the suggestions from the story.

1. I thought I might marry him when the exams were over.
2. Kathleen was more interested in marriage than I thought.
3. I was fortunate; I was lucky...
4. Kathleen and I had become close friends.
5. We had half imagined George was dead.
6. Kathleen was excited about George's turning up.
7. I was to keep Kathleen company in the empty house.
8. The only thing to be fetched was the milk.
9. 'I'd like to talk to you, Needle'.

10. 'I'm going to marry Kathleen.'
11. He looked as if he would murder me and he did...
12. The Haystack Murder was one of the notorious crimes of that year.
13. I thought that perhaps I might be seeing more of him in similar circumstances.
14. They took him to a nursing home.
15. George has recovered somewhat in Canada...

Task 3. Retell the story of the haystack murder as if you were:

a) Kathleen; b) Skinny; c) the farm-hand.

Task 4. Imagine George and Kathleen's talk when they met that Saturday evening in Needle's absence.

Task 5. State whose utterances or thoughts these are, their full meaning and the circumstances they arose in:

1. 'He's probably gone native.'
2. 'He needs mothering.'
3. 'I hate arriving at empty houses.'
4. 'I have my own reasons for what I do.'
5. 'I'm not sure that the Congo marriage was valid.'
6. 'A girl who had everything to live for.'
7. She was at Confession only the day before she died – wasn't she lucky?'
8. 'He looks as if he had a mouthful of hay.'

Task 6. Answer the questions.

1. What new information did you gather about the period of time the story develops in? about Needle's religious views? her notion of luck?

2. Why does Needle dislike herself and her friends in the snapshot? Why does she refuse to idealize youth?

3. Did Needle's friends guess the meaning of her find of the needle in the haystack correctly? How would you interpret it? Has the proverb 'to look for a needle in a haystack' much to do with the story?

4. What other errors can you find in her friends' way of thinking?

5. Was Needle really set apart from other people? In what way, if any?
6. Was Needle right when she refused to keep George's secret?
7. Who is the object of the author's investigation in the story?
8. Was George's murder of Needle deliberate or did it happen by chance? What change of the circumstances might have made the crime impossible?
9. Was George a madman?
10. Where did George get his schooling of cruelty?
11. How did George earn his living?
12. Did George love Kathleen? What made him marry her? Were the reasons he gave Needle convincing?
13. What ruin did George bring to each of his friends?
14. How does the author interpret George's nature? What hints at it can you pick in the story?
15. How many friends are there in the snapshot? Who is set apart? What is the symbolic meaning of it?

Task 7. Sum up: a) Needle; b) George; c) Kathleen; d) Skinny.

Assignment 11

William Somerset Maugham

EPISODE (Part I)

W. S. Maugham (1874 – 1965) was an English novelist, short-story writer, playwright and literary critic. Born in Paris, he got his education in England and in Germany. He was a medical man by profession, but the success of his first novel *Liza of Lambeth* (1897) made him take up writing professionally. His best-known novels are *Of Human Bondage* (1915), *The Moon and Sixpence* (1919), *Cakes and Ale* (1930), *Theatre* (1937), *The Razor's Edge* (1944) and some others.

Being a prolific writer, Maugham published more than ten collections of short stories in his lifetime. The story *Episode* is one of the sequences told by Ned Preston, a prison visitor, who was keenly interested in complexities of human nature.

PART I

It was quite a small party, because our hostess liked general conversation; we never sat down to dinner more than eight, and generally only six, and after dinner we went up to the drawing-room. I was glad on arriving to find that I knew everyone. There were two nice clever women besides our hostess and two men besides myself. One was my friend Ned Preston.

Ned Preston was a Scot, a good-humored, merry soul, with a gift for telling a story. He was always looking for an occupation to satisfy his desire for activity. I don't know how he heard that at Wormwood Scrubs* they were in want of prison visitors, but the idea took his fancy so he went to the Home Office** and saw the official in charge of prisons to offer his services. Ned Preston satisfied the official who interviewed him that he

* Wormwood Scrubs – тюрьма в Лондоне.

** The Home Office – Министерство внутренних дел.

was in every Way reliable, and from the beginning he got on well with the governor, the warders, and the prisoners.

One of Ned's duties was to see prisoners through the first difficult days of their confinement. They were often badly shaken by their trial and sentence. Sometimes they cried hysterically; sometimes they could neither eat nor sleep. Ned's business was to cheer them, and his natural kindness often worked wonders. If they were anxious about their wives and children, he would go to see them and if they were hard up, provide them with money. He brought them news so that they might get over awful feeling that they were shut away from the common interests of their fellow-men. He would advise them about their future, and when the time approached for their release see what jobs they were fitted for and their persuade employers to give them a chance to make good.

Since everyone is interested in crime it was inevitable that sooner or later, with Ned there, the conversation should turn upon it. It was after dinner and we were sitting comfortably in the drawing-room with drinks in our hands.

'Had any interesting cases at the Scabs lately?' I asked Ned.

'No, nothing much.'

He narrated two or three anecdotes*. They tended to prove a point he was fond of making, that in what till we all got democratic in England were called the lower orders there was more passion, more romance, more disregard of consequence that could ever be found in the well-to-do and educated classes.

'Because the working man doesn't read much,' he said, 'because he has no great gift for expressing himself, you think he has no imagination. You're wrong. He extravagantly imaginative. You think he has no nerves. You're wrong again. He's a bundle of nerves.'

Then he told us a story which I shall tell as best as I can in my own words.

Fred Manson was a good-looking fellow, tall, well-made, with blue eyes, good features, and a friendly, agreeable smile, but what made him really remarkable so that people turned round in the streets to stare at him

* anecdote – здесь: эпизод, история.

was that he had a thick head of hair, with a great wave in it, of a deep rich red. It was really a great beauty. Perhaps it was this that gave him so sensual a look. His eyebrows were thick, only a little lighter than his hair, and he was lucky enough not to have that ugly skin that so disfigures red-heads. His was a smooth olive. His eyes were bold, and when he smiled or laughed, which he did constantly, his expression was wonderful. He was twenty-two and he gave you the rather pleasant impression of just loving to be alive. It was inevitable that with such looks and above all with that troubling sexuality he should have success with women. He was charming, tender, and passionate, but immensely promiscuous. He had a kindly nature, but somehow or other he made it quite clear to the objects of his passing fancy that all he wanted was a little bit of fun and it was impossible for him to remain faithful to anyone.

Fred was a postman. He worked in Brixton. It is a densely populated part of London, a district of innumerable streets lined with little houses inhabited by the people who work in the neighborhood and also by clerks, shop-assistants, skilled workers of one sort or another. He was strong and healthy and it was a pleasure to him to walk from street to street delivering the letters. He was a sociable creature. It was never long before he was well-known. After a time, his job was changed. His duty then was to go to the red-pillar boxes into which the letters were put, empty them, and take them, and take the contents, to the main post-office of the district. His bag would be pretty heavy sometimes by the time he was through, but he was proud of his strength and the weight only made him laugh.

One day he was emptying a box in one of the better streets, a street of semi-detached houses, and had just closed his bag when a girl came running along.

‘Postman,’ she cried, ‘take this letter, will you. I want it to go by this post most particularly.’

He gave her his good-natured smile.

‘I never mind obliging a lady,’ he said, putting down his bag and opening it.

‘I wouldn’t trouble you, only it’s urgent,’ she said as she handed him the letter she had in her hand.

‘Who is it to – a feller?’ he grinned.

‘None of your business.’

‘All right. But I tell you this, he’s no good. Don’t you trust him.’

‘You’ve got a nerve,’ she said.

‘So they tell me.’

He took off his cap and ran his hand through his mop of curling red hair. The sight of it made her gasp.

‘Where do you get your perm?’ she asked with a giggle.

‘I’ll show you one of these days if you like.’

He was looking down at her with his amused eyes, and there was something about him that gave her a funny feeling.

‘Well, I must be on my way,’ he said. ‘If I don’t get on with the job pretty damn quick I don’t know what’ll happen to the country.’

‘I’m not detaining you,’ she said coolly.

‘That’s where you make a mistake,’ he answered.

He gave her a look that made her heart beat fast and she felt herself blushing all over. She turned away and ran back to the house. Fred noticed it was four doors away from the pillar-box. He felt pleased with himself. During the next few days he looked at the house whenever he passed it, but he never saw the girl. One afternoon he ran across her by chance just as he was entering the street in which she lived.

‘Hello,’ he said, stopping.

‘Hello.’

She blushed scarlet.

‘Haven’t seen you about lately.’

‘You haven’t missed much.’

‘That’s what you think.’

She was prettier than he remembered, dark-haired, dark-eyed, rather tall, with a good figure, a pale skin, and very white teeth.

‘What about coming to the pictures with me one evening?’

‘Taking a lot for granted, aren’t you?’

‘It pays,’ he said with impudent charming grin.

She couldn’t help laughing.

‘Not with me, it doesn’t.’

‘Oh, come on. One’s only young once.’

There was something so attractive in him that she couldn’t bring herself to give him a saucy answer.

‘I couldn’t really. My people wouldn’t like me going out with a fellow I don’t know. You see, I’m the only one they have and they think a rare lot of me. Why, I don’t even know your name.’

‘Well, I can tell you, can’t I? Fred. Fred Manson. Can’t you say you’re going to the pictures with a girl friend?’

She had never felt before what she was feeling then. She didn’t know whether it was pain or pleasure.

‘I suppose I could do that.’

They fixed the night, the time, the place. Fred was waiting for her and they went in, but when the picture started and he put his arm round her waist, without a word, her eyes fixed on the screen, she quietly took it away. He took hold of her hand, but she withdrew it. He was surprised. That wasn’t the way girls usually behaved. He walked home with her after the show. She told him her name. Grace Carter. Her father had a shop of his own. He was a draper and had four assistants. Grace was a student at London University. When she got her degree she was going to be a school teacher. Her father had started life as an errand boy, then become a draper’s assistant, and because he was hardworking, honest, and intelligent was now owner of a prosperous little business. Success had given him grand ideas for his only child. He didn’t want her to have anything to do with trade. He hoped she’d marry a professional man perhaps, or at least someone in the City.

When they reached the corner of her street Grade held out her hand.

‘You’d better not come to the door,’ she said.

‘Aren’t you going to kiss me good night?’

‘I’m not.’

‘Why?’

‘Because I don’t want to.’

‘You’ll come to the pictures again, won’t you?’

‘I think I’d better not.’

‘Oh, come on!’

There was such a warm urgency in his voice that she felt as though her knees would give way.

‘Will you behave if I do?’

He nodded.

He scratched his head when he left her. Funny girl. He had never met anyone like her. There was something in her voice that got you. It was warm and soft. He tried to think what it was like. It was like as if the words kissed you. Sounded silly, that did, but that’s just what it was like.

From then on they went to the pictures once or twice a week. After a while she allowed him to put his arm round her waist and to hold her hand, but she never let him go farther than that.

‘Have you ever been kissed by a fellow?’ he asked her once.

‘No, I haven t,’ she said simply. ‘My ma’s funny, she says you’ve got to keep a man’s respect.’

‘I’d give anything in the world just to kiss you, Gracie.’

‘Don’t be so silly.’

‘Won’t you let me just once?’ She shook h a head. ‘Why not?’

‘Because I like you too much,’ she said suddenly and then walked quickly away from him.

It gave him quite a turn. He wanted her as he had never wanted a woman before. What she had said finished him. He’d been thinking of her a lot, and he had looked forward to the evenings they spent together as he had never looked forward to anything in his life. For the first time he was uncertain of himself. She was above him in every way, what with her father making money hand over fist* and her education and everything, and him only a postman. They had made a date for the following Friday night and he was anxious that she might not come. He repeated to himself over and over again what she’d said: perhaps it meant that she’d made up her mind to drop him. When at last he saw her walking along the street he almost sobbed with relief. That evening he neither put his arm round her nor took her hand and when he walked her home he never said a word.

‘You’re very quiet tonight, Fred,’ she said at last. ‘What’s the matter with you?’

* and over fist – быстро и легко.

He walked a few steps before he answered.

‘I don’t like to tell you.’

She stopped suddenly and looked up at him. There was terror on her face.

‘Tell me whatever it is,’ she said unsteadily.

‘I’m gone; I can’t help myself. I didn’t know what it was to love like I love you.’

‘Oh, is that all? You gave me such a fright. I thought you were going to say you were going to be married.’

‘Me? What d’you take me for? It’s you I want to marry.’

‘Well, what’s to prevent you, silly?’

‘Gracie, d’you mean it?’

He flung his arms round her and kissed her full on the mouth. She didn’t resist. She returned his kiss and he felt in her a passion as eager as his own.

They arranged that Gracie should tell her parents that she was engaged to him and that on Sunday he would come and be introduced to them. It was not till after dinner on Sunday that Gracie broke her news. George Carter was not a very tall man, with a high colour, who with increasing prosperity had put on weight. Like many other employers who have risen from the working class he was a slave-driver and he got as much work out of his assistants for as little money as was possible. He had an eye for everything and he wouldn’t put up with any nonsense, and he was reasonable and even kindly, so that they did not dislike him. Mrs. Carter was a quiet, nice woman, with a pleasant face and the remains of good looks. They were both in the early fifties, for they had married late after ‘walking out’ for nearly ten years.

‘Well, I suppose it had to come sooner or later,’ said her father. ‘What’s his name?’

‘Fred Manson.’

‘A fellow you met at college?’

‘No. You must have seen him about. He clears our pillar-box.’

Oh, Gracie, you can’t mean it. You can’t marry a common postman, not after all the education we’ve given you.’

For an instant Mr. Carter was speechless.

‘Your ma’s right, my girl,’ he burst out now. ‘You can’t throw yourself away like that. Why, it’s ridiculous.’

‘I’m not throwing myself away. You wait till see him.’

Mrs. Carter began to cry.

‘It’s such a come-down*. I shall never be able to hold up my head again.’

‘Oh, ma, don’t talk like that. He’s a nice fellow and he’s got a good job.’

‘How did you get to know him?’ Mr. Carter interrupted. ‘What sort of family has he got?’

‘His pa drives one of the post-office vans,’ Gracie answered.

‘Working-class people.’

‘Well, what of it? His pa’s worked twenty-four years for the post-office and they think a lot of him.’

Mrs. Carter began crying again. Gracie loved her parents and couldn’t bear to see them so distressed.

‘I’m sorry, Ma, I knew it would be a disappointment to you, but I can’t help it, I can’t really. I love him so. I love him so terribly. I’m sure you’ll like him when you see him. We’re going for a walk this afternoon. Can’t I bring him back to supper?’

‘I don’t like it and it’s no good pretending I do, but I suppose we’d better have a look at him.’

Supper passed off better than might have been expected. Fred wasn’t shy and he talked to Gracie’s parents as though he had known them all his life. After he had gone and they were alone in their bedroom Mr. and Mrs. Carter talked him over.

‘He is handsome, you can’t deny that,’ she said.

‘Handsome is that handsome does. D’you think he is after her money?’

‘Well, he must know that you’ve got a tidy little bit, but he’s in love with her all right.’

‘Oh, what makes you think that?’

* It’s such a come-down. – Это такое унижение для нас.

‘Why, you’ve only got to see the way he looks at her.’

‘Well! that’s something at all events.’

In the end the Carters withdrew their opposition on the condition that the young things shouldn’t marry until Gracie had taken her degree. That would give them a year, and at the back of their minds was the hope that by then she would have changed her mind. They saw a good deal of Fred after that. He spent every Sunday with them. Little by little they began quite to like him. He was so easy, so gay, so full of high spirits, and above all so obviously head over ears in love with Gracie that after a while even Mr. Carter was prepared to admit that he did not seem a bad fellow. Fred and Gracie were happy. She went to London every day to attend lectures and worked hard. They spent blissful evenings together. He gave her a very nice engagement ring and often took her out to dinner in the West End and to a play. On fine Sundays he drove her out into the country in a car that he said a friend had lent him. They talked of the little flat they would have when they were married and the fun it would be to furnish it. They were more in love with each other than ever.

Active vocabulary

1) hostess n; 2) to get on with smb; 3) to see smb through smth; 4) to work wonders; 5) to be hard up; 6) to get over smth; 7) the lower orders; 8) urgent a, urgency n; 9) to blush vi; 10) to take smth/smb for granted; 11) impudent a; 12) prosperous a; 13) to have smth to do with smb/smth; 14) to break the news; 15) to be after smth.

Vocabulary tasks

Task 1. Give the corresponding nouns, translate them: *urgent, to blush, impudent, prosperous, to imagine.*

Task 2. Express the same notion using the new vocabulary: *the woman who entertains guests; to go red; shameless, unblushing; successful in business; demanding immediate action or attention; to be too sure of smb or smth; social classes of humble position; to be short of money; to make a surprising effect; to help smb to live through a hard period; to report fresh events; to want, to try to obtain; to have a connection with smb or smth.*

Task 3. Paraphrase using the new vocabulary.

1. His telegram must be sent off as quickly as possible. 2. Tom tried to show by his manner that he had never seen or spoken to those people. 3. The girl saw her mistake and went red. 4. The painter was too sure of his talent and was disappointed when his new picture passed unnoticed. 5. – Do you know that Granny is coming? Here is the telegram. – Go upstairs and tell Father about it. 6. His firm was not successful in business and had to move from town to town far too often. 7. Take this tablet for your headache. It will do you good in no time. 8. The family was constantly in want of money and finally had to emigrate from Ireland. 9. When Edwin and Bella got married, evil tongues spoke that he wanted her wealth. 10. He was never on good terms with his mother-in-law.

Task 4. Study the word combinations. Make up a sentence of your own with one from each group of three.

to have *nothing (something, very little)* to do with that accident;
to take *one's wife (success, smb's agreement)* for granted;
an urgent *matter (problem, call)*;
the *hopes (interests, living conditions)* of the low orders;
an impudent *smile (look, remark)*;
to get over *one's grief (the operation, illness)*;
a *considerate (talkative, marvellous)* host;
to get on *well (swimmingly, like a house on fire)* with each other;
to see smb through *a predicament (the exams, one's struggle)*;
a *prosperous man (factory, family)*;
to be after *glory (fame, success)*;
to blush with *joy (pleasure, shame)*.

Task 5. Reproduce the situations in the story when the author uses the adjectives 'urgent' and 'prosperous' and the corresponding nouns, too.

Task 6. Recall the situations in your life:

- a) when somebody saw you through something;
- b) when you took something for granted by mistake;
- c) when you had to break unpleasant news;
- d) when you had an urgent problem to solve.

Task 7. Translate the sentences. Use the active vocabulary.

1. Он оправится от этого шока, ведь время творит чудеса, не правда ли? 2. Мы нуждались в деньгах, а он поддерживал нас все эти ужасные полгода. 3. Низшие сословия полны негодования. 4. Он наглый молодой человек и охотится за твоей преуспевающей фирмой. 5. Мы с ним не ладим, и он не хочет иметь ничего общего с нами. 6. Она покраснела, когда хозяйка представляла ее гостям. 7. Это срочно, поэтому я вынужден его побеспокоить. 8. Он принимал свою жену за что-то само собой разумеющееся, и вышел из себя, когда она сообщила, что хочет получить развод. 9. Родители запретили нам ехать туда. Кто сообщит Тому эту новость? 10. Я не могу заставить себя обращаться с ней уважительно.

Discussion of the story

Task 1. Paraphrase or explain.

1. They tended to prove a point he was fond of making, that in what till we all got democratic in England were called the lower orders there was more passion, more romance, more disregard of consequences than could ever be found in the well-to-do and educated classes.

2. He was charming, tender, and passionate but immensely promiscuous.

3. His bag would be pretty heavy sometimes by the time he was through...

4. 'You've got a nerve,' she said.

5. It gave him quite a turn.

6. She was above him in every way, what with her father making money hand over fist...

7. Like many other employers who have risen from the working class he was a slave-driver... He had an eye for everything and he wouldn't put up with any nonsense...

Task 2. Answer the questions.

1. Where is the story set?

2. What is the story-teller? What duties did he have at Wormwood Scrubs?

3. What sort of people was Ned Preston in charge of?
4. What were Ned Preston's ideas of the so-called lower orders?
5. What was Fred Manson's greatest attraction?
6. What type of girl was Gracie?
7. What was unusual about Gracie's behaviour, in Fred's opinion?
8. What was the reaction of Gracie's parents when the girl broke the news of her engagement?
9. What made Gracie's parents put up with the engagement?

Task 3. Give as much information as possible round the suggestions from the story.

1. It was quite a small party.
2. Ned Preston was a Scot, a good-humored, merry soul.
3. Fred Manson was a good-looking fellow.
4. Fred was a postman.
5. One day he was emptying a box in one of the better streets.
6. One afternoon he ran across her by chance.
7. They fixed the night, the time, the place.
8. From then on they went to the pictures once or twice a week.
9. It gave him quite a turn.
10. It was not till after dinner on Sunday that Gracie broke her news.
11. Mrs. Carter began to cry.
12. In the end the Carters withdrew their opposition.
13. Fred and Gracie were happy.

Task 4. Retell the story: a) as Gracie; b) as Fred; c) as Mrs. Carter.

Task 5. Give your opinion on the greatest danger in a marriage if:

- a) the girl is pure and the boy is promiscuous;
- b) the girl is educated and the boy is not;
- c) the girl comes from a middle-class family and the boy comes from the lower orders;
- d) the girl's parents are against the marriage.

Task 6. Discuss: a) the parents' right to prevent a marriage they dislike; b) the job of a prison visitor and its social value.

Assignment 12

William Somerset Maugham

EPISODE (Part II)

PART II

Then the blow fell. Fred was arrested for stealing money from the letters he collected. Many people, to save themselves the trouble of buying postal orders, put notes in their envelopes, and it was not difficult to tell that they were there. Fred went up for trial, pleaded guilty and was sentenced to two years' hard labor. Gracie went to the trial. Up to the last moment she had hoped that he would be able to prove his innocence. It was a dreadful shock to her when he pleaded guilty. She was not allowed to see him. He went straight from the dock to prison. She went home and, locking herself up in her bedroom, threw herself on the bed and wept: When Mr. Carter came back from the shop Gracie's mother went up to her room.

'Gracie, you're to come downstairs,' she said, 'Your father wants to speak to you.'

Gracie got up and went down. She did not trouble to dry her eyes.

Seen the paper?' he said, holding out to her the Evening Ne didn't answer.

'Well, that's the end of that young man,' he went on harshly.

They too, Gracie's parents, had been shocked when Fred was arrested, but she was so distressed, she was so convinced that everything could be explained, that they hadn't had the heart to tell her that she must have nothing more to do with him. But now they felt it time to have things out with her.

'So that's where the money came from for those dinners and theatres. And the car. I thought it funny that he should have a friend who'd lend him a car on Sundays when he'd be wanting it himself. He hired it, didn't he?'

‘I suppose so,’ she answered miserably. ‘I just believed what he told me.’

‘You’ve had a lucky escape, my girl, that’s all I can say.’

‘He only did it because he wanted to give me a good time. He didn’t want me to think I couldn’t have everything as nice when I was with him as what I have been used to at home.’

‘You’re not going to make excuses for him, I hope. He’s a thief, that’s what he is.’

‘I don’t care,’ she said sullenly.

‘You don’t care? What d’you mean by that?’

‘Exactly what I say. I’m going to wait for him and the moment he comes out I’m going to marry him.’

Mrs. Carter gave a gasp of horror.

‘Gracie, you can’t do a thing like that,’ she cried. ‘Think of the disgrace. And what about us? We’ve always held our heads high. He’s a thief, and once a thief always a thief.’

Don’t go on calling him a thief,’ Gracie shouted. ‘What he did he did just because he loved me. I don’t care if he is a thief. I love him more than ever I loved him. You don’t know what love is. You waited ten years to marry, Pa. D’you call that love?’

‘You leave your ma out of this,’ Mr. Carter shouted. Then an idea occurred to him and he gave her a piercing glance. ‘Have you got to marry the feller?’

Gracie blushed furiously.

‘No. There’s never been anything of that sort. He loved me too much. He didn’t want to do anything perhaps he’d regret afterwards.’

‘I don’t know what’s come over you,’ moaned Mrs. Carter. ‘You were always such a good girl. You’ve never given us a day’s uneasiness.’

‘Stop it, Ma,’ said Mr Carter violently. ‘We’ve got to get this straight once and for all. You’ve got to give up this man, see? I’ve had enough of this nonsense. You’ve got to promise that you’ll have nothing more to do with the feller ever.’

‘D’you think I’m going to give him up now? How often do you want me to tell you that I’m going to marry him the moment he gets out?’

‘All right, then you can get out of my house and get out pretty damn quick. And stay out.’

‘Pa!’ cried Mrs. Carter.

‘Shut up.’

‘I’ll be glad to go,’ said Gracie.

‘Oh, will you? And how d’you think you’re going to live?’

‘I can work, can’t I? I can get a job at Payne and Perkins. They’ll be glad to have me.’

‘Work, will you? You that’s never done a stroke of work in your life except that tomfoolery at the college. Bright idea it was of your ma’s to give you an education. Fat lot of good it’ll be to you when you’ve got to stand on your feet for hours and got to be civil and pleasant to a lot of old trouts who just try and give you all the trouble they can just to show how important they are. All right, marry your gaol-bird. I suppose you know you’ll have to keep him too. You don’t think anyone’s going to give him a job, do you, not with his record. Get out, get out, get out.’

He had worked himself to such fury that he sank into a chair, Mrs. Carter, frightened, poured out a glass of water and gave him some drink. Gracie slipped out of the room.

Next day, when her father had gone to work and her mother was out shopping, she left the house with such effects as she could get into a suitcase. Payne and Perkins was a large department store in Brixton, and with her good appearance and pleasant manner she found no difficulty in getting taken on. She arranged to share a room with one of the girls who worked with her.

Ned Preston saw Fred in the evening of the day he went to prison. He found him shattered, but only because of Gracie. He took his thieving very lightly.

I had to do the right thing by her, didn’t I? Her people, they didn’t think I was good enough for her; I wanted to show them I was just as good as they were. When we went up to the West End I couldn’t give her a sandwich and half of bitter in a pub, why, she’s never been in a pub in her life, I had to take her to a restaurant. If people are such fools as to put money in letters, well, they’re just asking for it.’

But he was frightened. He wasn't sure that Gracie would see it like that.

I've got to know what she's going to do. If she chucks me now – well, it's the end of everything for me, see? I'll find some way of doing myself in, I swear to God I will.'

He told Ned the whole story of his love for Gracie. 'I could have had her over and over again if I'd wanted to. And I did want to and so did she. I knew that. But I respected her, see? She's one in a thousand, I tell you.'

He talked and talked. He stormed, he wept. From those confused words one thing became very clear. A passionate, a frenzied love. Ned promised that he would see the girl.

'Tell her that I love her, tell her that what I did I just did because I wanted her to have the best of everything, and tell her I just can't live without her.'

As soon as he could find time Ned Preston went to the Carters' house, but when he asked for Gracie the maid who opened the door told him that she didn't live there anymore. Then he asked to see her mother. He gave the maid his card, thinking the name of his club would impress Mrs. Carter. Perhaps Mrs. Carter was impressed because he was a gentleman; anyhow it was not long before she was telling him the whole story. She grew upset as she told it and began to cry.

'And now she's gone and left us. God knows, we love her. She's all we've got and we've done everything in the world for her. Her pa never meant it when he told her to get out of the house. He was just as upset as I was when we found she'd gone. And d'you know what's she's been and gone and done? Got herself a job at Payne and Perkins. And to think of our Gracie working with a lot of shop-girls-oh!'

Ned made a mental note of the store's name. He hadn't been at all sure of getting Gracie's address out of Mrs. Carter.

'Have you ever seen her since she left you?' he asked.

Of course I have. I went to the store and waited outside till closing time and then I spoke to her. I asked her to come home. She said she'd come home if we never said a word against Fred and if we were prepared to have her marry him as soon as ever he got out. Of course I had to tell her

pa. I never saw him in such a state. He said he'd rather see her dead at his feet than married to that goal-bird.'

Mrs. Carter again burst into tears and as soon as he could Ned Preston left her. He went to the department store and asked for Gracie Carter. She was pointed out to him and he went up to her.

'Can I speak to you for a minute? I've come from Fred Manson.' She went deathly white. For a moment it seemed that she could not utter a word.

'Follow me, please.'

She took him into a passage. They were alone. She stared at him anxiously.

'He sends you his love. He's worried about you. He's afraid you're awfully unhappy. What he wants to know really is if you're going to chuck him.'

'Me?' Her eyes filled with tears, but on her face was a look of ecstasy. 'Tell him that nothing matters to me as long as he loves me. Tell him I'd wait twenty years for him if I had to. Tell him I'm counting the days till he gets out so as we can get married.'

She couldn't stay away from her work for more than a minute or two. She gave Ned all the loving messages she could get into the time to give

Fred Manson. Ned didn't get to the Scrubs till nearly six. When Ned entered the cell Fred turned pale and sank on to the bed as though he didn't mist his legs. But when Ned told him his news he gave a gasp of relief. For while he could not speak.

'I knew you'd seen her the moment you came in. I smelt her'

He sniffed as though the smell of her body were strong in his nostrils, and his face was a mask of desire. Ned Preston felt so uncomfortable that he had to look the other way.

Fred was an exemplary prisoner. He worked well, he gave no trouble. Ned suggested books for him to read and he took them out of the library, but that was about as far as he got.

'I can't get on well with them somehow,' he said. 'I start reading and then I begin thinking of Gracie.'

Fred was allowed to see Gracie once a month, but their meetings, with a glass screen between, under the eyes of a warder, were so painful that after several visits they agreed it would be better if she didn't come any more. A year passed. Owing to his good behavior he could be free in another six months. Gracie had saved every penny she could out of her wages and now as the time approached for Fred's release she set about getting a home ready for him. She took two rooms in a house and furnished them on the hire purchase system. She wanted everything to be nice and new and clean and comfortable. She took pains to make the two little rooms bright and pretty. To do all this she had to go without the barest necessities of existence and she grew thin and pale. Ned suspected that she was starving herself and when he went to see her took a box of chocolates or a cake so that she should have at least something to eat. He took fond, passionate messages from one to the other. He was convinced that Fred would go straight in future and he got him a job from a firm. He was to start work as soon as he came out of goal. Gracie took the necessary steps so that they could get married at once. The eighteen months of Fred's imprisonment were drawing to an end. Gracie was in a fever of excitement.

It happened then that Ned Preston fell ill and was unable to go to prison for three weeks. It bothered him, for he did not like to stay away from his prisoners, so as soon as he could get out of bed he went to the Scrubs. The chief warder told him that Manson had been asking for him.

'I think you'd better go and see him. I don't know what's the matter with him. He's been acting rather funny since you've been away.'

It was just a fortnight before Fred was to be released. Ned Preston went to his cell.

'Well, Fred, how are you?' he asked. 'Sorry I haven't been able to come and see you. I've been ill, and I haven't been able to see Gracie either.'

'Well, I want you to go and see her.'

His manner was so unusual that Ned was taken aback. It was like him to be anything but pleasant and civil.

'Of course I will.'

'I want you to tell her that I'm not going to marry her.'

Ned was so shocked that for a minute he could only stare at Fred Manson.

‘What on earth d’you mean?’

‘Exactly what I say.’

‘You can’t let her down now. Her people have thrown her out. She’s been working all this time to get a home ready for you.’

‘I don’t care. I’m not going to marry her.’

‘But why, why, why?’

Ned was flabbergasted. Fred Manson was silent for a bit. His face was dark and gloomy.

‘I’ll tell you. I’ve thought about her night and day for eighteen months. And now I’m sick to death of her.’

When Ned Preston reached this point of his story our hostess and our fellow guests broke into loud laughter. He was plainly taken aback. There was some little talk after that and the party broke up. Ned and I, having to go in the same direction, walked along Piccadilly together. For a time, we walked in silence.

‘I noticed you didn’t laugh with the others,’ he said abruptly.

‘I didn’t think it funny.’

‘What d’you make of it?’

‘Well, I can see his point, you know. Imagination’s an odd thing, it dries up, I suppose, thinking of her incessantly all that time he’d exhausted every emotion she could give him, and I think it was quite literary true, he’d just got sick to death of her. He’d squeezed the lemon dry and there was nothing to do but throw away the rind.’

‘I didn’t think it funny either. That’s why I didn’t tell them the rest of the story. I wouldn’t accept it at first. I thought it was just hysteria or something. I went to see him two or three days running. I argued with him. I thought if he’d only see her it would be all right, but he wouldn’t even do that. He said he hated the sight of her. I couldn’t move him. At last I had to go and tell her.’

We walked on a little longer in silence.

‘I saw her at that store, in the same passage. She saw at once there was something the matter. She went awfully white. She wasn’t a girl to

show much emotion. There was something noble about her face. Calm. Her lips quivered a bit when I told her. She didn't say anything for a minute until she spoke it was quite calmly, as though – well, as though she'd just missed a bus and would have to wait for another. As though it was a nuisance you know, but nothing to make a song and dance about. 'There's nothing for me to do now but put my head in the gas-oven,' she said.

'And she did.'

Active vocabulary

1) to have things out with smb.; 2) to be used to smth; 3) disgrace n; 4) not to do a stroke work; 5) shattered p)p) 6) to take smth lightly; 7) to do the right thing by smb; 8) to get on with smth; 9) to take pains to do smth; 10) to go without smth; 11) to go straight; 12) to draw to an end; 13) to be taken aback.

Vocabulary tasks

Task 1. Give the corresponding verbs, translate them: disgrace, shattered, urgent, prosperous.

Task 2. Arrange into pairs of synonyms: *to get on (with smth)*, *to go straight*, *shattered*, *to be used (to)*, *to take pains (to)*, *to go without smth*, *to be taken aback*, *to take smth lightly*, *destroyed*, *to form a habit*, *to do without smth to be surprised*, *to advance/to make progress*, *to take it easy*, *to work hard*, *to start living honestly*.

Task 3. Find the synonyms of the lexical units given below, in the text:

to give up a person, *to have enough of something* (E.g.: *I have had enough of this nonsense*), *prisoner*, *personal property*, *to justify smb.*, *to have things out*.

Note that most of the synonyms belong to colloquial English.

Task 4. Study the short dialogues below. Make up short dialogues of your own with the underlined lexical units.

1. – How is Tom getting on with his new book? – Very well, thank you.

2. – Do you smoke? At your age?! What do your parents think of it? – They take it lightly. They both smoke too.

3. – George, your coffee is ready. – Oh, bother! I haven't done a decent stroke of work this morning.

4. – I say, Bob, I'd like to know how you feel about yesterday's incident. – All right, let's have it out, shall we?

5. – Harry, come here! You know I'm unused to asking for things twice. – Sorry for detaining you, Mum.

6. – What are you chiefly busy with now? – Taking pains to find a new job.

Task 5. Study the word combinations. Point out the one in each group of three used in the story. Reproduce the situations.

to be used to *hard work* (*everything nice, reading in bed*);

a shattered *man*, shattered *hopes* (*dreams*);

to take one's *failures* (*thieving, family*) lightly;

to do the right thing by *one's family* (*parents, girl*);

to take pains *to furnish one's flat* (*to buy the best car, to make room pretty*);

to go without *supper* (*a fur-coat, the barest necessities*);

to be taken aback by smb's *words* (*manner, imprisonment*).

Task 6. Answer the questions.

1. What sort of people take life lightly? 2. What are your notions of disgrace? 3. In what way can you do the right thing by your parents? 4. Are you used to hard work? comfort? telling the truth? 5. Is it pleasant to have things out with a person you respect? 6. What chances of going straight are there for a former prisoner? 7. How do you feel when your holidays are drawing to an end? 8. Why do some people go without supper? 9. How long can you go without food? water? sleep?

Task 7. Translate the sentences. Use the active vocabulary.

1. Она уже привыкла выяснять с ним отношения. 2. Когда его освободили из тюрьмы, он зажил честно. 3. Как он может обходиться без еды? Не удивительно, что он выглядит разбитым. 4. Какой позор! За четыре года он палец о палец не ударил. 5. Как ваши успехи в работе? – Мои коллеги не воспринимают наши проблемы всерьез. 6. Он

всегда поступал правильно по отношению к нашему хозяину.
7. Учебный год подходит к концу. Студенты изо всех сил пытаются хорошо учиться. 8. Он был поражен, когда узнал, что они не хотят иметь с ним ничего общего. 9. Его преданный друг восстановил справедливость. 10. Он рассказал мне историю своей жизни, но не раскрыл своего происхождения.

Discussion of the story

Task 1. Paraphrase or explain:

1. Many people, to save themselves the trouble of buying postal orders, put notes in their envelopes.
2. ... they hadn't had the heart to tell her that she must have nothing more to do with him.
3. 'I suppose you know you'll have to keep him too. You don't think anyone is going to give him a job, do you, not with his record.'
4. 'I'll find some way of doing myself in, I swear to God I will.'
5. Ned made a mental note of the store's name.
6. Ned Preston felt so uncomfortable that he had to look the other way.
7. 'He'd squeezed the lemon dry and there was nothing to do but throw away the rind.'
8. She spoke ... as though it was a nuisance, but nothing to make a song and dance about...

Task 2. State whose utterances these are and what they imply; what circumstances they refer to:

1. 'You've had a lucky escape, my girl.'
2. 'She is one in a thousand, I tell you.'
3. 'She's all we've got and we've done everything in the world for her.'
4. 'He's been acting rather funny since you've been away.'
5. 'Imagination is an odd thing, it dries up.'
6. 'There was something noble about her face.'

Task 3. Group the vocabulary round the following topics and retell them:

1. Fred's arrest and imprisonment.
2. Gracie has the matter out with her parents.
3. Gracie leaves home and gets a job.
4. Ned Preston sees Fred in prison.
5. Ned Preston visits the Carters'.
6. Ned Preston meets Gracie.
7. Gracie gets a home ready for Fred.
8. Fred refuses to marry Gracie.

Task 4. Give a brief summary of the whole story.

Task 5. Write a newspaper report of Gracie's death using no more than four phrases (when-who-what-how-why).

Task 6. Give your opinion on:

1. The cause of the change in Fred.
2. Gracie's suicide as a way out.
3. Who is guilty of Gracie's death?

Task 7. Imagine:

- a) the reaction of Gracie's parents to her death;
- b) Fred's reaction;
- c) Fred's future.

Assignment 13

Agatha Christie

WHERE THERE IS A WILL

Agatha Christie (1891 – 1976) is famous for her detective novels, stories and plays, some of which were filmed. She was born in England in a middle-class family, got a medical education and started writing, almost by chance, at the age of 26 (her first novel was *The Mysterious Affair at Styles*). Public recognition came to her in 1926 owing to her novel *The Murder of Roger Ackroyd*. The authoress was keen on crime and its motives, on her characters' psychology and on keeping the reader intrigued. She wrote easily and quickly, and her works are uneven in quality. Her best books were written in the 1920-ies and 30-ies, among them *Peril at End House* (1932), *Murder on the Orient Express* (1934), *Ten Little Niggers* (1939) and some others. By 1976, the year of her death, 'the queen of detective fiction' had written 85 novels, 2 collections of poetry and a great many stories and plays.

'Above all, avoid worry and excitement,' said Dr. Meynell, in the comfortable fashion affected by doctors. 'There is a certain cardiac weakness,' continued the doctor, 'but nothing to be alarmed about. I can assure you of that.'

Mrs. Harter looked worried.

Dr. Meynell, on the contrary, looked pleased with himself. The reason he liked attending rich patients rather than poor ones was that he could task his active imagination in giving them advice.

'Daily task on a fine day, but avoid walking up hills. And, above all, plenty of distraction for the mind. Don't dwell on your health.'

To the old lady's nephew, Charles Ridgeway, the doctor was more frank.

'Do not misunderstand me,' he said. 'Your aunt may live for years, probably will, At the same time, shock or overexertion might carry her off like that!' He snapped his fingers, 'She must lead a very quiet life. No

exertion. But, of course, she must not be allowed to brood. She must be kept cheerful and the mind well distracted.'

'Distracted,' said Charles Ridgeway thoughtfully.

Charles was a thoughtful young man. He was also a young man who believed in furthering his own inclinations whenever possible.

That evening he suggested a radio set.

Mrs. Harter was disturbed and unwilling.

'I do not know that I care for these newfangled things,' said Mrs. Harter. 'The waves, you know – the electric waves. They might affect me.'

Charles, in a superior and kindly fashion, pointed out the absurdity of this idea.

Mrs. Harter, whose knowledge of the subject was of the vaguest, remained unconvinced.

'All that electricity,' she murmured. 'You may say what you like, Charles, but some people are affected by electricity. I always have a terrible headache before a thunderstorm. I know that.' She nodded her head triumphantly. Charles was a patient young man. He was also persistent.

'My dear Aunt Mary,' he said, 'let me make the thing clear to you.'

He was something of the authority on the subject. He delivered quite a lecture on the theme.

Mrs. Harter, lost in a sea of words that she did not understand, surrendered

'Of course, Charles,' she murmured, 'if you really think –'

'My dear Aunt Mary,' said Charles enthusiastically, 'it is the very thing for you, to keep you from brooding and all that.'

The radio set arrived. Mrs. Harter was left to examine the object – a large, ugly-looking box with knobs.

It took all Charles's enthusiasm to reconcile her to it, but Charles was in his element, turning knobs and discussing it.

Mrs. Harter sat in her high-backed chair, patient and polite, with a rooted conviction in her own mind that these new-fangled notions were nuisance

'Listen, Aunt Mary, we are on to Berlin! Isn't that splendid? Can you hear the fellow?'

‘I can’t hear anything except a good deal of buzzing and clicking,’ said Mrs. Harter

Charles continued to turn knobs. ‘Brussels,’ he announced with enthusiasm.

‘Is it really?’ said Mrs. Harter with no interest.

Charles again turned knobs and an unearthly howl echoed forth into room.

‘Now we seem to be on to the Dog’s Home*,’ said Mrs. Harter.

‘Ha, ha!’ said Charles, ‘you will have your joke, won’t you, Aunt Mary? Very good that!’

Mrs. Harter could not help smiling at him. She was very fond of Charles. For some years a niece, Miriam Harter, had lived with her. She had intended to make the girl her heiress, but Miriam had not been a success. She was impatient and obviously bored by her aunt’s society. She was always out, ‘gadding about’** as Mrs. Harter called it. In the end she had got acquainted with a young man of whom her aunt disapproved. Miriam had been returned to her mother.

Having found nieces disappointing, Mrs. Harter turned her attention to nephews. Charles, from the first, had been a success. He was always pleasantly respectful to his aunt and listened with interest to the stories of her youth. In this he was a great contrast to Miriam who had been frankly bored and showed it. Charles was never bored; he was always good tempered, always gay. He told his aunt many times a day that she was a perfectly marvelous old lady.

Highly satisfied with her nephew, Mrs. Harter had written to her lawyer with instructions as to the making of a new will. This was sent to her, approved by her, and signed.

And now even in the matter of the radio, Charles won fresh laurels. Mrs. Harter, at first antagonistic, became finally fascinated. She enjoyed it very much better when Charles was out. The trouble with Charles was that he could not leave the thing alone. Mrs. Harter would be seated in her chair

* the Dog’s Home – приют для собак, где они содержатся (за определённую плату) в отсутствие хозяев.

** to gad about – слоняться без дела, бездельничать.

comfortably listening to a symphony concert or a lecture, quite happy and at peace with the world. Not so Charles. The harmony would be shattered by shrieks while he enthusiastically attempted to get foreign stations. But on those evenings when Charles was dining out with friends, Mrs. Harter enjoyed the radio very much indeed. She would turn on two switches, sit in her high-backed chair, and enjoyed the programme of the evening.

It was about three months after the radio had come that the first happening occurred. Charles was absent at a bridge party.

The programme for that evening was a ballad concert. A well-known soprano was singing Annie Laurie* and in the middle of Annie Laurie a strange thing happened. There was a sudden break, the music ceased for a moment, the buzzing, clicking noise continued, and then that, too, died away. There was silence, and then very faintly a low buzzing sound was heard.

Mrs. Harter got the impression, why she did not know, that the machine was tuned into somewhere very far away, and then, clearly and distinctly, voice spoke, a man's voice with a faint Irish accent.

'Mary- can you hear me, Mary? It is Patrick speaking ...I am coming for you soon. You will be ready, won't you, Mary? '

Then, almost immediately, the music of Fannie Laurie once more filled the room.

Mrs. Harter sat frozen in her chair, her hands on each arm of it. Had she been dreaming? Patrick! Patrick's voice! Patrick's voice in this very room, speaking to her. No, it must be a dream, a hallucination perhaps.

She must just have dropped off to sleep for a minute or two. A curious thing to have dreamed – that her dead husband's voice should speak to her.

It frightened her just a little. What were the words he had said?

'I'm coming for you soon. You will be ready, won't you, Mary?'

Was it, could it be a premonition? Cardiac weakness. Her heart. After all, she was getting on in years.

* 'Annie Laurie' – известная шотландская песня о любви, написанная около 1700 г. Уильямом Дугласом.

‘It’s a warning – that’s what it is,’ said Mrs. Harter, rising slowly and painfully from her chair.

She said nothing of her experience to anyone, but for the next day or two she was thoughtful.

And then came the second occasion. Again she was alone in the room.

The radio, which had been playing an orchestral selection, died away with the same suddenness as before. Again there was silence, the sense of distance, and finally Patrick’s voice, not as it had been in life-but a voice faraway, with a strange unearthly quality.

‘Patrick speaking to you, Mary. I will be coming for you very soon now’

Then click, buzz, and the orchestral selection was full of swing again.

Mrs. Harter glanced at the clock. No, she had not been asleep this time. It was no hallucination; she was sure of that.

Could it be that Patrick had really spoken to her? That his actual voice had come through space? No, there was nothing impossible in the idea. Patrick had spoken to her. He had prepared her for what must soon be coming

Mrs. Harter rang the bell for her maid, Elizabeth.

Elizabeth was a tall, thin woman of sixty. Beneath an unbending exterior she concealed a lot of affection and tenderness for her mistress.

‘Elizabeth, said Mrs. Harter when her maid had appeared, ‘you remember what I told you? The top left-hand drawer of my bureau. It is locked – the long key with the white label Everything there is ready.’

‘Ready, ma’am?’

‘For my burial,’ said Mrs. Harter. ‘You know perfectly well what I mean, Elizabeth. You helped me to put the things there yourself.’

Elizabeth’s face began to work strangely. ‘Oh, ma’am,’ she wailed, ‘don’t dwell on such things. I thought you was a sight better.’

‘We have all got to go some time or another,’ said Mrs. Harter practically. ‘I am over seventy, Elizabeth. There, there, don’t make a fool of yourself. If you must cry, go and cry somewhere else.’

Elizabeth retired, still crying.

Mrs. Harter looked after her with a good deal of affection.

'Silly old fool, but faithful,' she said, 'Very faithful. Let me see, was it a hundred pounds, or only fifty I left her? It ought to be a hundred.'

The point worried the old lady and the next day she sat down and wrote to her lawyer asking if he would send her will so that she might look it over.

It was that same day that Charles frightened her by something he said at lunch.

'By the way, Aunt Mary,' he said, 'who is that funny old fellow in the spare room?

'The picture over the mantelpiece, I mean. The old man with side whiskers?'

'That is your Uncle Patrick as a young man', she said.

'Oh, I say, Aunt Mary, I am awfully sorry. I didn't mean to be rude. '

Mrs. Harter accepted the apology.

Charles went, on rather uncertainly 'I just wondered. You see- '

He stopped undecidedly and Mrs. Harter said sharply, 'We...? What were you going to say?'

'Nothing,' said Charles hastily. 'Nothing that makes sense, I mean'.

For the moment the old lady said nothing more, but later that day, when they were alone together, she returned to the subject.

'I wish you would tell me, Charles, what it was that made you ask me about the picture of your uncle'.

Charles looked embarrassed.

'I told you, Aunt Mary. It was nothing but a silly fancy of mine – quite absurd'

'Charles,' said Mrs. Harter in her most autocratic voice, 'I insist upon knowing.'

'Well, my dear aunt, if you will have it, I fancied I saw him – the man in the picture, I mean – looking out of the end window when I was coming up the drive last night. Some effect of the light, I suppose. I wondered who on earth he could be, the face was so – early Victorian, if you know what I mean. And then Elizabeth said there was no one, no

visitor or stranger in the house, and later in the evening I happened to enter the spare room, and there was the picture over the mantelpiece. My man to the life! It is quite easily explained, really, I expect. Must have noticed the picture before without realizing that I had noticed it, and then just fancied the face at the window'

'The end window?' said Mrs. Harter sharply.

'Yes, why?'

'Nothing,' said Mrs. Harter.

But she was shocked all the same. That room had been her husband's dressing-room.

That same evening, Charles again being absent, Mrs. Harter sat listening to the wireless with feverish impatience. If for the third time she heard the mysterious voice it would prove to her finally and without a shadow of doubt that she was really in communication with some other world.

Although her heart beat faster, she was not surprised when the same break occurred, and after the usual interval of deathly silence the faint faraway Irish voice spoke once more.

'Mary – you are prepared now... On Friday I shall come for you. Friday at half past nine ... Do not be afraid – there will be no pain... Be ready...'

Then the music of the orchestra broke out again.

Mrs. Harter sat very still for a minute or two. Her face had gone white and she looked blue.

Presently she got up and sat down at her writing-desk. In a somewhat shaky hand she wrote the following lines:

Tonight, at 9:15, I have distinctly heard the voice of my dead husband. He told me that he would come for me on Friday night at 9:30. If I should die on that day and at that hour I should like the facts made known so as to prove beyond question the possibility of communicating with the spirit world – Mary Harter.

Mrs. Harter read over what she had written, enclosed it in an envelope, and addressed the envelope. Then she rang the bell which was

promptly answered by Elizabeth. Mrs. Harter got up from her desk and gave the note she had just written to the old woman.

‘Elizabeth,’ she said, ‘if I should die on Friday night I should like that note given to Doctor Meynell. No’ – as Elizabeth appeared about to protest – ‘do not argue with me. You have often told me you believe in premonitions. I have a premonition now. There is one thing more. I have left you in my will fifty pounds. I should like you to have a hundred pounds. If I am not able to go to the bank myself before I die, Mr. Charles will see to it’.

As before, Mrs. Harter cut short Elizabeth’s tearful protests. The old lady also spoke to her nephew on the subject the following morning.

‘Remember, Charles, that if anything should happen to me, Elizabeth is to have an extra fifty pounds.’

‘You are very gloomy these days. Aunt Mary.’ said Charles cheerfully. ‘What is going to happen to you? According to Doctor Meynell, we shall be celebrating your hundredth birthday in twenty years or so!’

Mrs. Harter smiled affectionately at him but did not answer. After a minute or two she said, ‘What are you doing on Friday evening, Charles?’

Charles looked a little surprised.

‘As a matter of fact, the Ewings asked me to go in and play bridge, but if you would rather I stayed at home’

‘No’, said Mrs. Harter with determination. ‘Certainly not. I mean it, Charles. On that night of all nights I should much rather be alone.’

Charles looked at her curiously, but Mrs. Harter gave no further information. She was an old lady of courage and determination. She felt that she must go through with her strange experience single-handed.

Friday evening found the house very silent. Mrs. Harter sat as usual in her straight-backed chair drawn up to the fireplace. All her preparation was made. That morning she had been to the bank, had drawn out 50 pounds in notes, and had handed them over to Elizabeth despite the latter’s tearful protests. She had sorted and arranged all her personal belongings and had labeled one or two pieces of jewellery with the names of friends or relations. She had also written out a list of instructions for Charles.

Now she looked at the long envelope she held in her hand and drew from it a folded document. This was her will sent to her by Mr. Hopkinson in accordance with her instructions. She had already read it carefully, but now she looked over it once more to refresh her memory. It was a short document.

Mrs. Harter nodded her head several times. Charles would be a very rich man when she was dead. Well, he had been a dear good boy to her. Always kind, always affectionate, and with a merry tongue which never failed to please her.

She looked at the clock. Three minutes to the half-hour. Well, she was ready. And she was calm – quite calm. Although she repeated these last words to herself several times, her heart beat strangely and unevenly.

Half past nine. The wireless was switched on. What would she hear? A familiar voice announcing the weather forecast or that faraway voice belonging to a man who had died twenty-five years before?

But she heard neither. Instead there came a familiar sound, a sound she knew well but which tonight made her feel though an icy hand were laid on her heart. A fumbling at the front door.

It came again. And then a cold blast seemed to sweep through the room. Mrs. Harter had now no doubt what her sensations were. She was afraid. She was more than afraid – she was terrified...

And suddenly there came to her the thought: ‘Twenty-five years is a long time. Patrick is a stranger to me now’.

Terror! That was what was invading her.

A soft step outside the door – a soft, halting footstep. Then the door swung silently open.

Mrs. Harter staggered to her feet, swaying slightly from side to side, her eyes fixed on the open doorway. Something slipped from her fingers into the grate.

She gave a cry which died in her throat. In the dim light of the doorway stood a familiar figure with a chestnut beard and whiskers and an old-fashioned Victorian coat.

Patrick had come for her!

Her heart gave one terrified leap and stood still. She slipped to the ground.

There Elizabeth found her, an hour later.

Dr. Meynell was called at once and Charles Ridgeway was hastily summoned from his bridge aid.

It was not until two days later that Elizabeth remembered the note given to her by her mistress. Dr. Meynell read it with great interest and showed it to Charles Ridgeway.

‘A very curious coincidence,’ he said. ‘It seems clear that your aunt had been having hallucinations about her dead husband’s voice. She must have unnerved herself up to such a point that the excitement was fatal, and when the time actually came she died of the shock. I will let you know the result of the autopsy as soon as possible, though I have no doubt of it myself. In the circumstances an autopsy is desirable, though purely as a matter of form.’

Charles nodded.

On the preceding night, when the household was in bed, he removed a certain wire which ran from the back of the radio cabinet to his bedroom on the floor above. Also, since the evening had been a chilly one, he had asked Elizabeth to light a fire in his room, and in that fire he had burned a chestnut beard and whiskers. Some Victorian clothing belonging to his late uncle he replaced in the attic.

As far as he could see, he was perfectly safe. His plan had succeeded. A sudden shock, Dr. Meynell had said. Charles, that affectionate young man, beloved of old ladies, smiled to himself.

When the doctor had left, Charles went about his duties mechanically. Certain funeral arrangements had to be finally settled. Relatives coming from a distance had to have trains looked out for them. In one or two cases they would have to stay the night. Charles went about it all methodically, to the accompaniment of his own thoughts.

A very good stroke of business! Nobody, least of all his dead aunt, had known in what predicament Charles was. His activities, carefully concealed from the world, had landed him where the shadow of a prison loomed ahead.

Ruin had stared him in the face unless he could in a few short months raise a considerable sum of money. Well – that was all right now. Charles smiled to himself. Thanks to – yes, call it a practical joke – nothing criminal about that – he was saved. He was now a very rich man. He had no anxieties on the subject, for Mrs. Harter had never made any secret of her intentions.

Elizabeth put her head round the door and informed him that Mr. Hopkinson was here and would like to see him.

About time, too, Charles thought. Repressing a tendency to whistle, he went to the library. There he greeted the old gentleman who had been for over a quarter of a century the late Mrs. Harter's legal advisor.

The lawyer seated himself at Charles's invitation and entered upon business matters.

'I did not quite understand your letter to me, Mr. Ridgeway. You seemed to be under the impression that the late Mrs. Harter's will was in our keeping. '

Charles stared at him.

'But surely – I've heard my aunt say as much.'

'Oh! quite so, quite so. It was in our keeping'.

'Was?'

'That is what I said Mrs. Harter wrote to us, asking that it might be sent to her on Tuesday last.'

An uneasy feeling crept over Charles. He felt a far-off premonition of unpleasantness.

'Doubtless it will come to light among her papers,' continued the lawyer smoothly.

Charles said nothing. He had already been through Mrs. Harter's papers, well enough to be quite certain that no will was among them. In a minute or two, when he had regained control of himself, he said so. His voice sounded unreal to himself.

'Has anyone been through her personal belongings?' asked the lawyer.

Charles replied that the maid, Elizabeth, had done so. At Mr. Hopkinson's suggestion Elizabeth was sent for. She came promptly and answered the questions put to her.

She had been through all her mistress's clothes and personal belongings. She was quite sure that there had been no legal document such as a will among them. She knew what the will looked like – her poor mistress had had it in her hand only the morning of her death.

‘You are sure of that?’ asked the lawyer sharply.

‘Yes, sir. She told me so. And she made me take fifty pounds in notes. The will was in a long blue envelope.

‘Quite right,’ said Mr. Hopkinson.

‘Now I come to think of it,’ continued Elizabeth, ‘that same blue envelope was lying on this table the morning after – but empty. I laid it on the desk.’

‘I remember seeing it there,’ said Charles.

He got up and went over to the desk. In a minute or two he turned round with an envelope in his hand which he handed to Mr. Hopkinson. The latter examined it and nodded his head.

‘That is the envelope in which I sent the will on Tuesday last.’

Both men looked hard at Elizabeth.

‘Is there anything more, sir?’ she inquired respectfully,

‘Not at present, thank you.’

Elizabeth went toward the door.

‘One minute,’ said the lawyer.

‘Was there a fire in the grate that evening?’

‘Yes, sir, there was always a fire’.

‘Thank you, that will do.’

Elizabeth went out. Charles leaned forward, resting a shaking hand on the table. ‘What do you think? What are you driving at?’*

Mr. Hopkinson shook his head.

‘We must still hope they will may turn up. If it does not –’

‘Well, if it does not?’

* What are you driving at? – На что вы намекаете?

‘I am afraid here is only one conclusion possible. Your aunt sent for that will in order to destroy it. Not wishing Elizabeth to lose by that, she gave her the amount of her legacy in cash.’

‘But why?’ cried Charles wildly. ‘Why?’

Mr. Hopkinson coughed. A dry cough.

‘You have had no – er – disagreement with your aunt, Mr. Ridgeway?’ he murmured.

Charles gasped.

‘No, indeed, he cried warmly. ‘We were on the kindest, most affectionate terms, right up to the end.’

‘Ah!’ said Mr. Hopkinson, not looking at him.

It came to Charles with a shock that the lawyer did not believe him. Rumours of Charles’s doings might have come round to him. What more natural than that he should suppose* that these same rumours had come to Mrs. Harter, and that aunt and nephew should have had a quarrel on the subject? Of course his aunt had never burned the will. Of course –

His thoughts came to a sudden check. What was that picture rising before his eyes? An old lady with one hand clasped to her heart – something slipping a paper – falling on the red-hot embers...

Charles’s face grew very pale. He heard a hoarse voice – his own – asking:

‘If that will’s never found?’

‘There is a former will of Mrs. Harter’s dated September, 1920. By it Mrs. Harter leaves everything to her niece, Miriam Harter, now Miriam Robinson. ‘

What was the old fool saying? Miriam? All his cleverness – for Miriam!

The telephone rang sharply at his elbow. He took up the receiver. It was the doctor’s voice, hearty and kindly.

‘That you, Ridgeway? Thought you’d like to know. The autopsy’s just concluded. As a matter of fact, the cardiac trouble was much more

* What more natural than that he should suppose... – Еще естественнее предположить...

serious than I suspected when she was alive. She couldn't have lived longer than two months. Thought you'd like to know. '

'Excuse me,' said Charles, 'would you mind saying that again?'

'She couldn't have lived longer than two months,' said the doctor in a slightly louder tone. 'All things work out for the best, you know, my dear fellow –'

But Charles had put back the receiver on its hook. He was conscious of the lawyer's voice speaking from a long way off.

'Dear me, Mr. Ridgeway, are you ill?'

Damn them all! No hope in front of him – only the shadow of the prison wall.

He felt that Somebody had been playing with him – playing with him like a cat with a mouse. Somebody must be laughing...

Active vocabulary

1) to avoid (smth, doing smth); 2) distraction n, to distract one's mind; 3) to dwell on smth; 4) persistent adj; 5) to reconcile smb to smth; 6) nuisance n; 7) patient adj; 8) heir(ess) n; 9) to be a success, to succeed (in smth); 10) premonition n; 11) determination n; 12) to do smth single-handed; 13) to raise a sum of money; 14) to destroy vt.

Vocabulary tasks

Task 1. Write the following words in transcription: *persistent, reconcile, nuisance, patient, heiress, premonition, determination.*

Task 2. Give the corresponding:

a) nouns: *persistent, to reconcile, patient, to destroy, to distract;*

b) adjectives: *success, determination, to destroy, to reconcile.*

Task 3. Arrange in pairs of:

a) synonyms: *to avoid, to dwell on unpleasant thoughts, to reconcile oneself (to), to determine, single-handed, to brood, to decide, on one's own, to keep way (from), to put up (with).*

b) antonyms: *impatient, determination, to destroy, to succeed, single-handed, to create, with outside help, patient, hesitation, to fail.*

Task 4. Study the word combinations, add to each three the one used in the story.

to avoid *dark streets* (*wicked people, unpredictable situations*);
to dwell on *one's predicament* (*human nature, the new danger*);
a patient *doctor* (*visitor, dog*);
to persistent *rain* (*debate, opposition*);
to *discuss* (*argue about, laugh at*) premonitions;
to *keep house* (*wash linen, look after the children*) single-handed;
to raise *a large* (*round, surprising*) sum of money;
to destroy *an old house* (*an enemy ship, all illusions*);
to reconcile one's family to *one's failure* (*loss of money, one's marriage*);
to *become* (*have the making of, marry*) as heiress;
those *barking dogs* (*noisy parrots, screaming children*) were nuisances.

Task 5. Fill in the blanks choosing between:

1. determined/determining:
a) Nick's grandfather was a gentleman of ... character. b) Sometimes there are very funny reasons ... the choice of a profession.
2. distracted/distracting:
a) This book is sure to keep your mind well ... from brooding.
b) Life in the village offered very few events ... the doctor's mind from work.
3. destroyed/destroying:
a) Do you call harmless these people whose evil tongues are busy ... the best reputations? b) The impression of the film was nearly ... by ads popping up every now and again.
4. embarrassed/embarrassing:
a) 'You'll have to choose between me and that horrible cat you brought home yesterday,' Mrs Smith declared. 'My dear, you are putting me in an ... position,' Mr. Smith responded. b) The silence in the room showed how ... the people felt after that tactless remark.

Task 6. Choose the right word from those in brackets.

1. This film is sure to ... (succeed, be a success). 2. Steve didn't know how to ... time that evening (destroy, kill). 3. At night the baby's ... cry kept the family awake (persistent, continuous). 4. The problem was not easy but two days later a sudden ... occurred to me (determination, decision). 5. Please, ... buying useless things no matter how attractive they are (keep away from, avoid).

Task 7. Translate into English, use the new active vocabulary where possible.

1. Боб не верил предчувствиям – они его нередко обманывали, но теперь он никак не мог избавиться от предчувствия какой-то опасности. 2. Выключи колонку, она действует на на нервы. Мы хотим серьезно поговорить, а эта громкая музыка отвлекает. 3. Отец велел Петру пуще всего избегать дурной компании, праздных людей и злых языков. 4. Волк не смог разрушить дом Наф-Нафа, построенный из камня. 5. Правительство обещало собрать деньги в помощь этому региону. 6. Единственный наследник этой семьи жил за границей, но был полон решимости возвратиться на родину через год-другой. 7. Фред попытался сдвинуть книжный шкаф с места, но шкаф был слишком тяжелым. Фред понял, что одному ему со шкафом не справиться, и позвал брата. И даже вдвоем им это не удалось. 8. «Лучший способ сохранить здоровье – не думать о нем слишком много», – посоветовал врач. И он прочел чуть ли не лекцию на эту тему. Дедушка терпеливо слушал его только две минуты. 9. «Мой первый роман имел успех, и это примирило отца с моей профессией», – сказал писатель, отвечая публике. 10. Наследница никак не могла смириться с этим. 11. Враг разрушил наши города, никого не пощадил. 12. Этот непрекращающийся дождь – такая помеха! 13. Постарайся избегать встреч с ним. У меня нехорошее предчувствие. 14. Он терпеливый, решительный и настойчивый. Он непременно добьется успеха. 15. Вы должны отвлечь наследника от дурных мыслей. 16. Помогите мне достать денег. Я не смогу сделать это в одиночку. 17. Его особенности раздражают меня. 18. Его жалкий вид смутит ее. 19. В своей речи он остановился на наглости преступников и неотложных шагах, которые нужно предпринять.

Task 8. Answer the questions.

1. What sort of people do you try to avoid? 2. Do you believe in premonitions? 3. What do you do to distract your mind from unpleasant thoughts? 4. What natural phenomena do you call nuisances in summer? 5. Which do you prefer: to do heavy work single-handed or together with your family? 6. Why do some people try after waking up to dwell on the day's pleasant promises?

Discussion of the story

Task 1. Choose the right active vocabulary to discuss the following items:

1. Mrs. Harter's condition as described by Dr. Meynell.
2. Mrs. Harter and her nephew argue about a radio set as an idea.
3. The radio arrives, and Mrs. Harter comes to like it.
4. The first terrible happening.
5. Mrs. Harter starts her preparations for death after the second occasion.
6. Charles' story about 'the man in the picture'.
7. Mrs. Harter's reaction to Patrick's speaking for the third time.
8. The fatal Friday evening.
9. Charles destroys some material pieces of evidence and makes happy plans.
10. The legal lawyer shatters Charles' hopes.

Task 2. Answer the questions.

1. Was Mrs. Harter's death a case of murder?
2. Did Charles look on himself as murderer?
3. What fatal mistakes of judgement had Mrs. Harter made?
4. What sort of future awaited Charles?
5. Does the story end in 'poetic justice' (evil is punished, goodness is rewarded)?

Task 3. Confirm or disprove the following:

1. Charles was a born actor.
2. Mrs. Harter was a stupid old lady.
3. In a way Dr. Meynell helped Charles to make his criminal plan.
4. The lawyer knew more of Charles than anybody else.

Task 4. Discuss:

- 1) the title of the story;
- 2) Mrs. Harter;
- 3) Charles and his way of life.

Task 5. Suppose you are to investigate the case of Mrs. Harter's death. Make up several questions addressed to Charles about that Friday evening that he might find embarrassing.

ANSWER KEYS

Assignment 1

1. He is unnerved. 2. Drop in at our place for a delicacy. 3. At the back of his mind he realized that they were in a predicament. 4. Pick up this piece of paper. 5. They leave me unnoticed. 6. He climbed the tree without any hesitation. 7. At the top of the rock he lost his nerve. 8. Your greed can't help you to get a precious thing for nothing. 9. Who provides books for you? 10. He is disappointed in his girl. 11. In this battle the English defeated the French at the cost of Nelson's life. 12. What's wrong with him? – He is bewildered. 13. Greedy people pick flowers in their neighbours' gardens. 14. He regained his nerve and did not hesitate any more. 15. Disappointment is a bad sign.

Assignment 2

1. Out of the corner of her eye she noticed that he was keeping a look out for them. 2. Why does he look so anxious? – His son has got into trouble. 3. I regret that I staged a demonstration then. 4. You are responsible for their rescue. They have already got out of their depth. 5. Have a look at this delicacy. He has the makings of a cook. 6. At the back of his mind he realizes that they have got caught up in a strong current. 7. What does the phrase “for nothing” mean? – When you get something “free of charge”. 8. They annoy me, they are constantly hanging about here. 9. He was desperate and looked sulky. 10. I met this cunning man at a resort. 11. He has all the makings of a musician. 12. He got out of his depth and got caught up in a current. 13. Out of the corner of his eye he noticed a precious ring. 14. They entered the building free of charge and hung about the place for three hours. 15. They staged a demonstration of a rescue. 16. Don't be sulky. Let him eat this delicacy. 17. He was in a predicament and felt desperate. 18. You are responsible for safety at the resort. 19. You annoy me. You needn't keep a look out for her on the beach. 20. I regret that I have such a cunning friend.

Assignment 3

1. You must (*should*) summon up your will (*summon your will up*), or (*otherwise*) you will (*can / may*) go to pieces. 2. At the back of his mind he realised that they pinned their hopes on him. 3. Keep clear of their company or you can (*may*) get into trouble and I won't be able to bring you out of danger. 4. Why didn't he resist? – He is innocent. 5. I am so exhausted after (*from*) work, I am going to faint. 6. Many people lose their nerve (*become unnerved*) in a predicament. 7. It's ridiculous to think that this cheat's words (*the words of this cunning man*) could seem convincing to anyone. 8. He dropped in for of tea and promised to help us. But I suppose (*think/believe*) he has second thoughts now. 9. His future is unpredictable. 10. I am disappointed in you; you've turned out a greedy and cunning man. 11. If I don't come/get clear of the smell of fish, I'll faint. 12. To our disappointment, he even didn't regret anything. 13. Don't be greedy. It's not a precious ring. 14. He looked pathetic and ridiculous. 15. He brought us out of danger at the cost of his own life. 16. He summoned up all his strength and climbed the hill. 17. The cheat looked bewildered. 18. If you get out of your depth, we'll come to your rescue. 19. He promised to provide delicacies for us free of charge/for nothing. 20. We were desperate as we had got caught up in a thunderstorm.

Assignment 4

1. You will be in great danger on board the liner. 2. He feels superior to us and is on formal terms with us. 3. He is well brought-up, he is always considerate and he never speaks at the top of his voice. 4. Now he regrets that he proposed to her. 5. I believe in reading before going to bed. 6. She made an exhibition of herself and he reproached her for it. 7. He was deliberate in his speech. 8. He has left her behind. – How disgusting! 9. Come to our rescue or we will not survive. 10. At the back of her mind she realizes that he provides for her.

Assignment 5

1. I think it's wiser to weigh each side of the question. 2. He treats her badly. No wonder she feels distressed. 3. I hope she has consented to take part in the competition. – No, she hasn't. She even forbade/forbad her brother to mention it. 4. I can hardly recognize him. He has become so manly. 5. Emma left her child to her aunt's charge and the latter brought him up. 6. Why are you so sulky? – Your words reminded me of the day when I made an exhibition of myself. 7. It's undesirable to disturb him now. 8. He is very cunning; he always falls on his feet. 9. Who keeps the house (home) together? – I do. And my husband provides for me and our kids/children. 10. Your elation bewildered him.

Assignment 6

1. She burst into tears when he proposed to her. 2. You are guilty because you deprived them of any hope. 3. She broke her promise not to set foot beyond our district. 4. Why is she weeping bitterly? – Her husband treats her very badly. 5. He was left unnoticed / Everyone left him unnoticed and he felt embarrassed. 6. He couldn't resist the sin. 7. He is a peculiar child. He is at ease everywhere. 8. He brought them out of danger and got a reward. 9. Spare us! We are exhausted. 10. He has left / left them behind. – Don't worry, I'll teach him a lesson. 11. Don't deprive them of their reward. 12. When she burst into tears, he felt ill at ease. 13. He consented to leave the dog to his stepfather's charge. 14. His peculiarities annoy me. 15. He regretted that he had spared them. 16. Out of the corner of her eye she noticed that the monkey was climbing the tree. 17. His pathetic look/sight embarrassed her. 18. What's the difference between “to go to pieces” and “to break down”? 19. He couldn't resist the current he had got caught up in. 20. Is he guilty of the crime? she asked innocently.

Assignment 7

1. His evidence misled us. 2. I can't bring myself to write a letter to my friend though I haven't heard from him for two months already. 3. Thoughts about their treachery torment / are tormenting him. 4. He

accused them of breaking their promise. 5. Despite this misfortune / distress you must regain your nerve. 6. He is an uncommunicative man. You can't make him recount the story. 7. We can reveal the origin of this strange thing. 8. A manly person can't be brutal. 9. We pin our hopes on them. We hope they can resist the enemy. 10. He has all the makings of a businessman. He can get a precious thing for nothing / free of charge.

Assignment 8

1. She shuddered when she saw that disgusting thing. 2. I am going to get even with them and set wrong right. 3. He did that deliberately. He wanted to revenge on them. 4. We are resentful about / at / over the fact that they have released the criminals. 5. He made a mess of our work but fell on his feet. 6. The story she recounted to us moved me. 7. She does not regret that she lost her precious ring on board the liner. 8. He is a faithful friend; he helps us in distress and grief. 9. 'What a marvellous castle!' repeated he stubbornly. 10. I want to remind you that you got off light last time.

Assignment 9

1. He lost his head and made a mess of our work. 2. I am fed up with him and I don't want to keep in touch with him. 3. I don't see any visible reasons to forbid it. 4. They used to stick together before his treachery. 5. Don't disturb him; something is sure to turn up. 6. Let's raise cotton! – What an extraordinary idea! 7. I disapprove of his behaviour. He is a callous man. 8. She got a divorce and left the kids to her ex-husband's charge. 9. Why is he so haggard? – No wonder, he is always making a fuss over trifles. 10. I set foot beyond our camp. – Keep your mouth shut!

Assignment 10

1. It is rumoured that he has settled down at last. 2. She has always treated him in a maternal way. 3. He had to admit that he had released the criminal. 4. What an agreeable, decent young man! – Don't let his appearance mislead you. He is notorious. 5. What are you brooding over / about? –

I wonder why we get on in years so quickly. 6. Don't stand in his way. – He is brutal and callous, he won't spare you. 7. You can cook this delicacy at leisure. 8. He couldn't conceal his disappointment when he climbed the hill. 9. He is an undesirable guest. The Browns won't feel at ease in his presence. 10. She went to pieces / broke down / lost her head / lost her nerve and burst into tears. She wept bitterly for about an hour but then she regained her nerve.

Assignment 11

1. He will get over this shock as time works wonders, doesn't it? 2. We were hard up and he saw us through those terrible / awful six months. 3. The lower orders are full of resentment. 4. He is an impudent young man and he is after your prosperous firm. 5. We don't get on with him and he does not want to have anything to do with us. 6. She blushed when the hostess was introducing her to the guests. 7. It's urgent, that's why I have to disturb him. 8. He took his wife for granted and lost his head when she told him she wanted to get a divorce. 9. The parents have forbidden us to go there. Who will break the news to Tom? 10. I can't bring myself to treat her with respect.

Assignment 12

1. She is used to / has got used to having things out with him. 2. When he was released from prison, he went straight. 3. How can he go without food? No wonder he looks shattered. 4. What a disgrace! He hasn't done a stroke of work for four years. 5. How are you getting on with your work? – My colleagues take our problems lightly. 6. He has always done the right thing by our host. 7. The academic year is drawing to an end. The students are taking pains to study well. 8. He was taken aback when he learned that they didn't want to have anything to do with him. 9. His faithful friend set wrong right. 10. He recounted the story of his life to me but didn't reveal his origin.

Assignment 13

1. Bob didn't believe in premonitions, as they often deceived him, but now he could not get rid of the feeling of danger. 2. Turn off the speaker; it's getting on our nerves. We want to have a serious conversation, and this loud music is distracting. 3. His father told Peter to avoid/keep clear of bad company, idle people and evil tongues above all else. 4. The wolf could not destroy Naf-Naf's house, which was built of stone. 5. The government promised to raise money to help the area. 6. The only heir of this family lived abroad, but was determined to return to his homeland in a year or two. 7. Fred tried to move the bookcase out of the way, but the bookcase was too heavy. Fred realised that he couldn't do it single-handed, so he called his brother. Even the two of them couldn't manage it. 8. 'The best way to keep healthy is not to brood on it too much,' the doctor advised. And he almost gave a lecture on the subject. Grandfather listened patiently for only two minutes. 9. 'My first novel was a success, and it reconciled my father to my profession,' said the writer, answering the audience. 10. The heiress couldn't reconcile herself to it. 11. The enemy destroyed our towns sparing nobody/without sparing anybody. 12. This persistent rain is such a nuisance. 13. Avoid meeting him. I have a bad premonition. 14. He is patient, determined and persistent. He is sure to succeed. 15. You must distract the heir's mind from bad thoughts. 16. Help me to raise some money. I won't be able to do it single-handed. 17. His peculiarities annoy me. 18. His pathetic appearance embarrassed me. 19. In his speech he dwelt on the criminals' impudence and urgent measures one should take.

ЗАКЛЮЧЕНИЕ

В результате работы с пособием у студентов должны сформироваться навыки и умения иноязычного общения, по определенному набору которых судят об уровне профессиональной компетенции специалиста. Подобные навыки устной речи, приобретенные в процессе переработки оригинальных текстов, обеспечивают не только коммуникативную, но и профессиональную направленность обучения английскому языку.

Сопровождающие рассказы упражнения направлены на формирование иноязычной коммуникативной компетенции и стимулируют творческую речевую деятельность на английском языке.

Пособие может быть использовано в комплексе с учебниками для I – V курсов «Практический курс английского языка» под редакцией В. Д. Аракина и учебным пособием в двух частях «Практическая грамматика английского языка. Первый год обучения» С. Ю. Галицкой, О. В. Комягиной, А. О. Назаровой.

Авторы надеются, что пособие будет значимым и эффективным подспорьем в изучении английского языка.

Успехов всем, кто изучает английский язык!

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