



READING

Elementary

Dears, last week we started to read 'Sherlock Holmes Investigates' by Sir Arthur Conan Doyle. Here we can continue.

Sherlock Holmes Investigates

The adventure of the speckled band.

Sherlock Holmes was sitting back in his chair, with his eyes closed. His head was on a cushion. Now he opened his eyes now and looked at the woman.

"Please tell me everything," he said

"That is easy to do. I remember very second of that horrible time. The house is very old, and we live in only one part of it. The bedrooms are on the ground floor, and the other rooms are in the middle. All the bedrooms are together. The first is doctor Roylott's, the second is my sister's, and the third is my bedroom. You can see the garden from the bedroom windows."

"Do you understand that?"

"Yes."

" That night Dr Roylott went to his room early, but he did not go to bed. Instead he smoked one of his Indian cigars. My sister did not like the smell of the smoke, so she came into my bedroom. We sat together for a few minutes, talking about her wedding.

When we had finished talking, my sister stood up and went to the door. At the door she stopped and looked at me.

She said: "Did you hear anyone whistling in the middle of the night?"

I said: "No, I didn't; why?"

She answered: "On the last three nights I've always heard a whistle at about 3a.m., but I don't know if it came from the next room or from the garden. I thought the best thing was to ask you. Do you whistle when you sleep?"

"I'm sure I don't, and I've never heard a whistle"

"Yes, it's not important anyway"

My sister went away. Later I heard her key turning in the lock. We used to lock the doors of our rooms during the night, because we were a bit afraid of the big animals around the house. Then I went to bed.

I could not sleep that night. I felt that some disaster was going to happen. You know that my sister and I were twins, and twins are very close in a strange way.

It was a stormy night. The wind was blowing outside, and I could hear the rain against the windows. Suddenly, in the middle of the storm, I heard the scream of a woman. It was my sister. I jumped up, put on my dressing gown, and ran out of my room. As I ran, I heard a whistle. I remember it, because it was like the whistle my sister told me about. Then I heard a sound like some metal falling on to the ground.



I ran to my sister's door, and it opened slowly. I was scared. I didn't know what was going to come from her room. By the light in the passage I saw my sister. Her face was white because she was frightened. I ran to her and put my arms around her, and she fell down.

My sister was in terrible pain. I thought that she did not recognise me. Then, she suddenly screamed "Oh, my God! Helen! It was the band! The speckled band." I will never forget the horror in her voice.

She wanted to say something more. She pointed her finger in the direction of the doctor's room. But she couldn't speak. I ran, I called for my step-father, and I met him as he was coming from his room.

When he reached my sister we tried to help her, and we asked for a doctor to come from the village. But it was no good. My sister did not speak to anyone again before she died. That is the story of the terrible death of my sister.

TO BE CONTINUED

Source: <http://www.english-online.org.uk/reading/elementread.htm>

Intermediate

Last week you continued reading Gulliver's Travels by Jonathan Swift. I am using the Oxford Bookworms Library Green Series, Adaptations of classic and modern stories for younger readers. In this Library Gulliver's Travels is classified as stage 4 (of the 6 stages), which means approximately 1400 headwords, ideal for intermediate learners. The story is retold by Clare West and is divided into 12 chapters. Today you are going to read the first part of the sixth chapter. After the last chapter you will be given a glossary.

CHAPTER SIX – PART ONE **GULLIVER AND HIS MASTER**

Soon after we arrived, the whole family sat down at the table for dinner. There was a large piece of meat on a plate about eight metres across. The farmer put me on the table, with some small pieces of bread and meat in front of me. I was very frightened of falling off the edge of the table, which was ten metres high from the ground. The farmer and his family were delighted to watch me eating food with my own small knife and fork. But when I started walking across the table to the farmer, his youngest son, a boy about ten, picked me up by my legs. He held me so high in the air that my whole body trembled. Fortunately his father took me away at once, and angrily hit the boy hard on the head. But I remembered how cruel children can be to small animals, and I did not want the boy to take his revenge on me. So I fell on my knees and asked them not to punish the child any more. They seemed to understand.

Just then I heard a noise behind me. It sounded like twelve machines running at the same time. I turned my head and saw a huge cat, three times larger than one of our cows. The farmer's wife held it in my arms, so that it could not jump at me. But in fact, because I showed no fear, there was no danger, and the cat even seemed a little afraid of me.



At the end of dinner, a servant came in with the farmer's one-year –old son in her arms. He immediately started crying and screaming, because he wanted to play with me. His mother smiled and put me in his hand. When he picked me up and put my hand in his mouth, I shouted so loudly that he dropped me. Luckily, I was not hurt, but it showed me how dangerous life was going to be in Brobdingnag.

After eating, the farmer, or my master, as I shall now call him, went back to his work in the fields. I think he told his wife to take good care of me, because she put me carefully on her bed and locked the bedroom door. I was exhausted, and slept for two hours.

When I woke up, I felt small and lonely in such a huge room, and on such a large bed. Suddenly I saw two huge rats run towards me across the bed. One came right up to my face, so I pulled out my sword and cut open his stomach. The other ran away at once. I walked up and down on the bed, to control my trembling legs, and looked at the dead rat. It was as large as a big dog, and its tail measured two metres. When my master's wife came into the room some time later, I showed her how I had killed the rat. She was delighted that I was not hurt, and threw the dead rat out of the window.

My master had a daughter who was about nine years old. She was given the special responsibility of taking care of me, and I owe her my life. During my stay in her country we were always together, and she saved me from many dangerous situations. I called her Glumdalclitch, which means 'little nurse'. She was good at sewing, and managed to make some clothes for me in the thinnest material available. She also made me a small bed, which was placed on a shelf too high for rats to reach. Perhaps the most useful thing she did was to teach me the language, so that in a few days I could speak quite well.

TO BE CONTINUED

Advanced

Environment & wildlife:

Interview: the Bird-Man of the Isles

Andrew Rossiter talks to Graham Ross, who runs a one-man wildlife hospital on the wild and beautiful Scottish island of Skye.

ANDREW: Graham; people call you the "bird man of the Isles"; so can you tell me what exactly is it that you do with birds?

GRAHAM: Well I take in injured birds, mainly birds of prey; I fix them, and hope-fully return them to the wild. These injuries would be broken wings, or starvation, or whatever.

Are there a lot of birds of prey on the Scottish isles, or are there less than there used to be?

The Scottish islands are still a stronghold for a lot of birds of prey. There are probably as many as there ever were.



When you get a bird in, what do you do to it? Do you keep it in a bird's hospital, or do you send it out to a doctor? Or are you the doctor yourself?

I'm not the doctor! But the veterinary sur-geons here tend to be more acquainted with sheep and cattle, rather than birds. And I tend to look after the bird side of it. In fact, some of the veterinary surgeons here refer patients to me!

You get in falcons and eagles here! How does an eagle manage to get here? How do people find eagles to bring to you?

Somebody'll maybe come across an in-jured eagle, for example, on the hill; and report it to somebody. And more often than not it's the police that contact me and tell me there's an injured bird, eagle or what-ever, at such and such a place. And I usually go for it if it's an eagle, but if it's something like a smaller bird, I ask people just to put a box over it and bring it to me.

Do all the birds you have come from the island of Skye? Or do people bring them in from further afield?

All the ones I have at the moment come from the Isle of Skye. I have had them from further afield; from the mainland of Scot-land, and from some of the other islands nearby.

And after you've had a bird, what do you do with it? Do you release it into the wild? And if so, how many of your birds can you release into the wild? Or do you have to keep some of them because they're unable to fly?

The majority of the birds are released back into the wild. I do have some that over the years I've had to keep, because they were unable to fend for themselves in the wild.?

Are there a lot of people doing this kind of rescue work for birds of prey in Scot-land? Or are you one of the few?

There are a few throughout Scotland; and most areas are covered by somebody who will take in birds and attend to them as best as possible.

Is the situation for birds of prey or eagles still getting worse, or is it improv-ing in this part of the world, would you say?

I think compared to the situation in the sixties, when they had a pesticide prob-lem, the situation is improving.

Would you say it's going to go on im-proving? Or have we reached a sort of equilibrium now?

As far as Skye's concerned, I think probab-ly that the numbers of birds of prey are about as high as we could expect; as high as the habitat will stand.

You sometimes breed birds, I believe, in particular owls. What do you do with these? Do you put them back in the wild, or do you send them to other parts of Britain, or what?

We've been breeding barn-owls for several years now, and we release them into the wild on Skye.

Have you got any plans to breed any other types of bird?

No plans immediately. It just depends on what I might have; and if I had a pair... the buzzard*, for example. There's no point in breeding buzzards; they're so common. Peregrine*; there's not many peregrines in the area, but to breed them and release them could improve the natural stock. But I think they're doing quite well naturally, and I think if they reach their own levels, that's quite sufficient. Kestrels*, sparrowhawks* are fairly common throughout Skye and the country, so there's no point in breeding them.



WORDS

bird of prey: carnivorous bird; these include hawks, falcons and eagles - the wild: nature - veterinary surgeon: vet, animal doctor - be acquainted with: be familiar with, know about - starvation: having no-thing to eat - release: let go fend for themselves: live without help - attend to: help, pay attention to - stand: support - breed: reproduce.

Kestrels, buzzards, peregrines and sparrowhawks are four different types of birds of prey found in Britain and Europe.

WORKSHEET

Pair work, oral: Have students recreate this interview in their own words, working in pairs. In each case, the student taking the role of the interviewer should read the questions, the other student answer them as best as he can.

Writing: Imagine that this interview is to be used as the basis for an article , and write this article in 400 words or more..

Discussion: perhaps you have some keen ornithologists in your class; if so, get them to talk about the questions raised by this interview.

Comprehension: true or false?

Read through these true/false statements, then listen to the interview and try and answer them:

1. Graham Ross sends as many birds as possible back to nature.
2. There are more birds in Scotland now than ever before.
3. Vets on Skye are more specialized in large animals.
4. The only birds that Graham actually goes out to get are eagles.
5. People send birds from all over Britain to Graham Ross.
6. He only keeps weak birds.
7. The environmental situation has improved since the sixties for birds.
8. There are not enough birds of prey on Skye.
9. Barn owls are released after several years on the island.
10. It is impossible to breed Peregrine Falcons in captivity

Source: <http://www.linguapress.com/advanced/birdman.htm>

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