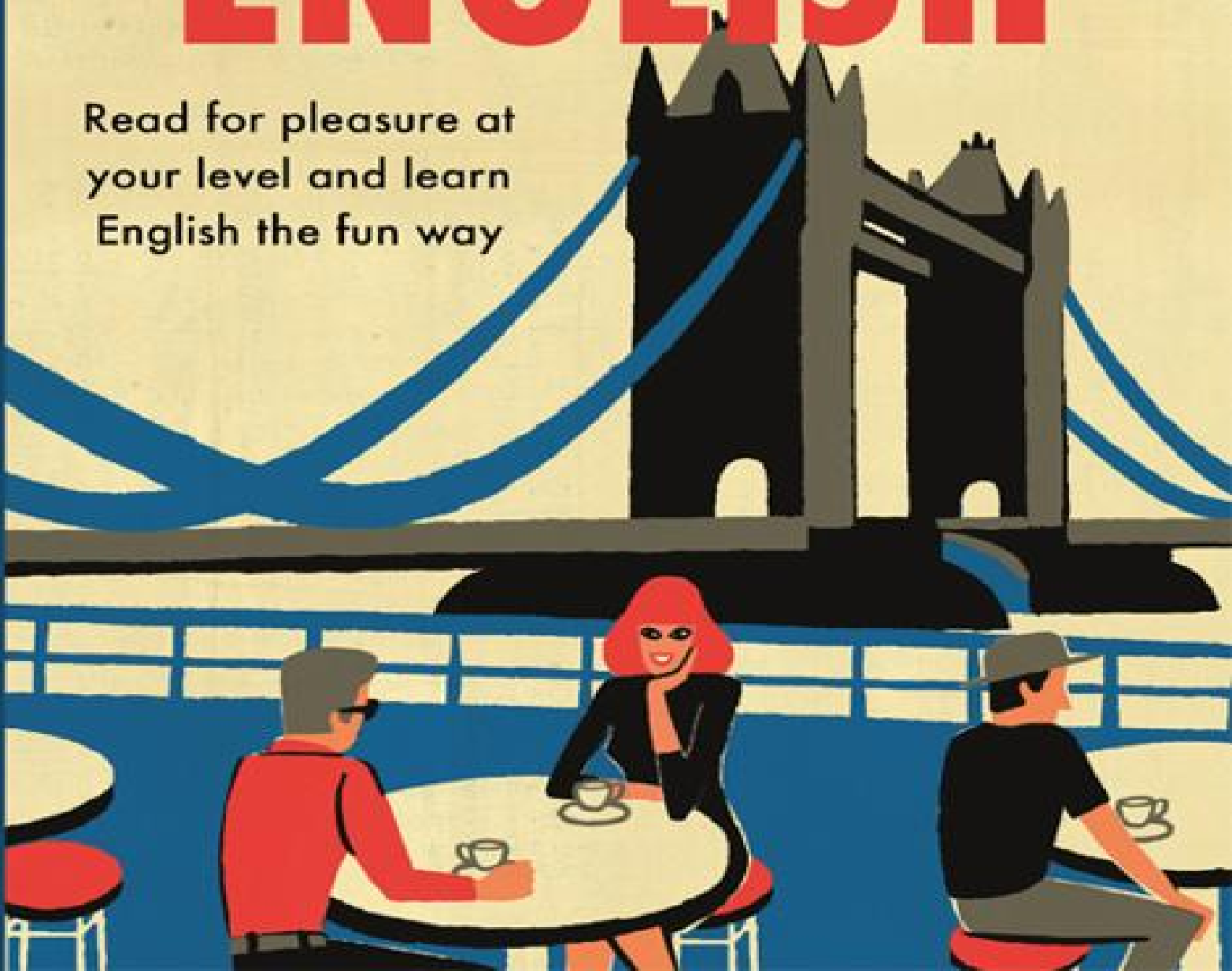
OLLY RICHARDS

for beginners

SHORT STORIES in ENGLISH

Read for pleasure at your level and learn English the fun way



ELT A2-B1

SHORT STORIES in ENGLISH

Read for pleasure at your level and learn English the fun way!

OLLY RICHARDS

Series and Development Editor
Rebecca Moeller

www.hodder.co.uk

Teach Yourself

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Don't forget the audio!



Listening to the story read aloud is a great way to improve your pronunciation and overall comprehension. So, don't forget – download it today!

The audio that accompanies this course is available to purchase from the Readers app and from readers.teachyourself.com.

Use **audio50** for 50% off any purchase.



About the Author



Olly Richards, author of the *Teach Yourself Foreign Language Graded Readers* series, speaks eight languages and is the man behind the popular language learning blog *I Will Teach You a Language*.

Olly started learning his first foreign language at age 19 when he bought a one-way ticket to Paris. With no exposure to languages growing up, and no special talent to speak of, Olly had to figure out how to learn a foreign language from scratch.

Fifteen years later, Olly holds a master's in TESOL from Aston University as well as Cambridge CELTA and Delta. He has also now studied several languages and become an expert in language learning techniques. He collaborates with organizations such as the Open University and the European Commission, and is a regular speaker at international language events and in-person workshops.

Olly started the *I Will Teach You a Language* blog in 2013 to document his latest language learning experiments. His useful language learning tips have transformed the blog into one of the most popular language learning resources on the web. Olly has always advocated that reading is one of the best ways to improve your language skills and he has now applied his expertise to create the *Teach Yourself Foreign Language Graded Reader*s series. He hopes that *Short Stories in English for Beginners* will help you in your language studies!

For more information about Olly and his blog, go to www.iwillteachyoualanguage.com.

For more information about other readers in this series, go to readers.teachyourself.com.

Using this Book – At a Glance

Short Stories in English for Beginners is designed for beginner to low-intermediate level learners*. These stories offer:

- Exciting content and practice with the 1000 most common words in English.
- Interesting pictures to support reading.
- Shorter stories with chapters so you can progress easily.
- Texts written at your level.
- Summaries, vocabulary lists, and comprehension questions so you can understand more easily.

Getting the most from the stories

- Read each story from beginning to end. This will give you a feeling of progress.
- Read often and a lot. This will improve your language skills.
- Remember that you will not understand everything you read. This is completely normal.

Handling words you do not know

1. Look for similarities with words you know.
2. Re-read the sentence that uses the unknown word several times and guess what the word means.
3. Think about different forms of words you know. (You may not know *have gone*, but you may see that it is related to *go*.)
4. Note unknown words in a notebook, and check the meanings later.

The Six-Step Reading Process

1. Look at the illustration and title. Think about what the story might be about. Then read the chapter. *Do not stop to look up unknown words*. Simply try to follow the story
2. Read the summary to see if you have understood everything

3. Go back and read the *same* chapter again
4. After you read again, read the summary again and review the vocabulary list
5. Work through the comprehension questions to check your understanding of the story
6. At this point, you can re-read the chapter or move on to the next chapter.

* Common European Framework of Reference (CEFR) levels A2–B1

Introduction

Reading in a foreign language is one of the most effective ways for you to improve language skills and expand vocabulary. However, it can sometimes be difficult to find engaging reading materials at an appropriate level that will provide a feeling of achievement and a sense of progress. Most books and articles written for native speakers are too difficult for beginner language learners to understand. They often have very high-level vocabulary and may be so lengthy that you feel overwhelmed and give up. If these problems sound familiar, then this book is for you!

Short Stories in English for Beginners is a collection of eight unconventional and entertaining short stories that are especially designed to help high-beginner to low-intermediate-level English learners* improve their language skills. These short stories offer something of interest for everyone and have been designed to create a supportive reading environment by including:

- **Rich linguistic content in different genres** to keep you entertained and expose you to a variety of word forms as well as 1000 of the most common words in the English language!
- **Interesting illustrations** to introduce the story content and help you better understand what happens.
- **Shorter stories broken into chapters** to give you the satisfaction of finishing the stories and progressing quickly.
- **Texts written especially at your level** so they are more easily comprehended and not overwhelming.
- **Special learning aids** to help support your understanding including:
    - ***Summaries*** to give you regular overviews of plot progression
    - ***Vocabulary lists*** to help you understand unfamiliar words more easily
    - ***Comprehension questions*** to test your understanding of key events and to encourage you to read in more detail.

So perhaps you are new to English and looking for an entertaining way to learn, or maybe you have been learning for a while and simply want to

enjoy reading and expand your vocabulary, either way, this book is the biggest step forward you will take in your studies this year. *Short Stories in English for Beginners* will give you all the support you need, so sit back, relax and let your imagination run wild as you are transported to a magical world of adventure, mystery and intrigue – in English!

*** Common European Framework of Reference (CEFR) levels A2–B1**

How to Read Effectively

Reading is a complex skill. In our first languages, we employ a variety of micro-skills to help us read. For example, we might skim a particular passage in order to understand the general idea, or gist. Or we might scan through multiple pages of a train timetable looking for a particular time or place. While these micro-skills are second nature when reading in our first languages, when it comes to reading in a foreign language, research suggests that we often abandon most of these reading skills. In a foreign language, we usually start at the beginning of a text and try to understand every single word. Inevitably, we come across unknown or difficult words and quickly get frustrated with our lack of understanding.

One of the main benefits of reading in a foreign language is that you gain exposure to large amounts of words and expressions used naturally. This kind of reading for pleasure in order to learn a language is generally known as ‘extensive reading’. It is very different from reading a textbook in which dialogues or texts are meant to be read in detail with the aim of understanding every word. That kind of reading to reach specific learning aims or do tasks is referred to as ‘intensive reading’. To put it another way, the intensive reading in textbooks usually helps you with grammar rules and specific vocabulary, whereas reading stories extensively helps show you natural language in use.

While you may have started your language learning journey using only textbooks, *Short Stories in English for Beginners* will now provide you with opportunities to learn more about natural English language in use. Here are a few suggestions to keep in mind when reading the stories in this book in order to learn the most from them:

- **Enjoyment and a sense of achievement when reading is vitally important**. Enjoying what you read keeps you coming back for more. The best way to enjoy reading stories and feel a sense of achievement is by reading each story from beginning to end. Consequently, reaching the end of a story is the most important thing. It is actually more important than understanding every word in it!

- **The more you read, the more you learn**. By reading longer texts for enjoyment, you will quickly build up an understanding of how English works. But remember: in order to take full advantage of the benefits of extensive reading, you have to actually read a large enough volume in the first place. Reading a couple of pages here and there may teach you a few new words, but it won't be enough to make a real impact on the overall level of your English.
- **You must accept that you won't understand everything you read in a story**. This is probably the most important point of all! Always remember that it is completely normal that you do not understand all the words or sentences. It doesn't mean that your language level is flawed or that you are not doing well. It means you're engaged in the process of learning. So, what should you do when you don't understand a word? Here are a few steps:

1. Look at the word and see if it is familiar in any way. Remember to look for vocabulary elements from your first language that may be familiar. Take a guess – you might surprise yourself!
2. Re-read the sentence that contains the unknown word several times. Use the context of that sentence, and the rest of the story, to try to guess what the unknown word might mean.
3. Think about whether or not the word might be a different form of a word you know. For example, you might encounter a verb that you know, but it has been conjugated in a different or unfamiliar way:

   go
   went
   have gone

   You may not be familiar with the particular form used, but ask yourself: *Can I still understand the gist of what's going on?* Usually, if you have managed to recognize the main verb, that is enough. Instead of getting frustrated, simply notice how the verb is being used, and carry on reading. Recognizing different forms of words will come intuitively over time.
4. Make a note of the unknown word in a notebook and check the meaning later. You can review these words over time to make them part of your

active vocabulary. If you simply must know the meaning of a bolded word, you can look it up in the vocabulary lists at the end of each chapter or in the glossary at the back of this book or use a dictionary. However, this should be your last resort.

These suggestions are designed to train you to handle reading in English independently and without help. The more you can develop this skill, the better you'll be able to read. Remember: learning to be comfortable with the ambiguity you may encounter while reading a foreign language is the most powerful skill that will help you become an independent and resilient learner of English!

The Six-Step Reading Process

In order to get the most from reading *Short Stories in English for Beginners*, it will be best for you to follow this simple six-step reading process for each chapter of the stories:

1 Look at the illustration and read the chapter title. Think about what the story might be about. Then read the chapter all the way through. Your aim is simply to reach the end of the chapter. Therefore, *do not stop to look up words and do not worry if there are things you do not understand*. Simply try to follow the plot.

2 When you reach the end of the chapter, read the short summary of the plot to see if you have understood what has happened. If you find this difficult, do not worry; you will improve with each chapter.

3 Go back and read the *same* chapter again. If you like, you can focus more on story details than before, but otherwise simply read it through one more time.

4 When you reach the end of the chapter for the second time, read the summary again and review the vocabulary list. If you are unsure about the meanings of any words in the vocabulary list, scan through the text to find them in the story and examine them in context. This will help you better understand the words.

5 Next, work through the comprehension questions to check your understanding of key events in the story. If you do not get them all correct, do not worry; simply answering the questions will help you better understand the story.

6 At this point, you should have some understanding of the main events of the chapter. If not, you may wish to re-read the chapter a few times using the vocabulary list to check unknown words and phrases until you feel confident. Once you are ready and confident that you understand what has happened – whether it's after one reading of the chapter or several –

move on to the next chapter and continue enjoying the story at your own pace, just as you would any other book.

Only once you have completed a story in its entirety should you consider going back and studying the story language in more depth if you wish. Or, instead of worrying about understanding everything, take time to focus on all that you *have* understood and congratulate yourself for all that you have done so far. Remember: the biggest benefits you will derive from this book will come from reading story after story through from beginning to end. If you can do that, you will be on your way to reading effectively in English!


La
Paella
Loca
staurante

Crazy Paella

Chapter 1 – Getting Ready

‘Daniel, I’m here!’ Julia calls. She is at the front door of the house.

‘What is it, Julia?’ I reply.

‘We’re going to Spain today! You remembered, right?’

‘Of course I did. I’m packing!’ I call.

My name is Daniel. I’m 24 years old. Julia is my sister. She is 23. We’re both at university. We share a house in London. Our parents are Arthur and Sarah Bell.

Julia and I are getting ready for a trip. We’re going to Barcelona, Spain. We’re both earning degrees in Spanish. We already know a lot of the language, but we want to learn more. We’re going to be **exchange students** this term.

I’m tall, about six feet. I have longish brown hair. My eyes are green and I have a wide mouth. I have a strong build. My legs are strong due to hours on the tennis courts. I’m a very good basketball player as well.

My sister Julia also has brown hair. Her hair is longer than mine. She doesn’t have green eyes. She has brown eyes like my dad. I have the same colour eyes as my mum.

My parents both work. My dad is an **electrician**. He works for a major electric company. My mum is a writer. She also owns a company. It sells **science fiction** books.

My parents are really great. They always help us to reach our goals. They both speak Spanish well. They often speak to us in Spanish. It helps Julia and I practise. They really encouraged us to become exchange students. We are leaving for Spain today.

My dad comes in my room. He looks at me in surprise. Why? Because I'm not dressed. 'Daniel! Why aren't you dressed?' Dad asks.

'Dressed? I just got up. I had a **shower** five minutes ago. I'm not even dry yet!'

'Come on! We don't have much time. I want to take you to the **airport**. But I have to go to work, too.'

'Don't worry, Dad. I'm getting dressed now.'

'Where's your sister?'

'She's in her room.'

My dad goes into my sister's room. He wants to talk to her. He enters and Julia looks at him. 'Oh, hi, Dad. Do you need something?' asks Julia.

'Yes. Your brother's getting dressed. Here.' My dad gives Julia a **wad of cash**. 'I want you to both have this.'

Julia is surprised. 'Dad! There's a lot of money here!' she says.

'Your mother and I have saved this money. We want to pay for part of your trip to Spain.'

'Thanks, Dad!' says my sister. 'It will be very useful. I'm going to tell Daniel!'

Julia turns to leave. She almost runs into me. She and Dad didn't notice that I was coming in. My dad sees me. 'Oh, Daniel, you're here!' he says. 'And you're dressed! Great!'

My dad points to the money. 'That money is for the two of you. It's to help with the trip.'

'Thanks, Dad. It'll be really helpful,' I reply.

Julia smiles.

'Now we must get ready,' Dad says. 'We have to leave for the airport! Come on!'

Shortly after we eat, we leave the house. We **head for** the airport in Mum's car. Julia is very **nervous**.

'Julia,' Mum says, 'are you all right?'

'I'm really nervous,' Julia answers.

‘Why?’

‘I don’t know anybody in Spain. I’ll only know Daniel.’

‘Don’t worry,’ Mum replies. ‘There are a lot of very nice people in Barcelona. Especially Daniel’s friend Armando.’

‘Yes, Mum. I’m sure you’re right. But I still feel nervous … What if something happens?’

‘It will be all right,’ says Dad.

At the airport there are lots of people **checking in**. Many of them are travelling for work. Some are travelling for fun. I go over to Julia. Then I ask, ‘Are you more **relaxed** now?’

‘Yes, Daniel. I was really nervous in the car.’

‘Yes, I know. But everything’s going to be fine. My friend Armando is really nice. He often helps exchange students like us.’

Our parents **hug** us warmly. We all wave goodbye as Julia and I leave. ‘We love you both!’ they call. That’s the final thing we hear. An hour later, our plane **takes off**. We are headed for Barcelona!

Chapter 1 Review

Summary

Daniel and Julia are students. They live in London. They study Spanish at university. They are going to Spain today. They will be exchange students in Barcelona. Their parents take them to the airport. Julia is very nervous in the car. She relaxes at the airport. She and Daniel leave for Spain.

Vocabulary

exchange student a student studying in another area or country

electrician someone whose job is to put in or repair electrical equipment

science fiction stories that take place in an imagined future or in other parts of the universe

shower a piece of bathroom equipment that produces a flow of water that you stand under to wash yourself

airport a place where passengers get on and off aircraft

wad of cash a pile of paper money

head for (*slang*) go to

nervous worried or frightened

check in (for a flight) to tell the people at an airport that you have arrived

relaxed feeling calm, comfortable and not worried

hug to put your arms around someone and hold them

take off when an aeroplane leaves the ground and goes up into the air

Comprehension Questions

Select one answer only for each question.

1) Daniel and Julia live in ___.
   a. the same house in London
   b. different houses in London
   c. the same house in Barcelona
   d. different houses in Barcelona

2) Daniel and Julia's parents ___.
   a. speak Spanish, but they don't practise with their children
   b. speak Spanish and practise with their children
   c. don't speak Spanish
   d. don't live in London

3) Daniel and Julia's father gives them a present for the trip. What is it?
   a. a car
   b. a trip to the airport
   c. a science fiction book
   d. money

4) During the trip to the airport, Julia feels ___.
   a. sad

b. happy
c. nervous
d. frightened

5) At the airport, there ___.
a. are a lot of Daniel’s friends
b. are a lot of businesspeople
c. aren’t many people
d. are a lot of children

Chapter 2 – Spain

Our plane lands in Barcelona. My friend Armando is waiting at the airport. ‘Hi, Daniel!’ he says. He gives me a big hug. ‘I’m so happy you’re here!’

‘Hi, Armando! It’s great to see you!’ I reply.

Armando looks at my sister Julia. I introduce them. ‘Armando, my friend, this is my sister Julia.’

Armando turns to Julia. He **kisses** her on each cheek. ‘Hi, Julia. Pleased to meet you!’

My sister is very **shy**. She’s especially shy when she meets new people. ‘Hello … Armando,’ she says. Her face turns red. Then she becomes **quiet**.

‘Your sister is really shy, isn’t she?’ Armando says to me, smiling.

‘Yes she is, but she’s lovely,’ I say.

A short while later we head for Armando’s **flat**. We are staying there for the term. We get a **taxi**. After 30 minutes, we arrive in Barcelona centre. The taxi costs 41 euros and 50 cents. Armando says it’s the usual rate to this section of the city. We pay for the taxi and get out.

It’s a short walk to Armando’s flat. It’s June and it’s really hot. But there is a nice wind to cool us.

We arrive at the flat at lunchtime. My sister and I are really hungry. ‘Armando,’ I say, ‘where can we eat?’

‘There are a couple of good **restaurants** in the area.’

‘What types of food do they have?’

‘One of the restaurants, *La Paella Loca*, has a great **paella**. I really recommend it. You can take the bus there. The other one has lovely fish. It’s just next door.’

‘Julia, do you want to have paella?’ I ask my sister.

‘Yes! I’m so hungry!’ she replies.

Armando can’t come with us. He is a teacher and he has a class. So Julia and I head for the paella restaurant. It’s a short walk to the bus **station**.

‘Hmm ... Now, which bus goes to the paella restaurant?’ I ask Julia.

‘I don’t know …’ she replies. ‘Let’s ask.’ She points to a man in a white shirt.

We walk over to the man. He smiles. ‘Hello! Can I help you?’

‘Hi. How do we get to *La Paella Loca* restaurant?’ I ask.

‘It’s easy! The number 35 bus goes in that direction. It goes right to *La Paella Loca*. However, there’s a small problem.’

‘What’s that?’ I ask.

‘That bus is normally **packed** at this time.’

‘OK. Thank you!’ we say.

As we walk to the nearest bus stop, Julia and I talk. She is not **comfortable** with taking the bus. ‘Daniel,’ she says, ‘Let’s just eat at the fish restaurant. It’s easier. I don’t want to take a packed bus.’

‘I know …’ I begin. Then I have an idea. ‘Wait! I’ll take the bus to *La Paella Loca*. You go to the fish restaurant.’

‘Why?’

‘Because that way we can compare the two restaurants.’

‘Oh. Good idea. OK. Enjoy! I’ll call your **mobile** later,’ she calls and walks off.

I get on the next bus and sit down. I’m very **tired**. I quickly go to sleep. The bus system in Barcelona is very good. I know there is nothing to worry about.

I **wake up** a while later. The bus has stopped. There’s no one else on it except for the driver. ‘Excuse me,’ I say. ‘Where are we?’

‘We’ve arrived in Valencia,’ he replies.

‘What? Valencia? We’re in Valencia? How can that be?’ I say.

‘Well this is the **express bus**. It goes directly from Barcelona to Valencia,’ he tells me.

I can’t believe it. I took the wrong bus. But what can I do?

I thank the driver and get off the bus. Then I take out my mobile. I want to call my sister, but I can't turn it on. My **battery has died**! I check my watch. It's just after five o'clock in the afternoon. My sister doesn't know where I am. She must be really worried. I have to contact her. I need a **phone box**!

I ask a woman on the street for a phone box. 'There's one,' she says, pointing. 'It's just over there.'

I thank her and head for the phone box. But when I get there, I realize something. Julia's phone number is in my mobile's memory. I can't turn my mobile on. I finally have a phone, but I don't have a number! Now what?

I think for a while. Then I realize something. I'm really hungry. I haven't eaten since breakfast! I decide to find a restaurant. I can think about my problems later.

I find a restaurant up the street. The waiter comes to my table. 'Good evening!' he says happily.

'Good evening,' I reply.

'What would you like?' he asks slowly in Spanish.

I look quickly at the **menu**. 'I'd like … paella?' I say in Spanish.

'Sorry? I didn't understand you,' he answers in Spanish.

I try again. My Spanish can't be that bad. 'Um … I'd like paella?' I point **madly** at the word *paella* on the menu. Then I say it again in English.

Finally, the waiter then smiles and says in English, 'Thanks. I'm not from here. I'm new and my Spanish isn't that great.'

I start to laugh very loudly. A lot of people in the restaurant turn and look. At this point, I'm **embarrassed**. I didn't need to laugh so loudly. But I don't care. **It's all too much**. This whole situation is just so strange! My sister and I wanted to have paella together. And now here I am, eating paella – but alone in Valencia! And my sister doesn't know where I am. It's so **ironic**!

I finish dinner and pay the bill. Then **reality sinks in**. What do I do now? My mobile doesn't work. There is a phone box, but I don't have my sister's number. What can I do? Then I remember. I can call London! I know the number to my mum and dad's house.

I go back to the phone box. I call my parents' number. It rings four times. Finally my mum says 'Hello?'

'Hi, Mum. It's Daniel.'

'Daniel?' she says. 'How are you? How's Barcelona?'

'It's good. Um … Mum. I have a problem.'

'What's wrong? Has something bad happened?'

'No, nothing bad, Mum. Can you call Julia, please? Tell her that I'm in Valencia. And tell her that my mobile battery has died.'

'In Valencia? What are you doing in Valencia?!'

'It's a long story, Mum. I'll tell you the details later.'

We say goodbye.

I decide to get a hotel room. There is one available up the street. I can go back to Barcelona tomorrow. Right now, I need sleep.

I pay for a night's stay in cash. I use the money from my dad. I have no credit cards with me. I go to my room. I take off my clothes and get into bed. I turn off the light and go to sleep. I'm really tired. What a **crazy** day!

Chapter 2 Review

Summary

Daniel and Julia arrive in Barcelona. Daniel's friend Armando meets them at the airport. They all go to Armando's flat. Daniel and Julia are hungry. Armando suggests two restaurants. Julia walks to a fish restaurant. Daniel takes a bus to a paella restaurant. On the bus, Daniel falls asleep. He wakes up in Valencia! His phone isn't working. He doesn't know his sister's phone number. He eats paella in a restaurant. In the end, he calls his mother. Then he stays at a hotel for the night.

Vocabulary

kiss to touch someone with your lips, especially on their mouth or face

shy nervous and not confident when meeting and speaking to people

quiet having or making little or no noise

flat a set of rooms that someone lives in, and which are part of a larger building

taxi a car with a driver that you pay to take you from one place to another

restaurant a place where you can buy and eat a meal

paella a Spanish dish made of chicken, rice, seafood, vegetables and seasonings

station a building where trains, buses, or other vehicles stop to allow people to get on and off

packed very full

comfortable happy and relaxed (about doing something)

mobile a telephone that you carry with you

tired feeling that you need a rest

wake up to stop sleeping

express bus a large vehicle with a lot of seats for passengers that travels quickly between big cities, without stopping

(mobile) battery has died there is no longer power to run a device or telephone

phone box a small booth or box, usually on a street, with a telephone you can pay to use

menu a list of the food available in a restaurant

madly in an excited way

embarrassed feeling ashamed or stupid

It's all too much. (Something) is more than a person can handle or manage

ironic surprising, often because it is the opposite of what is expected

reality sinks in *(expression)* when you one begin to understand the truth of what is happening

crazy out of control, unexpected

Comprehension Questions

Select one answer only for each question.

6) Armando is ___.

a. an airport worker
b. a friend of Julia and Daniel's parents
c. Julia's friend
d. Daniel's friend

7) In Barcelona, it's ___.
a. cold
b. hot
c. neither hot nor cold
d. hot in the mountains and cold near the Mediterranean Sea

8) After going to Armando's flat, Julia and Daniel head for ___.
a. a restaurant
b. Armando's friend's flat
c. the train station
d. Valencia

9) Daniel can't contact his sister because ___.
a. his mobile battery has died
b. he has no money
c. there is no phone box
d. he forgot his mobile

10) Daniel spends the night ___.
a. in a hotel in Barcelona
b. on the bus
c. in a hotel in Valencia
d. at the airport

Chapter 3 – The Motorway

I wake up early at the hotel and have a shower. I order some food to my room. I have little money at this point. But I'm hungry again so I take my time and enjoy.

After that, I get dressed and leave. I notice the time on a clock in the hall. It's ten o'clock in the morning. I wonder if Mum has talked to Julia yet. My sister is a nervous person. I hope she's all right.

I get to the hotel **entrance**. As I leave, I stop to think. 'How am I going to get back to Barcelona? I spent most of my money on the hotel. I don't know where a bank is. I can't get money from my account. And Julia is probably waiting for me. I need a **solution** –fast!

Then I notice two workers. They are carrying boxes towards a **lorry**. On the lorry, there's a picture with the name of the company. I look more closely. Then I start laughing very loudly. I stop myself quickly. I don't want to be embarrassed again! I can't believe it. The picture on the lorry is of paella. It's a lorry from *La Paella Loca* restaurant!

I go over to one of the workers. 'Hello,' I say.

'Good morning,' he answers. 'How can I help you?'

'Do you work for this restaurant in Barcelona?' I ask and point to the picture on the lorry.

'No, I'm just a lorry driver,' the man says.

'Do you know the restaurant *La Paella Loca*?'

'Yes, we bring rice there every week. It's for their paella, but I don't work there.'

The driver gets into the lorry. Suddenly, I have an idea! 'Excuse me?' I say.

'Yes?' the driver answers.

'Could you take me back to Barcelona?' I ask.

'Now?' he says.

'Yes,' I reply. 'I have little money. I must get back to my sister!'

The driver stops to think. Then he replies. ‘OK, I guess so. Get into the lorry. Sit between the rice boxes. And don’t tell anybody!’

‘I won’t. Thank you,’ I say.

‘No problem,’ he says. Then he adds, ‘Quickly, please. I have to leave now. I can’t be late!’

I get into the back of the lorry. I sit down between a couple of boxes of rice. The driver starts the lorry. We head for Barcelona. I think it’s a great idea. A lorry is faster than a bus. I can gain some time that way. And, it costs me no money. I sit back happily to enjoy the ride.

It’s very dark in the back of the lorry. I can’t see anything. I can just hear the lorry’s **engine** and the cars on the **motorway**. Then, suddenly, something in the lorry moves. There’s another person among the rice boxes! ‘Hello?’ I say.

Silence.

‘Who’s there?’ I ask in English.

More silence. I know someone is there. He or she is between the boxes. Finally, I get up and walk over. What a surprise! It’s an old man. He’s hidden between the boxes.

‘Excuse me,’ I say, ‘But who are you?’

‘Leave me alone, please,’ the man answers. He speaks perfect English!

‘What are you doing here?’ I ask.

‘I’m travelling to Barcelona.’

‘Does the driver know you’re here?’

‘No, he doesn’t. I got into the lorry while you were talking to him.’

‘I see …’ I say.

Suddenly, the driver stops. He gets out and heads towards the back. The old man looks at me **with concern**. ‘Why did he stop?’

‘I don’t know.’

There’s a sound at the back door.

‘I have to **hide**!’ says the man.

The driver comes into the lorry. He only sees me. The old man is hiding behind the boxes.

‘What’s going on in here?’ he asks me.

‘Nothing.’

‘Who were you talking to?’

‘Me? Nobody. There’s no one else here. Can’t you see?’

‘Listen. We’re not in Barcelona yet. Be quiet. I don’t want any trouble. Understand?’

‘I understand,’ I reply.

The driver closes the door. He goes back to the driver’s seat. At that same moment, the old man comes out from between the boxes. He looks at me with a smile. ‘I’m **lucky** that he didn’t see me!’ he says.

‘Yes, you are,’ I say. ‘So, tell me. Why are you travelling from Valencia to Barcelona in a lorry?’

‘Do you really want to know?’

‘Yes, of course!’

‘Allow me to tell you a little story.’

‘Please! It’s a long ride.’

The old man tells me his story. ‘I have a son, but I have never met him. His mother and I were together many years ago. We weren’t really a perfect match. But I loved her. Then I went to the United States. It was for a job opportunity. The job didn’t go well. I couldn’t get back.’ He paused. Then he continued, ‘She moved away. And I never saw her – or my son – again. Recently, I found out where they are.’

‘In Barcelona?’

‘Exactly.’

‘How old is your son?’

‘He’s 24.’

‘That’s the same age as me!’

The old man laughs. ‘What a **coincidence**!’

‘Yes, it is.’

After a few minutes of silence, I get up to **stretch my legs**. I ask the man, ‘What’s your son’s name?’

‘His name is Armando. He has a flat in Barcelona. It’s in an area near the restaurant *The Crazy Paella*. That’s why I’m in this lorry.’

The Crazy Paella. Also known as *La Paella Loca* in Spanish. The man in the lorry is my friend Armando’s father. I can’t believe it!

Chapter 3 Review

Summary

Daniel wakes up and eats in his hotel room in Valencia. When he leaves the hotel, he sees a lorry. It belongs to *La Paella Loca* restaurant. Daniel asks the driver to take him back to Barcelona. The driver says yes. Inside the lorry, Daniel meets an old man. The man is also going to Barcelona. He is looking for his son, Armando. The man is the father of Daniel’s friend Armando.

Vocabulary

entrance the part of a building where you go in

solution the answer to a problem or a question

lorry a large vehicle for carrying heavy goods by road

engine the part of a machine that uses energy to produce movement

motorway a wide road for vehicles travelling fast over long distances

silence when it is completely quiet and no sound can be heard

with concern in a worried or unsure way

hide to be in a place where people cannot see or find something or someone easily

lucky when something good happens to you by chance

coincidence when two things happen at the same time by chance

stretch (one’s) legs to move around, usually after being still for a time

Comprehension Questions

Select one answer only for each question.

11) Daniel probably woke up at around ___.
    a. 10:15
    b. 10:00
    c. 9:00
    d. 12:15

12) The driver of the lorry ___.
    a. works in the hotel
    b. works at *La Paella Loca* restaurant
    c. only works as a driver
    d. works for another restaurant

13) Daniel meets ___ in the lorry.
    a. a young man
    b. a young woman
    c. a different driver
    d. an old man

14) The person Daniel meets in the van is travelling to ___.
    a. work in *The Crazy Paella*
    b. work as a driver
    c. visit the person's father
    d. visit the person's child

15) The person in the van is ___.
    a. Daniel's father
    b. Armando's father
    c. Julia's mother
    d. Daniel's mother

Chapter 4 – The Return

The man and I talk little on the ride to Barcelona. I don't mention that I may know his son. At last, the *Paella Loca* lorry arrives. The driver turns off the engine. The old man and I get out the back door. The old man hides among the people on the street. I thank the driver.

'You're welcome,' he says. 'Have a good day!'

I turn around. The old man is looking at the restaurant. It's *La Paella Loca* at last! We both go in. No one is there. It's three o'clock in the afternoon. It's still too early for **dinner**.

'What do you want to do?' I ask the man.

'I'm not hungry,' he replies. 'I want to go to my son's flat. Do you want to come with me?'

'Sure,' I reply.

The old man has Armando's address. We take the number 35 bus in silence. Then we walk towards Armando's flat. He still doesn't know that Armando is my friend. Armando doesn't speak about his father very often. I know Armando and the man have never met.

At this point, I just can't decide. Should I tell the man that I know Armando? Should I keep it to myself? Finally, I come to a conclusion. I will keep quiet. I want the meeting to be a great surprise.

We arrive at the flat and walk through the front entrance. 'Good afternoon!' says the **receptionist**.

'Hello,' we reply.

The old man moves towards the receptionist. He wants to ask for Armando's flat number.

'Leave it to me,' I say.

We take the **lift** up to the third floor. We get out. We walk towards the door of the flat.

'It's here,' I say to the old man.

'How do you know?' he asks.

Finally, I explain. I tell him that I have known Armando for years. It was just luck – or **fate** – that he and I were in the same lorry. At first, he can't believe it. Then he accepts his fate. He can't wait to meet his son.

We ring at the door but there is no answer.

'Julia? Armando?' I call. 'Is anyone there?' Again, nobody answers. I explain that my sister and I are staying in the flat. Then I take out my key and open the door.

'Where are they?' the man asks.

'I don't know. But they should be here soon.'

We go into the flat. I find my mobile phone charger. For the next 15 minutes, I charge my phone. After, I call my sister. Julia's phone rings once. She answers quickly.

'Daniel! Finally! Mum called, but I was so worried!'

'Hello, Julia. Don't worry. I'm fine. I'm at Armando's flat. I'm with someone.'

'Who is it?'

'Well, it's a long story. Come back to the flat. Where are you?'

'I talked to Mum this morning. She told me about Valencia. Armando and I waited for you all night! We just went out for lunch. We're on our way back now.'

'OK. We'll wait for you here.'

Half an hour later, Armando and Julia arrive at the flat. 'Hello, Daniel! We're so happy to see you!' says Armando. He turns to the old man. 'And who are you?' he asks.

Before the man can reply, I say, 'Um … Armando, I have something important to tell you.'

'What's going on?' he asks.

'Armando, this is your father,' I say.

At first, Armando **is taken aback**. 'My father? That's **impossible**!'

The old man looks at him. 'Are you Armando?' he says.

'Yes, I am. You can't possibly be my father!' Armando replies.

'My name is Antonio Sotomonte. Yes, I'm your father.'

The man explains everything to Armando. Armando soon **realizes** that it really is his father. He hugs the old man **awkwardly**. After so many years, they have finally met. Both men are not sure what to do.

Finally, Armando smiles and says, ‘Well … I guess this calls for a **celebration**!’

‘I agree!’ says his father, Antonio.

‘Shall we go to *La Paella Loca*?’ says Julia.

I look at Julia. I’m surprised. ‘No! I don’t want paella! I never want to eat it again!’ She looks at me and laughs. ‘I don’t want to go near that restaurant!’ I continue. ‘And I don’t want to get on a bus for a long time either! I want a pizza!’

They all **burst out laughing**. After a moment, I laugh too.

‘What a crazy day!’ I say.

‘Yes,’ replies Antonio. ‘***Un día loco***; a crazy day indeed!’

Chapter 4 Review

Summary

Daniel and the old man arrive in Barcelona. They go into *La Paella Loca* restaurant. Nobody is there because it’s early. Then they go to Armando’s flat. No one is there either. Daniel charges his phone. He calls Julia. She is out with Armando. Julia and Armando come back to the flat. Daniel introduces Armando to his father. They decide to celebrate with a dinner. But Daniel doesn’t want paella, he wants pizza.

Vocabulary

dinner a main meal in the evening or in the middle of the day

receptionist a person that sits at the entrance to an office or building and directs visitors

lift a small box that takes people up and down in a building

fate an unknown and uncontrollable power that seems to make things happen

be taken aback to be surprised, often in an unpleasant or unwanted way

impossible not possible, not able to do or happen

realize to know and understand something that you did not know or understand before

awkwardly in an odd or uncomfortable way

celebration a happy event or party

burst out laughing to suddenly start to laugh

un día loco a Spanish expression meaning 'a crazy day'

Comprehension Questions

Select one answer only for each question.

16) The old man and Daniel go first to ___.
   a. Armando's flat
   b. a phone box
   c. *The Crazy Paella* restaurant
   d. the airport

17) When they get to the flat ___.
   a. Julia and Armando are there
   b. only Julia is there
   c. only Armando is there
   d. no one is there

18) The first thing Daniel does is ___.
   a. charge his mobile
   b. make dinner
   c. call Armando
   d. call his parents

19) Next, Daniel calls ___.
   a. his parents
   b. Armando
   c. Julia

d. the lorry driver

20) For the celebration, Julia suggests they go to ___.

a. *The Crazy Paella*
b. a pizza restaurant
c. London
d. Valencia





A Very Unusual Excursion

Chapter 1 – The Creature

Lake Ullswater is in the north-west of England. It's in a well-known area called the Lake District. It is a popular place for families to visit. People often go there to take photos. They also go to enjoy nature in the summer season.

The Lake District is a region with very **mild weather**. It's often cloudy and summers aren't very hot. Because of this, **hikers** love Lake Ullswater. Sylvia is one of these hikers. She lives near Lake Ullswater. She loves nature and she loves hiking. She often goes hiking in June and July. The weather is warm, but not too hot. Every weekend, she puts her things in a **backpack** and hikes in the **woods** near the lake.

Sylvia's good friend George likes hiking, too. He often goes with Sylvia. Last weekend, they decided to go for a hike near Lake Ullswater. But in the end, it became a very unusual **excursion**!

Sylvia and George met at the start of the walk. 'Hi, Sylvia!' George **shouted** from far away.

'Hello, George!' answered Sylvia.

'I'll be right there!' shouted George. He ran towards Sylvia.

'George, slow down. You'll get tired.'

'Don't worry, I brought energy drinks for the hike,' said George. He pointed to his large backpack and laughed.

The two friends were very happy to see each other. They talked a little. Then they started their excursion.

After a few miles, the **path** changed. It **split** into two paths.

Which direction should we go?' asked Sylvia. 'To the left or the right?'

'Let's go left,'replied George.

'Well, um … I think I'd prefer to go right.'

‘Why?’

Sylvia looked at the woods near the left path. Then she answered, ‘There are stories about that path. Some people saw a big hairy **creature** there….’

‘Really? Do you believe those stories?’

‘Um … I don’t know. I guess, we could go that way …,’ said Sylvia. She looked worried.

‘Come on, Sylvia. Let’s try it!’ George encouraged her. Sylvia gave him a worried look. Then they walked down the left path.

An hour later, George and Sylvia were still on the path. There were trees all around them. It was late afternoon. Sylvia asked George, ‘Do you think there are **strange** creatures in these woods?’

‘I don’t think so.’

‘Why not?’

‘Well, I’ve never seen a strange creature. Have you?’

‘Not in these woods.’

‘Right. So that means we’re **safe**!’

Sylvia laughed. ‘I guess so!’

They continued their hike.

Several miles later, the two friends were still walking. The sun was low in the sky. Suddenly, they walked out of the woods. In front of them was the lake.

George and Sylvia looked around. Near the lake was a house. The house was made of **wood** and it looked very old. ‘Look, George,’ called Sylvia. ‘Look over there!’

‘Where?’ replied George.

‘There! There’s a house! It’s made of wood.’

‘Oh! I can see it. Let’s go and have a look!’

‘What? But what if someone’s there?’

‘Don’t be **scared**, Sylvia. I’m sure no one will be there.’

The two friends walked towards the house. Before they went in, they looked around the place. ‘The house looks like it was built a long time ago,’

said Sylvia. ‘Look at the state of the windows! The glass is very old. And the wood is really old, too!’

‘Yes,’ replied George. ‘I’d say that it’s at least 50 years old. But I wouldn’t say it’s **ugly**. There’s something that I like about it.’

George looked around. Suddenly he called, ‘Hey, Sylvia! Come here!’ Near the lake there was a small **boat**. It was old and made of wood. It was standing in the water near the **shore**. George looked at Sylvia. ‘Let’s get in it!’

‘**Are you kidding**?’ replied Sylvia. ‘Why?’

‘We can go to the middle of the lake!’

‘I don’t know ….’

‘Come on! Let’s go! It’ll be fun!’

‘OK …,’ said Sylvia. She didn’t sound happy.

Sylvia and George got into the boat with their backpacks. They slowly **rowed** to the middle of the lake. Sylvia looked around. ‘It’s so nice here!’ she commented.

‘Yes, I know. There are lots of trees. And we can still see the sun perfectly.’

‘I’m so happy we came out here. Let’s have something to eat. Do you want something?’

‘Of course! What do you have?’

Sylvia took several cookies and sandwiches out of her backpack. George took out the energy drinks.

‘What do you want?’

‘The sandwiches look good ….’

‘Sure! Help yourself.’

‘Thank you, Sylvia!’

The two friends ate their sandwiches in the middle of the lake. Suddenly, they heard a noise.

‘Did you hear that?’ George said.

‘Yes, I did,’ Sylvia replied. She sounded scared.

‘I think it’s coming from the house.’

‘So do I!’

‘Let’s go and look!’

Sylvia looked at George in surprise. ‘Seriously?’ she said.

‘Yes! Come on!’

George and Sylvia rowed back to the shore. They put their backpacks on. Then they slowly walked to the old wooden house.

‘Sylvia, I want to go in the house.’

‘Why? Aren’t we supposed to be hiking? Out in the clean air? *Not* in houses?’

‘Well, yes. But in the woods there are lots of interesting things. I like to **explore** interesting things.’

‘I’m not sure ….’

‘Come on. Let’s go into the house,’ George suggested again. Finally Sylvia agreed.

Sylvia and George took a few steps towards the house. They opened the door and went in. Everything inside the house was very old. No one had lived in it for a very long time. There was **dust** everywhere.

‘Sylvia, look at this,’ called George. His voice sounded strange.

‘What?’

‘Here, next to the window.’

Sylvia looked. On the floor, in the dust, there were several very large **footprints**.

‘What do you think these footprints could be?’ asked George.

‘I think they’re bear footprints!’ answered Sylvia.

‘A bear, Sylvia?! There aren’t any bears around here! The closest bears are hundreds of miles away!’

‘Then I have no idea. But let’s get out of here!’

Suddenly, the two friends heard a noise in the kitchen. Sylvia and George ran to the room. They could not believe their eyes. A big hairy creature was

standing in the kitchen! It quickly turned, went out the back door and ran away. The creature made a lot of noise. It even broke the door as it left!

George and Sylvia stood still. The creature **disappeared** into the woods. Sylvia couldn't speak. 'What *was* that?' George asked.

They didn't know.

Chapter 1 Review

Summary

Sylvia and George go hiking around Lake Ullswater. They come to the lake. Near the lake there is an old house and a boat. They go on the lake in the boat. Then they hear a noise. They go back the house and go in. In the kitchen, they see a strange creature. The creature runs out of the house. It goes into the woods. Sylvia and George don't know what the creature is.

Vocabulary

lake a large area of water with land all around it

mild weather weather that is quite warm and comfortable

hiker a person who enjoys long walks in the countryside

backpack a small bag used to carry things around on the back

wood an area where a lot of trees grow closely together

excursion a trip or outing

shout to say something very loudly or to make a loud noise with your voice

path a narrow route across a piece of ground that people walk or ride a bicycle along

split to go in two different directions

creature any living thing that is not a plant

strange unusual

safe unlikely to be harmed or hurt

wood the hard substance that trees are made of

scared frightened

ugly not pleasant to look at

boat a vehicle for travelling over water

shore the area of land next to the sea or next to a lake

Are you kidding? a question asked to express disbelief or check if someone is joking

row to pull a boat through water using long wooden sticks

explore to travel around a place and find out what it is like

dust a powder of dirt on a surface or in the air

footprint the mark that a foot leaves on the ground

disappear if someone or something disappears, the person or thing goes somewhere and cannot be seen or found

Comprehension Questions

Select one answer only for each question.

1) Sylvia and George are in ___.
   a. London
   b. the Lake District
   c. Scotland
   d. South-west England

2) Sylvia and George are making an excursion to a ___.
   a. lake
   b. beach
   c. small town
   d. city

3) While walking along a path, Sylvia and George come across a ___.
   a. small town
   b. city
   c. store
   d. house

4) When they see the boat on the lake they ___.
   a. don’t go in it

b. sleep in it
c. decide it’s not safe to get in
d. row to the middle of the lake

5) While on the lake, Sylvia and George hear a sound in the ___.
a. boat
b. house
c. lake
d. woods

Chapter 2 – The Search

‘Did you see that, Sylvia?’ George said.
‘Yes!’ answered Sylvia. ‘What was it?’

‘I don’t know! But it was very big and very ugly!’

‘Yeah … like some kind of creature!’

George looked at Sylvia and said, ‘Let’s go after it!’.

‘Are you kidding?’ answered Sylvia. ‘**No way**!’

‘Come on! We’re here to explore! Let’s follow it!’

‘Oh, George! I don’t know about this …’

George and Sylvia left the old house. They followed the creature’s footprints into the woods. They looked around. Finally, George said, ‘The creature could be anywhere. We have to **split up**.’

‘Split up?’ said Sylvia in surprise. ‘Are you **crazy**, George? There’s a strange creature out here. And we don’t know where it is!’

‘I know,’ George answered. ‘But we could take a picture of it. We might be on the news.’

‘What?’

‘Come on, Sylvia,’ said George. ‘Maybe it’s a special animal! Maybe it was never photographed before!’ He looked at Sylvia and continued, ‘They might write an article about us! Maybe I’ll be interviewed for the TV news! We could …’

‘Stop! You’re so crazy, George. I shouldn’t encourage you, but fine. Let’s split up then.’

George went one way. Sylvia went the other. Sylvia saw no sign of the creature. She thought more about it. In the end, she came to the simplest conclusion. She and George **imagined** the creature. It was not real.

A few minutes later, Sylvia saw George in the woods. It was almost dark. She told George about her conclusion. She told him the creature was not real. George disagreed. He was certain it was real. They just needed to prove it.

Suddenly, George saw a **thicket** of trees. He wanted to see if the creature was inside. He told Sylvia to wait. As he went into the thicket, George smiled and **waved**.

Sylvia waited for George to come out. She waited several minutes. No George. She waited nearly half an hour. Still no George!

Sylvia looked at her **mobile** phone. It had no **service**. She couldn't even call for help. At this point, she was scared. But she couldn't just leave George!

Suddenly she thought, *maybe he went back to the house! Maybe this is all a **joke**!*

Sylvia walked back to the old house. She looked around. Still no George. She decided to wait. If he was joking, she could joke, too. She planned to act normally. She would act as though it was no big deal that he was missing. Ha! That would be fun!

There was an old bed in the main room. She sat down and took out a sandwich. She ate it and thought about George. Where was he? What could she do?

As Sylvia thought, she became sleepy. Her head could not function. What a day! *I'll just wait for George here and …* That was her last thought as she went to sleep.

Sylvia woke up early the next day. George still wasn't there! She had hoped the whole experience was a dream. But now she realized it wasn't. She was really worried. Maybe this wasn't a joke.

Sylvia decided to go to the nearest town. She walked back along the same path. At last she came to a small town. Although it was a Sunday, there were several people around. Sylvia tried her mobile phone again. Still no service. None! She needed a phone now!

Sylvia went to a nearby restaurant. There were a lot of people there. Sylvia didn't know what to say. It was a very unusual situation! Finally, she decided not to say anything. She went to the owner and said, 'Hello. Can I use your phone, please?'

'Of course you can. It's on the wall over there.'

‘Thank you very much.’

First Sylvia rang George’s number. His mobile didn’t ring. Maybe there was a problem with it? Next she decided to call George’s house. The phone rang once, twice, three times. Why didn’t anybody answer? George’s brother was normally home in the morning. Not today. Sylvia called again but there was no answer. She left a message. ‘Where are you, George!?’ she asked.

Sylvia left the restaurant. She stood on the street for several minutes and thought. Sylvia was an independent woman. She was a woman who **thought things through**. *Right then,* she thought. *Let’s figure this out! Maybe George got lost in the thicket. And when he came out, I was gone. So he went home. That must be it!*

Sylvia had to get back to George’s house. She ran back to the restaurant and called a **taxi**. After 30 minutes, she arrived at George’s house. ‘That’s nine pounds,’ said the driver.

‘Here’s ten pounds,’ said Sylvia. ‘Keep the change.’

‘Thank you. Have a good day.’

Sylvia got out of the taxi and walked towards George’s house. The house was very big and beautiful. It had two floors and a garden. It was in a very nice **neighbourhood**. There were big houses and shops all around. George’s car was parked outside the house. Was George inside? Had he called his family?

Sylvia checked her mobile phone. She had service now, but there were no messages. She called George again. She left another message and said she was worried. She asked him to contact her right away.

I don’t understand, she thought. *George drove his car home. So why didn’t he call me?* Sylvia rang the doorbell. There was no answer. She rang three times but no one answered.

Sylvia was concerned. She went to the house of her two friends Claudia and Veronica. Her friends weren’t at home either. She tried calling. Their phones were turned off! Something strange was going on. She just didn’t know what. All her friends had disappeared!

Sylvia didn’t know what to do. She didn’t want to contact the police. She knew George was safe because his car was home. There were no friends around to ask for help. Sylvia decided to do something. She would find George herself!

At this point is was late afternoon so Sylvia took another taxi back to Lake Ullswater. She took the path into the woods near the cabin. After a few minutes, she saw the old wooden house. But this time, she noticed a difference: there were lights on in the house!

Chapter 2 Review

Summary

Sylvia and George look for a strange creature in the woods. George disappears. Sylvia goes to the old house to find him. He isn’t there. She falls asleep. She wakes up the next day. George still isn’t there. She is worried. She calls George. He doesn’t answer. She goes to his house. She sees his car. But she can’t find him and she can’t find her friends. She finally returns to the old house. There are lights on in the house.

Vocabulary

No way! (*slang*) an expression used to show surprise or disbelief

split up to divide a group of people into smaller groups or individuals

crazy silly or stupid

imagine to form a picture of someone or something in your mind

thicket a small group of trees

wave to move your hand to say hello or goodbye or to attract someone’s attention

mobile a telephone that you carry with you

(mobile) service the system that allows you to use a mobile telephone

joke something said or done to be funny

think things through to consider or work through a problem

taxi a car with a driver who you pay to take you from one place to another

neighbourhood an area of a town or city

Comprehension Questions

Select one answer for each question.

6) At first, Sylvia thinks that the creature is ___.
   a. real
   b. a joke
   c. George
   d. in her imagination

7) Later, George comes across ___.
   a. a special tree
   b. another house
   c. Sylvia's car
   d. a group of trees

8) Sylvia falls asleep in ___.
   a. the woods
   b. the boat on the lake
   c. a bed in the house
   d. the town

9) When she wakes up, Sylvia ___.
   a. goes to a nearby town
   b. goes to the thicket
   c. calls George's parents
   d. calls her parents

10) When she returns to the lake, Sylvia sees ___.
   a. a fire in the house
   b. lights on in the house
   c. the creature in the house
   d. George in the house

Chapter 3 – The Surprise

Sylvia could not believe it. ‘There are lights on in the house!’ she cried. She followed the path down to the lake. She went over to the house.

It was late afternoon, but she **definitely** saw orange lights inside. She walked around the outside of the house. She wanted a view of who was inside. It must be George!

‘Hello?’ she shouted. ‘It’s Sylvia!’ No one answered. Suddenly, a noise came from within the house. *OK, George*, thought Sylvia. *This isn’t funny anymore!* Sylvia went to the door and opened it. She was totally unprepared for what she saw.

Everyone she knew was there! There were so many people inside the house! Her mother was there, other family members, even her friends Claudia and Veronica!

‘Sylvia!’ her mother shouted. ‘I’m so glad you’re here!’

‘Hello,’ Sylvia said **cautiously**. ‘What’s going on?’

‘Well,’ said her mother. ‘Sit down. Let me explain.’

Sylvia sat down on the old bed. ‘What’s happening?’ she finally said. Everyone around her looked worried. No one said anything. ‘Where’s Dad?’ she asked her mother.

‘He’s at work. He’s coming soon,’ her mother answered.

Sylvia looked around the room. ‘Can someone please tell me what’s going on?’ she asked.

Sylvia’s mother stood up and started to talk. ‘We think George is missing. We believe a creature took him.’

‘What? How do you know that we saw a creature?’

‘George sent us a message. He said he needed help. Then, his mobile **went dead**. We’re here to look for George.’

‘Now?’ Sylvia asked with surprise.

‘Yes, now.’

Everyone picked up their backpacks. They turned on their **torches**. They were ready to go and look for George. They left the house and formed groups.

Sylvia stopped for a moment at the door. She stood there for a while. *I just don't understand*, she thought. *George wouldn't go off alone. He wouldn't want to scare me. And why would he send a message to Mum? Why not me? And why are all my friends here? Not his?* She shook her head. ***Something just doesn't add up*** …

After a moment, Sylvia looked around. She couldn't see the groups! She couldn't see anyone! 'Where are you?' she called. 'Hello? Can anyone hear me?'

Sylvia walked towards the woods. *Maybe they're all there*, she thought. As she walked, she took a torch from her backpack. She turned it on. It was getting dark again.

'Where are you all? Is anyone there?' she shouted. No one answered. *I don't understand!* she thought. She looked around the dark woods. Suddenly, she turned around. It was better to wait in the old house than to walk in the woods in the dark!

Sylvia went back to the house and sat on the old bed again. She waited for a few minutes. No one came. Suddenly, Sylvia heard a noise coming from the kitchen.

She got off the bed. She walked slowly towards the kitchen. She tried not to make any noise. She wanted to see what was going on. Maybe it was her friends? Her mother?

She turned on the torch. Then she saw it – the creature! It was very ugly, and it was coming towards her!

Sylvia shouted and ran from the house. 'Help! Help!' she cried. No one was there. She ran as fast as she could. But the creature was quicker than she was. It was soon right behind her. Sylvia turned to see it. She fell to the ground in a **panic**. She was really scared so she started **kicking**. The creature had her legs. She couldn't get away!

Sylvia kept fighting. But suddenly, the creature stopped and got up. It reached down. It wanted to help Sylvia stand up! *What is going on here?*

thought Sylvia.

Suddenly, Sylvia saw movement around her. All of her friends and family came out of the woods. They had their torches on. But they had something else in their hands, too – **candles**! And they were singing something. It was a song she knew well.

At that moment, Sylvia understood everything. The creature took off its **costume**. It was her father! 'Happy birthday, Sylvia!' he said. Then he joined in the singing.

'Happy birthday to you!' everybody sang around her. Sylvia didn't know whether to laugh or cry.

'Dad, were you the creature?' Sylvia asked in surprise. 'Was it you this whole time?'

'Yes, my love. It was me all along. I had a great time playing the role!' he laughed. Then he continued, 'We planned the party for yesterday. But then there was a development at your mother's office. So we had to move the party to today. George came up with a great idea. He suggested we **play a trick** on you. He did it to get you to the cabin for two days.'

'Really? Yes, that was some trick,' said Sylvia as she looked around. 'And where is George?'

George came out from behind a tree. He was completely clean and completely safe.

'I'm sorry, Sylvia,' said George. 'We played a pretty bad trick on you. But we wanted it to be a birthday to remember! And you are getting a really great present!'

Sylvia's father handed her a birthday card.

'For that trick? It must definitely be a great gift!' said Sylvia, laughing. She opened the card. In it there were several papers. 'What is this?' she asked and looked around.

Sylvia's friends and family picked her up. They carried her to the front of the house. 'We bought you this old house, honey! The house is your birthday present!' said her mother.

Sylvia's father joined them. 'We're going to **renovate** it together,' he added. 'It's going to be your summer house!'

Sylvia started to laugh. Then she started to cry with **relief**. George was safe. She was safe. And this crazy old cabin was hers!

Finally, Sylvia was able to speak again. ‘Well,’ she began, ‘I want to thank you all for the birthday surprise. And Mum, Dad, I can’t believe this house is mine, thank you!’ Then she looked at her father and George. ‘Dad, that was quite a **performance**. I just want to give the creature one important piece of advice. He is *not* welcome as a visitor any more!’

The group laughed and then sang some more. Then they went into the cabin. It was time for coffee and cake. It was also time for a long rest for the birthday girl!

Chapter 3 Review

Summary

Sylvia returns to the cabin to look for George. The lights are on. She goes inside. Her family and friends are there. They say they are there to find George. Sylvia doesn’t understand. Her friends leave to look in the woods. Sylvia thinks about her current situation. She goes back to the cabin. She sees the creature there. It chases her into the woods. She falls but then the creature helps her up. It is actually her father! The creature is part of her birthday surprise and the cabin is her present.

Vocabulary

definitely certainly

cautiously slowly and with care

go dead to no longer work or be usable

torch a small electric light that you carry in your hand

something just doesn’t add up something does not make sense or does not seem right

panic a frightened or worried state in which you cannot think calmly

kick to hit someone or something with your foot

candle a stick of wax with a piece of string through the middle which produces a flame when you burn it

costume a set of clothes that you wear to make you look like a different person or like an animal or other creature

play a trick to make someone do what you want by using clever but unfair methods

renovate to repair or change something to make it better, usually a building

relief a good feeling because something bad or unpleasant stops or does not happen

performance the acting in a play or event in which a person behaves like someone or something else

Comprehension Questions

Select one answer only for each question.

11) The first time that Sylvia goes into the house, she finds ___.
    a. George
    b. her father
    c. most of her friends and family
    d. the creature

12) While Sylvia stands near woods to think, ___.
    a. something strange comes out of the water
    b. her father comes up behind her
    c. she meets the creature
    d. her friends leave

13) Because she is alone, Sylvia decides to ___.
    a. go to the thicket to look for George
    b. call George's mobile
    c. go back to the town again
    d. go back to the house again

14) When Sylvia gets back to the house ___.

a. she hears a noise in the kitchen
b. her mobile phone rings
c. Claudia and Veronica enter the house
d. she falls asleep

15) The creature was actually ___.
a. Sylvia’s mother
b. George
c. Sylvia’s father
d. a real bear



The Knight

Chapter 1 – Gold

A long time ago, there was a large **kingdom**. It was full of interesting people, animals and things. One day, a **knight** came to the kingdom. He was dressed in all black and white. He looked very strong.

The knight came to the main town. He stopped in the **market square**. He wanted to purchase something. It was something very special.

The market square was very big. It was full of people. There were various products for sale. The knight walked slowly through the square. He went directly to a dark corner of the market. There he found a **trader**.

The trader had an unusual range of items. The knight looked at the products. 'Hello, trader,' he said.

'Yes, sir?'

'I seek a **potion**. Do you have any?'

'Potion? No, we have no potion here. None.'

The knight looked the trader in the eye. Then he said, 'I believe you know what I want.'

'Oh, yes. Oh … oh … potion. Um … What kind of potion?'

'The potion for strength.'

The trader looked around him. Then he looked at the knight. 'I don't have any here. There is not much these days. The … uh … "item" I need to make it is hard to find.' The trader paused and looked around again. Then he said, 'I can make you some, but it will be at great cost.'

'I have gold. I require two potions for strength. How long will it take?'

'Come back this evening. They'll be ready.'

The knight **nodded** and walked away.

The knight walked across the square. People looked at him. They did not know him. However, the knight was famous. He was an independent

fighter. His name was Lars. Lars travelled from kingdom to kingdom. He fought many men. He often fought for kings.

Lars crossed a **stone bridge**. He arrived at the **castle** door. Then two **guards** stopped him.

‘Who are you?’ asked one of the guards.

‘My name is Lars. I want to see the king.’

‘You can’t. Now leave.’

Lars looked at the guard. He took a few steps back. He put his **bag** down. The bag contained many unusual items. Lars took an old **scroll** from the bag. He gave it to the guard.

‘Look at this scroll. It is from the king,’ said Lars.

The guard looked at the scroll. It looked official. It also had the king’s mark.

‘Fine,’ the guard said. ‘Come in.’

The knight moved forward. He walked into a large room and waited. The room was very big and beautiful. Several guards were there. They looked at the knight **suspiciously**. They wanted to know why he was there.

Soon, the king entered. His name was Andur. He was dressed completely in purple. Purple was the colour of kings. He wore **gold** around his arms and neck.

‘Are you Lars?’ King Andur asked.

‘I am,’ answered Lars. He held up the scroll. ‘I want to speak with you.’

‘Come with me,’ said the king.

King Andur and Lars went into a smaller room. Both men sat down. The king offered Lars a cold drink. Lars accepted.

‘Thank you for coming,’ the king said to Lars. ‘I see you received my message.’

‘Yes. I’ve also heard that you require help.’

‘What have you heard exactly?’

‘You need someone to carry a **load** of gold. It must go to your brother Arthuren. You need a man you can **trust**. I am that man.’

The king thought for several minutes. At last he said, ‘And why should I trust you?

‘I have helped you before. I will not **betray** you now.’

‘War and gold are different things. And this is a lot of gold.’

‘I don’t need gold. I have gold.’

‘Then why are you here?’

‘I like to travel and discover new things.’

King Andur thought for a moment. He looked suspicious. Lars smiled. After a moment, the king said, ‘OK, Lars. Take the gold to my brother. I’ll tell my guards.’

‘Thank you, King Andur.’

‘Don’t thank me yet. First I must hear from Arthuren that the gold has arrived. Then you will get your own gold.’

Lars left the castle. He walked over to the guards. One of the guards called. ‘So, you are back! We’ve just heard. You are taking the gold to Arthuren’s kingdom?’

‘Yes.’

‘Well, good travels!’ the guard laughed. ‘There are many **dangers** on the road. You’ll never make it!’ The other guards laughed as well. Then the guard became serious. ‘Men,’ he called, ‘prepare the gold. It leaves tomorrow.’

It was now evening. The knight returned to the market square. He found the trader. ‘Do you have my potions?’ he asked.

‘Yes, here they are. It was not easy! And it was very costly. That will be six pieces of gold.’

The knight looked up in surprise. He gave the trader the gold. The trader handed him the potions. ‘Thank you, kind sir,’ said the trader. ‘Have a good day.’

The knight simply walked away.

The next day, three guards came to Lars. They were joining the knight on the **journey**. They carried **weapons**. They were prepared for a fight if needed.

The four men walked to the Northern Road. It led straight to Arthuren's kingdom. At the road, the horses and the gold were waiting.

The main guard was named Alfred. He turned to Lars. 'Are you ready?' he asked.

'Yes. We can go.'

'Before we leave,' said Alfred, 'I must tell you something. We are the king's top guards. We will protect you on the journey. But this gold is not your property. If you try to take it, we will kill you.'

'That's good to know,' said Lars, smiling.

Alfred looked Lars directly in the eye. 'It's not funny. It's true.'

'I understand. Now let's leave.'

The load of gold was in the back of a **wagon**. Lars looked at the bags and smiled. The horses began to move. Lars and the guards slowly began to walk.

Chapter 1 Review

Summary

A knight named Lars travels to King Andur's kingdom. He gets two bottles of strength potion. He then goes to the castle. He speaks to the king. The king asks Lars to take gold to the king's brother. Three guards will go with the knight. The guards will keep the gold safe. They will kill the knight if he takes the gold. The group leaves on their journey.

Vocabulary

kingdom a country ruled by a king or queen

knight in the past, a soldier of a high social class who rode a horse

market square an open space with buildings on all four sides at which people buy and sell things

trader a person or company that buys and sells things

potion a special mixture of things, usually one that has power or is magic

nod to move your head up and down, especially to agree or to say 'yes'

stone bridge a structure made of rocks built over a river to allow people or vehicles to cross from one side to the other

castle a big, strong building, usually made of stone and used as a place where people can defend themselves against their enemies

guard someone whose job is to keep a person, place or thing safe

bag an object that you put things in and carry with you

scroll a letter written on paper or skin and rolled up

suspiciously with the feeling that you cannot trust or believe someone or something

gold a valuable pale yellow metal, often used to make jewellery

load the amount carried by something, such as a lorry or train

trust to believe that someone is honest and loyal

betray to do something which harms someone who thinks you are a friend

danger a thing that may harm you

journey when you travel from one place to another, especially a long distance

weapon something that is used for fighting, such as a gun or a knife

wagon a large open vehicle with four wheels, usually pulled by an animal

Comprehension Questions

Select one answer only for each question.

1) Lars is dressed in ___.
   a. black and red
   b. black and white
   c. black and blue
   d. white and red

2) Lars buys ___.
   a. a potion for strength
   b. two potions for strength
   c. a potion to get gold
   d. two potions to get gold

3) At the door to the castle, Lars speaks to ___.
   a. the king
   b. an angry trader
   c. the king's brother
   d. a guard

4) Lars and the guards are carrying ___.
   a. weapons
   b. costly potions
   c. a load of gold
   d. guards

5) The group is going to ___.
   a. an unknown kingdom
   b. the kingdom of King Andur's brother
   c. King Andur's kingdom
   d. the kingdom's market square

Chapter 2 – The Journey

Lars and the guards followed the Northern Road. Behind them came the horses and the wagon of gold. After some time, Alfred, the main guard, said, ‘Lars, what is along the way?’

‘It’s not an easy way. It’s very dangerous,’ replied Lars.

‘So, what will we do?’

‘Well, there are some dangerous men and animals on this road. I recommend that we stay away from them. We’ll try not to fight.’

‘Do you fight well, Lars?’

‘I’m well known for my skill. I can fight very well.’

‘I hope so,’ said Alfred. Three men carried on walking. Soon they came to a big stone bridge. It was **similar** to the bridge at King Andur’s castle.

‘Lars,’ said Alfred. ‘This bridge is very similar to the castle bridge.’

‘Yes. You built it a long time ago.’

‘*I* built it?’ said Alfred with surprised.

‘Well, not you. The people of your kingdom. They built it a long time ago. They built it for a reason. But I will not tell you that now.’

The men crossed the bridge. Then they walked into a big wood. It was full of trees. But there were no animals. In fact, it was **silent**.

‘Why are these woods so silent?’ Alfred asked.

‘We are in the Silent Woods. There aren’t any animals here,’ Lars replied

‘Why not?’

‘A long time ago there was a great **battle** here. It was between King Andur and his brother.’

Alfred was young. He didn’t know about the battle. He thought that King Andur and King Arthuren trusted each other.

‘You look surprised, Alfred,’ said Lars.

‘I am,’ Alfred replied.

‘Why?’ asked Lars.

‘I thought the two brothers never fought.’

Lars laughed. ‘Oh, I see. Well, they did. But that was many years ago.’ Lars stopped talking. The men moved on.

The Silent Woods were very dark. The trees were tall. You could hardly see daylight.

Later, Alfred asked, ‘Do you know where we’re going, knight?’

‘Yes. I’ve been here before.’

‘When?’ asked Alfred.

‘A long time ago.’ Lars thought back. He remembered the fight between King Andur and King Arthuren. It was one of the biggest battles in history. Before it, the woods were called the Animal Woods. But after the battle, they became the Silent Woods.

Lars continued talking. ‘When I was younger, I fought for King Andur. I was in the battle in these woods.’

‘What was the battle for?’

´King Andur started it.’

‘And why did he fight his brother?’

‘King Andur wanted a **fountain** in the woods.’

Lars walked in silence for several minutes. Alfred stayed silent, but he was thinking. He wanted to know more about the great battle. He had always thought that King Andur was a peaceful king.

‘Can I ask you something, Lars?’

‘Yes.’

‘What kind of fountain is it exactly?’

‘Wait and see,’ was all Lars said.

Lars and Alfred were silent for an hour. The other guards talked softly at times. There were only trees and silence – nothing more. At last the group came to a **lake**. ‘We’ve arrived,’ the knight said.

‘What is this?’

‘A long time ago, this lake was a fountain.’

‘The fountain from the battle?’

‘Yes.’

The guards and the knight walked to the lake. Lars finally spoke. ‘A long time ago, there was a fountain here. There wasn’t much water. Nothing like this. But the original water was **magic**. If you drank the water, it gave you **special powers**.’

‘What type of powers?’ asked one of the guards.

‘If a person drank the water, he or she became very strong.’

Alfred cupped his hands. He drank some of the water.

‘It tastes normal,’ he said.

‘Of course,’ said Lars. ‘It’s normal water now. It was magic a long time ago.’

Alfred dried his hands and asked, ‘So, what happened? Why isn’t the water magic now?’

Lars looked at him and began to tell the story. ‘Both Andur and Arthuren wanted power. They would do anything for it. One day they heard about a magic fountain. A fountain that made people strong. Immediately, both kings wanted it. They raced to the woods. When they met at the fountain, the fighting started.’

‘What did they do?’ asked Alfred.

‘Both kings called in their **soldiers**. The battle went on for days, weeks and then months. It was an ugly scene. During the battle, the men drank as much water as they could. They wanted to be strong to win. They let their horses roll in it. They walked through it. They **bathed** in it. They took all the water. Soon the water became **foul**. It could no longer be used.

He looked at the guards. ‘After some time, the fountain dried up. The rains came and created the lake. But it was not magic water.’

Alfred looked at him. ‘So that was the end of the magic water?’

‘Not quite,’ replied Lars. He gave Alfred a serious look. ‘Arthuren had a small amount of magic water saved. And he knew a **secret**. You can make magic water. You need to have some of the original magic water and time, but it’s possible.’

‘So that’s the secret …’ began Alfred.

‘Well, that’s part of the secret. Come now. Let’s leave these woods.’

The group continued on their way. Soon, they left the woods. The sun was out. The trees weren't as tall. They had a beautiful view of the countryside.

'Where are we?' asked Alfred.

'We're nearly at Arthuren's castle. It's good that we didn't run into any dangers.'

Alfred looked at him. 'Are there really dangers in those woods?'

Lars looked back. 'Yes. Why do you think we travelled in the day? They mostly come out at night.'

'Why didn't you tell me?'

'I didn't think you would come,' said Lars. He laughed. Then he said, 'OK, let's go.'

The group could soon see a town. In it, there was a large castle. The guards had never been in another kingdom before.

'Is this it?' asked Alfred.

'Yes, this is the kingdom. And that is Arthuren's castle. We are taking the gold there.'

Alfred paused. 'Lars,' he began, 'there's something I haven't asked you …'

'What's that?'

'What's this gold for? Is it a **tax**?'

'King Andur lost the battle of the Silent Woods. So now he must pay his brother in gold every five years.'

'Why does he pay? Can't they make **peace**?'

'They made peace. But Arthuren has something that King Andur doesn't. Andur must buy it.'

Alfred looked at Lars in surprise. 'What does Arthuren have?'

'More magic water. Andur purchases it to keep his people happy. They use it to make strength potions. Like these two potions here.' Lars took out the potions he had bought.

'I have heard about the potions! Do they really work?'

‘They do,’ said Lars. He put the potions away and looked at Alfred. ‘But they only work if they are made from real magic water. Come now. It’s time to go.’

Chapter 2 Review

Summary

Lars and King Andur’s guards begin their journey. On the way, the knight tells a story. Andur fought his brother, Arthuren, in a big battle. The battle was over a fountain of magic water. The magic water gave people power. During the battle, the water was lost. But Lars said that King Arthuren still has magic water. He sells it to King Andur. Andur is sending gold to pay for more magic water.

Vocabulary

similar when things are like each other but not exactly the same

silent not speaking or making any noise

battle a fight between two armies

fountain a place where water flows out of the ground

lake a large area of water with land all around it

magic strange powers that some people believe cause strange things to happen that you cannot explain

special power having a special strength or force

soldier someone who is in an army

bath to sit or lie in water so that you can wash yourself

foul very unpleasant or unusable

secret a piece of information that must not be told to other people

tax money you pay to the government from your income or that is added to the price of goods you buy to pay for public services

peace a situation in which there is no war or violence

Comprehension Questions

Select one answer only for each question.

6) Lars the knight ___.
   a. knows the way to Arthuren's kingdom
   b. doesn't know the way to Arthuren's kingdom
   c. asks the way to Arthuren's kingdom
   d. gets lost on the way to Arthuren's kingdom

7) ___ travelling to King Arthuren's kingdom.
   a. Three guards and Lars are
   b. Two guards and Lars are
   c. One guard and Lars are
   d. Only Lars is

8) In the Silent Woods ___.
   a. nothing has ever happened
   b. there was a battle between two brothers
   c. there was an unknown war
   d. there are many animals

9) The fountain in the Silent Woods ___.
   a. still exists
   b. never existed
   c. is now gone
   d. was always a lake

10) After leaving the Silent Woods ___.
   a. there is a second wood
   b. the group can see the sea
   c. the group decides to go back to King Andur's kingdom
   d. the group can see King Arthuren's kingdom

Chapter 3 – The Secret

Lars, Alfred and the guards walked towards Arthuren's castle.

'How are we going to get into the castle?' asked Alfred.

'Through the front door,' Lars said and laughed very hard. Then he gave Alfred a strange look. Alfred looked at him silently. *Something feels wrong*, thought Alfred.

The group walked through the countryside. There were trees and fields. The fields were covered in grass. On the way, they passed many **farmers**. The farmers lived outside the castle's walls. They grew food to feed the kingdom.

One of the farmers saw the group. They were near his field. He stopped working and spoke to them. 'Good afternoon, sir!' the farmer said to Lars.

'Good afternoon,' Lars called back.

'Where are you going?'

'I'm going to the castle. We must see the king.'

The farmer's wife came over. 'Who are these men?' she **whispered** to her husband. Her husband didn't answer.

Soon the farmer asked, 'Who are you? I see your horses are carrying a load.'

'King Andur sent us. He has given us an important task.'

The farmer was silent. Then he spoke, 'I hope nothing bad has happened?' He looked at Lars with concern.

'No, don't worry,' Lars replied with a smile. 'Everything is fine.'

'Well. Have a good journey then,' said the farmer. He went back to work.

The group continued walking across the fields. Alfred turned to the knight, 'It seemed like they were **frightened**,' he commented.

'They were.'

'But why?'

'Because there is a secret. Only people in this kingdom know. And they want to keep it safe.'

‘And what is it? Is it something dangerous?’

Lars didn’t answer.

Soon, the men came to a big stone bridge. It was near the castle. Again, it was similar to the bridge at King Andur’s castle bridge. Two guards were on the bridge. One of them came over. He looked at Alfred, ‘Are you King Andur’s men?’

‘Yes. I **represent** the king,’ answered Alfred. Then he indicated Lars. ‘This knight kept us safe during the journey. The other two guards are with us.’

The guard looked at the wagon. Then he asked, ‘Is that the gold?’

‘Yes,’ replied Lars, ‘it’s the gold.’

‘OK,’ said the guard, ‘you may pass.’

Alfred look at Lars in surprise. *Lars seems to know the kingdom of Arthuren very well,* Alfred thought.

The guard gave a sign to open the door. Another guard stood by the door as they entered. They walked into the castle’s market square. There were lots of people. Many of them were market traders. Others were farmers.

The group walked across the square. Suddenly, Alfred looked puzzled. ‘I know this place,’ he said.

‘It’s similar to the market square in King Andur’s castle,’ said Lars.

‘Yes, it’s almost **identical**!’

‘A long time ago, the two kingdoms were joined,’ explained Lars. ‘That’s why they are so similar. But that was before the great battle. Now they have no **social** contact. The people of the two kingdoms don’t like each other at all.’

The horses and wagon neared the castle doors. The castle itself was also very similar to King Andur’s. In fact, the structure was exactly the same.

Two guards went to unload the gold. Lars and Alfred went to see King Arthuren. They entered the king’s rooms.

King Arthuren called out, ‘Welcome to my kingdom!’

‘Good afternoon, **Your Majesty**,’ replied Lars.

‘Lars, it’s really you! I’m so happy to see you.’

‘I’m happy to see you, too, Your Majesty.’

Alfred didn’t understand at all. How did Lars and the king know each other?

‘Have you brought the gold, Lars?’

‘Yes, it’s yours.’

‘Excellent. We can start our plan.’

Alfred looked surprised. *What plan is that?* he thought.

Lars took out the strength potions. He had brought them from King Andur’s kingdom. He gave them to King Arthuren. Arthuren carefully measured the amounts.

‘What is happening?’ Alfred asked.

Lars and Arthuren looked at each other. Then Lars spoke. ‘I must tell you something, Alfred,’ he began.

Alfred took a few steps back. He was frightened. How did the king and Lars know each other? Why did Lars buy those strength potions? King Arthuren had magic water. He could make them himself!

Lars walked over. ‘Alfred,’ he began again, ‘this kingdom **ran out of** magic water a long time ago.’

‘What? Does King Andur know?’

‘No, he doesn’t.’

‘But we must tell him!’ Lars just looked at Alfred. Alfred became suspicious. ‘Why did you give the strength potions to this king? It is an act against King Andur!’

‘These are some of the last potions for strength. There is no more magic water. Do you understand?’

Alfred nodded.

Lars continued, ‘We might be able to make more magic water. We will use these potions instead of original water.’ Then Lars added, ‘We have always used original water. But this might work. We hope.’

Alfred was angry. ‘We have paid the gold for nothing? You betrayed me, Lars!’ he cried. ‘You betrayed King Andur!’

‘Yes, I lied. But I did it to maintain peace,’ said Lars. ‘I want no blood on my hands.’ He looked at Alfred and hoped he would understand.

‘How will this keep peace?’ replied Alfred. ‘The secret is that there is no more magic water. No one knows now. But soon people will find out. Then Andur will know you stole the gold.’

Lars stopped smiling. ‘Alfred, King Andur cannot find out that there’s no magic water. The result will be war. Peace will be over. King Andur will **attack** Arthuren.’

‘So you will make magic water for Andur with the potions?’ asked Alfred.

‘Yes. Just to keep the peace,’ Lars said. ‘If we can.’

Alfred looked at Lars suspiciously again. The comment worried him. ‘What do you mean “*if* we can”?’

Lars looked at Alfred. Then he spoke slowly. ‘As I said, we usually make new magic water with **pure** magic water. We mix magic water with normal water. The normal water becomes magic.’ Then Lars paused. ‘But there is no more pure magic water. The original water is gone.’

‘And?’

‘Well, we will try.’

‘Try what?’

‘We will try to make magic water from these potions. The potions have the magic water in them. We will mix the potions with normal water. Maybe it will make the normal water become magic.’

‘Maybe? Maybe?’ cried Alfred. ‘And what if it doesn’t? As you said, there is no more magic water …’

Lars was silent. After a moment, King Arthuren answered. ‘If the potion does not work,’ he explained, ‘then the battle at the Silent Woods was not the last one.’ There will be war.

Chapter 3 Review

Summary

Lars and the guards arrive at King Arthuren's kingdom. Lars and the king seem to know each other. The knight gives the king two strength potions. Then Lars tells Alfred a big secret. Arthuren doesn't have magic water to sell. Arthuren and Lars will try to make more magic water. They will use the potions. However, they are not sure it is possible. If they cannot make more water, Arthuren says there will be war.

Vocabulary

farmer someone who uses land for growing food or keeping animals for meat or goods

whisper to talk very softly so that other people cannot hear

frightened afraid or very worried

represent to speak or to act officially for someone else

identical exactly the same

social of or about activities done with other people when not working

Your Majesty a title used when speaking to a king or queen

run out of to completely use up so there is no more

attack to suddenly and quickly try to hurt someone

pure not mixed with anything else

Comprehension Questions

Select one answer only for each question.

11) The first person to speak to Lars and his group is ___.
    a. the king
    b. a guard
    c. a farmer
    d. a farmer's wife

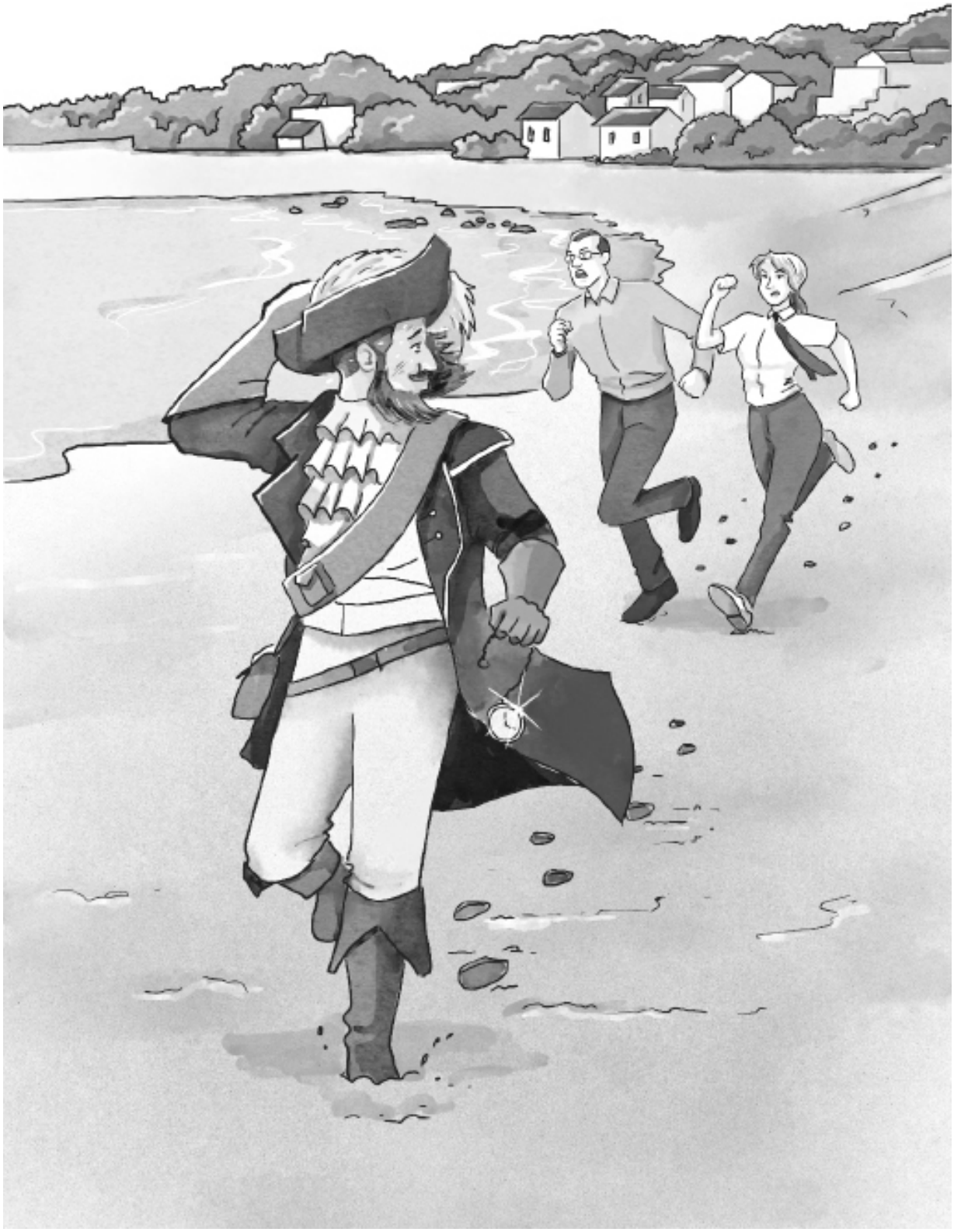
12) The market square in Arthuren's kingdom ___.
    a. is not at all like King Andur's
    b. is similar to King Andur's
    c. is closed

d. has a magic fountain

13) Lars and King Arthuren ___.
   a. fight
   b. don’t know each other
   c. know each other
   d. work for King Andur

14) Lars gives Arthuren ___.
   a. a weapon
   b. one potion for strength
   c. two potions for strength
   d. a magic fountain

15) The secret of Arthuren’s kingdom is that ___.
   a. the kingdom has no more magic water
   b. King Andur is going to attack Arthuren
   c. Lars is the king of Arthuren
   d. the gold is not real



The Watch

Chapter 1 – The Legend

Carl was a **watchmaker**. He was in his 40s and single. His parents lived in London. He lived by the sea in the south-west of England. He lived alone in a small house on a **quiet** street in Penzance.

Carl was a tall thin man, but he was very strong. He had his own **workshop**. He fixed watches. He made his own high-quality watches. He often did other jobs as well.

Carl worked very long hours. He usually worked late. His workshop was near Eastern Green **Beach**. At the end of the day, he often went to the beach to **stretch his legs**.

One night, Carl met an old friend on his walk. Her name was Susan.

‘Carl! How are you?’ she said.

‘Hi, Susan. What are you doing here?’

‘I’m walking, just like you,’ Susan laughed.

‘I see. Well, let’s walk together then!’

Carl and Susan walked for a long time. They talked about many things. They talked about their jobs and their families. They talked about everything in general. As they walked, Susan asked, ‘How’s your job? Are you working a lot?’

‘Yes, I have a lot of work. I’m very happy.’

‘Good for you, Carl.’

Susan was a **security guard**. She watched the boats near the beach. She told Carl she liked her job. She saw many interesting things on the beach. In fact, she had found something just today.

‘Carl,’ began Susan, ‘I was actually hoping to see you.’

‘Really?’ replied Carl.

‘Yes. I’ve found something. And I don’t know what to do with it.’

‘What have you found, Susan?’

Susan took out a watch. It looked very old. It was very good quality. ‘Can you tell me what kind of watch this is?’ she asked.

‘Let me have a look,’ Carl said.

Carl took the watch in his hand. He looked at it closely. ‘I have no idea what kind it is,’ he said at last.

Susan was surprised. ‘Don’t you know anything about it?’

‘Well, I know it’s a watch. But it’s very old. I’m just not sure …’ He paused and looked at her. ‘Do you have to go to work right now, Susan?’

‘No, I’m finished for the day.’

‘Let’s go to my workshop. I have some books that might help us.’

Carl and Susan went to Carl’s workshop. The workshop was very old. Inside the workshop there were many tools and watches. It was all part of Carl’s job. Susan had never been to the workshop. She thought it was very interesting. ‘Wow!’ she said. ‘There’s a lot of stuff in here!’

‘Yes, I have a lot of work. I like what I do.’

‘That’s good, Carl!’

Carl told Susan to follow him. She put down the watch and walked into another room. There were a lot of books. They were very large and very old. It was impossible to read many of the names.

‘What are we doing here?’ Susan asked.

‘We’re looking for information,’ answered Carl.

‘Information about what?’

‘About what kind of watch this is. I’ve never seen anything like it before!’

Carl and Susan searched the books. After several minutes, Susan found something. It was in a book about the Caribbean Sea. ‘Carl! Look at this!’ she called.

Carl closed his book and went to Susan. ‘What is it?’

‘It’s a picture of the watch! And it’s in a book about **pirates**!’

Carl was very surprised. A book about pirates? Why would a pirate book have a picture of the watch? It didn’t make sense.

Susan explained, ‘The name of the book is *Caribbean Pirates*. It’s about England and fighting pirates in the Caribbean Sea.’

‘I still don’t understand. What about the watch?’

‘Listen,’ said Susan. ‘According to the book, there was a famous pirate. His name was Eric el Kraken. He had a very **particular** type of watch. They say it had **strange powers**.’

‘Strange powers? What kind of strange powers?’ asked Carl.

‘People said that el Kraken could travel through time.’ Susan turned the page and continued. ‘It says that the watch helped him time-travel!’

Carl laughed and said, ‘That’s just a **legend**. A pirate who travelled through time? And with a watch? That can’t be true!’ Carl laughed.

Just then, there was a noise in the workshop.

‘What was that?’ asked Carl.

‘I don’t know,’ replied Susan. ‘Let’s go and see!’

The two friends went back into the workshop. They looked around. The watch was gone! ‘Somebody has stolen the watch!’ Carl cried.

‘See? That watch is special. It’s not a normal watch!’ said Susan.

Then Carl noticed something else. The door to the workshop was open. Suddenly, he heard footsteps outside. Somebody was running down the street.

Carl looked at Susan and started to run. ‘Let’s go!’ he called back.

Carl and Susan ran out of the workshop. They went towards the beach. When they reached it, Carl looked down. There were footprints in the **sand**. Very deep and large footprints, like those of a very **stout** man.

Suddenly, Susan stopped. She pointed to a large man in black. He was running down the beach. ‘Look, Carl! There he is!’ she shouted.

Carl ran after the man and **shouted**, ‘Hey! Stop! Stop right now!’ The man **ignored** him and kept running. Again Carl **demanded**, ‘Stop! Stop right now!’

The man continued to ignore Carl. So Carl ran even faster. At last he caught up with the man. Carl pushed him and they both fell over onto the sand.

The man shouted loudly, ‘You shall let me go! I have done nothing to you! This is my watch!’

Carl stood up. He took a moment to look at the man. He was quite a character. His clothes were not modern. They were very **old-fashioned**. They were in a style worn hundreds of years ago. He also had a strange hairstyle. It was one from long ago.

Carl and Susan watched the man. He slowly got up. He cleaned the sand from his clothes. He had the watch in his right hand. He looked at them **suspiciously**.

‘What do you want? Why are you looking at me like that?’ he demanded. The stout man spoke with a very unusual **accent**. His English sounded very strange.

Carl looked at him and said, ‘You stole my watch. You came into my workshop and took it.’

‘No!’ said the stout man. ‘You stole it from me! I have only taken it back! It is mine!’

Carl and Susan looked at each other. Finally, Susan asked the stout man, ‘Who are you?’

‘I’m Eric el Kraken. Now, please excuse me. I must go back to the seventeenth century.’

Chapter 1 Review

Summary

Carl is a watchmaker. He lives in the south-west of England. One day he meets his friend Susan on the beach. Susan shows him a very old watch. They go back to Carl’s workshop to study the watch. A book says that the pirate Eric el Kraken had the watch. He used it to travel through time. Suddenly, Carl and Susan notice the watch is gone. They hear footsteps. They chase a man to the beach. Carl catches him. The man says he is the pirate Eric el Kraken. He wants to go back in time with the watch.

Vocabulary

watchmaker a person who makes watches
quiet having or making little or no noise
workshop a place where people build or repair things
beach an area of sand or stones at the edge of the sea
stretch (one's) legs to move around, usually after being still for a time
security guard someone whose job is to keep a person, place or thing safe
pirate a sailor who steals things from other ships at sea
particular special, of a certain type or style
strange power an unusual strength or force
legend an old traditional story that is usually not true
sand very small grains of rock that are found on beaches and in deserts
stout round and heavy, usually overweight
shout to say something very loudly or to make a loud noise with your voice
ignore to not pay attention to someone or something
demand to ask for something in a forceful way that shows you do not expect to be refused
old-fashioned not modern or fashionable
suspiciously with a feeling that you cannot trust or believe someone or something
accent the way people from a particular area pronounce words

Comprehension Questions

Select one answer only for each question.

1) Carl works as a ___.
    a. watchmaker
    b. beach cleaner
    c. pirate
    d. guard
2) At the end of the day, Carl likes to ___.
    a. walk around the streets of Penzance
    b. walk around his workshop

c. walk along the beach
d. study watches

3) Susan is Carl's ___.
   a. girlfriend
   b. wife
   c. daughter
   d. friend

4) The legend says that the watch ___.
   a. was lost long ago
   b. can tell the time
   c. has strange powers
   d. belongs to a famous watchmaker

5) The watch goes missing from Carl's workshop because ___.
   a. Susan steals it
   b. an unknown man takes it
   c. Susan and Carl lose it
   d. Carl forgets where he has put it

Chapter 2 – The Caribbean

Carl and Susan looked at the strange man in front of them. Finally, Carl managed to speak. ‘The seventeenth century? Go back? You mean … You’re really Eric el Kraken?’ he asked. The man said nothing. He was attempting to use the watch.

Carl moved closer. The man looked like an old pirate. He wore old black clothes. Clothes like a pirate from the Caribbean. A pirate, like those characters in legends and books. ‘Can it be true?’ asked Carl.

Finally, the man looked at him and answered, ‘Yes, that’s me.’

Now Carl understood. The watch really did have strange powers. ‘So the legend is true!’ he said.

‘What legend?’ asked Eric.

‘The legend about your watch.’

Eric looked at Carl and Susan. ‘How do you know about my watch?’ he said.

Susan answered, ‘It’s written as a legend in our book.’

‘In a book, you say?’ Eric said with a smile. ‘Ha! So I am famous! Good.’

‘No … Not you exactly. Just your watch.’

Eric walked across the beach. He was thinking. He looked at his watch and said, ‘The watch is mine. But I didn’t buy it. I found it. I took it from another pirate.’

‘Another pirate?’ said Carl.

‘Yes, … a dead pirate!’ Eric laughed. Then he became serious. ‘I don’t know who he was. No one does. But I got this. It is mine!’ He started playing with the watch again.

Carl watched Eric. He was attempting to use the watch. But it wasn’t working. Then Carl realized something. Eric el Kraken had only found the watch. He didn’t know how it worked. Eric didn’t know why the watch had such strange powers either.

Carl looked at the pirate and said, ‘Eric, do you know how the watch works?’

‘Of course I do,’ Eric shouted. Then he looked at Carl again. ‘All right,’ he said. ‘I don’t know how it works. I think there are different **factors** involved. Sometimes, I hold it in my hand and it takes me forward in time. Like it did here. Then, exactly seven hours later, I hold it in my hand again and I return to my time. I don’t know what factors start and stop it.’ Eric paused.

‘But why do you do it?’

‘I like to see how things have changed. There are no more pirates. There are just tall buildings everywhere. And did you know there are now flying machines? Unbelievable!’

Carl and Susan smiled. It seemed a little **crazy**. Eric didn’t know much about the current world.

Eric looked at the watch again. Then he turned away and shouted, ‘Now leave me alone! It’s almost time. Six hours and 58 minutes! Soon, I can return to my time and place. And I can’t be late!’

Carl and Susan looked at each other. ‘What do you think, Susan?’ asked Carl quietly.

‘What are you asking?’

‘Do you want to go to the seventeenth-century Caribbean?’

Susan thought.

‘Come on! It will be fun!’ said Carl.

‘Don’t pressure me!’ Susan thought a moment more. Finally she said, ‘OK. Let’s go!’

Carl and Susan approached Eric el Kraken and said, ‘We want to go with you.’

‘No,’ said Eric.

‘What do you mean “No”?’ demanded Carl.

‘I mean…. no,’ said Eric. He simply looked at Carl.

‘But we want to see how things have changed, too. We know the modern world. We want to see how things *were*. Like you want to see how things

will be.'

Suddenly, Eric got a strange look in his eyes. It was like he had an idea. 'Oh wait. You know the modern world …,' He paused. 'OK. You come with me. I may have a task for you. OK?'

'OK!' replied Carl. 'So, do we all just touch the watch?'

'Yes. Just put your hands on the watch. Get in position! **Hurry**!'

Susan, Carl, and Eric all touched the watch. Suddenly they were **transported** to the Caribbean in the seventeenth century. The night turned to day and they were in a pirate **camp**. The process was surprisingly easy.

Carl and Susan released the watch. Several pirates were looking at them. One of them was a fit man with dark **skin** and long hair. He approached Eric el Kraken.

'Good morning, **Captain**! You're finally back!' Then he looked at Carl and Susan and added, 'And you've brought **guests**?'

Eric smiled. 'Yes, Frank. I did,' he answered. Then he turned to the other pirates. 'Listen up!' he shouted. 'These people here are …' Eric el Kraken paused. He looked at his guests and asked, 'Ah … what are your names?'

'Carl and Susan,' they answered.

'That's right! Men! These people are Carl and Susan!'

The pirates didn't pay much **attention**. Crazy things had often occurred due to the watch.

'Yes, Carl and Susan …,' Eric continued with a strange smile. 'And they are going to help us. They will help us win today.'

This got the attention of the men. The pirates shouted happily.

'Win?' said Carl. 'Win what?'

Eric turned to Carl and Susan. Then he turned back to his men. 'You're going to help us win the **battle**, Carl and … uh … Susan.'

'Battle?' cried Susan. 'What battle?'

'The one against the English **ships**.'

'What? You didn't say anything about that!' she replied.

Eric el Kraken simply ignored them. 'Back to work!' he called to his men. Then he and the pirate called Frank went to his **tent**. Carl and Susan were left alone.

Carl and Susan stood and looked at the sea. It was filled with pirate ships.

A moment later, Frank returned. ‘I’m sorry,’ he said.

‘What? Why are you sorry?’ Susan asked.

‘Because Eric is crazy.’

Susan and Carl looked at each other. ‘Crazy?’ asked Carl.

‘Crazy,’ Frank paused and looked at them. ‘Completely.’

‘I see,’ replied Carl. ‘And why do you say that?’

‘Because he thinks he can use you.’

‘Use us?’

‘To stop the English ships. The English know about the watch. Their aim is to get it at any price. They **attack** us every night. Eric must stop them. He claims you can help.’

There were battle noises far away. The first ships were under attack. The English were coming! ‘How does Kraken want us to help?’ asked Carl.

‘He claims you two know what will happen. You live in the future …’

‘No, no, no. We don’t know what’s going to happen. We don’t know anything about this battle. We only know about the watch! And even that’s just a legend!’

Frank looked down. ‘Eric will be **disappointed**. He will do anything to keep that watch. If you can’t help him, he won’t need you any more.’ He gave them a serious look. ‘Things might **get ugly**.’

Susan and Carl looked at each other in fear. ‘Um … what can we do?’ asked Susan.

‘You have to steal the watch,’ explained Frank. ‘If the captain doesn’t have the watch, there won’t be a fight!’

‘Uh … OK. When?’

This afternoon there’ll be an important battle. Captain el Kraken is going to bring a lot of ships to the fight. You must take the watch from him. Then go back to your time and never return.’

Frank returned to Eric’s tent. Carl and Susan sat on the beach.

‘What can we do? I’m just a watchmaker. You’re a security guard,’ said Carl. ‘How can we steal from a pirate?’

‘We have to find a way,’ replied Susan. ‘Wait! I have an idea!’

Chapter 2 Review

Summary

The man on the beach is the pirate Eric el Kraken. He uses the special watch for time travel. He has just arrived from the seventeenth century. Carl and Susan return to the seventeenth century with Eric. When they arrive, Eric decides that they can help him. They must win a battle against the English, who want the watch. Another pirate wants Carl and Susan to steal the watch from Eric. Then there will not be a fight for it.

Vocabulary

factor something that causes or influences a situation

crazy silly or stupid

hurry to go somewhere or do something quickly

transport to move something from one place to another

camp a place where people live in temporary shelters, usually for a short time

skin the outside layer of your body

captain the person in charge of a ship or an aircraft

guest someone invited to a home or event

pay attention to focus or concentrate on something

battle a fight between two groups or armies

ship a large boat that carries passengers or goods on sea journeys

tent a frame covered with cloth in which you can sleep or live, usually for a short time

attack to quickly and suddenly try to hurt someone

disappointed unhappy because something is not how you had hoped or expected

get ugly to become unpleasant or dangerous

Comprehension Questions

Select one answer only for each question.

6) The power of the watch allows people to ___.
   a. travel in time
   b. travel only to the seventeenth century
   c. travel only to the twenty-first century
   d. only tell the time

7) Eric travels through time with ___.
   a. Carl
   b. Susan
   c. Carl and Susan
   d. Frank

8) Eric wants to ___.
   a. fight the English ships
   b. run away from the English ships
   c. live in England with Carl and Susan
   d. give the watch to the English captain

9) Eric thinks that Carl and Susan can ___.
   a. bring him back to their time
   b. tell him what will happen in the battle
   c. speak with the English attackers
   d. help Frank on the ship

10) Frank tells Carl and Susan to first ___.
   a. go back to their time
   b. steal the watch
   c. help in the battle against the English ships
   d. get away from Eric

Chapter 3 – The Battle

A few hours later, everyone was ready for battle. Eric, Frank, Carl and Susan boarded Eric el Kraken's ship. It was very big. It had many **cannons**. It was the pirate's personal and favourite ship. Frank was his **second in command**. El Kraken always travelled with him.

Eric el Kraken was high up at the **helm**. Frank showed Carl and Susan the rest of the ship. 'What do you think of our beauty?' he asked.

Susan looked around and smiled. 'I can't believe I'm on a real pirate ship. This is **incredible**!' she said.

Frank laughed. 'It's nothing,' he said. 'We see it daily.'

Frank brought Carl and Susan back to the helm. The ship was already moving. The wind was slightly cold. But there were no clouds. All they could see was the blue water of the Caribbean and the beach. It was beautiful. Then Carl remembered – they were going into battle against the English. They had to do something to stop it!

Eric el Kraken watched the sea. He was still at the helm. Carl and Susan watched Eric. Suddenly, they heard Frank's voice behind them. 'So, how are you going to do it?'

'Do what?' replied Carl.

'Steal the watch! You have to do it before the battle starts.'

'Wait a second,' said Carl. 'That's the part I don't understand! Why does Eric want Susan and me here on the ship? We don't know how to fight!'

'I told you. He thinks you can beat the English somehow.'

Carl looked up. He saw Eric. He was looking at them. His eyes showed nothing. He was just watching them.

'Well, he is wrong,' said Carl. 'We can't help. I don't know what he thinks we can do.'

'Actually,' Frank said, 'I don't know what Eric is thinking either.'

'Why do you say that?' asked Susan.

'Look at the sea.'

Carl and Susan looked. They counted ten pirate ships.

‘See? We have ten ships,’ Frank pointed out.

Susan didn’t understand what Frank meant. ‘Yes, we have ten ships. So?’

Frank just looked at her.

‘Oh, I see,’ she said. ‘We have ten ships but the English have more, right?’

‘Yes.’

‘How many more?’

‘They have thirty.

‘Thirty?’ shouted Carl. ‘And we have ten? You’re all crazy!’

‘That’s why I want to stop this. You have to steal the watch. We can’t win this battle. But el Kraken won’t **give up**. Not to the English. Not to anyone.’

‘OK. So what can we do?’ asked Carl.

‘We steal the watch.’ Susan jumped in. She looked at Carl. ‘Like I said, I have an idea.

Susan explained the plan. ‘You’re a watchmaker, right?’

‘Yes,’ answered Carl.

‘Tell Eric that you can win the battle. But you need his watch to do it.’

‘And how do I do that?’

‘Tell him you know how it works. Say you can stop the English ships with its powers.’

‘And then?’

‘Run!’

‘That’s a really bad plan,’ said Carl.

‘But it’s the only one we have,’ replied Susan.

Carl agreed. They had no choice.

Carl walked over to Eric. Time was running out. The captain was telling his men what to do.

Eric saw Carl. ‘What do you want? You know a way to win?’

‘Umm, yes … Yes, I do. Come here. I’ll tell you.’

The stout pirate and Carl walked away from the others. Frank and Susan **pretended** that they didn't see anything.

'Eric, as you know, I'm a watchmaker. I need to see your watch.'

The pirate's face changed completely.

'What for?'

'If you let me see it. I think we can win the battle.'

'What do you mean?' asked Eric. He was looking at Carl suspiciously.

Carl didn't know what to say. He thought hard. Then he continued. 'I think I know how it works,' he lied.

'So?'

'If you let me see it, I can change it. I can change the watch. It will take us to another place. One that is far from here. That way we don't need to fight.'

The time had come. The English ships had arrived. They began **firing** their cannons. The pirate boats fired their cannons back. The ships rocked as the cannon balls hit around them. Eric shouted at his men, 'Come on! Keep firing! We can't lose!'

Carl tried to think. He needed the watch. As long as Eric had the watch, he would fight. And without the watch, Carl and Susan couldn't return to Penzance.

'Listen to me!' shouted Carl. Eric ignored him. The English ships' cannons kept firing. 'Let me see it!' continued Carl. 'Let me see the watch!' he shouted. 'Then we can win the battle! We can beat the English!'

Eric looked at him. But he held **tightly** on to the watch.

Suddenly, a cannon shot through the helm. Eric lost his **balance**. He fell. This was Carl's chance! He **grabbed** the watch from Eric and ran. Eric realized what had happened. 'Stop! Stop that man!' he shouted.

Eric's men began to chase Carl. Carl threw the watch to Susan. She quickly caught it and ran. Carl ran towards her. Then they saw Eric. He was coming their way.

The English cannons fired again. Eric tried to grab Susan. Suddenly, Frank stepped in to stop Eric. He was helping Susan!

Susan had the watch. Carl grabbed for the watch. Eric grabbed for the watch. Frank grabbed Susan to keep her safe. The next thing they knew, the watch was **activated**. The whole group was travelling forward in time. They were going to the twenty-first century!

Day turned to night and they were back on Eastern Green Beach. Eric was the first to realize what had happened. He looked around for the watch. He couldn't see it anywhere!

Then Eric saw it. It was under Frank's foot. He pushed Frank away. He picked up the watch. It was broken. 'What have you done, Frank? What have you done?' Eric cried.

Frank ignored him. He was looking at the beach. Then he looked at the town and the people. It was the first time he had been in the future. It was all new, and a little strange.

Eric got more and more **angry**. He said to Frank, 'What do we do now? We can't go back! What do we do?'

Nobody said anything. Finally, Susan spoke. 'Come to the workshop, Eric. Carl will try to fix your watch. And if he can fix it, you can get home. But then you must **destroy** the watch. It is dangerous! No good will come from it.'

'I will,' replied Eric.

Then Susan looked at Frank. 'I have a request. You must promise to help Eric. He must destroy the watch. Make sure he does not keep it. **Force** him to do it if you have to. If you do not destroy it, it will be the end of you. Do you understand?'

'I do,' said Frank. 'When I am back home, I never want to see that watch again!'

Finally Susan looked at Carl. 'And you!' she said smiling. 'The next time you have a crazy idea – like wanting to time-travel, don't take me with you!'

Carl smiled and agreed.

Chapter 3 Review

Summary

Everyone gets on Eric's ship to go to battle. Frank tells Carl to steal Eric's watch soon. Carl asks Eric to show him the watch. Eric says no. Suddenly the English attack. Eric falls. Carl grabs the watch and runs. Eric falls. Carl, Susan, Eric and Frank fight for the watch. The watch is activated. They travel to Penzance in the twenty-first century. The watch is broken during the trip. Carl agrees to fix Eric's watch. Eric promises to destroy the watch when he gets home.

Vocabulary

cannon a large gun that fires big metal balls or other large explosives

second in command the person who takes over if a leader can no longer lead

helm the wheel that is used to control a ship

incredible extremely good or great

give up to stop before something is finished, often because it is too difficult

pretend to try to make someone believe something that is not true by acting like it is true

fire to shoot something from a gun or other weapon

tightly in a firm and strong way

balance when you have the same amount of weight on each side of your body so that you do not fall over

grab to take something suddenly or violently

activate to make something start working

angry very annoyed or upset

destroy to damage something so badly that it no longer exists or cannot be used

force to use power or physical strength to make something happen

Comprehension Questions

Select one answer only for each question.

11) The pirate named Frank is ___.

a. Eric’s cousin
b. Eric’s son
c. Eric’s second in command
d. just another pirate

12) Frank tells Carl to steal the watch and ___.
a. fight Eric
b. go back to the twenty-first century
c. travel to the seventeenth century
d. use it to fight the English

13) When Carl talks to Eric, Eric ___.
a. gives him the watch
b. doesn’t give him the watch
c. steals the watch
d. tries to leave

14) Who is transported back to Penzance in the end?
a. Carl and Susan
b. Eric and Carl
c. Eric and Frank
d. Eric, Carl, Frank and Susan

15) Carl will only fix Eric’s watch if Eric promises to ___.
a. return to the Caribbean
b. destroy the watch
c. give him his pirate ship
d. let him keep the watch





The Chest

Chapter 1 – Edinburgh

Once upon a time, there was a man who lived in Scotland. The man was quite old. His name was Walter.

Walter had never married. He had no children or family nearby. He had lived for many years alone, but he was very kind. He always treated everyone nicely.

Walter had never travelled far. He had travelled around his home in Scotland. But he had not gone farther. Now it was time to act. He had a **mission**.

Walter didn't have a lot of funds, but he was not poor. He had saved some money in his younger years. He planned to use that money for his mission. He must go to three separate places. He needed money for food, hotels and travel. He had a mission. And he must complete it!

First, Walter travelled to Edinburgh. A lot of people watched him as he passed by. He hadn't cut his hair in a long time. He had a long **beard**. His clothes were very **strange** as well. He looked a bit different on the streets of the big city.

Walter arrived at The Meadows. It was a very large park in Edinburgh. It was full of people. Walter approached a young man. The man was about 25 years old. He was reading a local newspaper. He was sitting against a tree. He looked very **calm**.

Walter sat down next to the man. 'Good afternoon,' Walter said.

'Hello …' answered the man. He looked at Walter **suspiciously**. Then he carried on reading.

'How are you, David?' Walter said.

The man looked up. He was very surprised. How did this strange person know his name? He looked at the old man **carefully**. 'Did you say David?'

he asked.

‘Yes, I did.’

‘How do you know my name?’

‘I can’t tell you that.’

David stopped reading the newspaper. He looked at Walter, this time even more carefully. He looked at the long beard. He tried to imagine him with no beard. Nothing. He had no idea who the old man was.

‘What do you want?’ asked David. By now he was very suspicious.

‘Don’t worry,’ said Walter. ‘I haven’t come to **harm** you. I am here to tell you about something.’

‘Go ahead,’ replied the man. ‘Tell me.’

Walter pulled a picture out of his **pocket**. In the picture there was a **chest**. It looked very old. It also looked like it might have something inside it. Something of **value**.

‘What’s that?’ David asked.

‘Don’t you know what it is?’

‘It looks like a chest. I’ve never seen it in my life.’

Walter looked at David closely. Then he pointed to the picture. ‘Look at this.’

David looked. The chest had a **lock**. The lock had three zeros on it. ‘It’s a lock.’

‘Yes, and –?’ Walter continued.

‘The numbers are missing?’ David questioned.

‘That’s it!’ said Walter. ‘All three numbers are missing!’ The he looked at David closely. ‘I need those three numbers for my mission,’ Walter said.

‘Mission? What mission?’

‘I can’t tell you that,’ the old man replied calmly.

David didn’t understand. He had no idea what the man wanted. How could he give the man numbers he didn’t know? Finally Walter said, ‘I’m sure you’ve got one of those numbers.’

‘I don’t know what you are talking about.’

‘Think about it, David. You must have an old object. An object with a number on it?’

David thought carefully. He had no such object. He was sure of it. Then he remembered something. He did have one thing with a number. Maybe that was it?

‘Now that you mention it,’ he said **excitedly**, ‘I may have something! Wait here. I’ll go and get it!’

‘Where are you going?’ asked Walter.

‘To my house. I need to get something.’

‘Wait! I’ll come with you.’

David looked at the man suspiciously once again. The man was old. He seemed nice. He guessed it would not be a problem. ‘OK,’ he said. ‘Follow me!’

David and Walter left the park. They went back along a small street. Then they took a bus to David’s house. It was in a different part of town.

While they travelled, David asked Walter, ‘What’s your name?’

‘My name is Walter. Walter Davies.’

‘And how long have you been in Edinburgh Mr Davies?’

‘Oh, please call me Walter! No need to be so polite.’

‘OK, Walter. How long have you been in Edinburgh?’

‘I’ve been here two hours.’

‘Oh really? That’s not long.’

‘Yes, but I like it! There are a lot of nice people and interesting sights here.’

‘Yes, there are.’

The two men continued talking. Soon they reached David’s house.

The house was small and **neat**. David took Walter to the **garage**. David kept many things from his past there. He had things from when he was a boy. He had some old photos. He even had some old school notes.

‘What are we looking for here?’ asked Walter.

‘I remembered something I have. It sounds like the object you are looking for.’

‘An old object? With a number?’

‘Yes, an old object with a number. Please wait a minute. I’m going to look.’

For half an hour, David searched. Walter tried to help. David asked Walter to sit down. He wanted to find it himself. After an hour, David finally found the object. ‘Look, Walter,’ he said with excitement, ‘I’ve found it!’

‘What have you found?’ Walter asked. He got up and walked over. He looked at David carefully, ‘How do you know it’s what I need?’

‘I don’t know, but I’ve had this for a long time. And it has a number.’

David **unwrapped** an old cloth. Inside was a **gold necklace**. And inside the necklace, there was a number. ‘When you said you needed something with a number,’ David began, ‘I remembered this.’

‘Do you remember who gave you that necklace?’ asked Walter.

‘I’m not sure. I’ve had it since I was a baby.’

Walter smiled. He opened the garage door. ‘Where are you going?’ David asked.

‘I’m finished here,’ replied Walter. ‘Remember that number. And read this.’ He handed David a letter. Then he walked away.

‘Wait! Come back! Don’t you want the necklace?’ called David. But Walter was gone. He had **disappeared** through the doorway.

Walter returned to central Edinburgh. He caught the train to the **airport**. His next stop was Northern Ireland.

Chapter 1 Review

Summary

Walter is an old man from Scotland. He is in Edinburgh on a mission. He has a picture of an old chest. There is a lock on the chest. Three numbers are missing from it. Walter asks a man named David about the missing numbers. He says one number is on an object David has. David looks in his garage and finds something. He shows Walter an old necklace. There is a

number in it. Walter tells David to remember the number inside the necklace. He gives David a letter. Then Walter leaves for Northern Ireland.

Vocabulary

mission an important or official job that someone believes he or she must do

beard the hair that grows on a man's chin

strange unusual

calm not nervous, excited or upset

suspiciously with the feeling that you cannot trust or believe someone or something

carefully without making mistakes or causing damage

harm to hurt, damage or cause problems for someone or something

pocket an extra piece of cloth sewn into a piece of clothing or a bag, used for keeping small things in

chest a large box for storing things

(of) value worth money, important

lock a device that fastens things such as doors and drawers, usually opened and closed using a key or number code

excitedly with a feeling of being very happy and not calm because something good is going to happen

neat tidy and arranged carefully

garage a small building that you keep your car in

unwrap to remove layers or cloth to open something up

gold necklace a piece of jewellery for around the neck made of a pale yellow metal

disappear if someone or something disappears, the person or thing goes somewhere and cannot be seen or found

airport a place where passengers get on and off aircraft

Comprehension Questions

Select one answer only for each question.

1) Walter is ___.
    a. a young man
    b. a man in his 40s
    c. an elderly man
    d. a young boy
2) Walter speaks to David for the first time in ___.
    a. Northern Ireland
    b. a park
    c. an airport
    d. a garage
3) Walter shows David a photo of a ___.
    a. chest
    b. garage
    c. necklace
    d. city
4) David takes Walter to ___.
    a. the airport
    b. a taxi
    c. Northern Ireland
    d. a garage
5) After speaking to David, Walter travels to ___.
    a. Scotland
    b. London
    c. Northern Ireland
    d. a park

Chapter 2 – Belfast

A few hours later, Walter arrived safely in Northern Ireland. The city of Belfast was full of people. There were many exciting things to do and see. But Walter had a mission. He knew just where to go.

Walter called a **taxi**. He told the driver a local address. They agreed on a rate. It was in a faraway part of Belfast. After some time, he arrived at a large house.

The house looked very **expensive**. The owner took good care of it. It was probably owned by someone rich. It had a very large garden. There were several dogs running around in it. The house even had a tennis court!

Walter stood outside. He simply looked at the house for a while. Then he rang the doorbell. He rang again and waited for someone to answer. ‘Hello?’ he called. Nobody came. No one seemed to be home. The old man looked around. He decided to wait.

Walter pulled out the photo of the chest. He looked at it closely and smiled. He put the photo back inside his **jacket**. He waited some more.

Walter heard a car approaching. As expected, it was an expensive car. There was a woman inside it. She wore big **sunglasses**. She didn’t see Walter.

The woman pressed a **button**. The garage door opened. She slowly drove in. She still didn’t see Walter.

The woman reached for the button again. She was closing the garage door. Walter might miss her!

‘Excuse me! Wait!’ called Walter.

At last the woman saw Walter. She stopped immediately. The garage door remained open.

‘Yes? Who are you?’ she asked.

‘Can I talk to you for a moment, please?’ asked Walter.

The woman looked at him suspiciously. She walked out of the garage. A **butler** came up from the garden. He looked at the woman and said, ‘Miss Murray? Shall I take care of your car?’

‘Yes, Brian. Thank you.’

‘Miss Lucy Murray, am I correct?’ asked Walter.

‘Yes, that’s me.’ Lucy looked at Walter closely.

‘I’ve come to talk to you. It’s important.’

‘Important? If it’s business I can refer you to my office …

‘No, it's not business,’ replied Walter.

‘What could it be?’ Lucy asked. Walter only smiled. ‘Well, whatever it is, come with me. Come into the house, please.’

Walter followed the woman inside. The house was very big. In fact, it was huge. It was also very beautiful.

‘Is this all yours?’ asked Walter.

‘Yes,’ she answered. ‘I’m a professional designer. At age 19, I started a company.’ She paused and looked around. ‘What can I say? I’ve done very well.’

‘I can see that. Wow! You have must have done a lot of work.’

‘Yes. I have worked very hard.’ She started walking again. ‘Come this way, please.’

Walter and Lucy went up some steps. They came to a large door. The door was **wooden** and very pretty. It was an old design.

‘Is your house very old?’ asked Walter.

Lucy smiled. ‘No, it’s not. But it was built to an old design. I have very **traditional** tastes.’

Lucy opened the door. Walter looked around in surprise. It was a huge room. It was full of beautiful and expensive furniture. It was also very neat and clean.

Brian the butler soon came in. He had brought **afternoon tea**.

‘Sir …’ said Brian.

‘Walter, please.’

‘Walter, would you like something to drink?’

‘Yes, a cup of tea. Thank you.’

Lucy took off her jacket. It was a very hot day. Brian spoke to Walter again. ‘Let me take your jacket, sir.’ Walter took off his jacket. He handed it to the butler. Brian left the room and then quickly returned. He handed some hot tea to Walter. Then he left Lucy and Walter alone.

Lucy and Walter sat down. They looked at each other. ‘Welcome to my home, Walter. May I ask why you are here?’

Walter drank some tea. Then he set his cup on the table. ‘I need to know a number,’ he said calmly.

Like David, Lucy was surprised. ‘A number?’ she asked.

‘Yes, a number.’

‘A **specific** number?’ asked Lucy.

‘Yes. It would be on an object you have. Please make an effort to remember it.’

Lucy thought for a while. She tried to understand what Walter meant. However, unlike David, she didn’t remember anything.

‘I don’t know what you mean. Please, if you could explain …’

Walter looked around. *The second number must be here somewhere*, he thought. Of course, the photo! He must show her the photo!

‘Can your butler bring my jacket, please?’ asked Walter.

‘Of course,’ replied Lucy.

Brian left the room. Seconds later, he appeared with Walter’s jacket. Walter reached into his jacket. It had many pockets. It was difficult to find the photo. It took time. Lucy was becoming **impatient**.

At last, he found it. ‘Here it is!’ Walter laughed. ‘I have it! We need the number for this.’

He put the picture of the chest on the table. Lucy took the picture in her hands. She looked at it carefully. Suddenly, she remembered something!

‘I don’t know why … But I think I remember something,’ she said.

‘Think, Lucy, think,’ said Walter.

Lucy stood up. ‘Come with me, Walter,’ she said. ‘I don’t know who you are or what you want. But you’ve made me think of something.’

Walter smiled. He and Lucy left the house. They entered a small building next to it. The inside of the building was like a small private **museum**. There were many drawings, paintings and other things of value.

Near a beautiful drawing, Lucy found a small box. She opened it. There was a necklace inside. The necklace was just like David's. It was very old, but Lucy was able to open the necklace. She was still able to recognize the number inside.

Lucy gave the necklace to Walter. He looked at it carefully. 'OK. That's all I needed,' he said calmly.

'I still don't understand, Walter. What is it that you want? The chest reminded me of the necklace. But I don't know why. Do you? Is that important?'

Walter paused a moment. 'I have to go now, Lucy. Please don't ask any more questions.' He handed her a letter. Then Walter paused and said, 'Remember the number. And read this. It will help.'

Walter turned and left Lucy's house. As he disappeared, he called, 'I'm off to London! See you soon, Lucy!'

Lucy didn't say goodbye. She couldn't. She had no idea why Walter had come. She looked at the letter. It all seemed very suspicious, but yet somehow important. She preferred to forget everything. But she would let the old man have his fun. She slowly opened the letter.

Chapter 2 Review

Summary

Walter travels to Belfast. He visits a woman named Lucy. She lives in a large house. Walter tells Lucy about the chest. He asks her to remember a number. At last Lucy remembers something. She shows Walter an old necklace. It has a number inside. Lucy has many questions. Walter doesn't answer them. He gives Lucy a letter and says goodbye. Lucy starts to read the letter.

Vocabulary

taxi a car with a driver who you pay to take you from one place to another
expensive costing a lot of money
jacket a short coat, usually with long sleeves
sunglasses dark glasses that protect your eyes from the sun
button a small round object you press to make a machine turn on or move
butler a person who helps other people in the home for a job
wooden made of wood
traditional based on customs that have existed for a long time
afternoon tea a light meal with tea eaten in the afternoon
specific exact, of a certain type
impatient easily angered because you don't like to wait
museum a building where collections of interesting things are arranged for people to see

Comprehension Questions

Select one answer only for each question.

6) Lucy's house is ___.
   a. big and beautiful
   b. small but beautiful
   c. medium-sized
   d. big but not very nice

7) The butler is called ___.
   a. Brian
   b. Walter
   c. David
   d. Lucy

8) Lucy remembers a number when Walter ___.
   a. talks about the number
   b. shows her the photo of the chest

c. talks about the chest
d. talks about a necklace

9) Lucy ___.
a. doesn’t understand what is going on
b. knows what Walter is doing
c. is not going to let Walter have any fun
d. is not able to help Walter

10) After saying goodbye, Walter___.
a. travels to Belfast
b. travels to Edinburgh
c. rests for a day
d. travels to London

Chapter 3 – London

At Belfast airport, Walter bought food for the trip. What he really needed was a rest. He was getting tired. Then he remembered. There was just one more person to meet. Then his mission was complete!

Walter boarded his **flight**. Shortly after, he arrived in London. As usual, he got a taxi into the city. On the way, the taxi drove past the Tate Modern art gallery. Walter could see how big the art museum was. He asked the driver, 'Have you ever been inside the Tate Modern?'

'Yes. It's nice, but the art is very strange. It's very **modern**. Too many strange patterns and colours … I prefer traditional art.'

'I do as well,' said Walter. 'I have always preferred traditional things.' He looked out the window as the taxi drove on.

Finally, Walter arrived in the centre of London. He paid the driver and got out. Then he looked around. There were so many things to see. But he had to focus! His mission was almost complete.

Walter didn't know exactly where the third person's house was. He stopped a man on the street and showed him the address. 'Excuse me. How do I get here?' he asked.

'Oh, I know that place,' answered the man. 'It's next to the **boat rental** shop.' He showed Walter the way.

'Thank you!' Walter called and walked away.

Walter decided to walk. It was healthy to walk. Also, major events were happening. It gave Walter time to **consider** things.

At last, Walter came to the boat rental shop. Next to it, there was a small wooden house. *I hope someone's there this time!* he thought. He remembered Lucy in Belfast. He didn't like to wait. He was impatient, too.

Walter rang the doorbell. A young man of about 30 opened it. He looked a bit like Walter, but without the beard. 'Hello!' said the man. 'What can I do for you? Would you like to rent a boat? Maybe book a trip?'

'Uh, no,' Walter answered. 'My name is Walter,' he continued. 'I want to talk to you, sir.'

‘No need to call me sir! Please, call me Alan.’

‘OK, Alan. I’d like to talk to you, please.’

‘Certainly, Walter. Come in.’

Walter looked around. The house was very traditional and simple. Its owner seemed traditional and simple, too. Alan wore simple clothes. He had traditional **tastes**. Everything was very clean and neat.

‘Well?’ Alan said. ‘You wanted to talk to me?’ Walter started speaking. But then he noticed something. Alan was wearing a **ring**. There was a number on the ring. Walter began to laugh.

‘What is it?’ asked Alan with concern.

‘I thought I was going to have more difficulty!’

‘Excuse me?’ said Alan.

‘That ring of yours … Who gave it to you?’

‘It was a gift from years ago. Back when I was a boy. I don’t remember who gave it to me. I think it used to be a necklace.’

Walter looked at the number. He had found all three numbers. His mission was complete … almost. There were a few more things to do.

‘Alan,’ Walter began, ‘look at this.’ He showed Alan the photo of the chest. ‘This chest has a lock. We need three individual numbers to open it. And three separate people have those numbers. You are one of those people.’

Alan looked at him strangely. Then he asked, ‘And what’s in the chest?’

‘I can’t tell you that right now.’

‘But why do I have one of the numbers?’

‘I can’t tell you that either,’ answered Walter. He didn’t want to say any more. Not yet.

Walter gave Alan a letter and continued, ‘Please read this letter. The two other people have **identical** letters. The letters tell you what to do. I have to go now. **Trust** me, I’ll see you soon.’ Walter turned and left.

Alan was so surprised he didn’t know what to do. So he opened the letter. It read:

Dear David, Lucy and Alan,

Thank you for reading my letter. As you know, I have helped you find a number. There are two other people with numbers. These individual numbers mean nothing. Together, these three numbers open a chest in Scotland. The chest is at my home. I would like to invite you to come there. Please meet me there in three days.

I have nothing else to write. I request that you do not try to contact me. Soon you will know who I am. But today is not that day. Have a nice trip!

Regards,
Walter

Three days later, David, Lucy and Alan arrived in Edinburgh. They all went to the same address as per the letter.

Lucy and Alan were the first to arrive. Then came David.

'Hi,' David said.

'Hello,' said Lucy and Alan.

All three people paused for a few seconds. At last David asked, 'What are we doing here?'

'Have you read the letter?' said Lucy excitedly.

'Yes,' the men answered.

'But I have no idea what this is about,' added David.

'Well, let's go in and find out,' said Lucy. She rang the doorbell.

Walter opened the door. He was dressed nicely. After all, this was a very special event. 'Hello,' he said calmly. Then he invited them in and said, 'Thank you for coming.'

The house was neat and simple. It was very traditional. Walter offered them tea, but no one wanted any. They were too excited. Finally, Walter smiled and said, 'Follow me.'

Walter brought Alan, Lucy and David to a room. In the centre, there was the chest. They ran to the chest. They all had their numbers. They were ready to open it.

David put in his number first. Then Lucy put in hers. Finally, it was Alan's turn. When he put in his number, the lock made a noise. Alan pushed

open the chest.

The chest was completely full of stuff. On the top of the things, there was another letter. Alan laughed. ‘Ha! Another letter? I can’t believe it!’

‘Does anyone want to read it?’ said Lucy.

‘I’ll read it,’ said David

David took the letter from the chest. He read it out loud to the others:

*Hello David, Lucy and Alan. Thank you so much for coming. I have brought you here for a special purpose. You all know that you were **adopted**. I checked that with the adoption **agency**..*

David’s hands were **shaking**. ‘Is that true for you guys, too?’

‘Yes,’ said Alan.

‘Me, too. Now read on, please,’ Lucy said.

*The three of you … you are **siblings**. I am your uncle. Your mother was my sister. She and your father died in an **accident**. It happened just after David **was born**. These are your parents’ things. The necklaces are from them as well.*

*After the **terrible** loss of your parents, I was your only family left. I tried to keep us as a traditional family. But I couldn’t care for a baby and two young children alone. I had to put you up for adoption. I didn’t want to put you in a facility. But I wanted to be sure you had loving parents. I wanted you to have the best lives possible. So I asked an adoption agency for help.*

Now that you are all adults, it is time. I wanted to tell you. You have more family than the ones you know and love. Look around. I invite you to meet your brothers, sisters – and your uncle, me!

Love,
Walter

David, Lucy and Alan looked at each other. Then they turned around. There was Walter – their uncle. He looked at them and smiled. ‘I have so much to tell you!’ he said calmly.

Chapter 3 Review

Summary

Walter travels to London. He arrives at the house of the third person, Alan. Alan has the third number. Walter invites David, Lucy and Alan to come to his home. They arrive in Edinburgh. They are ready to open the chest. They go to Walter's house and put their numbers into the lock. The chest opens. It contains many things. It also contains a letter. The letter explains that they are siblings and that Walter is their uncle.

Vocabulary

flight a journey in an aircraft

modern to do with the present time and not the past

boat a vehicle for travelling over water

rental the act of paying money so that you can use something

consider to think about something carefully

taste a person's preferences for something such as clothing, art or behaviour

ring a round piece of jewellery that you wear on your finger

identical exactly the same

trust to believe that someone is honest and loyal

adopt to take someone else's child into your family and legally become their parent

agency an organization or business that provides a particular service

shake to make many quick small movements from side to side or up and down

sibling a brother or sister

accident a bad thing that happens that is not intended

be born a person or animal is born when it comes out of its mother's body

terrible very bad

Comprehension Questions

Select one answer only for each question.

11) In this chapter, Walter travels to ___.
    a. Edinburgh and Belfast
    b. only Belfast
    c. London and Scotland
    d. only London

12) Walter talks to the taxi driver about ___.
    a. the taxi driver’s family
    b. Walter’s family
    c. an art museum
    d. his trip to London

13) Alan lives ___.
    a. near a park
    b. on a boat
    c. in a small village
    d. near a river

14) In the end, the chest contains ___.
    a. only a letter
    b. a letter and some things
    c. a letter from the people’s parents
    d. money

15) David, Lucy and Alan are ___.
    a. cousins
    b. sister and brothers
    c. friends
    d. children



Unknown Territory

Chapter 1 – New Lands

Hundreds of years ago, Vikings lived in Northern Europe. This period of history is known as the Viking Age. Their **territory** was cold. It was not very level. It was covered in **mountains**. Therefore, they could not produce a lot of food. This may be why the Vikings were always looking for new territory.

During the Viking period, there was a town called Asglor. In Asglor, there lived a young man. He was a little older than 20 years old. He was named Thoric.

Thoric was very powerful. He was tall and had nice features. He had long brown hair and a large nose. He had a wide mouth and strong arms and legs.

One afternoon, Thoric returned from **hunting**. The town of Asglor was full of people. The sun was shining. It was a bit cold. On his way home, Thoric saw a well-known **explorer**. His name was Niels. Niels spent a lot of time outside of Asglor. He explored new lands. He looked for new sites to grow food.

Thoric waved to Niels. ‘Hello!’ he called.

‘Thoric!’ replied Niels.

‘Niels. Are you still in town?’

‘Yes. I’m here for two more nights.’

‘And then where are you going?’

‘I don’t know exactly. **Chief** Eskol says it’s very far away.’

Thoric had a lot of respect for Chief Eskol. He was a big man. He had the longest hair Thoric had ever seen! He also had big **muscles** and a serious voice. Eskol was a very **strict** man. He had many rules and laws. Sometimes he was mean. However, most people considered Eskol a good leader.

‘Does Chief Eskol have new plans?’ Thoric asked with interest.

‘Yes, but he hasn’t told us about them. He’s just said that we must go farther.’

Chief Eskol often sent out **expeditions**. They explored outside the town. Asglor was a small place. It was beside some mountains and a small **lake**. Near the lake there was a **river** that led to the sea. In summer, there was enough food. But in winter, the animals and plants were gone. There was not much food. During the previous winter, people had died. Chief Eskol knew he needed to find new lands soon.

‘That's good news,’ said Thoric. ‘I don’t want a food **shortage** this winter!’

‘Me neither. My family must eat better. I can’t just give them **meat** all the time.’

Thoric had never met Niels’ family. He only knew Niels’ father. He was a famous explorer in the village. ‘Niels, I must go,’ Thoric finally said. ‘I have to clean the animals that I just shot. My family wants to sell the meat.’

‘OK, lad. Good day to you.’

Thoric went back to his house. He spoke to his parents and sister. His family were **farmers**. They had a little piece of land. They grew some crops. They raised animals as well. They kept the females. They sold the males. They also sold the meat from Thoric’s hunting. They made money, but it was never enough.

That night, Thoric couldn’t sleep. There was too much to think about. Where was Chief Eskol going? What was this new expedition all about?

Two days later, Thoric went hunting again. There were increasingly fewer animals. Winter was approaching. It was getting harder to find anything to shoot!

Thoric came back from hunting. He met Niels again. Niels was walking fast. ‘Thoric! Come quickly!’ he called.

‘What is it Niels?’

‘Chief Eskol has called a meeting. The whole town must attend.’

‘Is he going to tell us his plans?’

‘Mostly likely, yes! I have to go. Take that meat home and come quickly!’

Thoric took the meat home and walked quickly to the Great Hall. The Great Hall was a very big building made of **wood**. Its walls were covered in pictures of Viking **gods**. The Hall was Chief Eskol’s house. He lived there with his **wife** and four children. All the people who served his family and the town lived there, too.

Talks and meetings were often held inside the Great Hall. Chief Eskol would call everyone together. The whole town would come. It was a time to get important information. And that’s just what they got this time.

Chapter 1 Review

Summary

Thoric is a hunter in the Viking Period. He lives in a town called Asglor. Chief Eskol is the leader of Asglor. Niels is an explorer. He finds new lands for Chief Eskol. Niels tells Thoric that Chief Eskol has new plans. Eskol wants to explore farther away. Chief Eskol calls a meeting. All the town comes to hear the important news.

Vocabulary

territory the land that a particular country controls

mountain a very high hill

hunt to chase and kill animals for food or for sport

explorer a person who travels around places and finds out what they are like

chief a person in charge of a group or organization

muscle one of the parts in the body that are connected to bones and that cause the body to move by becoming shorter or longer

strict expecting people to obey your rules

expedition a long journey, especially to a dangerous place or to a place that has not been visited before

lake a large area of water with land all around it

river a large stream of water that flows across land

shortage when there is not enough of something

meat the flesh of animals eaten as food

farmer someone who uses land for growing food or keeping animals for meat or goods

wood the hard substance that trees are made of

god a spirit that some people believe controls nature or represents a particular quality

wife the woman who a person is married to

Comprehension Questions

Select one answer only for each question.

1) Thoric is ___.
   a. an explorer
   b. a hunter
   c. the chief
   d. a farmer

2) Niels is ___.
   a. an explorer
   b. a hunter
   c. the chief
   d. a farmer

3) Eskol is ___.
   a. the chief explorer
   b. a priest
   c. a farmer
   d. the town chief

4) The village of Asglor ___.
   a. has enough food year round

b. needs more food in summer
c. needs more food in winter
d. needs more hunters

5) Niels thinks the meeting is probably about ___.
a. Asglor's food shortage right now
b. Niels' exploration plans
c. Thoric's hunting plans
d. Chief Eskol's exploration plans

Chapter 2 – Going West

The meeting was as Thoric hoped. It was about Chief Eskol's **strategy** for the next expedition. It was true Eskol wanted to travel farther, much farther.

Chief Eskol announced his new plan. He wanted to go past the mountains and past the lake. He wanted to take the river down to the sea. He wanted to travel the seas to find more land. His strategy was to go as far west as possible.

The people of Asglor were surprised, including Thoric and Niels. However, they all agreed to the expedition. The building and organizing began.

A month passed. It went by very slowly. It was nearly winter. The people of Asglor knew they would need more food soon. They wanted to avoid shortages. Hopefully this would be the last hungry winter.

Niels led the building of the **ships**. They were made from trees near the river. Chief Eskol often visited the building site. He wanted to measure the **progress**.

'Tell me, Niels,' Eskol said, 'when can we **sail**? I see that some ships are already on the river.' Then he added with a serious voice, 'We need to sail soon.'

'I am not sure, Chief. Maybe in a week? Possibly sooner.'

'A week? Well done!'

'Yes, the wood is good. The materials are strong. And our builders are very skilled,' reported Niels.

That night, Chief Eskol gave a second talk in the Great Hall. It was time to decide who would go on the ships. There was only room for 75 men. One by one, men raised their hands to go. Most of them were **warriors**. The warriors were very well trained. Their abilities would be good for the expedition.

Thoric wanted to go as well. Although he was not a warrior, he was very good at hunting. Food was always important on an expedition. Thoric raised his hand.

‘You don’t know what food there will be,’ Thoric said to the Chief. ‘You need hunters. I can hunt anywhere and anything,’ he said.

Chief Eskol looked at Thoric and said, ‘All right. Come with us.’

From that moment on, Thoric couldn’t wait for the expedition to begin. When the day came, Chief Eskol, Niels, Thoric and the rest of the Vikings prepared to sail. They asked the gods to help them. Their wives and families said goodbye.

Eskol put his wife in control while he was away. She came to discuss things with the men as well. She also offered them encouragement. It would be a long trip. At last the men got on the ships. The expedition began.

The three ships began travelling westwards. They were in excellent shape. Everyone seemed happy. The first few weeks went by with no issues.

Several weeks later, the ships continued to make progress. The explorers saw no land yet, only water. They did not even see **birds**. Birds meant there was land nearby.

Some of the Vikings began to question Chief Eskol. ‘Chief Eskol, are you sure there’s land in the west?’ asked one man.

‘I’m positive.’

‘What if we can’t find it?’

Chief Eskol became **angry**. ‘We will not fail!’ he **shouted**. ‘There is land in the west. Someone told me it was there. Someone who saw it with his own eyes. Do you understand? Now get out of my sight,’ said the Chief. The conversation was over.

Eskol was strong and determined. He didn’t like to be questioned. But he knew the men didn’t have his strong beliefs. For them it was unclear. He decided to speak to the rest of the ship.

‘There is land in the west!’ he shouted to the explorers. ‘I can prove it! Do you understand me? I have **evidence**!’ He held up a small piece of cloth. On the cloth there were **strange** images. ‘Someone made this! You must believe me! I know something is there!’

The Vikings kept **quiet** and continued **rowing**. But they all had one question on their mind: who told Chief Eskol there was land in the west?

Later that day, it suddenly began to rain. The wind became stronger. The water began to get **rough**. Soon, a **storm** developed like they had never seen. It hit the ships so strongly that they could hardly sail. The Vikings fought to keep the three ships together.

At last the storm passed. Chief Eskol could see the **sky** again. He checked where the ships were. Then he became angry. The storm had changed their **course**! He could not be sure where they were. He could not tell the men. He could only hope he was still right. There had to be land if they went west.

Days later, Thoric **woke** early. He looked to the sky. Suddenly, he saw something. At first he couldn't believe it. Then he looked again. Yes, they were really there!

Thoric ran for Niels. 'Niels! Niels! Wake up!' he shouted.

'What's going on?' said the explorer, his eyes still shut.

'There are birds!'

'What?'

'There are birds in the sky! There's land nearby!'

Niels' eyes flew open. He looked up. There, far to the west, he saw birds! 'So it is true!' he cried.

Niels got up. He had to report to the Chief. Thoric went with him. 'Chief Eskol, wake up!' shouted Niels.

Chief Eskol quickly woke up. 'Niels? Thoric? What's happened?'

'There are birds in the sky!' shouted Niels.

'There's land!' cried Thoric.

Chief Eskol quickly stood. Then he shouted to the ships' men, 'Row! Come on! Wake up, everyone! There is land nearby! Row!'

The men rowed hard and saw land at last. Chief Eskol ordered the ships to stop at a nearby **beach**. The beach was very long. There were many trees and mountains nearby. It was beautiful.

The Vikings got off their ships. Chief Eskol called the men together. They broke into small groups. He said to one group, 'You lot, gather sticks. We need a fire.' Then he looked at Thoric and Niels. 'We have very few

resources left,' he said. 'We won't last long unless we hunt. Shoot several animals.'

Thoric and Niels hunted, but nothing felt natural. The trees and sounds were different. Even the animals were different. But the men were hungry. They killed and ate the unknown animals anyway. The meat was different, but it was not bad.

Chief Eskol spoke to the men that night. 'We've got food now. And we are thankful for that,' he told them. 'But now we need to explore. We must see what is beyond the beach. We need to find out if we can farm here. If we can raise food here, more Vikings will come.'

One of the men asked, 'How do we know where we are? Some men think the storm took us off course.'

Chief Eskol didn't speak for several minutes. In the end, he said nothing. He **ignored** the question and said, 'We must explore this place. We'll start tomorrow at **sunrise**.'

Chapter 2 Review

Summary

The Chief shares his exploration plan with the village. The expedition will sail west on the sea. Thoric and Niels are chosen to go on the journey. The expedition leaves. Weeks later, the men fear there is no land in the west. Chief Eskol shows them proof that there is. Later that day, there is a storm. The ships go off course. After the storm, the Vikings find land. They get off the ships. They hunt for food. They plan to begin exploring the next day.

Vocabulary

strategy a plan, the way you are going to get something

ship a large boat that carries passengers or goods on sea journeys

progress movement forward towards a goal or completion of a plan

sail to travel somewhere in a ship or a boat

warrior a soldier, especially in the past

bird a creature with wings and feathers that produces eggs
angry very annoyed or upset
shout to say something very loudly or to make a loud noise with your voice
evidence facts or objects that help to prove something
strange unusual
quiet having or making little or no noise
row to pull a boat through water using long wooden sticks
rough not smooth
storm a time when there is a lot of wind and rain
sky the area above Earth where you can see the sun, moon, stars and clouds
course (of a ship) the direction that a vehicle is travelling in
wake (up) to stop sleeping, or to make someone stop sleeping
beach an area of sand or stones at the edge of the sea
resource something that you have and are able to use
ignore to not pay attention to someone or something
sunrise tThe beginning of the day when the sun moves into the sky

Comprehension Questions

Choose one answer only for each question.

6) How many Vikings are on the expedition?
   a. 30
   b. 60
   c. 75
   d. 85
7) How many ships are on the expedition?
   a. 2
   b. 3
   c. 4
   d. 5
8) Halfway through the journey the ships ___.

a. are attacked by other Vikings
b. cannot stay together
c. begin to fill with water
d. run into a big storm

9) Who is the first to see the birds in the sky?
a. Thoric
b. Niels
c. Chief Eskol
d. Niels' father

10) In what order do the Vikings plan to do these things?
a. explore the land, hunt, raise food
b. raise food, hunt, explore the land
c. hunt, raise food, explore the land
d. hunt, explore the land, raise food

Chapter 3 – The Decision

The men rose with the sun. They ate some of the supplies left from the journey. They also had meat from the hunt.

Thoric went to talk to Chief Eskol as soon as he finished. ‘Hello, Chief,’ he said.

‘Hello, Thoric. Do you need something?’

‘I need to talk to you.’

‘Go on.’

Thoric wanted to ask about one thing. ‘At the start of the trip,’ he began, ‘the men had **doubts**. They asked a lot of questions. They didn’t know if there was land in the west. But you were a good leader. We have arrived safely at this land.’

‘Yes. What do you want to say, Thoric?’

‘The man who told you about the land. The one who gave you the proof. Who was he?’

‘The man who told me that these lands existed?’

‘Yes, exactly.’

Chief Eskol looked around him.

‘What’s wrong?’ Thoric asked.

‘Where’s Niels?’

‘He’s eating, I think.’

‘I see. The man who told me about this place was Niels’ father.’

‘Niels’ father?’

‘Yes.’

Thoric was very surprised. Niels’ father was the mysterious man? But Niels’ father was dead. Thoric didn’t understand. ‘I thought Niels’ father died on a previous expedition. And that was an expedition going to the east,’ he said. ‘He died in a fall in the mountains.’

‘No. That was a lie. I sent them westwards. It was a secret expedition. No one knew anything.’

‘Did you send him to this land? Alone?’

‘No. I sent him west with 13 other men. Two men died on the way. Eight men died here. Niels’ father and two men made it back. They died when they arrived or shortly after. It was **exhaustion**. We didn’t have the resources to save them. Before Niels’ father died, he told me of this land. In addition, he gave me this.’

Eskol threw the cloth with the images on the table. It was some sort of writing. Thoric had never seen anything like it. Thoric looked at the Chief. Yes, maybe Chief Eskol did have evidence. Now. But what about then?

‘How did you know?’ Thoric asks. ‘Why did you send those men west? You said you thought there was nothing but sea.’

‘I **had a feeling**.’

‘You had a feeling?’ Thoric looked at Eskol in surprise. ‘Niels’ father died because you had a feeling? Because you took a **risk**?’ Thoric looked at Eskol closely. ‘If Niels finds out, he’ll never **forgive** you.’

Chief Eskol took Thoric by the arm. ‘You cannot tell Niels. Niels is the best explorer we have. He is nearly as good as his father. He can’t be **distracted** now. We need him.’

Thoric nodded. ‘Understood.’

‘Now, go back to the men,’ said the Chief. ‘Do not speak of this again.’

A short while later, the men picked up their **weapons**. They crossed the beach and entered the woods. They were ready for action. Niels led the group.

They walked for hours. Then, below a hill, they saw something. It was a small community. You could even say it was a village. Niels waved his hand. The expedition stopped immediately.

Niels, Eskol and Thoric looked closely. The village was strange to them. The houses seemed strange. The men, women and children were a darker colour. They were wearing strange clothes. They were speaking a very strange **language**. The men didn’t know what to think.

Chief Eskol went towards the village first. The rest of the group followed. At first many people were frightened. Some ran off towards their

houses. Chief Eskol **gestured** calmly. ‘We won’t hurt you!’ he said in a low voice. Eskol said the words a few times. He did simple gestures each time.

After some time, the village chief appeared before Eskol. He offered Chief Eskol a drink. Eskol looked at the drink. Then the village chief said ‘water’ in the Viking language. Eskol looked at him in surprise. The man knew their language!

Chief Eskol talked to the village chief for several hours. The chief explained many things. He had learned the Viking language from the first expedition. He had spoken with them!

The village chief then explained what happened to the men. The local people had not killed the men. They had tried to help them. The men did not accept their help and died. Some were killed by animals. Some died because they ate the wrong foods. Some died from **disease**.

After speaking with the village chief, Chief Eskol called his men together. He said to them: ‘Gentlemen, I have learned many things. Most importantly, there were Vikings here previously. They did not listen to the local people. And they died.’ He looked around at his men. He was very serious.

Eskol continued, ‘The village chief tells me some of those Vikings left. They tried to go back to their homeland.’ He paused. ‘I have met those men,’ he continued. ‘They told me about this land. They, too, are dead. They died from exhaustion after the trip.’

The men looked at each other. So that’s how Eskol knew about the lands in the west.

Eskol was not finished. He became very quiet. Then he said, ‘We must make a decision. We don’t know where we are. The storm took us too far off course.’ The Viking explorers were quiet for several minutes.

Then Chief Eskol carried on talking: ‘We must now decide. Do we stay here? Do we learn to live in this **society**? If we do, the people of this community will help us. They will provide food. They will teach us.’ He looked around at the men. ‘Or is our aim to get home? And risk exhaustion and death.’

Chief Eskol looked at the people of the village. ‘These are good people,’ he began. ‘They know the land. They can farm it. They can hunt on it. They have asked us to stay. For me, the choice is clear. I will stay.’

The men looked at Chief Eskol. One man called, ‘So we’re just going to leave our families? Never see our friends again? We can’t do that!’

Another man shouted, ‘Look at the shape our ships are in! The storm **damaged** them badly! We can’t get back home safely. I vote we stay.’

Chief Eskol looked at his men. ‘Both of you may be right. That is why I can offer no advice. We will each make the choice as an individual. If you want to leave, you are free to go. I will not force you to stay. If you choose to stay, you are welcome. But from this point on, I am not your chief. I am just a man.’

In the following days, two groups formed. One group planned to stay in the new lands. They would **establish** a new Viking society. The second group would take the least damaged ships. They would make the effort to return home.

One month later, the second group left. As they sailed away, Eskol spoke. ‘Things did not go as planned.’

‘No, they didn’t,’ replied Niels as he looked at his **former** leader. ‘You wanted to help our town. Things didn’t turn out as expected. But this is a good place. We can live here.’

‘Yes,’ said Thoric. ‘It’s interesting. It’s good to be in a new place with new things.’

‘And we can keep exploring,’ continued Niels. ‘We can find new and interesting challenges. Don’t worry. We’ll be happy.’ Then he smiled and said, ‘Chief.’

The men laughed. They were ready for their next expedition – exploring a new world. One that would later be called North America.

Chapter 3 Review

Summary

Thoric finds out how Eskol knew there was land. Eskol sent an expedition west years ago. Two men returned, but they died from exhaustion. One man was Niels' father. Chief Eskol and the men then explore the new land. They find a small village. The local chief speaks the Viking language. He explains that the villagers tried to help the Vikings. The men did not listen and died. Eskol decides that each man must choose what to do. Some men try to make the dangerous trip home. Eskol, Niels and Thoric decide to stay. They want to explore the new land. These lands will later become North America.

Vocabulary

doubt a feeling of not being certain about something

exhaustion a feeling of extreme tiredness

have a feeling to believe that something is true not because of facts but because of emotions

risk to take the chance of damaging or losing something

forgive to stop being angry with someone for something they have done

distracted nervous or not able to think clearly because you are worried or upset

weapon something that is used for fighting, such as a gun or a knife

language communication using speech and writing

gesture to move your body or its parts to express what you think or feel

disease an illness

society all the people who live in a group or in a particular country or area

damage to harm or hurt something

establish to start an organization or business

former existing or true in the past but not now

Comprehension Questions

Select one answer only for each question.

11) Who told Chief Eskol about the lands in the west?
    a. Eskol's father
    b. Thoric's father

c. Niels' father
d. the village chief

12) While exploring, the expedition comes across ___.
a. Viking animals
b. another group of Vikings
c. a group of local people
d. a farm

13) The Vikings form two groups because ___.
a. they are hungry
b. they must fight
c. they want to do different things
d. their plans are the same

14) Chief Eskol decides to ___.
a. go back to Northern Europe
b. continue exploring different lands
c. stay in the new land
d. fight the local people

15) The land in the story is now called ___.
a. Norway
b. North America
c. the United Kingdom
d. South America





Laura, the Invisible Woman

Chapter 1 – The Incident

Laura is an average woman. She is a woman of average height. She is of average weight. She has an average job with an average income. She lives in a medium-size house. She drives a medium-size car. She even has an medium-size dog! Basically, Laura has an average life.

Laura also has a simple life – a life without **incident**. She has a university education. She lives and works in Edinburgh, Scotland. She is an **administrative assistant** with a sales management team. She often leaves work very late. She never speaks badly of her company. She is a model employee and a perfect professional.

Laura loves where she lives. At the weekend, she likes spending time with friends and family. They often go to sports clubs, the movies or even a stage performance. And just last week, she and her husband saw a great film series. But sometimes, Laura wants **quiet** time. That's why some weekends she goes out of the city.

Today Laura is driving to the country with her friends, Raj and Sophie. The friends plan to have a **barbecue**.

Laura stops her car at a park outside of Edinburgh. It's a beautiful area with several trees. Sophie looks around. 'This is a great place for a barbecue!'

'I agree,' says Raj. 'Do we have enough food?´

'Of course,' answers Laura. 'I know how much you like to eat!' They all laugh. Then Laura adds, 'Let's start **cooking**!'

Laura, Raj and Sophie take the food out of the car. They turn on some music and prepare for the barbecue. Laura finds some sticks and makes a fire. She waits for it to get hot. As she waits, Laura checks her messages.

'Oh no!' says Laura. She has a message from the **director** at her office. She forgot to post something for the production department. They need it

right now! Laura just applied for a new job in the production department. She has an interview on Monday. She has to fix this right away!

Laura looks at her friends. She holds up her **mobile**. 'Hey, guys,' she says, 'I'll be right back. I need to make a work call.'

'Oh, come on, Laura,' says Raj. 'you're always working …'

Raj is right, Laura,' Sophie adds.

'I know – I know …' says Laura. 'But I got a message from the director. And she's not happy.'

Laura goes over to some nearby trees. It is evening and it's getting dark. The trees are very tall. She can hardly see anything.

Laura calls her office. She speaks with another administrative assistant. The assistant asks her to wait for the director.

While she is waiting, Laura looks around. Suddenly she notices something. Among the trees, there is a **strange** light! Laura puts away her mobile as she goes over to the light.

The light is coming from a beautiful **metal ball**. Laura has never seen anything like it! The ball is covered with patterns. She reaches out to touch it. The metal is cold. It actually feels nice.

Laura picks up the ball. Then, as suddenly as it started, the light **goes out**. The ball feels very strange in her hand. It's almost too cold. Laura doesn't like the feeling. She drops the ball. Then she goes back to the barbecue.

Laura approaches her friends. They are talking about her. 'Laura should turn her mobile off at the weekend,' Raj says.

'I agree,' Sophie adds. 'It's not good to work so much. The body and mind need quiet. She needs to **relax** sometimes.'

Laura walks up. 'Are you guys talking about me?' she says, laughing. 'OK! OK! I'm ready to relax!'

Raj and Sophie say nothing. Raj checks a problem with the barbecue. Laura's friends **ignore** her completely. They don't even look at her.

'Why aren't you looking at me?' Laura asks. She **waves** at Raj. She puts her face near Sophie. Then she really tests them. She dances around and waves her arms. Sophie looks around, but then they continue to ignore her. It's like Laura's not there!

Raj and Sophie carry on talking about Laura. ‘I wonder where she is,’ Raj says, ‘she’s been on the phone a long time. I’m getting worried.’

‘You know her,’ says Sophie. ‘She’s probably reviewing financials or contracts or something. She’ll be back soon.’

Then Laura realizes something. Her friends can’t see her! As unbelievable as it is, she seems to be **invisible**! It’s like she’s in some TV series!

Oh my gosh! thinks Laura. *I can’t believe it!* Then she thinks, *But why?* Suddenly, Laura remembers the strange object in the trees. *Is this because of the light?* she thinks. *Am I invisible because I touched it?* She isn’t sure.

Laura doesn’t know what to do. Finally, she makes a decision. ‘I don’t know how long that light will affect me,’ she says. ‘I’m invisible! I have to enjoy it!’

Laura watches her friends. Raj takes the food off the barbecue. Sophie puts cold drinks on the table. Laura listens to their conversation.

‘Well yes, Raj,’ says Sophie. ‘Laura works a lot, but it’s normal. And hey! This is her big opportunity. She may be company president someday!’

‘Yeah, but she doesn’t earn enough,’ comments Raj.

‘That’s true,’ agrees Sophie. ‘But her pay will improve. She’ll get what she is worth. They’re starting to realize that she is their top employee. Who knows what she can achieve.’

‘Yes, I know. But I just wish she could relax more.’

‘I know. Me, too,’ says Sophie as she continues to cook.

Laura is surprised. She didn’t know how much her friends respected her. Everything they are saying about her is so nice! She smiles happily.

Suddenly, Raj’s **tone** changes. ‘Seriously though,’ he says, ‘where is Laura?’

‘I really don’t know,’ replies Sophie. ‘Let’s go and look for her.’

Laura’s friends turn off the music. They walk towards the trees. They walk directly towards the strange object. It’s lying on the ground. Raj sees it first. ‘Look, Sophie. What’s this?’ He bends over and picks it up. He begins to examine it.

Sophie gives him a strange look. ‘I don’t know … but I wouldn’t touch it!’

Raj looks up surprised. ‘You’re right!’ He throws the ball into the trees. The two continue looking for Laura.

After some time, Raj and Sophie walk back to the barbecue area. Both stop in surprise. Laura’s car isn’t there! Raj looks at Sophie. ‘What is happening here? Is this some sort of game?’ he asks.

‘I have no idea,’ replies Sophie. ‘No idea at all.’

Meanwhile, Laura is on her way back to Edinburgh. She wants to enjoy the effects of her invisibility. The best place to completely experience it is in public. As she drives, her friends make an important phone call – to the police!

Chapter 1 Review

Summary

Laura is an average woman. She is an administrative assistant in Edinburgh. One day, Laura and her friends drive to the country. They want to have a barbecue. During the barbecue, Laura finds a strange object. She touches it and become invisible. No one can see or find her. Laura goes back to Edinburgh. She wants to have fun being invisible. Her friends become worried. They call the police.

Vocabulary

incident something that happens, especially something bad such as a crime.

administrative assistant a person whose job is to help someone else in an office

quiet having or making little or no noise

barbecue a meal for which the food is cooked over a fire, usually outdoors

cook to prepare and heat food so that it is ready to eat

director the manager of a business, organization or department

mobile (phone) a telephone that you carry with you

strange unusual

metal ball a round object made of a hard shiny material such as iron, gold or silver

go out to stop working or become dark

relax to rest and become calmer and less worried

ignore to not pay attention to someone or something

wave to move your hand in order to say hello or goodbye or to attract someone's attention

invisible impossible to see, not possible to be viewed by others

tone the quality of a sound or of someone's voice

meanwhile at the same time

Comprehension Questions

Select one answer only for each question.

1) Laura works as ___.
   a. an administrative assistant
   b. a cook
   c. a driver
   d. salesperson

2) Laura is ___.
   a. a very young girl
   b. a woman of medium height
   c. an old woman
   d. not described well in the story

3) Laura's best friends are called ___.
   a. Olly and Laura
   b. Joe and Sarah
   c. Raj and Sophie
   d. Jim and Sally

4) Her friends think that Laura ___.
   a. should look for a new job
   b. doesn't work enough
   c. works too much
   d. could be a better employee

5) Laura decides to ___.
   a. go to Edinburgh to get help
   b. call her friends
   c. enjoy her new power
   d. listen in on people she doesn't know

Chapter 2 – The Lie

Laura arrives in Edinburgh. She parks near Princes Street. She walks throughout the city. No one sees her. She can't believe it. She laughs quietly. 'This really is amazing!'

Laura thinks about what to do. In her mind, she makes a list of all the things that might be fun. She starts laughing. For the first time in her life, she is not average!

Laura continues her walk down Princes Street. There are several small stores there. Many shoppers and store staff are around this evening.

Laura walks into a store. Although people can't see or hear her, some people can feel her. She has to be **careful**. She picks up some shoes and a dress. She looks, but then replaces them. She likes being invisible, but she doesn't want to **steal**.

Next Laura goes to a popular restaurant. There is a long line to get in. She walks easily past it. She walks right in. *This is fun!* she thinks. She really enjoys being the Invisible Woman.

She stays at the restaurant for a while. Then Laura has an idea. She can go to her office! Her manager is working today. It would be fun to see what she is doing. Especially if she doesn't know Laura is there.

Laura races to her office. She enters the building. She looks at the security desk. The computer screens are clear. The **security cameras** are not recording her. She's safe!

Laura waits for a minute. Another administrative assistant comes in the building. He is going to the same office. She follows him into the **lift**. Soon, she is on the seventh floor. Time to look for her manager!

The door to the lift opens. Laura's manager, Ms Smith, is in the central office. She is speaking to several other managers. 'Our employees work very hard,' she says. 'We offer some people **bonuses**. Some staff even get **stock**. But most employees get only a percentage of our **profits**. However, these days it's not enough. We need to change something in this

organization. We need to build up our business. Our employees need to earn more money.'

Laura can't believe it. *Ms Smith is fighting for her employees!* she thought. *I never thought that would happen!*

'For example,' Ms Smith continues. 'I have an employee. Her name is Laura. She's worked here for five years. She puts in lots of hours. She has never asked for a **raise**. She's a good employee. But we can't pay Laura more money right now. Why? Because company profits this **quarter** are low. We need to keep our money just to stay open. Something has to change!'

Oh my gosh! thinks Laura to herself. *My manager just said that I'm a good employee! In front of everyone! That's really going to help my career!* Then she thinks, *It's too bad about the company profits though. But how can that be? Antonio is working on that big **technology** project. I assume that will help profits.*

Laura wants to know what's happening. And now is the perfect time to check. She is invisible after all. She has access to everything!

Laura goes to Antonio's office. Antonio is a computer programming manager. *I don't want to steal his ideas,* she thinks. *I just want to know why the company is losing money.*

Antonio has been really successful. He started as a sales associate. He always made his sales goals. So they brought him on the management team. Now he's working on a big project. It's supposed to involve a lot of money. The company's money issues should soon be fixed.

Laura decides to look in Antonio's files. She can still hear her manager talking outside. 'Antonio, tell me,' begins her manager, 'I know you're working on that big technology project. It's the one based on the network program we worked on as a group. This project has **potential**, doesn't it? It could actually make the company rich, right?'

'I'm really sorry, Ms Smith,' Antonio begins, 'but the project won't be possible. It costs too much. It's a huge **investment**. And the network programming is very **advanced**. We just don't have the technology.'

While she listens, Laura finds the project file. Antonio has done a lot of research. His documents show that. But Antonio is obviously wrong. According to the data and the documents, the project has a lot of potential right now. The technology is not that advanced. She looks at the papers again. Antonio is lying. The project is very profitable.

Why doesn't Antonio want to do the project? she thinks. *It's a really good project! Why is he lying?* Then she sees something. It's another file. In it, there is a letter. It's written on paper from a **competitor**!

Laura quickly reads the letter. Antonio has sold the idea to the competitor. He's planning to quit his job to work for them! *How can he do that?* she thinks. *If we don't get this project, I don't get my raise!*

Laura decides it's time to do something about Antonio! She takes Antonio's letter from the competition and the project file. She leaves both of them on her manager's desk. 'There,' she says. 'Ms. Smith will have a nice surprise in the morning. Antonio, too – hopefully it will be the police!'

Laura leaves the managers to their meeting. It is getting late. She decides to go home to see her husband. Recently, they have been arguing a lot. In fact, they had a big argument about work today. It will be interesting to see her husband when she's invisible. Maybe she can learn something!

Laura drives home. She enters her house carefully. When she comes in, she hears her husband crying. *What's wrong?* Laura asks herself. Then she hears him speak.

'Are you sure, Officer?' he says sadly.

Her husband Craig is speaking on the phone. He is talking to the police! Then Laura realizes. She has **technically** been missing for many hours. Craig is probably very worried.

Craig puts down the phone. He starts to cry harder. Laura realizes something else. Craig loves her very much. She looks at him. She can see he is really suffering. Laura makes a decision right then. Despite their problems, she wants to sort out their relationship!

Laura wants to reach out and touch her husband. Then she remembers – she's invisible. He'll be afraid. For the first time, Laura starts to **consider** her situation. Being invisible is generally fun. It has advantages. However, she doesn't want to be this way forever!

But how can Laura become visible again? She suddenly has an idea. *Of course! The metal ball!* she thinks. She needs to touch the object again. It might make her visible. She has to go back to the park!

Laura gets in her car. She drives through the streets of Edinburgh. It's late. There aren't many cars. Still, Laura drives through quiet areas. An invisible woman in a visible car would be hard to explain.

At last, Laura arrives at the park. Sophie and Raj are still there. However, there are several other people, too – including the police! *What is going on?* she thinks.

Chapter 2 Review

Summary

Laura is still invisible. She goes to her office in Edinburgh. She listens to a meeting about low profits. An employee named Antonio says a big project is not possible. Laura checks Antonio's files. He is lying. He has sold the idea for the project. Laura gives Antonio's files to her manager. Next Laura checks on her husband. He is very worried. She realizes he loves her. She wants to be normal again. She thinks touching the metal ball might help. She drives to the park again. However, something strange is happening there.

Vocabulary

careful making sure that you do something correctly or safely

steal to take something without the owner's permission

security camera a device that makes videos of an area in real time so it can be watched and protected

lift a small box that takes people up and down in a building

bonus something good that you get in addition to something else good

stock part ownership of a company or business

profit money you make by selling something for more than you paid for it

raise an increase in money paid to do a job

quarter a three-month period in the business year

technology scientific knowledge, methods or equipment used in practical ways

potential the possibility of becoming something big or important in the future

investment an amount of money or time put into something in order to get a return

advanced the newest or most developed

competitor a person or business that tries to win or to be better than the others

technically according to official or usual practice

consider to think about something carefully

Comprehension Questions

Select one answer only for each question.

6) First, Laura walks ___.
   a. down Princes Street
   b. in a park in Edinburgh
   c. near a shop in Edinburgh
   d. around the outside of Edinburgh

7) After her first stop, Laura decides to go to ___.
   a. her house
   b. her office
   c. a small town
   d. Princes Street

8) Antonio, a manager at Laura's company, ___.
   a. wants to buy the company
   b. wants to date Laura
   c. lies about a project
   d. thinks employees need more money

9) What does Laura decide about her husband?
   a. She doesn't love him.
   b. He doesn't love her.
   c. She wants to improve their relationship.
   d. She wants to leave him

10) Laura thinks she can become visible by ___.
   a. touching the metal ball again
   b. breaking the metal ball
   c. removing the metal ball and taking it far away
   d. talking to Antonio

Chapter 3 – The Object

Laura is back at the small park. There is a **crowd** of people. The police are also there. *What are all these people doing here?* Laura thinks. Then she realizes. They are there because of her!

Sophie and Raj are among the crowd. They are talking near a table. Laura walks over to them. As she walks, Laura looks around. Everyone is there – Laura's friends, her relatives, the police, and **volunteers** from Edinburgh. Even Craig is just driving up!

'Think, Sophie,' says Raj sadly. 'Where could Laura be? I mean, we were right there!'

'I have no idea,' Sophie replies. 'She'll come back. It's just so strange …'

'Yeah. One minute she's talking on her mobile and then she's gone!'

'I know,' says Sophie. 'I'm really worried …'

Laura listens. She feels really bad. She doesn't want to **hurt** her friends or husband. She doesn't want to waste people's time. She just wants to get back to the metal ball. She's done being invisible!

She hears Raj again. 'Hey, Sophie. Do you remember that metal ball? Over by the trees?'

'Yes?'

'Well, I have a theory.'

Sophie looks at him. 'A theory?'

'Yes,' Raj continues. 'What if it's more than that? What if it did something to Laura?'

Sophie continues to look at Raj. She seems **confused**. But Laura is not confused. She's worried. She doesn't want her friends to know anything. She just wants to touch the ball and become visible. She doesn't want to explain!

Raj looks closely at Sophie. 'Maybe the ball is special. Maybe it made Laura sick. Or maybe it even took her somewhere! You never know…'

Sophie **shakes** her head. ‘You and your theories, Raj …’ Then she pauses. There is no other explanation. Maybe …

‘Think about it. Laura went missing near it,’ Raj adds. They look at each other. Then Raj says, ‘Come on! Let’s go look.’

Sophie finally agrees. ‘OK. Let’s go.’

The two friends start walking over to the trees.

Oh no! thinks Laura. *What if they take the object? Or give it to the police?* Laura runs ahead of her friends. She has to find the object first!

Laura gets to the trees first. The metal object isn’t there! *Where is it?* she thinks. *It has to be here somewhere! It didn’t fly away!* She keeps looking.

Raj and Sophie come closer. ‘It has to be around here. I threw it right over here,’ says Raj as he points to the trees.

That’s it! thinks Laura. *Someone moved it! What if they lost it? I need that ball!* Laura runs to where Raj is pointing. Raj and Sophia walk to the area, too. Suddenly, Raj stands up. He has the metal object in his hand!

Laura looks carefully at the object. There is no light at all now. She doesn’t know what that means. She just has to find a way to touch the object again. She knows it will make her visible.

‘Hey, Sophie! I found it!’ calls Raj.

Sophie runs over. ‘Wow! What is it?’ she asks.

‘I have no idea,’ replies Raj. ‘It’s round and made of metal. But I don’t know what it does.’

‘Do you really think it did something with Laura?’

‘I doubt it. It just doesn’t make sense. It’s just a metal ball. So much for my theory …’ Raj throws the metal ball into the trees. Laura watches it carefully.

‘Come on,’ says Sophie as they walk away. ‘Now let’s check with the police. Maybe we should call the hospitals or ….’

Laura waits for Raj and Sophie to leave. She wants to touch the object. But she doesn’t want to hurt her friends. If she suddenly appears, they might be really afraid!

At last, Raj and Sophie are gone. Laura goes over to the trees. She picks up the metal ball and touches it. At first she feels nothing. Then the strange object starts to **light up**. Laura starts shaking. The object is completely lit up again. *At last, something is happening!* she thinks.

Suddenly, the shaking stops. The metal ball is still lit up. *Is that it? Did it work?* Laura wonders. She soon gets her answer. 'Laura! Laura!' she hears. 'Is that you?' It's Sophie and Raj. They can see her! She's visible!

Laura's friends run towards her. She still has the light in her hand. *Uh-oh*, she thinks. She quickly lets the ball go. It moves slowly into the trees. Soon, she can no longer see it.

'Laura, where have you been?' calls Raj. Laura turns around.

Next Sophie adds, 'And what was that light? It was so bright! That's how we found you!'

Laura doesn't know what to say. Telling the **truth** would make things so difficult. No one would believe her. An invisible woman? Really!

Suddenly Laura hears another voice in the crowd. It's Craig! He runs over to Laura. He **hugs** her tightly and **kisses** her. Then he looks her in the eyes and says, 'Where were you? I was so worried!'

Laura is speechless. 'I was in … In … I …'

More voices call out from the crowd. It's her manager and several others from the office. Laura can't believe all the **support**. So many people are there to help her!

The people stand around Laura. They all start talking at once. 'We were so worried!' repeats Craig.

'Where did you go?' says Raj.

'You won't believe what happened at the office!' says Ms Smith.

Laura puts her arm up. 'Please … Please … Give me a minute.' The crowd becomes quiet. Laura looks around. 'First of all, allow me to say thank you. Thank you so much for all your help. I really appreciate all your support.' Then she continues, 'I'm sure you are wondering where I was. Well, the truth is …' Laura pauses. Should she really tell them the truth? Would they believe her? Would they think she was **crazy**?

Laura begins again. ‘The truth is … I **got lost**,’ she announces. ‘I was talking on my mobile,’ Laura continues. ‘I didn’t look where I was going. Suddenly, I couldn’t find my way back.’ She smiles and says, ‘Thanks again and good night.’

Laura and Craig walk to her car. She is ready to go home. They walk past Raj and Sophie.

‘But what about your car?’ Raj calls out. ‘It was gone! We saw it!’

‘And what about that light?’ asks Sophie. ‘What was that? And you know, we saw something in the trees. It was a metal ball and …’

Laura keeps on walking. She might have to explain things later, but not now. Her experience as an invisible woman was amazing! She learned that she has kind friends, a good manager and a great husband. She also learned something very important: it’s great to have a totally average life!

Chapter 3 Review

Summary

Laura returns to the park. Many people are looking for her there. Raj and Sophie think the strange ball did something to Laura. They find the ball but change their minds. Laura finds and touches the ball. She becomes visible again. Everyone is happy to see her. But they have many questions. Laura will answer them later. First, she wants to enjoy having an average life again.

Vocabulary

crowd a large number of people or things together in one place

volunteer someone who offers to do something

hurt to cause pain or injury to someone

confused unsure of what to think, believe or do

shake to make quick small movements from side to side or up and down (In this case, Sophie is moving her head from side to side to mean ‘no’.)

light up to become filled with the energy that allows us to see

truth the true facts, something that is not a lie

hug to put your arms around someone and hold them

kiss to touch someone with your lips, especially on their mouth or face, to show that you feel love or affection for them

support to agree with an idea, person, etc. and want them to succeed

crazy mad, silly or stupid

get lost to not know where you are, to be unable to find your way

Comprehension Questions

Select one answer only for each question.

11) Who does Laura hear talking at the park first?
    a. her manager and her husband
    b. her manager and Raj
    c. her husband and Sophie
    d. Raj and Sophie

12) At first, Laura's friends want to ___.
    a. go back home
    b. find the strange object again
    c. call the police
    d. call Craig

13) Laura wants to ___.
    a. throw the ball away
    b. find the ball before her friends
    c. hide in the trees
    d. listen in on the police

14) Laura touches the object again and ___.
    a. shakes, then becomes visible once more
    b. continues to be invisible
    c. becomes afraid
    d. nothing happens

15) When she speaks to the group of her family and friends, Laura decides to ___.

a. tell the truth

b. tell the truth tomorrow

c. not tell the truth

d. ignore everyone





The Capsule

Chapter 1 – The Arrival

It began centuries ago. The Earth's environment was bad. People needed room. They wanted freedom. Therefore, humans started moving to other **planets**. They started **colonies** on more worlds, one after the next.

There was **peace** and success at the start. The different worlds were not separate. They worked together as a group. They depended on each other.

Then things changed. There was fast **population** growth. The individual planets needed more food. They needed more supplies. Each colony wanted more for themselves. Then the trouble began.

Wars started everywhere. There were changing political views and agreements. Colonies fought for land, power and **weapons**. In the end, two main **empires** remained: the 'Earthlings' and the 'Kalkians'. And both empires wanted it all.

The Earthling **government** was based on Earth. Its capital was Paris, France. Political officials met at the capitol building. There, they discussed matters like law, the economy, energy and the war.

The **Emperor** of the Earthlings was an old man named Valior. He was voted into the office many years ago. The election was not fair, but that did not concern Valior. He had led many wars. He had lost only a few. He was a ruler who did anything to win.

One day, Valior was speaking to his **ministers** at the capitol building. 'We must stop the fighting,' he cried. 'Our empire's economy cannot take more war. Our people are hungry. Our cities need roads. Many Earthlings need homes, lights and food.'

A man named Aldin spoke. Aldin was Valior's most **trusted** minister. 'But, sir,' he said, 'the Kalkians keep attacking us. We can't just sit here. This nation needs a strong military! We have to protect ourselves.'

‘I agree, but there is something we can do. I have done something that …’

Suddenly, there was a lot of noise outside the room. The door opened. A **security guard** entered. He was holding a woman. She was fighting and **shouting**, ‘Let me go! I have news for the Emperor! Let me go!’

Emperor Valior looked to the door. ‘What’s going on?’ he shouted. ‘I am leading a meeting!’

‘I’m, sorry, sir,’ the guard said. ‘This woman wants to talk to you. She says it is important.’

‘Fine. Go ahead. What is it?’

The woman was suddenly very **nervous**. She had never spoken to the Emperor. She began speaking slowly. ‘My … my … my highest Emperor, I’m sorry for my behaviour. But I have news.’

‘What type of news?’ asked the Emperor. Then he added, ‘Hurry up! This is an important meeting!’

‘A **capsule** has landed on my **farm**, Emperor.’

‘A what?’

‘A **space** capsule. I believe it’s a Kalkian space capsule, Emperor.’

‘How do you know it is a Kalkian capsule?’

‘My husband. He fought against the Kalkians. He described them to me.’

The ministers and the Emperor were **silent**. Finally, Aldin asked, ‘Another attack? Are they attacking the capital?’

‘No, no …’ the woman said. ‘The capsule has no weapons. But there is something inside it.’

‘Inside it?’ said the Emperor. He looked around the room. ‘What could be inside it?’

‘I don’t know,’ replied the woman. ‘I was too nervous to look.’

The Emperor called his guards. He told them to get to that farm – fast! The guards and the woman got into a **vehicle**. Minister Aldin went with them.

On the way, Aldin spoke with the woman. ‘What’s your name?’ he asked.

‘My name is Kira.’

‘Kira, that’s a nice name. Are you a farmer?’

‘Yes, the farm is all I have left.’

‘Do you live with your husband?’

‘My husband died in the war.’

Aldin suddenly felt **uncomfortable**. He changed the subject. ‘What does the capsule look like?’

Kira looked at him closely. ‘I’d rather you see it yourself instead,’ she said. Then she turned away.

‘All right, then,’ said a surprised Aldin. They were silent for the rest of the trip.

The vehicle arrived at Kira’s farm. Aldin and Kira got out. They went to the capsule. The guards waited in the vehicle.

There were marks all over the ground. The capsule was on its side. It was open.

‘Kira, I thought you didn’t look in the capsule,’ said Aldin.

‘I’m sorry. I didn’t tell you the **truth**. I didn’t want to say anything. Not until someone else saw it.’

‘Saw what?’

‘Look.’

Aldin slowly approached the capsule. At first he couldn’t see anything. Then he saw it. Inside the capsule there was a little girl.

‘It’s a child! A child!’ he called. He looked at Kira with surprise.

‘Yes. That’s why I didn’t touch or say anything. I didn’t know what to do. I wanted to get a doctor, but …’

Right! thought Aldin. *The girl is **unconscious**. She might need treatment. We need help!* Aldin ran to the vehicle. He told the guards to call for a doctor. He then **carefully** picked up the young girl. He took her inside Kira’s house. He put her on a bed.

A half hour later, the girl was still unconscious. Aldin finally left the room. Kira went with him. ‘So tell me,’ Aldin said. ‘Do you know anything

more about the capsule?'

'No … but it's Kalkian, isn't it?' Kira said slowly.

'Yes.'

'And the child?' asked Kira.

'She looks Kalkian as well.'

'But what's she doing here? Why have they sent us a child?'

'I don't know,' replied Aldin. 'When she can speak, perhaps she can tell us.'

'Has she really travelled across space?'

'It seems so. Most likely there was a bigger **spaceship**. They probably put her in the capsule. Then they left her close to Earth. The capsule likely landed itself here.'

At last, they heard a vehicle coming. Two doctors came in. They wanted to see the girl immediately. Aldin and Kira stayed away.

It was late. Aldin looked hungry. Kira asked him to join her for something to eat.

'Do you have children, Kira?' Aldin asked as he ate.

'No. My husband and I wanted children. But then the war came and …'

'I'm sorry.'

'It's OK,' she said and smiled sadly.

As he ate, Aldin looked around. The house was nice. It was clean and simple. It was the house of a woman living alone.

Soon Aldin noticed Kira was watching him. 'Did you want to ask me something, Kira?' he asked.

'Yes.'

'Well, go on.'

'What will you do with the girl?'

Aldin paused. Finally, he told her the truth. 'I don't know. I don't even know why she's here.'

Suddenly, one of the doctors ran into the kitchen. 'The little girl is awake! She can talk!'

Chapter 1 Review

Summary

Two empires are at war: the Earthlings and the Kalkians. The Earthling Emperor is meeting with his ministers. Suddenly, a woman comes. She says a Kalkian capsule has landed at her farm. Aldin is the Emperor's most trusted minister. He goes to the farm. In the capsule, Aldin finds a little girl. At first, the girl is unconscious. Then she wakes up.

Vocabulary

planet any of the large objects in the universe that move around a sun or star

colony an area controlled by another country with people from that country living there

peace a situation in which there is no war or violence

population the number of people who live in an area

weapon something that is used for fighting, such as a gun or knife

empire a group of countries controlled by one leader or group

government the group of people who control a country or area

emperor the ruler of a group of countries controlled by one leader or group

minister a politician who is in charge of a political department

trusted not likely to lie, harm or steal

security guard someone whose job is to keep a person, place or thing safe

shout to say something very loudly or to make a loud noise with your voice

nervous worried or frightened

capsule a small round object, in this case one used for travel

farm an area of land where crops are grown and animals are kept

space of or related to the area outside Earth's atmosphere, where stars and planets are

silent not speaking or making any noise

vehicle something that carries people or goods, especially on roads, for example a car or lorry

uncomfortable not feeling nice or relaxed

truth the true facts, something that is not a lie

unconscious in a state like sleep in which you are not aware of what is happening, usually because you are seriously ill or injured

carefully without making mistakes or causing damage

spaceship a vehicle for travel in the area outside Earth's atmosphere

Comprehension Questions

Select one answer only for each question.

1) There is a war between ___.
   a. Aldin and Emperor Valior
   b. the Earthlings and Kira's husband
   c. the Earthlings and the Kalkians
   d. Kira and Emperor Valior

2) The Emperor is in a meeting with ___.
   a. Aldin and the Kalkians
   b. his ministers
   c. Kira and her husband
   d. a little girl and Aldin

3) The woman, Kira, tells the Emperor that ___.
   a. there's a little girl in her house
   b. there's a capsule at her farm
   c. her husband died in the war
   d. Aldin must come to her house

4) At first, the little girl ___.
   a. tells Aldin about her world
   b. doesn't want to talk because she's shy
   c. cries a lot
   d. cannot speak because she is unconscious

5) Kira offers Aldin ___.

a. a cool drink
b. coffee
c. a place to rest
d. something to eat

Chapter 2 – The Girl

The girl from the Kalkian capsule was conscious! Someone needed to talk to her. Aldin was a minister of the Emperor. He was the person to do it. He walked into the bedroom. Kira joined him. They sat down.

The girl looked sleepy. Finally, she asked slowly, ‘Where am I?’ Kira and Aldin looked at each other in surprise. She spoke English!

The girl looked around. She saw the guards. Suddenly, she became very **frightened**. The doctor gave her a drug to **calm** her down. She soon went to sleep again.

An hour later, the girl’s eyes opened. ‘Where am I?’ she asked. Then she looked at Aldin. ‘Who are you?’ she asked. Her English seemed pretty good.

‘Hello,’ Aldin said. ‘My name is Aldin. This is Kira. We are Earthlings. Please stay calm.’ He paused. ‘How do you feel?’

‘I’m OK,’ she answered carefully. She didn’t trust them.

‘We don’t want to **hurt** you,’ Aldin explained.

The girl was still frightened. She didn’t answer.

Kira gave it a try. ‘Hi there,’ she said slowly. ‘Can you tell me your name?’

‘My name is Maha,’ the girl replied.

‘Everything’s all right, Maha. My name is Kira. And this is Aldin. You’re at my house. You were hurt. We’ve been looking after you.’

‘Am I in your capital?’ the girl asked. She looked out the window. It was late. She couldn’t see much through the glass. She could only see a few trees and fields. ‘It doesn’t look like a city,’ she said in surprise.

‘You are near the capital. Not in the capital,’ explained Aldin. ‘The emperor is still far from here.’

When the girl heard the word ‘Emperor’, she became frightened again. ‘I don’t want to go home! I’m 13 now. I can make my own decisions!’ she shouted.

Aldin was surprised. Why didn't the child want to go home? Why did she say that? Something strange was going on. 'Why don't you want to go home?' he asked.

'I don't like Kalkia any more,' replied Maha.

'You don't like Kalkia?' asked Aldin with surprise. 'What do you mean?'

'I don't want to live there any more.'

'Why do you say that?'

'Well, for one thing my family is never home.'

'Yes? And?'

'They **ignore** me. They don't spend time with me. They don't care about me.'

'So your family ignores you?' said Aldin.

'Yes … for a long time now.'

'And because you were **lonely**, you came here?' asked Kira.

'Yes. My father is always working. My mother is always travelling. I stay at home with **carers**. My father pays them to care for me. I don't like being with them.'

Aldin was beginning to understand. The girl had **run away** from home!

'Just a second, Maha. Are you telling me that you left home? That you ran away?'

The girl looked down. 'Yes,' she answered.

Aldin stood. He looked down at the girl. 'Excuse me. I need to go out.'

Aldin left the house. Kira followed. Aldin stood looking at Kira's pretty farm. He was thinking. He seemed uncomfortable with something.

'What are you thinking about, Aldin?' Kira asked.

'Something is not right here.'

'What do you mean?'

'The girl ran away from home. But she can't fly a spaceship. She's 13.'

'I get it. Someone helped her.'

'Yes. But who?'

'Let's find out.'

Aldin and Kira walked back inside. They walked into the bedroom.

‘Hello,’ Maha said.

‘Hello again,’ Aldin said, smiling at her.

Maha looked Aldin directly in the eye. ‘I will not go home. I want to stay here,’ she said firmly.

‘And why do you want to stay here?’

‘Like I said, I don’t like my carers.’

‘I don’t believe you,’ said Aldin calmly.

‘It’s the truth.’

‘Yes. But there’s more, isn’t there?’

She **sighed**. ‘Yes, there is more.’

‘I thought so. Tell me.’

‘We are losing the war. People have no food. Many people have nowhere to live. We can’t **survive** much longer. I’m frightened.’

Aldin sat down beside Maha. He looked at her closely. ‘You can stay here for now,’ he explained. ‘But you have to understand. Our two worlds are at war.’

‘I know that,’ she stated quickly. ‘I’m 13, not 6!’

Aldin laughed. ‘Then you understand. There are many factors here,’ he explained. ‘There could be huge developments because of this. There will be effects at national and international levels.’

‘Yes,’ Maha said, looking down. ‘But they still don’t know where I am!’ she quickly added. ‘I can just wait a few days. Then I can go somewhere else.’

Aldin looked at her. It was time to figure out how the child had got here. ‘Maha, a capsule is not an easy method of travel. You didn’t come here alone. You’re too young to travel across space without help.’

Maha looked up. ‘You’re right,’ she said **quietly**. ‘I can’t fly a spaceship.’

‘Who did then?’

‘I can’t tell you.’

Aldin was very patient. As a minister, he was used to dealing with people. ‘Maha, we need to know who helped you. If we don’t know that, we can’t help you.’

Maha was silent. Then she spoke. ‘It’s … It’s …’

‘Don’t worry. You’re safe,’ said Kira quietly.

Maha looked at them. Then she said it. ‘It’s Valior, your Emperor. He helped me.’

Aldin stood up quickly. He looked at Maha with concern. Then he looked at Kira. The guards looked at all of them.

‘Valior?’ said Aldin. ‘That can’t be true!’

Maha looked down again. ‘Yes, it can. I received a message from him weeks ago. He said he knew I wanted to leave. He wanted to help me. So he had his **spies** find me.’

‘Spies?’

‘Yes, there are many Earthling spies on Kalkia.’

Aldin put his hand to his head. He walked around the room. So, the Emperor had helped a Kalkian child leave. He just couldn’t understand why. ‘This is unbelievable,’ he finally said with a sigh.

After a short while, Maha spoke again. ‘Well, actually, there’s more,’ she said quietly.

Aldin turned and looked at Maha. *What more could there be?* he thought. At last he asked, ‘And what is that?’

Maha looked him in the eye. ‘My father.’

‘What about your father?’ asked Aldin quietly.

‘My father is the Emperor of the Kalkians.’

Chapter 2 Review

Summary

The girl from the capsule wakes up. The doctor checks the girl. He says she is fine. The girl begins to speak. Her name is Maha. She is Kalkian. She is 13 years old. At first Maha says she left because of her parents. Later, she

gives a different reason. She fears the Kalkians may not survive the war. Aldin then asks how Maha came to Earth. She finally tells him that Emperor Valior helped her. Then she adds that her father is the Kalkian Emperor.

Vocabulary

frightened afraid or very worried

calm to relax someone, to stop someone from being nervous, excited or upset

hurt to cause pain or injury to someone

ignore to not pay attention to someone or something

lonely unhappy because you are alone, with no friends around you

carer someone who feeds and takes care of another person for a job

run away to leave a place secretly

sigh to breathe out noisily, because you feel tired, disappointed, unhappy, etc.

survive to continue to live after something bad has happened

quietly with little or no noise

spy someone whose job is to discover secret information about another country or company

Comprehension Questions

Select one answer only for each question.

6) At first, Maha ___.
   a. won't talk at all
   b. is very nervous
   c. talks a lot about her family
   d. wants to speak to her father

7) Aldin figures out that Maha ___.
   a. has run away from home
   b. was asked to leave her home

c. is lost
d. doesn’t know where home is

8) Maha also says that ___.
a. her family loves her very much
b. she doesn’t know her parents
c. she loves her carers very much
d. she is not happy with her parents

9) When Aldin asks who helped her, Maha replies that ___.
a. the Kalkian Emperor helped her
b. Valior came to her in person
c. Earthling spies were sent by Valior
d. Kalkian spies helped her

10) Why might having the girl on Earth be a problem?
a. She is scared.
b. She is the daughter of the Kalkian Emperor.
c. She is a Kalkian spy.
d. Aldin doesn’t want her to go home.

Chapter 3 – The Truth

Aldin couldn't believe it. Maha was the daughter of the Kalkian Emperor! The girl could cause world **chaos**! And all because she was lonely? Because she thought Emperor Valior understood her problems? What had she done?!

Then Aldin realized something. It was not the girl's **responsibility**. She didn't really know what she had done. She was just sad. And a man named Valior had helped her. *He* was the problem – the Emperor! He was responsible. What was he thinking? Aldin had to find out.

Aldin left Kira's house. He got into a vehicle and drove to the capital. Once he was there, he went directly to the Emperor's office. Suddenly, a security guard stopped him. 'You're **barred** from entering,' said the guard.

Aldin was surprised. 'Barred? I must speak with Valior. Do you know who I am? I'm a minister!'

'Those are the Emperor's **orders**. No access for you, Aldin.'

Aldin wondered what to do next. He had to talk to Emperor Valior. Without thinking, Aldin hit the guard on the head. The guard fell to the floor. Aldin took the guard's weapon and entered Valior's office.

The Emperor was in his chair. He looked worried. 'Aldin, what do you want?' he sighed.

'Why didn't I know anything about the child?'

'What child?'

'Emperor, I'm not **stupid**.'

Valior stopped. 'OK. No more acting. What do you want to know?'

'Why is the Kalkian Emperor's daughter here? Why did you do it?' His voice became stronger. 'It's not our **policy** to use children!'

Valior stood. Then he shouted, 'It is not our policy to lose wars!'

Aldin looked at Valior. Then he asked, 'Why didn't you tell me?'

'I didn't tell you for one reason only.'

'And what is that?'

The Emperor looked down. ‘I knew you would not **approve**,’ he answered. ‘I didn’t want you to influence my decision.’ Valior was right. Of course Aldin would not want a child involved in a war. It just wasn’t right.

‘What are you going to do with her?’ Aldin asked next.

‘With Maha? We’re going to take care of her! She’s only a child,’ the Emperor said.

Aldin didn’t trust him. ‘I didn’t mean that,’ he continued. ‘I meant what’s going to happen? What will happen when the Kalkians find out? Will she be hurt?’

‘Those are good questions. All of them,’ said the Emperor calmly.

Aldin looked at the Emperor. He would not accept an easy answer.

The Emperor began to speak again. ‘The Kalkians know that Maha ran away,’ he continued. ‘But they don’t know what planet she went to. Nor do they know that Earthling spies helped her. So you see, they don’t really know anything.’ He looked at Aldin carefully. The Emperor wanted to **judge** how Aldin felt.

‘And if they figure out that you helped her?’

‘They can’t possibly find out. The spies won’t tell. No one here knows … except you.’

Aldin stopped to think. ‘But why?’ he asked. He just couldn’t understand the Emperor’s reasoning. ‘Why involve a small child? Why take her away from her parents?’

‘Because of who her parents are,’ answered Valior. The Emperor looked at Aldin as if he were stupid. ‘Don’t you see the benefits? We now have the Emperor’s daughter. We can use her. For controlling the Kalkian Emperor. For power. For anything really.’

Valior looked Aldin carefully again. Were his words influencing Aldin’s opinions? Aldin’s face showed nothing.

‘Do you get it now?’ he continued. ‘We can use Maha to get what we want. The Kalkian Emperor is **in our hands**. And all because his stupid little girl felt ignored!’ Valior let out a big laugh. It was a laugh that made Aldin’s heart feel cold.

Aldin looked at the Emperor. Here was a man who Aldin had always trusted. A man who was so important to Aldin. But now all Aldin felt was **disgust**. Valior was using a child to get what he wanted. And he would not let it happen.

Aldin smiled and said, ‘I understand very clearly now, Emperor. As you wish.’

Aldin turned and left the Emperor’s office. He walked quickly through the streets of the capital.

Aldin didn’t like what was going on. But he could not show it. If the Emperor learned that he was against him, Aldin would be killed. There was only one person Aldin could think of for help. One person who the Emperor couldn’t influence. He had to talk to her.

Aldin took a government vehicle. He drove quickly to Kira’s farm. He **knocked** on her door. ‘Kira! Are you there?’

Kira opened the door. ‘Yes?’ she replied. ‘What is it?’

‘Is the girl still here?’ asked Aldin.

‘Why, yes. They haven’t taken her to the capital yet.’

‘Good,’ replied Aldin.

‘But a vehicle is coming now,’ she added.

‘Oh. Well, we have less time than I thought. We have to hurry,’ he said nervously. ‘Take me to her.’

Aldin and Kira walked into the bedroom. The girl was sleeping quietly. ‘We have to go,’ he said.

‘Go? Go where?’ asked Kira.

Aldin looked around. He couldn’t see anyone. ‘Where are the guards?’

‘They’re at the capsule.’

‘Good,’ Aldin said. ‘Now’s our chance.’

‘Our chance?’ Kira asked. She looked **confused**.

‘To take Maha away,’ answered Aldrin.

Kira sat down. She looked at Maha. The girl looked comfortable for the first time. ‘You want to take Maha out of the capital?’

‘No, I want to take her off the planet.’

‘What?’ said Kira. ‘Why?’

‘Maha’s a confused and lonely little girl. Emperor Valior just wants to use her. He will use Maha to influence the Kalkian Emperor.’

Aldin explained Emperor Valior’s plans. Kira simply couldn’t believe it. ‘Do you see now?’ Aldin asked. ‘I don’t want them to hurt Maha. Unless we get her home, she doesn’t have a chance.’

‘We?’

‘We. We need to take her to Kalkia. I can’t do it alone, Kira. I need your help.’

Kira thought for a moment. She looked at the little girl. She then looked out the window at her farm. Finally, she looked at Aldin and said, ‘What have I got to lose?’

Kira told Maha they were going to the capital. They all got into Aldin’s vehicle. Aldin drove for hours. The nearest space **station** was far. On the way, Maha slept.

When they arrived, Aldin told the security guards that they were on **secret** government business. The guards said they wouldn’t tell anyone.

Kira and Aldin carried Maha to a nearby spaceship. They left the station without a problem. Maha woke when the spaceship took off. She wasn’t happy. Aldin felt sorry for her. But he knew they were doing the right thing.

The trip across space took several weeks. The spaceship neared Kalkia. Aldin spoke on the **radio**, ‘This is Earthling Ship 12913. I must speak with the Kalkian Emperor. I am Minister Aldin of the Earthlings.’

The radio came to life. ‘Why do you want to talk to our Emperor?’ said a guard.

‘We have his daughter.’

The radio went silent.

Soon Aldin saw a **warning** on his computer screen. Kalkian military units were coming. They waited near the spaceship. Suddenly, the radio link came to life again. ‘Give us Maha. Or you die,’ said a voice.

‘You’re not going to kill us,’ said Aldin with certainty. ‘I want to talk to your emperor.’ Then he added, ‘Now.’

Again, the radio went silent.

After several minutes, a powerful voice came on the radio. ‘This is the Kalkian Emperor,’ the voice announced. ‘Give me my daughter,’ he said and paused. ‘And I’ll give you your lives.’

‘We will give you Maha on one **condition**,’ answered Aldin.

They waited.

‘What is that?’ came the voice.

‘There must be peace between Earth and Kalkia.’

The Emperor was silent for several seconds. ‘Why should I believe you?’

‘Because we have brought your daughter back,’ answered Aldin. ‘Because I know the war has been difficult for everyone. Think of the economic problems. Think of the hunger and hurt. Both of our worlds are finished. This must end.’

The radio was silent again. Finally, the voice came back. It was softer this time. ‘I agree,’ said the Emperor with a sigh. ‘And I accept. Give me my daughter and we will work towards peace.’

Chapter 3 Review

Summary

Aldin speaks with Emperor Valior. Valior plans to use Maha to fight the Kalkians. Aldin does not agree with Valior’s plan. He keeps his feelings a secret. He returns to Kira’s farm. He and Kira take Maha to a spaceship. They travel to Kalkia. They speak with the Kalkian Emperor. They offer to return Maha, but the Kalkian Emperor must agree to peace. They come to an agreement. At last the war ends.

Vocabulary

chaos great confusion

responsibility something that you must do or deal with

barred if someone is barred from a place or barred from doing something, they are not allowed in or are not allowed to do it

order an instruction to do something

stupid silly or not clever

policy a plan about how to deal with something by a government, political party, business, etc.

approve to think something or someone is good

judge to form an opinion on something or someone

be in (someone's) hands to be completely under someone's control

disgust a strong feeling that you do not like or approve of something

knock to make a sound on a hard surface, usually to get someone's attention

confused unsure of what to think, believe, or do

station a building where trains, buses or other vehicles stop to allow people to get on and off

secret a piece of information that must not be told to other people

radio a piece of equipment that you use for listening to programmes which are broadcast

warning a statement that tells you about a possible danger or something bad that may happen

condition something that must exist or happen before another action can take place

Comprehension Questions

Select one answer only for each question.

11) After leaving the farm, Aldin goes to ___.
    a. a restaurant
    b. the capsule
    c. the capital
    d. his house

12) Aldin realizes that Valior, the Emperor, ___.
    a. is not truthful

b. wants peace
c. always tells the truth
d. is friends with the Kalkian Emperor

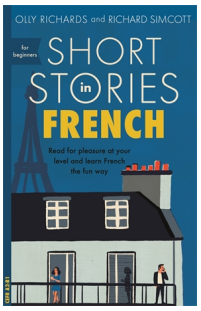
13) Aldin plans to ___.
a. return the child
b. stay with the child
c. kill the child
d. do nothing

14) Maha ___.
a. is happy about going home
b. didn’t want to come to Earth
c. wants to call her parents
d. is not happy about going home

15) When Aldin speaks to the Kalkian Emperor, he asks for ___.
a. money
b. peace
c. a job
d. a chance to stay on Kalkia

Want to try another language?









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Answer Key

Crazy Paella: *Chapter 1:* 1. a, 2. b, 3. d, 4. c, 5. b; *Chapter 2*: 6. d, 7. b, 8. a, 9. a, 10. c; *Chapter 3*: 11. c, 12. c, 13. d, 14. d, 15. b; *Chapter 4*: 16. c, 17. d, 18. a, 19. c, 20. a

A Very Unusual Excursion *Chapter 1*: 1. b, 2. a, 3. d, 4. d, 5. b; *Chapter 2*: 6. d, 7. d, 8. c, 9. a, 10. b; *Chapter 3*: 11. c, 12. d, 13. d, 14. a, 15. c

The Knight: *Chapter 1*: 1. b, 2. b, 3. d, 4. c, 5. b; *Chapter 2*: 6. a, 7. a, 8. b, 9. c, 10. d; *Chapter 3*: 11. c, 12. b, 13. c, 14. c, 15. a

The Watch: *Chapter 1*: 1. a, 2. c, 3. d, 4. c, 5. b; *Chapter 2*: 6. a, 7. c, 8. a, 9. b, 10. b; *Chapter 3*: 11. c, 12. b, 13. b, 14. d, 15. b

The Chest: *Chapter 1*: 1. c, 2. b, 3. a, 4. d, 5. c; *Chapter 2*: 6. a, 7. a, 8. b, 9. a, 10. d; *Chapter 3*: 11. c, 12. c, 13. d, 14. b, 15. b

Unknown Territory: *Chapter 1*: 1. b, 2. a, 3. d, 4. c, 5. d; *Chapter 2*: 6. c, 7. b, 8. d, 9. a, 10. d; *Chapter 3*: 11. c, 12. c, 13. c, 14. c, 15. b

Laura, the Invisible Woman: *Chapter 1*: 1. a, 2. b, 3. c, 4. c, 5. c; *Chapter 2*: 6. a, 7. b, 8. c, 9. c, 10. a; *Chapter 3*: 11. d, 12. b, 13. b, 14. a, 15. c

The Capsule: *Chapter 1*: 1. c, 2. b, 3. b, 4. d, 5. d; *Chapter 2*: 6. b, 7. a, 8. d, 9. c, 10. b; *Chapter 3*: 11. c, 12. a, 13. a, 14. d, 15. b

Glossary

A

accent the way people from a particular area pronounce words

accident a bad thing that happens that is not intended

activate to make something start working

administrative assistant a person whose job is to help someone else in an office

adopt to take someone else's child into your family and legally become their parent

advanced the newest or most developed

afternoon tea a light meal with tea eaten in the afternoon

agency an organization or business that provides a particular service

airport a place where passengers get on and off aircraft

angry very annoyed or upset

approve to think something or someone is good

Are you kidding? a question asked to express disbelief or check if someone is joking

attack to suddenly and quickly try to hurt someone

awkwardly in an odd or uncomfortable way

B

backpack a small bag used to carry things around on the back

bag an object that you put things in and carry with you

balance when you have the same amount of weight on each side of your body so that you do not fall over

barbecue a piece of equipment used for cooking food outdoors

barred if someone is barred from a place or barred from doing something, they are not allowed in or are not allowed to do it

bath to sit or lie in water so that you can wash yourself

(mobile) battery has died there is no longer power to run a device or telephone

battle a fight between two groups or armies
be born a person or animal is born when it comes out of its mother's body
be in (someone's) hands to be completely under someone's control
be taken aback to be surprised, often in an unpleasant or unwanted way
beach an area of sand or stones at the edge of the sea
beard the hair that grows on a man's chin
betray to do something which harms someone who thinks you are a friend
bird a creature with wings and feathers that produces eggs
boat a vehicle for travelling over water
bonus something good that you get in addition to something else good
burst out laughing to suddenly start to laugh
butler a person who helps other people in the home for a job
button a small round object you press to make a machine turn on or move

C

calm to relax someone, to stop someone from being nervous, excited or upset
camp a place where people live in tents or temporary shelters, usually for a short time
candle a stick of wax with a piece of string through the middle which produces a flame when you burn it
cannon a large gun that fires big metal balls or other large explosives
capsule a small round object, in this case one used for travel
captain the person in charge of a ship or an aircraft
careful making sure that you do something correctly or safely
carefully without making mistakes or causing damage
carer someone who feeds and takes care of another person for a job
castle a building, usually made of rock, often one in which a special person lives
cautiously slowly and with care
celebration a happy event or party
chaos great confusion
check in (for a flight) to tell the people at an airport that you have arrived

chest a large box for storing things

chief a person in charge of a group or organization

coincidence when two things happen at the same time by chance

colony an area controlled by another country with people from that country living there

comfortable feeling pleasant and not causing any pain

competitor a person or business that tries to win or to be better than the others

with concern in a worried or unsure way

condition something that must exist or happen before another action can take place

confused unsure of what to think, believe, or do

consider to think about something carefully

cook to prepare and heat food so that it is ready to eat

costume a set of clothes that you wear to make you look like a different person or like an animal or other creature

course (of a ship) the direction that a vehicle is travelling in

crazy mad, out of control, unexpected

crazy silly or stupid

creature any living thing that is not a plant

crowd a large number of people or things together in one place

D

damaged harmed, hurt by something

danger a thing that may harm you

definitely certainly

demand to ask for something in a forceful way that shows you do not expect to be refused

destroy to damage something so badly that it no longer exists or cannot be used

dinner a main meal in the evening or in the middle of the day

director the manager of a business, organization or department

disappear if someone or something disappears, the person or thing goes somewhere and cannot be seen or found

disappointed unhappy because something is not how you had hoped or expected

disease an illness

disgust a strong feeling that you do not like or approve of something

distracted nervous or not able to think clearly because you are worried or upset

doubt a feeling of not being certain about something

dust a powder of dirt on a surface or in the air

E

electrician someone whose job is to put in or repair electrical equipment

embarrassed feeling ashamed or stupid

emperor the ruler of a group of countries controlled by one leader or group

empire a group of countries controlled by one leader or group

engine the part of a machine that uses energy to produce movement

entrance the part of a building where you go in

establish to start an organization or business

evidence facts or objects that help to prove something

exchange student a student studying in another area or country

excitedly with a feeling of being very happy and not calm because something good is going to happen

excursion a trip or outing

exhaustion a feeling of extreme tiredness

expedition a long journey, especially to a dangerous place or to a place that has not been visited before

expensive costing a lot of money

explorer a person who travels around places and finds out what they are like

express bus a large vehicle with a lot of seats for passengers that travels to only main cities or stops

F

factor something that causes or influences a situation

farm an area of land where crops are grown and animals are kept

farmer someone who uses land for growing food or keeping animals for meat or goods

fate an unknown and uncontrollable power that seems to make things happen

fire to shoot something from a gun or other weapon

flat a set of rooms that someone lives in, which are part of a larger building

flight a journey in an aircraft

footprint the mark that a foot leaves on the ground

force to use power or physical strength to make something happen

forgive to stop being angry with someone for something they have done

former existing or true in the past but not now

foul very unpleasant or unusable

fountain a place where water flows out of the ground

frightened afraid or very worried

G

garage a small building that you keep your car in

gesture to move your body or its parts to express what you think or feel

get lost to not know where you are, to be unable to find your way

get ugly to become unpleasant or dangerous

give up to stop before something is finished, often because it is too difficult

go dead to no longer work or be usable

go out to stop working or become dark

god a spirit that some people believe controls nature or represents a particular quality

gold a valuable pale yellow metal, used to make jewellery

gold necklace a piece of jewellery for around the neck made of a pale yellow metal

government the group of people who control a country or area

grab to take something suddenly or violently

(security) guard someone whose job is to keep a person, place or thing safe

guest someone invited to a home or event

H

harm to hurt, damage or cause problems for someone or something

have a feeling to believe that something is true not because of facts but because of emotions

head for (*slang)* go to

helm the wheel that is used to control a ship

hide to be in a place where people cannot see or find something or someone easily

hiker a person who enjoys long walks in the countryside

hug to put your arms around someone and hold them

hunt to chase and kill animals for food or for sport

hurry to go somewhere or do something quickly

hurt to cause pain or injury to someone

I

identical exactly the same

ignore to not pay attention to someone or something

imagine to form a picture of someone or something in your mind

impatient easily angered because you don't like to wait

impossible not possible, not able to do or happen

incident something that happens, especially something bad such as a crime.

incredible extremely good or great

investment an amount of money or time put into something in order to get a return

invisible impossible to see, not possible to be viewed by others

ironic surprising, often because it is the opposite of what is expected

It's all too much. An expression said when something is more than a person can handle or manage.

J

jacket a short coat, usually with long sleeves

joke something said or done to be funny

journey when you travel from one place to another, especially a long distance

judge to form an opinion on something or someone

K

kick to hit someone or something with your foot

kingdom a country ruled by a king or queen

kiss to touch someone with your lips, especially on their mouth or face

knight in the past, a soldier of a high social class who rode a horse

knock to make a sound on a hard surface, often to get someone's attention

L

lake a large area of water with land all around it

language communication using speech and writing

legend an old traditional story that is usually not true

lift a small box that takes people up and down in a building

light up to become filled with the energy that allows us to see

load the amount carried by something, such as a lorry or train

lock device that fastens things such as doors and drawers, usually opened and closed using a key

lonely unhappy because you are alone, with no friends around you

lorry a large vehicle for carrying heavy goods by road

lucky when something good happens to you by chance

M

madly in an excited way

magic having strange powers that some people believe cause strange things to happen that you cannot explain

market square an open space with buildings on all four sides

meanwhile happening at the same time as something else

meat the flesh of animals eaten as food

menu a list of the food available in a restaurant

metal ball a round object made of a hard shiny material such as iron, gold or silver

mild weather weather that is quite warm and comfortable

minister a politician who is in charge of a political department

mission an important or official job that someone believes he or she must do

mobile (phone) a telephone that you carry with you

modern to do with the present time and not the past

motorway a wide road for vehicles travelling fast over long distances

mountain a very high hill

muscle one of the parts in the body that are connected to bones and that cause the body to move by becoming shorter or longer

museum a building where collections of interesting things are arranged for people to see

N

neat tidy and arranged carefully

neighbourhood an area of a town or city

nervous worried or frightened

No way! (*slang*) an expression used to show surprise or disbelief

nod to move your head up and down, especially to agree or to say 'yes'

O

old-fashioned not modern or fashionable

order an instruction to do something

P

packed very full

paella a Spanish dish made of chicken, rice, seafood, vegetables and seasonings

panic a frightened or worried state in which you cannot think calmly

particular special, of a certain type or style

path a narrow route across a piece of ground that people walk or ride a bicycle along

pay attention to focus or concentrate on something

peace a situation in which there is no war or violence

performance the acting in a play or event in which a person behaves like someone or something else

phone box a small booth or box, usually on a street, with a telephone you can pay to use

pirate someone who steals things from ships while they are at sea

planet any of the large objects in the universe that move around a sun or star

play a trick to make someone do what you want by using clever but unfair methods

pocket an extra piece of cloth sewn into a piece of clothing or a bag, used for keeping small things in

policy a plan about how to deal with something by a government, political party, business, etc

population the number of people who live in an area

potential the possibility of becoming something big or important in the future

potion a special mixture of things, usually one that has power or is magic

pretend to try to make someone believe something that is not true by acting like it is true

profit money you make by selling something for more than you paid for it

progress movement forward towards a goal or completion of a plan

pure not mixed with anything else

Q

quarter a three-month period in the business year

quiet having or making little or no noise

quietly with little or no noise

R

radio a piece of equipment that you use for listening to programmes which are broadcast

raise an increase in money paid to do a job

reality sinks in one begins to understand the truth of what is happening

realize to know and understand something that you did not know or understand before

receptionist a person that sits at the entrance to an office or building and directs visitors

relax to rest and become calmer and less worried

relaxed feeling calm, comfortable and not worried

relief a good feeling because something bad or unpleasant stops or does not happen

renovate to repair or change something to make it better, usually a building

rental the act of paying money so that you can use something

represent to speak or to act officially for someone else

resource something that you have and are able to use.

responsibility something that you must do or deal with

restaurant a place where you can buy and eat a meal

ring a round piece of jewellery that you wear on your finger

risk to take the chance of damaging or losing something

river a large stream of water that flows across land

rough not smooth

row to pull a boat through water using long wooden sticks

run away to leave a place secretly

run out of to completely use up so there is no more

S

safe unlikely to be harmed or hurt

sail to travel somewhere in a ship or a boat

sand very small grains of rock that are found on beaches and in deserts

scared frightened

science fiction stories that take place in an imagined future or in other parts of the universe

scroll an old form of letter written on paper or skin and rolled onto something

second in command the person who takes over if a leader can no longer lead

secret a piece of information that must not be told to other people

security camera a device that makes videos of an area in real time so it can be watched and protected

security guard someone whose job is to keep a person, thing, or place safe

(mobile) service the system that allows you to use a mobile telephone

shake to make many quick small movements from side to side or up and down

ships a large boat that carries passengers or goods on sea journeys

shore the area of land next to the sea or next to a lake

shortage when there is not enough of something

shout to say something very loudly or to make a loud noise with your voice

shower a piece of bathroom equipment that produces a flow of water that you stand under to wash yourself

shy nervous and not confident when meeting and speaking to people

sibling a brother or sister

sigh to breathe out noisily, because you feel tired, disappointed, unhappy, etc.

silence when it is completely quiet and no sound can be heard

silent not speaking or making any noise

similar when two or more things are like each other but not exactly the same

skin the outside layer of your body

sky the area above Earth where you can see the sun, moon, stars and clouds

social of or about activities done with other people when not working

society all the people who live in a group or in a particular country or area

soldier someone who is in an army

solution the answer to a problem or a question

something just doesn't add up something does not make sense or does not seem right

space the area outside Earth's atmosphere, where stars and planets are

spaceship a vehicle for travel in the area outside Earth's atmosphere

special power a special strength or force

specific exact, of a certain type

split to go in two different directions

split up to divide a group of people into smaller groups

spy someone whose job is to discover secret information about another country or company

station a building where trains, buses or other vehicles stop to allow people to get on and off

stock part ownership of a company or business

stone bridge a structure made of rocks built over a river to allow people or vehicles to cross from one side to the other

storm a time when there is a lot of wind and rain

stout round and heavy, usually overweight

strange unusual

strange power an unusual strength or force

strategy plan, the way you are going to get something

steal to take something without the owner's permission

stretch (one's) legs to move around, usually after being still for a time

strict expecting people to obey your rules

stupid silly or not clever

sunglasses dark glasses that protect your eyes from the sun

sunrise the time when the yellow thing in the sky comes up to give light and heat to Earth

support to agree with an idea, person, etc. and want them to succeed

survive to continue to live after something bad has happened

suspiciously with a feeling that you cannot trust or believe someone or something

T

take off when an aeroplane leaves the ground and goes up into the air

taste a person's preferences for something such as clothing, art or behaviour

tax money you pay to the government from your income or that is added to the price of goods you buy to pay for public services

taxi a car with a driver that you pay to take you from one place to another

technically according to official or usual practice

technology scientific knowledge, methods or equipment used in practical ways

tent a frame covered with cloth which you sleep in when you are camping

terrible very bad

territory the land that a particular country controls
thicket a small group of trees
think things through to consider or work through a problem
tightly in a firm and strong way
tired feeling that you need a rest
tone the quality of a sound or of someone's voice
torch a small electric light that you carry in your hand
trader a person or company that buys and sells things
traditional based on customs that have existed for a long time
transport to move something from one place to another
trust to believe that someone is honest and loyal
trusted not likely to lie, harm or steal
truth the true facts, something that is not a lie

U

ugly not pleasant to look at
un día loco a Spanish expression meaning "a crazy day"
uncomfortable not feeling nice or relaxed
unconscious in a state like sleep where you are not aware of what is happening, usually because you are seriously ill or injured
unwrap to remove layers or cloth to open something up

V

(of) value worth money, important
vehicle something that carries people or goods, especially on roads, for example a car or lorry
volunteer someone who offers to do something

W

wad of cash a pile of paper money
wagon a large open vehicle with four wheels, usually pulled by an animal
wake (up) to stop sleeping, or to make someone stop sleeping
warrior a soldier, especially in the past
watchmaker a person who makes watches

wave to move your hand to say hello or goodbye or to attract someone's attention

weapon something that is used for fighting, such as a gun or a knife

whisper to talk very softly so that other people cannot hear

wife the woman who a man is married to

wood the hard substance that trees are made of

wooden made of wood

woods an area where a lot of trees grow closely together

work to have a job that you are paid to do

workshop a place where people build or repair things

Y

Your Majesty a title used when speaking to a king or queen

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Olly Richards

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FERRG, THE DRAGON

The dragon saw the arrow pass by. He looked down.Then the dragon landed in the town square. 'Josh…?' said the dragon.





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