

МІНІСТЕРСТВО ОСВІТИ І НАУКИ УКРАЇНИ  
ОДЕСЬКИЙ НАЦІОНАЛЬНИЙ УНІВЕРСИТЕТ імені І. І. МЕЧНИКОВА

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**НАВЧАЛЬНИЙ ПОСІБНИК  
З ДОМАШНЬОГО ЧИТАННЯ  
АНГЛІЙСЬКОЮ МОВОЮ  
(М.С.Beaton “DEATH OF A PERFECT WIFE”  
та Muriel Spark “THE DRIVER’S SEAT”)**

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**Б597** Навчальний посібник з домашнього читання англійською мовою (М. С. Beaton “Death of a perfect wife” та Muriel Spark “The driver’s seat”): навч. посіб. / за ред. д. філол. н., проф. Н. О. Бігунової. – Одеса : Пресс-куррьер, 2020. – 238 с.

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Навчальний посібник призначений для здобувачів ступеня вищої освіти “Бакалавр” III, IV років навчання та здобувачів ступеня вищої освіти “Магістр” I року навчання спеціальності 035 – Філологія. Посібник побудовано таким чином, щоб під час читання і роботи над текстом поряд з розумінням змісту і оцінкою його художніх достоїнств студент витягав з нього і максимум лінгвістичної інформації шляхом спостереження над мовними явищами, їх аналізом і зіставленням з рідною мовою, що має сприяти кращому розумінню тексту твору, збагаченню і ідіоматизації мовлення. Виконання всіх завдань посібника сприятиме формуванню у студентів сталих навичок переказу іншомовного тексту, навчить їх цікаво, ідіоматично розповідати про події, описувати враження, висловлювати оцінку подіям і об'єктам, аргументувати, відстоювати свою точку зору, а також в цілому буде сприяти формуванню високих професійних якостей студентів, магістрів та аспірантів університету та підвищенню їх загальної культури.

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## ПЕРЕДМОВА

Пропонований навчальний посібник призначений для студентів філологічного факультету з дисципліни «Домашнє читання». При укладанні посібника враховувались рекомендації з мовної освіти та нормативні документи Міністерства освіти і науки України.

Сучасна концепція навчання іноземної мови передбачає формування комунікативної компетенції студентів. Її складовою частиною є мовна компетенція, що передбачає розвиток комунікативних умінь в чотирьох основних видах мовленнєвої діяльності і, в тому числі, читання.

Нерідко перспектива залишитися один на один з книгою на іноземній мові лякає тих, хто вивчає англійську – надзвичайно великий обсяг тексту, незнайома лексика і граматичні структури і незрозумілі реалії чужої культури можуть бути серйозними перешкодами до самостійного читання.

Основний курс англійської мови не передбачає «екстенсивного» читання, читання для задоволення, але ж важливість його як складової частини вивчення іноземної мови важко переоцінити. У державному освітньому стандарті прописана необхідність «сформування стійкого інтересу до читання як засобу пізнання інших культур». Цю і низку інших цілей і завдань прагне досягти пропонований курс з домашнього читання англійською мовою.

Для посібника обрано два сучасних художніх твори: перш за все, це детективний роман “Death of a Perfect Wife” (1989), який написаний шотландською письменницею Меріон Чесней, чий псевдонім – М.С. Бітон. Її найбільш відомий герой – Хейміш Макбет – шотландський поліцейський констебль. Його гострий розум, поєднаний з природньою шотландською цікавістю, знанням рідного краю та інтуїцією допомагають йому розв’язувати злочини. Хоча головним фокусом детективних романів завжди є певна таємниця, пов’язана зі злочином, і читача інтригують деталі події та виникаючі версії, авторська ідея М.С. Бітон є значно складнішою і ґрунтується на гуманістичному підході. Авторці вдалося зобразити персонажів своїх романів немов живих, знайомих читачеві людей, а іронія, вплетена у опис подій та

спілкування героїв, надає читачеві справжнє задоволення.

Другою книгою, обраною для читання, є новела британської письменниці та літературного критика Мюриел Спарк «The Driver's Seat» (1970). Мюриел Спарк відома своєю здатністю створювати тривожні і чарівні характери, викликаючи у читачів неспокійне відчуття моральної невизначеності. Новела «The Driver's Seat» отримала назву «метафізичного шокера». Вона належить до жанру психологічного трилера, основними темами новели є самотність, відчуження, ізоляція та втрата духовних цінностей. Шокуючі деталі підготовки молодою жінкою своєї смерті описані в новелі скупими, стислими штрихами, без емоцій та авторського коментаря і тому вони створюють особливо вражаючий ефект.

Посібник призначений допомогти читачеві художньої літератури працювати з текстом таким чином, щоб поряд з розумінням змісту і оцінкою його художніх достоїнств витягати з нього і максимум лінгвістичної інформації шляхом спостереження над мовними явищами, їх аналізом і зіставленням з рідною мовою, що має сприяти кращому розумінню читачем тексту твору, збагаченню і ідіоматизації його мовлення.

Перша книга поділена на 14 текстових відрізків, до яких розроблено відповідно 14 завдань. Новела містить 4 частини і відповідно 4 завдання. Всього розроблено 18 завдань, які передбачають пошук певних лексем в тексті художнього твору, лексикографічний аналіз лексики, пошук синонімів та антонімів слів, інтерпретацію ідіоматичних зворотів, вживання фразеологічних одиниць у контексті роману і новели та у власних ситуаціях, переклад фрагментів рідною мовою, відповіді на запитання, дискусію з проблематики художніх творів. Перевірка кожної частини художнього тексту і дискусія з прочитаного розраховані на 2 аудиторні години. Матеріал, поданий у посібнику, розрахований на 36 годин аудиторного часу, а також може використовуватися для самостійної роботи студентів.

## PART 1

### M.C. Beaton “DEATH OF A PERFECT WIFE”

#### *BEFORE YOU READ*

The novel “Death of a Perfect Wife” was written by a Scottish writer of romance, crime and mystery novels Marion Chesney, whose pseudonym is M.C. Beaton. Her most popular fictional creation, Hamish Macbeth, a Scottish police constable, was first introduced in 1985. His razor-sharp wit, combined with natural "Highland curiosity", as well as local knowledge and intuition enabled him to solve crimes. There are 35 mystery novels about Hamish Macbeth so far.

The genre of “Death of a Perfect Wife” is a mystery fiction or detective fiction, in other words a novel or short story in which a detective (either professional or amateur) solves a crime. The term comes from the *Latin mysterium*, meaning “a secret thing” stories can focus on both supernatural and non-supernatural topics. The term "mystery fiction" implies detective stories in which the emphasis is on the puzzle element and its logical solution (cf. whodunit), as a contrast to hardboiled detective stories which focus on action and gritty realism.

Though the main focus of detective stories is usually on the puzzle element and the reader becomes intrigued by the depicted events, M.C. Beaton’s message is far more sophisticated, involving humanistic approach to life. The author manages to portray the characters as if they were alive, and the irony woven into the complicating action gives the reader still more pleasure.

## UNIT 1

*M.C. Beaton*

### Death of a Perfect Wife

Hamish Macbeth #4

1989, EN

#### Chapter 1

*“Will you walk into my parlour?”*

*said a spider to a fly:*

*Tis the prettiest little parlour*

*that ever you did spy.*

*—Mary Howitt.*

It was another day like the morning of the world.

Police Constable Hamish Macbeth, his dog at his heels, sauntered along the waterfront of Lochdubh, a most contented man. For two whole weeks the weather had been perfect.

Above was a cerulean sky and before him the bustling little harbour and beyond that the blue of the sea, incredible blue, flashing with diamonds as the sun sparkled on the choppy surface of the water. Around the village rose the towering mountains of Sutherland, the oldest in the world, benign in the lazy light. Across the sea loch was Gray Forest, a cool dark cathedral of tall straight pines. Early roses tumbled over garden fences and sweet peas fluttered their Edwardian beauty in the faintest of breezes. On the flanks of the mountains, bell heather, the early heather that blossoms in June, coloured the green and brown camouflage of the rising moors with splashes of deepest pink. Harebells, the bluebells of Scotland, trembled at the roadside among the blazing twisted yellow and purple of vetch and the white trumpets of convolvulus.

As Hamish strolled along, he noticed the Currie sisters, Jessie and Nessie, two of Lochdubh’s spinsters, tending their little patch of garden. The garden bore a

regimented look. The flowers were in neat rows behind an edging of shells.

“Fine day,” said Hamish, smiling over the hedge. Both sisters straightened up from weeding a flower bed and surveyed the constable with disfavour.

“Nothing to do as usual, I suppose,” said Nessie severely, the sunlight sparkling on her thick glasses.

“And isn’t that the best thing?” said Hamish cheerfully. “No crime, no battered wives, and not even a drunk to lock up.”

“Then the police station should be closed down. The police station should be closed down,” said Jessie, who repeated everything twice over like the brave thrush. “It’s a sin and a shame to see a well-built man lazing about. A sin and a shame.”

“Och, I’ll find a murder just for you,” said Hamish, “and then you really will have something to complain about.”

“I hear Miss Halburton-Smythe is back,” said Jessie, peering maliciously at the constable. “She’s brought some of her friends from London to stay.”

“Good time to come here,” said Hamish amiably. “Lovely weather.”

He smiled and touched his cap and strolled on, but the smile left his face as soon as he was out of sight. Priscilla Halburton-Smythe was the love of his life. He wondered when she had come back and who was with her. He wondered when he would see her. Anxiety began to cast a cloud over his mind. It seemed amazing that the day was still perfect: the sun still shone and a seal rolled about lazily in the calm waters of the bay.

He tried to recover his spirits. The air smelled of salt and tar and pine. He walked on to the Lochdubh Hotel to see if he could scrounge a cup of coffee.

Mr. Johnson, the manager, was in his office when Hamish walked in. “Help yourself,” he said with a jerk of his head towards the coffee machine in the corner. He waited until Hamish was seated over a cup of coffee and said, “The Willets’ place has been sold.”

Hamish raised his eyebrows. “I wouldn’t have thought anyone would have taken that.” The Willets’ house was a Victorian villa set back from the waterfront. It had been up for sale for five years and was in bad repair.

“I gather they got it for a song. Someone said ten thousand pounds was the figure.”

“And who’re they?”

“Name of Thomas. English. Don’t know anything about them. Expected to move in today. Maybe it’ll be work for you.”

Hamish grinned. “A crime, you mean? With weather like this, nothing bad can happen.”

“The glass is falling.”

“I never knew a barometer yet that could tell the weather,” said Hamish. “What’s happening up at Tommel Castle?” Hamish asked the question with a casual air of indifference, but Mr. Johnson was not deceived. Tommel Castle, some miles outside Lochdubh, was the home of Priscilla Halburton-Smythe.

“I gather Priscilla’s come back with a party of friends,” said the manager.

Hamish took a sip of coffee. “What kind of friends?”

“Sloane Rangers, I think. Two fellows and two girls.”

Hamish was conscious of a feeling of relief. It sounded like two couples. He dreaded to hear that Priscilla had brought a boyfriend with her.

“Had a look at them yet?” he asked.

“Oh, aye, they were in for dinner here last night.”

Hamish stiffened. “And what has happened to the colonel’s hospitality when his daughter has to entertain her friends at the local hotel?”

Mr. Johnson looked uncomfortable. “They’ve been at the castle for over a week,” he said, and then looked at the ceiling so that he should not see the disappointment in Hamish’s eyes.

Hamish put his unfinished coffee slowly down on the desk. “I’d better be getting off on my rounds,” he said. “Come along, Towser.” The big mongrel slouched out after his master, his plume of a tail at half-mast as if he sensed Hamish’s distress.

Hamish stood out in the forecourt of the hotel among the tubs of scarlet geraniums and blinked in the sunlight. It seemed strange that the weather was still as glorious as ever. Over a week! And she had not called.

He went to the police station and then through the garden at the back and up to his small croft to make sure his sheep had enough water. The sun was hot on his back, curlews piped from the heather and overhead a buzzard, like Icarus, sailed straight for the sun.

A large black ewe ambled up and nuzzled his hand. Hamish automatically patted the sheep, his thoughts on what was going on at the castle. Priscilla had said something teasing last time before she had left about his lazy lack of ambition. He was certainly not an ambitious man. He enjoyed his easy-going life and he loved Western Sutherland with its mountains and heather and the broad stretch of the Atlantic beyond the sea loch where the old people said the blue men rode the waves and the dead came back as seals.

He decided it would do no harm just to go up to the castle and have a look.

He had a new white Land Rover, a perk from head office in Strathbane, no doubt with the blessing of Chief Detective Inspector Blair who enjoyed a reputation for solving murders with Hamish's help, even though Hamish had solved them single-handedly but had let the boorish detective take the credit.

The twisting road up to the castle wound through the hills and his heart lifted as the road bore him higher above the village. There would be some simple explanation as to why Priscilla had not been to see him. Her father, the colonel, strongly disapproved of her friendship with the local bobby. He had probably told her not to have anything to do with him, thought Hamish, deliberately forgetting that her father's temper and disapproval had not stopped Priscilla from visiting him in the past.

He parked the Land Rover on the verge outside the gates. He wanted to spy out the lie of the land before he was seen.

He walked slowly up the drive. He could hear shouts and laughter, so instead of following round the turn of the drive that would bring him to the lawns in front of the house, he plunged into the pine wood at the side and made his way silently over the pine needles to where he could get a clear view without being seen himself.

They were playing croquet, Priscilla and her friends. At first, he had eyes only

for her. She was bent over the mallet, the golden bell of her hair falling about her face. She was wearing a plain white blouse, a short straight scarlet cotton skirt, and low-heeled brown sandals with thin straps. Hamish's attention turned to the man who had come up to her and put his arms around her to show her how to use the mallet. He was tall, with crisp dark hair, a handsome face, and a blue chin. He was wearing a checked shirt and black curling hairs sprouted at the open neck. His sleeves were rolled up, revealing strong tanned arms covered with black hair.

There were two girls, both with the monkey faces of rich Chelsea, and well-coiffed hair. They were wearing casual clothes. The other man was a rabbity-looking individual with gold-rimmed glasses.

Then as Hamish watched, Priscilla smiled at the dark-haired man, a radiant smile, a happy smile, and Hamish felt cold. A darkness grew inside him. Priscilla Halburton-Smythe was in love with that hairy ape, that Neanderthal. His distress was sharp and acute. Suddenly, the smile left Priscilla's face and she looked about her and then at the trees.

Hamish crept silently away. He felt numb. Misery dragged at his feet like clay as he walked back to the Land Rover.

He drove very carefully back to Lochdubh, drove like a drunk man trying to sober up.

Then he saw a large dusty removal van outside the Willets' house. The newcomers had arrived.

Rather than be alone with himself and his thoughts, Hamish drove straight to the house and parked beside the van. A couple, a tall, rather elegant woman and a big shambling man, were unloading bits and pieces.

"Need any help?" he asked. "I'm Hamish Macbeth, the local bobby."

The woman wiped her hand on her trousers and held it out. "Trixie Thomas," she said, "and this is my husband, Paul."

She was almost as tall as Hamish. She had long brown hair which curled naturally on her shoulders and brown eyes, very large with bluish whites. Her mouth was thin and her teeth, rather prominent when she smiled, very white. Hamish judged

her to be about forty-five. Her husband, a large bear of a man with a crumpled clown's face, looked like a fat man who had recently been on a severe diet. His skin looked baggy as if it was meant to stretch across a fatter frame. He had little black eyes and a big mouth and a squashed nose.

"Are you managing?" asked Hamish.

"We're doing our best," sighed Trixie. "But it *is* hot. We rented this removal van. Couldn't afford the professionals so I suppose we'll have to manage...somehow." Her eyes grew wider and her mouth drooped and her hands fluttered in a helpless gesture.

"I'll give you a hand," said Hamish. He removed his peaked cap and rolled up the sleeves of his blue regulation shirt.

"Oh, *would* you?" breathed Trixie. "Poor Paul is so *helpless*." She had a breathless sort of voice, marred by a faint Cockney whine.

Hamish glanced at Paul to see how he liked being described as helpless but the big man was smiling amiably.

Glad of something to take his mind off his troubles, Hamish worked steadily. He and Paul loaded in the furniture and the bric-a-brac and books while Trixie walked about the house showing them where to put things. "We'll need more furniture," she said. "We're both on the dole and we decided to turn this into a bed and breakfast."

"Aye, well, if you're quick about it, you might get the tourists for July and August," said Hamish. "And if you want any secondhand stuff, there's a good place over at Alness. It's a bit of a drive..."

Trixie's mouth drooped again. "We haven't a penny left for furniture," she said. "I was hoping some of the locals might have some bits and pieces they don't want."

"Maybe I've got something I can let you have," said Hamish. "When we've finished, come over to the station and I'll make you something to eat."

He regretted the invitation as soon as it was out of his mouth. Although by no means a vain man, he had a feeling Trixie was making a pass at him. She was emanating a sort of come-hither sexiness, occasionally bumping into him as if by accident, and giving him a slow smile.

He regretted his invitation even more when the couple arrived at the police station. While he was cooking in the kitchen, Trixie wandered off into the other rooms without asking permission and was soon back, her face a little flushed and her eyes wider than ever. "I notice you don't use the fire," she said, "and there's that old coal scuttle. We don't have a coal scuttle." She smiled ruefully. "Couldn't afford one."

The coal scuttle had been given to Hamish by an aunt. It was an old eighteenth-century one with enameled panels and he was very fond of it. Her eyes seemed to be swallowing him up and he was surprised at the effort it took to shake his head and say, "No, I use that the whole time in the winter. You cannot expect me to light fires in a heat wave."

Trixie was now examining the contents of the kitchen shelves. She lifted down a pot of homemade jam and examined the label. "Strawberry! Just look, Paul. And homemade. I love homemade jam."

"Take it with you when you go," said Hamish. She threw her arms around him. "Isn't he delightful?" she said.

Hamish extricated himself and served the meal on the kitchen table.

He was beginning to dislike Trixie but he did not yet know why that dislike should be so intense. He turned his attention to Paul. The big man said they had decided to get out of the rat race and come north to the Highlands and maybe earn their living taking in paying guests. "There's a lot to be done to the house," he said, "but it shouldn't take too long to fix, and then I thought I might start a market garden. There's a good bit of garden there."

"The trouble is," said Hamish, moving his long legs to one side to avoid Trixie's, which had been pressing against his own, "that the summers haven't been very good and people have been taking holidays abroad. Mind you, with all the jams at the airports, they were saying on the news that people are starting to holiday in Britain again so you might be lucky."

"We put advertisements already in the *Glasgow Herald* and *The Scotsman*, advertising accommodation for July and August," said Trixie.

Hamish thought that for a pair with little money it was odd that they had found enough to advertise. And it was nearly the end of June. They would need to work very hard to get the rooms ready in time.

When they stood up to go, Trixie said, "I don't want to be a pest, but if you've any little thing in the way of furniture...? I mean, it's all paid for by the government anyway."

"Only the desk and chair, filing cabinet, and phone in the office are supplied by the police force," said Hamish. "The living quarters are all furnished by me. I haven't time to look at the rooms at the moment, but if I find anything, I'll let you know."

With a feeling of relief, he ushered them out. It was only when he was watching them make their way back to their own house that he realized with something of a shock that the weather had changed. The air felt damp and there was a thin veil of cloud covering the sun. He walked slowly round the front of the police station and stared down the loch.

Rain clouds were heading in from the sea on a damp wind. They were trailing long fingers over the water that had a black oily swell.

And then the midges came down, those Scottish mosquitoes, the plague of the Highlands. All during the long, dry spell, they had been mercifully absent. Now they descended in clouds, getting in his eyes and up his nose. He ran back into the kitchen, cursing, and shut the door.

The idyll was over. The weather had broken, Priscilla had returned with a man, and that couple had moved into Lochdubh, bringing with them an atmosphere of unease and trouble to come.

## **TASK 1**

*1. a) Look up the following words in the dictionary and learn them:*

content, tower, faint, blossom, tremble, twist, survey, peer, grin, casual, entertain, pat, tease, easy-going, wind, temper, reveal, creep, wipe, sigh, rent, afford, gesture, regret, homemade, intense, supply, mosquito, spell, descend, curse.

*b) Which of these words are homonyms?*

c) Which of the words can be pronounced in a different way depending on their meaning?

2. Find 5 English equivalents to the verb «прогулюватися» in the fragment.

3. What is special about the word **row**, used in the fragment?

4. What parts of speech are these words and how were they formed? What other derivatives with the same root can you name?

Disfavour, maliciously, amiably, indifference, stiffen, disappointment, unload, permission, delightful.

5. Build up situations based on the context around the following words and expressions using them in your answer:

to straighten up, to laze about + to complain about, out of sight, smell of, to help oneself, to be up for sale + to be in bad repair + for a song, to move in, to take a sip of + to be conscious of + to have a look at, to sense smth, to make sure, to be going on + lack of, no doubt + to solve murders + to take the credit, bits and pieces + to hold out a hand, to judge smb to be (some age) + to be on a diet, to do one's best + to give smb a hand, to take one's mind off one's troubles + on the dole + a bed and breakfast.

6. Choose 5 out of the above mentioned word combinations and make a story of your own around them.

7. Can you explain the term "battered wives"?

8. Find the following sentences in the text and explain how you understand them:

- Anxiety began to cast a cloud over his mind.
- Hamish asked the question with a casual air of indifference.
- His heart lifted as the road bore him higher above the village.
- He regretted the invitation as soon as it was out of his mouth.

9. Describe Hamish's relationship with Priscilla using the following words and word combinations:

temper, deliberately, to disapprove of, not to have anything to do with smb / smth (to have nothing to do with), to stop smb from doing smth.

*10. Describe how Hamish spied on Priscilla and her friends using the following words and word combinations:*

to spy out, shouts and laughter, instead of, to plunge into, to make one's way (to/towards/ out of, etc.), to get a clear view, without doing smth, at first, low-heeled, to come up to smb, to be in love with smb, misery, to sober up.

*11. Describe Paul and Trixie's visit to the police station using the following words and word combinations:*

regret, out of one's mouth, by no means, vain, to make a pass at smb, to bump into smb, by accident, to ask permission, flush, without doing smth, to be surprised at, to shake one's head, to examine the contents of smth, to throw one's arms around smb, to turn attention to smb /smth, to earn one's living, to take long, odd, get ready, pest, to usher smb in / out, filing cabinet, police force, living quarters.

*12. Cover the following topics:*

1. Describe Hamish's conversation with the Currie sisters.
2. Describe Hamish's conversation with Mr. Johnson. What was it that upset Hamish?
3. Explain the phrase "The idyll was over".

## **UNIT 2**

That evening, Dr. Brodie settled down to a large dinner of steak and chips. He and his wife ate at the round kitchen table. He had long ago given up any hope of ever finding it clear. His plate was surrounded by books and magazines and tapes and unanswered letters. The fruit bowl in front of him contained paper clips, hairpins, two screwdrivers, a tube of glue, and a withered orange.

His wife was sitting opposite him, a book propped up against the wine bottle. Dr. Brodie surveyed her with affection. She had a thin intelligent face and large grey eyes. Wispy fair hair as fine as a baby's fell across her face and she put up a coal-smear hand to brush it away. Dr. Brodie was a contented man. He enjoyed his small practice in the village and although he sometimes wished his wife, Angela, were a better housekeeper, he had become accustomed to his messy, cluttered home. Angela's two spaniels snored under the table and the cat promenaded on top.

“The cat’s just walked across your plate,” commented the doctor.

“Oh, did it? *Shoot*” said Angela, absent-mindedly, waving a hand and then turning another page of her book.

“There are new people at the Willets’ place,” said the doctor, pouring brown sauce over his steak and ketchup over his chips. He pulled away the wine bottle and poured himself a glass. Angela’s book fell over.

“I said there are new people at the Willets’ place,” repeated her husband.

His wife’s dreamy eyes focused on him. “I suppose I had better go and welcome them tomorrow,” she said. “I’ll bake them a cake.”

“You’ll what? When could you ever bake a cake?”

Angela sighed. “I’m not a very good housekeeper, am I? But on this occasion, I am I going to be good. I bought a packet of cake mix. I can simply follow the instructions.”

“Suit yourself. Priscilla Halburton-Smythe called down at the surgery to pick up a prescription for her father. She drove straight off afterwards.”

“And?”

“Well, she’s been back over a week and she hasn’t called at the police station once.”

“Poor Hamish. Why does he bother? He’s an attractive man.”

“Priscilla’s a very beautiful girl.”

“Yes, isn’t she,” said Angela in a voice which held no trace of envy. “Maybe I’ll bake a cake for Hamish, too.”

“The fire extinguisher’s above the stove, remember,” cautioned her husband. “The time you tried to make jam, everything went up in flames.”

“It won’t happen again,” said Angela. “I must have been thinking about something else.”

She rose to her feet and opened the fridge door and took out two glass dishes of trifle which she had bought that day at the bakery. The trifle consisted of rubbery custard, thin red jam, and ersatz cream. The doctor ate it with enjoyment and washed it down with Chianti and then lit a cigarette.

He was in his fifties, a slim, dapper little man with a balding head, light blue eyes, a freckled face, and dressed in shabby tweeds that he wore winter and summer.

After dinner, the couple moved through to the living-room while the cat roamed over the kitchen table, sniffing at the dirty plates.

The fire had gone out. Angela never raked out the ashes until the fireplace became so full of them that the fire would not light. She knelt down in front of the hearth and began to shovel out piles of grey ash into a bucket.

“Why bother?” said the doctor. “Light the electric fire.”

“Good idea,” said Angela. She rose to her feet, leaving ash all over the hearth and plugged in the fire and switched it on. Despite the warm weather, their house was always cold. It was an old cottage with thick walls and stone floors. Angela then went back to the table, absent-mindedly patted the cat, picked up her book, returned to the living-room, and began to read again.

The doctor had learned to live with his wife’s messy housekeeping. He would have been very surprised could he have known that Angela often felt she could not bear it any longer.

Often she thought of getting down to it and giving the place a thoroughly good clean, but a grey depression would settle on her. For relaxation she had once enjoyed reading women’s magazines but now she could not even bear to look at one, the glossy pictures of perfect kitchens and fresh net curtains making her feel desperately inadequate.

But on the following morning after she had served up her husband’s breakfast – fried black pudding, haggis, bacon, sausages, fried bread, and two eggs – she felt a lifting of her heart. She had a Purpose. She would behave as a good wife should and bake a cake and take it over to the new neighbours.

When she settled down to read the instructions on the back of the packet of Joseph’s Ready Mix, she experienced a strong feeling of resentment. If it was indeed a ‘ready mix’ then why did she have to add eggs and milk and salt and all these fiddly things that should have been in the packet already?

She searched around for the cake tin and then remembered the dogs were using

it as a drinking bowl. She threw out the water and put the dogs' water in a soup bowl instead, wiped out the cake tin with a paper towel, greased it, and started to work.

That afternoon, she set out for the Willets' place – no, Thomas's place, she reminded herself – feeling very proud of herself. She held in front of her, like a crown on a cushion, a sponge cake filled with cream.

There seemed to be a lot of activity around the old Victorian villa. Archie Maclean, one of the local fishermen, was carrying in a small table, Mrs. Wellington, the minister's wife, was cleaning the windows, and Bert Hook, a crofter, was up on the roof, clearing out the gutters.

The front door was open, and Angela walked inside. A tall woman approached her. "My name's Trixie Thomas," she said. "Oh, what a beautiful cake. We adore cake, but what with us being unemployed and living on government handouts, we've had to cut out luxuries like this."

Angela introduced herself and felt a rush of pride when Trixie said, "In fact, we're ready for a coffee break. We'll have it now."

She led the way into the kitchen. Her husband, Paul, was washing down the walls. "All the poor dear's fit for," said Trixie in a rueful aside. She raised her voice, "Darling, here's the doctor's wife with a delicious cake. We'll take a break and have some coffee. Sit down, Angela."

Angela sat down at a table covered with a bright red-and-white checked gingham cloth. Bluebottles buzzed against the window. "You should get a spray," said Angela. "The flies are dreadful today."

"I think there's been enough damage to the ozone layer already," said Trixie. "What I need are some old-fashioned fly papers."

She was making coffee in what looked like a brand-new machine. "I grind my own beans," she said over her shoulder. Paul was already seated at the table, looking at the cake like a greedy child. "Now, just a small piece, mind," cautioned his wife. "You're on a diet."

Angela watched Trixie with admiration. Trixie was wearing a sort of white linen smock with large pockets over blue jeans and sneakers. Her sneakers were snow

white without even a grass stain on them. Angela tugged miserably at her crumpled blouse, which had ridden up over the waistband of her baggy skirt, and felt messy and grubby.

“Now, for the cake,” said Trixie, bringing out a knife. Paul hunched over the table, waiting eagerly.

The knife sank into the cake. Trixie tried to lift out a slice. It was uncooked in the middle. A yellowy sludge oozed out.

“Oh, dear,” said Angela. “You can’t eat that. I don’t know how that could have happened. I followed the instructions on the packet so carefully.”

“It’s all right,” said Paul quickly. “I’ll eat it.”

“No, you won’t,” said Trixie, giving Angela a conspiratorial ‘men!’ sort of smile.

“I’m hopeless,” mourned Angela.

“Don’t worry. I’ll show you how to make one. It’s just as easy to make a cake from scratch as it is with one of these packets. And it was a lovely thought.” Trixie moved the cake out of her husband’s reach. He gave a sigh and lumbered to his feet and went back to work.

“I can’t do anything right,” said Angela. “I am utterly useless about the house. It’s like a rubbish bin.”

“You’ve probably let it go too far,” said Trixie with quick sympathy. “Why don’t you get someone in to clean?”

“Oh, I couldn’t. You see, it’s so awful, I’d need to make a start on it myself before any cleaning woman could see what she was doing.”

“I’ll help you.” Trixie smiled at Angela. “I feel we are going to be friends.”

Angela coloured up and turned briefly away to hide the look of embarrassed gratification on her face. She had never fitted in very well with the women of the village. In fact, she had never talked to anyone before about how she felt about her dirty house. “I really couldn’t expect you to help me, Trixie,” said Angela, feeling quite modern and bold because people in the village called each other by their surnames, Mr. or Mrs. This and That, until they had known each other for years.

“I’ll strike a bargain with you,” said Trixie. “I’ll nip back to your house with you and if you can let me have any old sticks of furniture you were thinking of throwing out, I’ll take that as payment.”

“Lovely,” said Angela with a comfortable feeling she had not experienced since a child of being taken in hand.

But as they walked to the doctor’s house, Angela began to wish she had not let Trixie come. She thought of the ash still spilling over the hearth on to the carpet and of all the sinister grease lurking in the kitchen.

Angela strode in, rolling up her sleeves. She walked from room to room downstairs and then said briskly, “Now, the best thing to do is just get started and don’t think about anything else.”

And Trixie worked. Her hands flew here and there. She was amazingly competent. Grease disappeared, surfaces began to gleam, books flew back up on the shelves. It was all magic to Angela, who felt she was watching a sort of Mary Poppins at work. She blundered around after her new mentor, cheerfully doing everything she was instructed to do as if the house were Trixie’s and not her own.

“Well, we’ve made a start,” said Trixie at last.

“A start!” Angela was amazed. “It’s never been so clean. I just don’t know how to thank you.”

“Perhaps you’ve got an old piece of furniture you don’t want?”

“Of course.” Angela looked about her helplessly. “There must be something somewhere.”

“What about that old chair in the corner of your living room?”

“You mean that thing?” The chair was armless with a bead-and-needlework cover.

Angela hesitated only a moment. It had been her grandmother’s but no-one ever sat on it and her gratitude for this new goddess of the household was immense. “Yes, I’ll get John to put it in the station wagon and run it over to you this evening.”

“No need for that.” Trixie lifted it in strong arms. “I’ll carry it.”

Despite Angela’s protests that it was too heavy for her, Trixie headed off.

Angela followed her to the garden gate. She wanted to say, “When will I see you again?” and felt as shy as a lover. Dr. Brodie was often away on calls and she spent much of her life alone. She had never worked since the day of her marriage to the young medical student, John Brodie, thirty years ago. They had been unable to have children. Angela’s parents were dead. She felt she had somehow only managed to muddle through the years of her marriage with books as her only consolation.

Trixie turned at the gate. “See you tomorrow,” she said.

Angela grinned, her thin face youthful and happy.

“See you tomorrow,” she echoed.

Constable Hamish Macbeth was leaning on his garden gate as Trixie went past, carrying the chair.

“Need any help?” he called.

“No, thanks,” said Trixie, hurrying past.

Hamish looked at her retreating figure. Where had he seen that chair? His mind ranged over the interiors of the houses in Lochdubh. The doctor’s! That was it.

He ambled along the road to the doctor’s house and went around to the side, no-one in the Highlands except the Thomases bothering to use the front door.

“Come in, Hamish,” called Angela, seeing the lanky figure of the red-haired policeman lurking in the doorway. “Like a cup of coffee?”

“Yes, please.” Hamish eased himself into the kitchen, and then blinked in surprise. He had never seen the Brodies’ kitchen look so clean. Angela bubbled over with enthusiasm as she told him of Trixie’s help.

“Was that your chair she was carrying?” asked Hamish.

“Yes, the poor things have very little furniture. They want to start a bed-and-breakfast place. It was just a tatty old thing of my grandmother’s.”

Hamish thought quickly. Someone setting up a bed-and-breakfast establishment usually wanted old serviceable stuff. He wondered uneasily whether the chair was valuable. But he did not know anything about antiques.

Flies buzzed about the kitchen.

“I should have kept the door shut,” said Angela. “Wretched flies.”

“You’ve got a spray there,” pointed out Hamish.

“These sprays make holes in the ozone layer,” said Angela.

“I suppose so. But it’s hard to think of the environment when you have the kitchen full of the beasties,” said Hamish whose Highland voice became more sibilant when he was upset, and somehow he felt that that remark about the ozone layer originally came from Trixie. And yet Trixie was right, so why should he feel so resentful?

After some gossip, Hamish got up and left. A thin drizzle was falling. The sky was weeping over the loch, but the air was warm and clammy.

And then he saw a Volvo parked at the side of the police station and Priscilla just getting out of it. He broke into a run.

## TASK 2

*1. Look up the following words in the dictionary and learn them:*

bother, envy, caution, bald, freckle shabby, despite, brand-new, greedy, messy, grubby, mourn, sympathy, bold, hesitate, shy, interior, echo, lurk, tatty, wretched, gossip, drizzle.

*Are any of these words homonyms?*

*2. Find two more English equivalents to the verb «прогулюватися» in the fragment.*

*3. Find the English equivalents to the following words:*

засохлий, хропіти, палко любити, пайки від уряду, підвищити голос, зробити перерву, старомодний, тапочки, білосніжний, корзина для сміття, закатати рукава, бути на виклику, обпертися ліктями, пройти повз, свистячий або шиплячий, довгов’язий.

*4. Find the synonym to the collocation “to come up to smb.” in the extract.*

*5. Can you identify the English word for «без роботи» in the text. What collocation can be used as a synonym to it?*

*6. What kind of textile (fabric) is linen? What other kinds of textile can you name?*

7. *What does the word “checked” mean? What other fabric patterns do you know?*

8. *Build up situations based on the context around the following words and expressions using them in your answer:*

to get down to, to give a place a clean, to settle down to smth + to be surrounded by smth / smb, to be accustomed to smth, to focus on smth / smb, on the occasion + to follow the instructions, to go up in flames, to consist of, to sniff at smth, to go out (about the fire) + to kneel down + to plug in smth, to get down to smth. + to give smth a clean, to set out for + to be proud of, to introduce oneself + to feel a rush of pride, to lead the way to/into, to be fit for, out of one’s reach + give a sigh, to strike a bargain with + to throw out, to head somewhere.

9. *Make use of the above mentioned word combinations in the situations of your own **or** make up a story with them.*

10. *What parts of speech are these words and how were they formed? What other derivatives with the same root can you name?*

affection, prescription, inadequate, admiration, eagerly, utterly, amazingly, cheerfully, gratitude, consolation, enthusiasm, serviceable, valuable originally, resentful, originally.

11. *What is the English collocation meaning «вibrатися з машини»? Do you use the same collocation when you leave other types of transport (a bus, a train, a plane, a bike)?*

12. *Translate these phrases into your native language:*

1) a book propped up against the wine bottle

2) but a grey depression would settle on her

3) she experienced a strong feeling of resentment

4) we’ve had to cut out luxuries like this

5) Angela coloured up and turned briefly away to hide the look of embarrassed gratification on her face.

13. *Describe Dr. Brodie and his wife’s appearance.*

14. *Answer the following questions:*

1. What kind of breakfast did Angela serve on the following morning?
2. Do you think Dr. Brodie was happy with his wife?
3. What happened when Angela brought her cake to Trixie?
4. Why did Angela watch Trixie with admiration?
5. Why did Angela feel grateful for Trixie's offer of help?
6. Why did Trixie remind Angela of Mary Poppins at work?
7. What was Hamish's response to Angela's remark about the ozone layer?

### UNIT 3

#### Chapter 2

*O Love! has she done this to thee?*

*What shall, alas! become of me?*

—John Lyly.

He slowed his pace as he neared the police station and tried to appear casual although his mouth was dry and his heart was thumping against his ribs.

Then just before he reached her, his pride came to his rescue. He, Hamish Macbeth, was not going to run after a woman with such abysmal taste that she could become starry-eyed over a man who looked like an ape.

“Evening, Priscilla,” he said.

“Open the kitchen door quickly,” said Priscilla. “I’m being eaten alive. Why do the midges leave you alone?”

“I’m covered in repellent,” said Hamish. “The door’s unlocked anyway. No need to wait for me. What brings you?”

Priscilla sat down at the kitchen table and pushed back the hood of her anorak. “Father thought I ought to call on the newcomers,” she said.

Of course, thought Hamish bleakly, and while you’re playing lady of the manor, drop in on the local bobby at the same time.

“What did you think of them?” he asked, putting on the kettle.

“They seem very pleasant. She’s got quite a forceful personality. Dr. Brodie’s wife was helping her get things arranged. Mrs. Brodie’s delighted to find a friend at

last, of course.”

“Why of course?” Hamish measured tea leaves into the teapot with a careful hand.

“Mrs. Brodie’s a lonely woman. She should have been one of those vague academics, writing her thesis and taking yet another degree or doctorate. Lots of brains and no self-confidence and very little common-sense. Trixie Thomas has taken her over with a firm hand. She’s going to perm her hair for her tomorrow.”

“She shouldn’t have a perm,” said Hamish. “That baby hair of hers suits her.”

“Oh, well, she’s happy and perms grow out,” said Priscilla.

Hamish handed her a cup of tea, poured one for himself, and sat down opposite her at the table.

“And what do you make of the husband, Paul?” he asked.

“Nice man. Bit of a helpless child. Seems Trixie’s got a hard job managing him and all the arrangements for the bed and breakfast.”

“Or that’s the way she plays it,” said Hamish. “Has she asked you for any furniture?”

“As a matter of fact she did. But I told her she’d need to see my father. I don’t own any of it.”

“I hear you’ve been back for over a week.”

Priscilla looked at Hamish’s hazel eyes, which were calm and appraising.

“I meant to get down and see you sooner,” she said defensively, “but time seemed to fly past. I’ve got these friends up with me. They’re leaving tomorrow.”

“Who are they?”

“Oh, just friends. Sarah James and her sister, Janet, David Baxter, and John Burlington.”

“I saw them,” said Hamish casually. “I was driving past. Who’s the hairy fellow?”

“You mean the good-looking one with the tanned face? That’s John.”

“What does he do?”

“He’s a very successful stockbroker.”

“Looks a bit old for a yuppie.”

“Hamish, I wouldn’t have thought you would be the type to sneer at yuppies. He’s not exactly young, he’s thirty.”

“Nearly as old as me,” said Hamish dryly.

“Anyway, he’s very hard-working and ambitious. He’s bought this brilliant farmhouse in Gloucester for weekends and he’s going to take me down to see it when I get back in September. I’m studying computers. My course starts up again in the autumn.”

“And you’re in love with him,” said Hamish flatly.

Priscilla coloured up. “I don’t know. I think so.”

All in that moment, Hamish could have struck her. If she had said, “Yes,” then that would have been the end of hope and he could learn to be comfortable. But Hamish knew people in love were never in any doubt about it and he cursed her in his heart for the hope she had so unwittingly held out.

He had no claim on her. As far as Priscilla was concerned, they were friends, nothing more.

Priscilla changed the subject. “After that business in Cnothan, I thought you would have got a promotion.”

“I told you, I don’t want a promotion. I’m very comfortable here.”

“Hamish, there seems something very...well...immature about a man who doesn’t want to get on.”

“You’re hardly a dynamo of ambition yourself, Miss Halburton-Smythe, or are you just an old-fashioned girl who wants to realize her ambition by marrying an ambitious man?”

“This tea’s foul,” said Priscilla. “And you’re foul. You’re usually so friendly and pleasant.”

“Priscilla, you never just called me an immature layabout and you expect me to be pleasant!”

“So I did.” She put a hand on his jersey sleeve.

“I’m sorry, Hamish. Let’s start again. I have just arrived, you have just poured

me a cup of something made out of sawdust, and we are talking about the Thomases.”

Hamish grinned at her in sudden relief. He prized their usual easygoing friendship and did not want to lose it.

Priscilla smiled back and then sighed. Hamish was tall and gangly and lanky and unambitious. But when he smiled and his hazel eyes crinkled up in his thin face, he seemed part of an older, cleaner world that John Burlington knew nothing about and could never belong to.

“Yes, the Thomases,” she said. “She’s very good at getting one to do things for her. I think half the village has been up at the house already, getting them food and fixing things for them.”

“Where are they from?”

“Edgware, North London.”

“Plenty of jobs in London,” said Hamish. “Not like the north. Wonder why he’s on the dole?”

“Maybe he wasn’t. Maybe he threw up his job to come here and went on the dole after he arrived. You’re very curious about them.”

“I have an uneasy feeling they are going to cause trouble,” said Hamish slowly.

There was a knock at the kitchen door and Hamish went to open it. John Burlington stood there. “Is Priscilla here?” he asked. “I saw her car.”

“I’m here,” called Priscilla, getting to her feet. She introduced the two men. John Burlington’s handsome face broke into an engaging smile. “You’ve been away for ages, Cilia,” he said. “The others are outside.”

Priscilla and John left. Hamish wandered through to the office and idly picked up some forms and put them down again. Cilia! What a name. He could hear them laughing outside. He could hear John Burlington saying, “You’ll never guess what our Cilia was doing. Drinking tea with the local copper. Darling, you’re too marvellous!” He must have brought the others with him.

Hamish sat down at the desk. He felt he did not really know Priscilla Halburton-Smythe very well. He himself could not have tolerated such company for very long, but then, perhaps jealousy was clouding his judgement.

Dr. Brodie sniffed the air suspiciously when he came home that night. Everything seemed to smell of furniture polish and disinfectant. Angela must be worn out with cleaning. Still, he had always wanted a clean house. He sat down at the table.

Angela lifted two boil-in-bag curries out of a pan and then the packets of rice. She cut open the bags and tipped the contents on to two plates.

“Where’s Raffles?” asked the doctor, ladling mango chutney on to his rice.

“I shut him out in the garden. He will climb on to the table during meals and cats are full of germs.”

“I think over the years we’ve become immune to Raffle’s germs,” said the doctor, pouring a glass of something that was simply emblazoned claret without the name of any vintage to sully its label. “Why the sudden fear of pollution by Raffles?”

“Trixie Thomas says cats are a menace. Besides, I’m sick of the hairs everywhere.”

“Poor old Raffles,” said the doctor, but his wife had retreated into a book.

He finished his curry. “Anything for dessert?” he asked. “The trouble with these instant meals is that they don’t fill you up.”

Angela rose from the table. “I made a butterscotch pudding,” she said. “Trixie showed me how.”

She put a plate in front of her husband. He took a mouthful and his eyebrows rose in surprise. “This is delicious,” he said. “Absolutely delicious. You clever girl!”

“I couldn’t have done it without Trixie.”

“Well, God bless Trixie,” said the doctor, looking around the shining kitchen with pleasure.

He was to regret those words bitterly in the weeks to come.

The summer crawled into July. The days seemed long and irritable. Intermittent drizzle and warm wet winds brought the flies and midges in droves. Trixie had made a sign that hung outside the house – The Laurels, Bed & Breakfast. She already had guests, a broken-down looking woman from Glasgow with a brood of noisy, unhealthy children and a thin, quiet man who drifted about the village like a ghost.

Hamish had given the Thomases a wide berth, but one day he saw Paul working in the garden. There was no sign of Trixie so he ambled over.

The big man leaned on his spade when he saw Hamish and said, "I'm trying to make a vegetable garden. It's hard work. This ground hasn't been turned over for years."

"Where's Mrs. Thomas?" asked Hamish.

"Oh, off somewhere. Inverness, I think."

"That's very hard work," said Hamish sympathetically. "Archie Maclean's got a rotary cultivator, you know, one of those things that just churn up the earth. If he's not out fishing, I suppose he would lend it to you. Would you like to walk along to his house and we'll ask him?"

"That would be great." Paul threw down the spade and wiped his hands on his trousers and came out of the garden to join Hamish.

"You must find Lochdubh a bit of a change from London," said Hamish, taking out a stick of midge repellent and wiping his face with it.

"I think I can make something of it here," said Paul. "New start. Never been able to do much with my life. Trixie's a marvel. I don't know what I would do without her."

"What was your job in London?"

"I couldn't move, and the fatter I got, the more I felt I had to eat. Trixie came into my life like a whirlwind and took me over and put me on a diet. I owned the house I lived in. It had been my mother's. Trixie suggested we put it up for sale and buy something up here with the money. I hope I can make something of the garden. It would mean a lot to me to be able to grow things, know what I mean?"

Hamish nodded, and then said, "But don't you miss the theatres and cinemas and all the fun of the city?"

"No, I didn't have much fun. It's quiet here and the people are friendly. We've had such a lot of help. But that's Trixie for you. Everyone loves her. She's going to do a lot for the village. She's forming the Lochdubh Bird Watching and Bird Protection Society. The first meeting's at the church tonight."

“It’ll be an interest for the children,” said Hamish cautiously. “It doesn’t do to go too far with this bird thing. Some of these societies can be downright threatening, telling people they can’t dig the peats because that’s the nesting place of the greater crested tit, or something. But I suppose Mrs. Thomas is just interested in finding out about the different types of birds.”

“I suppose,” echoed Paul. “But she likes to do things thoroughly. She’s even starting a Clean Up Lochdubh campaign.”

“Morals?”

“No, litter.”

Hamish looked along the street which bordered the waterfront. There was not a scrap of paper in sight.

“And she’s going to see Dr. Brodie about starting an Anti-Smoking League.”

“My, my, she’ll be on dangerous ground there,” said Hamish. “The doctor smokes like a chimney.”

“I know. Trixie says it’s a disgrace. She says he’s giving all his patients cancer. And she’s had to talk to Angela about the doctor’s diet. You should see what she’s been feeding that man. Chips with everything. Too much cholesterol.”

Hamish felt uncomfortable. “It doesn’t do to interfere with people,” he said. “Brodie’s fifty-seven and looks about forty and he’s never had a day’s illness that I can remember.”

“Oh, Trixie knows what’s best for him,” said Paul easily.

They walked on in silence. Hamish remembered David Currie, a thin weedy man who used to live in Lochdubh. He had a tyrant of a mother whom he adored. “Mother knows best,” was his favourite expression. Then one night he had got drunk and had chased his mother down the street with an axe and Hamish had had to rescue the terrified woman. After that, the Curries had moved to Edinburgh. Hamish had heard that David was a leading light in the Jehovah’s Witnesses.

### **TASK 3**

*1. a) Look up the following words in the dictionary and learn them:*

starry-eyed, yuppie, prize, tolerate, nod, terrify, lend.

b) *Are any of these words homonyms?*

2. *You've already come across two English equivalents of the phrase «нідіуму»: **to come up to** and **to approach**. Can you identify another synonym at the beginning of this fragment?*

3. *Find the English equivalents to the following words in the fragment:*

жахливий (поганий) смак, здоровий глузд, змінити тему, нероба (ледар), стукіт у двері, поїхати на рибалку, володіти будинком, виставити на продаж.

4. *Can you find two synonymic expressions, meaning «зайти, заскочити до кого-небудь» on page 11?*

5. *The author of the book often describes the characters' manner of saying smth., using the pattern **to say smth. + adverb**. What adverbs are used for this purpose in the extract?*

6. *Build up situations based on the context around the following words and expressions using them in your answer:*

to come to smb's rescue, at last, to take smth. / smb. over, as a matter of fact, to have a claim on smb., as far as smb. is concerned, to cause trouble, to pick up smth., to take a mouthful of smth., in droves, to wipe one's hands on smth., to find out smth., to interfere with smb.

7. *Make use of 5-7 of the above mentioned word- combinations in a story of your own.*

8. *What parts of speech are these words and how were they formed?*

Self-confidence, defensively, unwittingly, waterfront, immature, idly.

*What other derivatives with the same root can you name?*

9. *Translate these phrases into your native language:*

- 1) "And what do you make of the husband, Paul?" he asked.
- 2) Hamish grinned at her in sudden relief.
- 3) He was to regret those words bitterly in the weeks to come.
- 4) The fatter I got, the more I felt I had to eat.

10. *Answer the following questions:*

1. Why do you think Hamish wasn't as friendly and pleasant with Priscilla as he used to be?
2. What happened when Dr. Brodie came home that night? What was different?
3. How did Paul feel about his wife? What did he tell Hamish about her?

#### UNIT 4

Archie Maclean was at home. He gave Hamish a welcoming smile and then the smile faded as he saw Paul behind Hamish. He agreed to lend them his cultivator but he was decidedly chilly towards Paul and Hamish wondered why.

Hamish and Paul worked amiably together throughout the afternoon. Hamish then asked him back to the police station for tea. He put the teapot, two mugs, and a plate of chocolate biscuits on the kitchen table and then the phone in the office rang.

He left Paul and went to answer it. It was Detective Chief Inspector Blair from Strathbane. "How's the local yokel?" asked Blair.

"Just fine," said Hamish.

"Anything going on there?"

"No, nothing."

"You lucky sod," grumbled Blair. "Look, the new super, Peter Daviot, is coming over to the Lochdubh Hotel for the fishing. I want you to keep out o' his way."

"Why?"

"For your own good, you pillock. If he finds you're doing nothing, he'll close down your police station."

"Anything else?" asked Hamish.

"No," growled Blair. "Keep away from Daviot. I'm warning you."

He slammed down the phone.

Hamish waited a moment and then phoned Mr. Johnson, the manager of the Lochdubh Hotel.

"How would you like a supply of free-range eggs for a month for nothing?" asked Hamish.

“I like it fine,” said the manager. “With this salmonella scare, everyone keeps asking for free-range eggs. Of course, I’ve been telling them they’re free-range. I get cook to dip them in coffee to turn them brown and stick a wee hen’s feather on some of the shells to make it look like the real thing but it would be just my luck if one of them got the food poisoning. What d’you want in return?”

“Is a Mr. Daviot in the hotel?”

“Yes, just arrived.”

“Then I want dinner for two this evening,” said Hamish.

“All right. You’re on. But don’t order champagne.”

Hamish then phoned Tommel Castle. The butler answered the phone and Hamish asked to speak to Priscilla. “Who is calling?” asked the butler suspiciously. “James Fotherington,” said Hamish in impeccable upper-class accents.

“Certainly, sir,” oiled the butler.

Priscilla came to the phone. “Hullo, Hamish,” she said. “It is you, isn’t it?”

“Yes, will you have dinner at the Lochdubh with me tonight?”

There was a long silence and Hamish gripped the phone hard.

“Yes,” said Priscilla at last. “But we’ll go Dutch. Johnson’s prices get higher and higher.”

“I have the money,” said Hamish in offended tones.

“Very well. What time?”

“Eight. And...er...Priscilla, could you wear something grand?”

“Any point in asking why?”

“No.”

“All right. See you.”

Hamish went back into the kitchen. Paul had gone. So had all the biscuits. Not only that, but there were smears of jam on the plate. Eating chocolate biscuits with jam, marvelled Hamish. It’s a wonder that man has any teeth left.

That evening, Dr. Brodie sat down to a plate of pink wild rice. His wife poured him a glass of Perrier. “What’s this?” he asked, pushing the mess with his fork. “Tuna fish rice,” said Angela proudly. “You put a can of tuna in the blender and just

mix the paste with the wild rice. Try the whole wheat bread. I baked it myself.”

Dr. Brodie carefully put down his fork. He looked at his wife. Her hair was all curly, like a wig, and highlighted with silver streaks. She was wearing a white smock with strawberries embroidered on it, a pair of new blue jeans, and very white sneakers. He had not complained once about all the changes, pleased that his wife had all these new interests but hoping she would tire of it all and revert to her normal self. But it had been a long and tiresome day. He was hungry and he was weary. His home sparkled like a new pin but felt sterile and uncomfortable.

He put down his fork and got to his feet.

“Where are you going?” asked Angela.

“I am going to the Lochdubh Hotel for a decent meal. I hear they’ve got a new chef. Like to come?”

“Don’t be ridiculous,” said Angela, tears starting to her eyes. “I’ve been slaving all day, getting the place clean, making the bread...”

Dr. Brodie went out and very quietly closed the door behind him.

Angela sat down and cried and cried. Trixie had said he was killing himself with all that junk food and cheap wine and cigarettes. She had done it all for him and he had sneered at her. At last, she dried her eyes. There was the Bird Society meeting. Trixie would be there and Trixie would know what to do.

Mrs. Daviot said to her husband, “That’s a distinguished-looking couple.”

The superintendent looked over the top of his menu. A tall thin man with flaming red hair in a well-cut but slightly old-fashioned dinner jacket was ushering in a tall blonde who was wearing a strapless jade green gown with a very short ruffled skirt and high-heeled green silk shoes. The waiter came up to take the Daviots’ order. “Visitors, are they?” asked Mr. Daviot, indicating the couple.

“Oh, no,” said the waiter, “that’s Miss Halburton-Smythe and Mr. Macbeth, the local constable.”

“Ask them to join us,” said his wife eagerly. Mrs. Daviot was a social climbing snob and longed to be able to tell her friends that she had had dinner with one of the Halburton-Smythes.

Soon Hamish and Priscilla were seated at the superintendent's table. "I think it would be better if we just stuck to first names," said Mrs. Daviot eagerly. "I'm Mary and my husband is Peter."

"Very well then," said Priscilla. "It's Priscilla and Hamish."

Hamish cursed the impulse that had led him to waste a whole evening, when he could have been alone with Priscilla, in spiting Blair. Mary Daviot was a small, fat, fussily dressed woman whose Scottish accent was distorted by a perpetual effort to sound English. Her husband was small and thin with grey hair, grey eyes, and a grey face. "So you're Macbeth," he said surveying Hamish.

"Do call me Hamish, Peter," said Hamish sweetly.

There was a silence while they all decided what to have to eat. "The prices are ridiculous here," said Mr. Daviot finally. He turned to the waiter, "We'll all have the set menu."

"Perhaps you would care for something else," said Hamish to Priscilla.

"No, darling," said Priscilla meekly.

Hamish knew she was angry with him for having used her in order to introduce himself to the superintendent and his heart sank.

"All ready for the Glorious?" Mrs. Daviot asked Priscilla.

Priscilla raised her eyebrows.

"I mean The Glorious Twelfth," explained Mrs. Daviot.

"I suppose my father is," said Priscilla. "I don't shoot any more. Few enough birds as it is."

Hamish ordered a good bottle of claret. "We'll just have a glass of yours," said Mr. Daviot when Hamish offered him the wine list.

"You were involved in that murder case where that chap was shot on the grouse moor, weren't you?" the superintendent asked Hamish.

"Yes."

"Tell me about it. I wasn't in Strathbane then."

As Hamish talked, Priscilla endured the coy and vulgar conversation of Mrs. Daviot.

The first course arrived. It was salmon mousse. A tiny portion molded into the shape of a fish with a green caper for an eye stared up at Hamish.

“I gather the chef is famous for his novel cuisine,” said Mrs. Daviot.

“I’m not a fan of nouvelle cuisine,” said Priscilla. “They never give you enough to eat.”

She glanced at Hamish who seemed to be enjoying himself talking to the superintendent. Hamish did not like Mr. Daviot much but found him an intelligent policeman.

Priscilla realized with a shock that she had not thought about John Burlington in recent days. But now she wished with all her heart that he would miraculously turn up and take her out of the dining-room and away from Mrs. Daviot’s greedy eyes that seemed to be pricing her gown, her earrings, and her necklace.

The next course was Tournedos Bonnie Prince Charlie. A small piece of fillet steak rested on a small round of toast. Two mushrooms and two radishes cut in the shape of flowers decorated the plate. A kidney-shaped side dish contained a small portion of sliced carrots and an even smaller portion of mange-tout. Hamish mentally cut down the supply of free-range eggs by two-thirds and cast a hurt look at Mr. Johnson who came hurrying up.

“Everything all right?” he asked. There was a crash behind him and he swung round. Dr. Brodie had upset his chair and was storming from the dining-room.

“Excuse me,” muttered Mr. Johnson and went after the doctor.

“So it looks as if there’ll be no more murders in Lochdubh,” said Mr. Daviot.

“I hope so,” said Hamish. “But we have a creator of violence in our midst.”

“What’s met?” asked Mrs. Daviot.

“It’s someone who sets up situations and animosities in people that often lead to murder.”

“I don’t believe in that sort of thing,” said Mr. Daviot. “Murderers are usually on booze or drugs or both. Or there’s the ones that are born bad. No one *makes* another person murder them.”

“I think they do,” said Priscilla. “It’s often a way of committing suicide. You

don't do it yourself but you drive someone else into doing it for you.”

“I never let popular psychology interfere with police work,” said the superintendent. “Nothing beats a good forensic lab and this genetic fingerprinting is a wonder.”

He and Hamish fell to discussing cases which had been solved by genetic fingerprinting and Priscilla was again left to talk to Mrs. Daviot. This is what life would be like were I married to Hamish, she thought. But surely the fact that Hamish had sought out the superintendent meant that he was showing signs of ambition at last. Suddenly cheered, Priscilla endured Mrs. Daviot's questioning.

The last course arrived. Flora Macdonald's Frumenty. It tasted to Priscilla like whipped cream with a dash of cooking sherry.

“We must meet up again soon,” Priscilla realized Mrs. Daviot was saying.

Priscilla hesitated. She did not want to have to endure the company of this woman again. On the other hand, if Hamish had taken a step towards promotion, then she should help him. Besides, her father would be delighted to meet the new superintendent.

“Come for dinner tomorrow night,” she said.

“Eight o'clock. Tommel Castle. Do you know the road?”

“Oh, yes,” breathed Mrs. Daviot. “Peter, Priscilla's asked us for dinner tomorrow night.”

“That's very kind of you,” said Mr. Daviot.

“Yes, thank you, Priscilla,” said Hamish, quickly including himself in the invitation.

Priscilla wondered what her father would say about having Hamish Macbeth as a dinner guest.

When the dinner was over, Mr. Daviot signed his bill and Hamish told the waiter airily he would settle his with Mr. Johnson in the morning.

On the road out, Hamish fell back a little behind the others. “What did you think of your meal?” asked Mr. Johnson.

“You auld scunner,” said Hamish furiously. “I'm starving. That was child's

portions. It's worth half a dozen eggs and that's all you're going to get."

"Keep your hair on, laddie. The nouvelle cuisine is now being replaced by vieille. Brodie nearly had a heart attack with rage. Says the whole of Lochdubh's out to starve him."

"Aye, well, the fish and chip shop will be doing a grand trade tonight."

Hamish caught up with the others, said goodbye to the Daviots' and then escorted Priscilla to her car.

"That was a disgusting meal, Hamish," said Priscilla. "But I forgive you all. I never thought to see the day when you would attempt to court a superintendent. High time you decided to do something with your life."

Hamish hesitated. He dare not tell her he had only done it to spite Blair. She kissed him lightly on the cheek and climbed into her car. "Want a lift?"

"No, I'll walk." Hamish raised a hand in farewell and she drove off.

#### TASK 4

*1. Match the words to their definitions and learn them:*

1) indicate	a) to be in a difficult or painful situation for a long time without complaining
2) spite	b) to take in or comprise as a part of a whole or group
3) mutter	c) to keep complaining in an unhappy way
4) attempt	d) to say something in a low angry voice
5) starve	e) a feeling of wanting to hurt or upset people, for example because you are jealous or think you have been unfairly treated
6) grumble	f) to make regular movements forwards and backwards or from one side to another while hanging from a particular point
7) include	g) to speak in a low voice, especially because you are annoyed about something, or you do not want people to hear you
8) growl	h) an act of trying to do something, especially something difficult

9) endure	i) to direct someone's attention to something or someone, for example by pointing
10) swing	j) to suffer or die because you do not have enough to eat

2. What is the full English collocation, shortened in the following elliptical phrase: "Any point in asking why?"

3. Find 2 synonyms to the collocation "to consist of" used in the previous fragment.

4. Build up situations based on the context around the following words and expressions using them in your answer:

to keep out of one's way, free-range eggs, too long to do smth., to be seated at a table, in order to do smth., the wine list, to be involved in smth., to turn up, to cast a look at smb. / smth., to commit suicide, to drive smb. into doing smth., to catch up with smb.

5. Make use of the above mentioned word combinations in the situations of your own.

6. Find the English equivalents to the following words in the fragment:

щасливчик (везунчик), ідіот, селюк, бездоганний, ображений, схопити, випивка, наркотики, проводжати кого-небудь, огидний.

7. Translate these phrases into your native language:

1) He gave Hamish a welcoming smile and then the smile faded as he saw Paul behind Hamish.

2) Mary Daviot was a small, fat, fussily dressed woman whose Scottish accent was distorted by a perpetual effort to sound English.

3) Hamish knew she was angry with him for having used her in order to introduce himself to the superintendent and his heart sank.

4) Nothing beats a good forensic lab and this genetic fingerprinting is a wonder.

5) On the road out, Hamish fell back a little behind the others.

8. Describe Dr. Brodie's attitude to his wife's new image and the way things changed at home using the following word combinations:

*to complain about, to be pleased, to tire of smth., to revert to one's normal self, weary, to sparkle like a new pin, to feel sterile and uncomfortable, to get to one's feet, decent, junk food, sneer at smb. / smth.*

9. Answer the following questions:

1. What did Hamish and Priscilla look like when they entered the restaurant?
2. Why did Priscilla wish that John would miraculously turn up and take her out of the dining-room?
3. Touch upon the food served in the restaurant that evening. Did the visitors like it?
4. What cheered Priscilla during the conversation?
5. What made Priscilla invite Mr. and Mrs. Daviot to dinner the following night?
6. What was the reason for Detective Chief Inspector Blair's telephone call to Hamish?
7. How did Hamish manage to arrange an evening in a posh restaurant?

## UNIT 5

As he strolled along the waterfront, he suddenly saw a figure hurrying along the pavement on the other side of the road. The figure had an anorak hood pulled well over the head, but by those gleaming sneakers, he was sure it was Trixie. She turned her head away as if hoping not to be recognized. He turned and watched her. She was heading for the hotel.

He wondered what she was up to. She appeared to have taken over the gardening from Paul, who could often be seen sitting on the wall outside his house, staring at the loch. Then he forgot about her and wondered instead how Colonel Halburton-Smythe was taking the news that Hamish Macbeth had been invited to dinner.

“Ask the super and his wife by all means,” the colonel was raging, “but I will not have that scrounging bobby in this house.” “In that case,” said Priscilla coolly, “I shall just have to take them all out to a restaurant. Daviot would be very disappointed not to find Hamish at the dinner.”

Jenkins, the butler, who had been serving the colonel's supper of whisky and sandwiches, bent and whispered something in the colonel's ear. The colonel looked startled and left the room followed by his butler. He returned a few moments later, looking very pleased about something, and said, "Maybe I was too harsh, Priscilla. Ask your local bobby by all means."

What had Jenkins said, wondered Priscilla. The butler loathed Hamish. Her father's change of heart meant that Jenkins had told him something that had led the colonel to believe that Hamish would be unable to attend that dinner. It was no use asking Jenkins what he had said. Jenkins did not like her either.

She waited until Jenkins came back in with the coffee and slipped out and went down to the cook-housekeeper's parlour, halfway down the backstairs.

Mrs. Angus, the cook-housekeeper, was slightly drunk, but then, that was her usual condition. Priscilla told her about the dinner and discussed the menu and then said, "Does Jenkins know something about Hamish Macbeth? I've got a feeling he doesn't expect him to attend."

"That's right," said Mrs. Angus in her hoarse whisky voice. "Jamie, the water bailiff, told someone that Hamish Macbeth was going out poaching on the river tonight. You can know Hamish and Jamie have the understanding, for Hamish eye takes just the one fish. Big-mouth Jamie was joking to someone about the local copper being a poacher and that someone has reported it to that Mr. Daviot."

"Who would do a thing like that? No-one in the village, surely. Jenkins?"

"Cannot be him. He's been here all evening. But Hamish is to be on that river at midnight and probably that's when this superintendent will go looking for him."

Priscilla looked at the clock. Eleven-thirty! She ran to her room and changed into a sweater and tweed skirt and flat shoes and then climbed out of the back window so her father should not see her leave, got in her car, and roared off in search of Hamish.

The police station was in darkness and there was no reply to her knock so she drove off again in the direction of the River Anstey.

She parked the car and headed up the track beside the river to Hamish's

favourite beat. A thin drizzle was beginning to fall.

Hamish waded into the river and started to cast. The water gurgled about his waders and the wet air smelled of pine, bell heather, and honeysuckle. And then he heard someone crashing down through the undergrowth from the path. He reeled in his line and was making for the opposite bank when a familiar voice stopped him in his tracks. “Hamish!”

“Priscilla?”

Hamish waded towards the voice. He could see the white blur of her face.

“Get out of there,” hissed Priscilla. “Someone’s told the super about your poaching and he’s probably coming to arrest you. Get out! Give me your rod and net and I’ll hide them in the bushes. Get your waders off.”

Hamish handed her the rod and net and then sat down on the bank and pulled off his waders. Priscilla emerged from the undergrowth and took the waders and went off to hide them with rod and net.

“Hadn’t we better just go?” said Hamish when she came back.

“Listen!”

Priscilla stood close to him and they listened in silence. Then they heard furtive little sounds, the scrape of a foot, the crackling of a twig.

“We’d better look like a courting couple,” said Priscilla. “Put your arms around me.”

Hamish gathered her close. His senses were reeling. “Better make a good show of it,” he muttered and bent his head and kissed her.

The world went spinning off. He was whirling off into infinity with Priscilla in his arms. And then a blinding light was shone on his face. He and Priscilla broke free.

Hamish stood dazed, rocking slightly on his heels.

“What is the meaning of this?” he heard Priscilla demanding in arctic tones, but that voice seemed to be coming from a very long way off.

“I’m awfully sorry,” he heard Mr. Daviot reply. “Really very sorry. Jamie said there was a poacher on the river, and...”

“As you can see, Mr. Daviot, it is all very embarrassing. Jamie, I’m surprised at

you,” said Priscilla. The water bailiff shuffled his feet.

“Well, I’m sorry to have interrupted your...interrupted...er...” said the superintendent.

“Exactly. Good night, Mr. Daviot. I shall expect to see you and Mrs. Daviot at dinner at eight.”

“Yes, well, erm, good night, er, Hamish.”

But Hamish was standing with a vague smile on his face looking at nothing.

After they had gone, Priscilla bustled about, getting the fishing tackle and the waders, avoiding looking at Hamish. The intensity of that kiss and her own reactions had alarmed her. It was all very well to help Hamish on the road up the police ladder, but she had no intention of marrying him. She did not belong to his world or he to hers. At last, she tugged at his sleeve as though to wake him from a dream and he meekly took the things from her and followed her back up the hill.

### Chapter 3

*The pursuit of perfection, then,  
is the pursuit of sweetness and light...*

—Matthew Arnold.

Detective Chief Inspector Blair had said Hamish was half-witted. At the dinner at Tommel Castle that night, Mr. Daviot began to think Blair was right. Hamish tripped over things, knocked over things, absent-mindedly put his elbow in the gravy boat, and had a silly sort of smile on his face the whole time.

Mr. Daviot sympathized with the colonel, who appeared to dislike the local policeman intensely. What on earth did Priscilla see in the man?

Priscilla Halburton-Smythe was wearing a short black slip of a dinner gown. It showed off her slim figure and set off the pale gold of her hair. Mr. Daviot wished his wife had not chosen to wear beige silk with an enormous bow on one plump hip. He was used to his wife’s genteel tones, but during that dinner party, they grated on his ear.

Why could she not say *glass* instead of *gless*, or *that* instead of *thet*! He became

very cross with her and to most things she said, he interrupted with, “Don’t be silly,” or, “No-one’s interested in that,” until his hurt wife became as clumsy and gauche as Hamish.

In all, it was an unpleasant dinner party for all but Hamish, who seemed off in another world. Mrs. Halburton-Smythe, always nervous of her husband’s rages, sat like a silent ghost at the head of the table.

Conversation turned to the Thomases. “Pretty thing, Mrs. Thomas,” said the colonel. “Called here today looking for bits of furniture. Brave woman. Struggles on down there with that oaf of a husband leaving her to hold the place together.”

“Did you give her anything?” asked Priscilla.

“I gave her that old pine washstand. It was stuck in the corner of the tack room covered in dust.”

“She seems very selective,” commented Priscilla. “That washstand’s Victorian. If she’s so hard up for furniture, you would think she would be after chests of drawers or beds or something.”

“Oh, she is. You know old Mrs. Haggerty who died last year and no-one turned up to collect her bits and pieces out of that cottage? Turns out she hasn’t any relatives and the cottage belongs to the estate anyway. I promised to drive Mrs. Thomas over to have a look at what’s there.”

“I would keep clear of her if I were you,” said Priscilla. “I don’t like her much. I think she’s a bossy bitch.”

“Mind your language, girl, and when did you start to become such a good judge of character?” The colonel flashed a vicious look at Hamish Macbeth.

Everyone except Hamish was glad when the evening was over. He was still floating above the ground on the memory of that kiss.

But reality crept back into Hamish’s mind the following morning. He had kissed Priscilla. She had not kissed him. She had only allowed him to kiss her because the water bailiff and the superintendent were shortly to arrive on the scene. He thought of the dinner party and felt it was like looking back on a party where one had been very drunk.

Flies were buzzing around the kitchen and he seized the fly spray mentally damning Trixie and her ozone layer, and slaughtered the lot. But the fly spray smelled so vile that he opened the kitchen door to let the air in and five bluebottles promptly flew in, followed by a posse of midges.

The doorbell went at the front of the police station. When he opened the door, a middle-aged couple were standing on the step. “We’re touring Scotland,” said the man in an American accent. “I’m Carl Steinberger and this is my wife. The hotel here is too pricey for us. We wanted to know if you knew of anywhere cheaper.”

Hamish did not want to put any custom Trixie’s way, but, on the other hand, she had the reputation of being a good housekeeper and a good cook. “There’s The Laurels,” he said, pointing along the road. “It’s a bed and breakfast, but if you want lunch, I’m sure Mrs. Thomas will arrange something. Come in then and have a cup of tea.” Hamish adored American tourists, feeling more of an affinity with them than the English ones.

He slammed the kitchen door, muttering about the flies. “You’re unlucky,” he said to the Steinbergers. “It was lovely in June. This weather’s miserable. Hot, wet and clammy and the flies are a menace.”

“I don’t know why you don’t have screen doors like they do in the States,” said Mr. Steinberger.

“Screen doors?” Hamish stood with the teapot in one hand.

“Yes. All you need is a wood frame and some metal gauze or you could even use cheese cloth. Anything. Or strings of beads like they have in the Mediterranean countries.”

“Well, I never,” said Hamish. “Such a simple idea. I’ll get to work on it today.”

Mr. Steinberger looked amused. “Doesn’t look like you’ve got much crime in this area to keep you occupied.”

“We have had the murders,” said Hamish grandly. He served the couple tea and scones and they chatted amiably. When they left, Mr. Steinberger insisted on taking a photo of Hamish at the door of his police station. Rambling roses rioted over the porch, nearly obscuring the blue lamp. “They’ll never believe this back home,” he

said.

## TASK 5

1. Match the words to their definitions and learn them:

1) bend	a) to plan, prepare for, or organize something
2) harsh	b) to move part of your body so that it is not straight or so that you are not upright
3) genteel	c) to kill an animal for meat
4) flat	d) a liking or sympathy for someone or something, especially because of shared characteristics
5) climb	e) causing a disagreeable or painful sensory reaction
6) crash	f) to give permission for someone to do something
7) allow	g) typical of a high social class; polite, graceful
8) arrange	h) to use your legs, or your legs and hands, to go up or onto the top of something
9) affinity	i) level and smooth, with no curved, high, or hollow parts
10) slaughter	j) to hit something, often making a loud noise or causing damage

1. Can you identify a synonym to the word ***grip*** –*cxonumu*, used in the previous part?

2. Build up situations based on the context around the following words and expressions using them in your answer:

to stare at smth / smb, by all means, to report smth to smb, to look for smb / smth, to hand smb smth, to break free, to shuffle one's feet, to bustle about, to avoid doing smth, to have no intention of doing smth, to trip over things + to knock over things, to sympathize with, to be used to smth, to grate on one's ear, to be cross with smb, to be hard up, to keep clear of smb, to flash a look at smb, on the other hand, to keep smb occupied, to insist on smth, to take a photo of smb / smth.

4. Make use of 5-7 of the above mentioned word combinations in a story of your own.

5. Find the English equivalents to the following words in the fragment:

спантеличений, відчувати огиду до кого-небудь (ненавидіти), браконьєрство, прошепотіти, прихований (таємний), приголомшений, перебити (перервати), неясний (смутний), стривожити, незграбний, дурник, злісний, швидко, захопувати, липкий, двері-ширма, з важливим виглядом.

6. Translate these phrases into your native language:

- 1) He was still floating above the ground on the memory of that kiss.
- 2) But reality crept back into Hamish's mind the following morning.
- 3) Hamish did not want to put any custom Trixie's way, but, on the other hand, she had the reputation of being a good housekeeper and a good cook.

7. Whom did Hamish see as he strolled along the waterfront?

8. How did Colonel Halburton-Smythe take the news that Hamish Macbeth had been invited to dinner?

9. Give an account of Priscilla's efforts to find out why her father eventually agreed to have Hamish as a guest.

10. Make up a list of words and expressions which can be used to show how Priscilla managed to find Hamish and to prevent his arrest. Use these words and word-units in your answer.

11. Build up a story about the dinner at Tommel Castle the following night.

Was the superintendent proud of his wife?

12. Give an account of the Steinbergers' visit to the police station.

## UNIT 6

Hamish went out to a shed in the garden and ferreted out some pieces of wood. Then he went to the drapers and bought cheese cloth. It was the sort of drapers that still sold cheese cloth.

He measured the doorway and then got to work. The rain had stopped and the sun blazed down and the flies buzzed about the kitchen.

Trixie Thomas appeared on the doorstep. "What do you want?" asked Hamish sharply, for he was sure it was Trixie who had reported his poaching activities to the superintendent.

“I wanted to know if I could go up to your field and collect sheep wool from the fences.”

“Whatever for?”

“Mrs. Wellington has given me an old spinning wheel and I’m going to spin yarn.”

“Do you know how to do it?” asked Hamish curiously.

“Oh, yes, I once had lessons from a New Zealand woman at the Women’s Cultural Awareness Group in Camden Town in London.”

Hamish groaned inwardly. He knew Trixie would go ‘on stage’ with her spinning wheel as soon as possible, probably taking it out to the front garden where all could see and marvel at this further example of domestic perfection. She made no move to leave and he asked sharply, “Anything else?”

“I wanted to know if you would like to come to our Anti-Smoking League meeting tonight?”

“If there is one thing that will keep a man smoking,” said Hamish bitterly, “it’s folk like you going on at him. Why don’t you leave Dr. Brodie alone?”

“Because he is a doctor and should know better.”

“You must have been a smoker yourself once,” said Hamish. “There is nothing more vicious than an ex-smoker.”

Hamish himself was an ex-smoker and had vowed never to give in to the strong temptation to reform people who were still smoking. Trixie opened her mouth to say something and then thought better of it. She was feeling in a good mood. Colonel Halburton-Smythe had driven her over to an old deserted cottage and she had made quite a good haul. The colonel had entertained her with his worries about the possibility of his daughter perhaps marrying Hamish Macbeth.

“Mind if I use your toilet?” asked Trixie.

“Oh, very well,” said Hamish, standing aside to let her past.

She was gone a long time and he was just about to go in search of her in case she was searching the rooms when he heard her voice calling from the front of the house, “I see Paul. I’ll let myself out this way.”

Hamish went back to work. She seemed to have forgotten about collecting wool from the fences. His dislike of Trixie, he realized, was mainly because of the change she had wrought in Angela Brodie. Angela with her ridiculously curly hair now wore a perpetually harried look and was thinner than ever.

He finished the door and then discovered he needed *hinges* and set off in the direction of the ships *chandlers* which was also the local ironmongers and which was down by the harbour. As he was passing The Laurels, he heard a faint humming sound and looked into the garden. Sure enough, Trixie was there, busily spinning, a self-important look on her face. He went on his way and met one of the local fishermen, Jimmy Fraser. “What about a pint, Hamish?” asked Jimmy. “I’m buying.”

“All right,” said Hamish. They walked into the pub at the side of the Lochdubh Hotel. “What’s the matter, Jimmy?” asked Hamish. “I can practically see the steam coming out your ears.”

“It’s that woman,” growled Jimmy.

“Which one?”

“Her. The Englishwoman. Archie Maclean took herself out in the boat last night. A woman on a boat! It is a wonder we didn’t drown. Forbye, when I lit a cigarette, she struck it out o’ my mouth, and when I went to belt her one, Archie said I was to leave her alone and he is the skipper. It’s a black day. There’ll be trouble from this.”

“And why was Archie Maclean taking herself out on his boat?”

“Soft about her, that’s what he is. Sitting there, holding her hand like a giant bairn and leaving us to do all the work.”

“And what has Mrs. Maclean to say to this romance?”

Jimmy looked alarmed. “We wouldn’t tell her. She’d kill that woman if she knew.”

After a while, Hamish left him, bought the hinges, and walked back to the police station. So the perfect wife had fallen off her pedestal. Mrs. Maclean was not popular but the Lochdubh women would not like an Englishwoman poaching one of their own, so to speak.

Therefore, it was with some surprise that he saw later that day the minister’s

wife, Mrs. Wellington, carrying a cake to the Thomases. He was out walking with Towser when he saw her leaving. “Afternoon, constable,” she called. Hamish strolled up to her. “Been visiting the scarlet woman?” he said.

“Whatever do you mean, Mr. Macbeth?”

Hamish was a gossip, but hardly ever a malicious one. He decided to make an exception in this case. “Why, it is all over the village how herself went out with Archie Maclean and held his hand.”

Mrs. Wellington was a large tweedy woman. She eyed Hamish with disfavour. “And it is all over the village how you were caught up on the Anstey in the middle of the night, kissing and canoodling with Miss Halburton-Smythe.”

“Yes, but I am not the married man.”

“Meaning Archie Maclean is? Shame on you, Mr. Macbeth. Trixie and Paul told me all about it. Paul was laughing like mad. He said Trixie had gone out just to get some free fish – for the lambs are so desperately poor – and Archie got all spoony and she didn’t know how to handle it. Paul said there’s always some fellow or another who’s spoony about her. So if you hoped to turn me against her, you’ve failed. She’s the best thing that ever happened to Lochdubh, which is more than I can say about a certain lazy gossiping constable.” And quite red in the face with indignation, Mrs. Wellington strode off.

“Now what do you make of that?” said Hamish to Towser. Towser snorted. “Exactly,” said Hamish. “Fair makes you sick.”

The Thomases had another battered-looking woman in residence with her brood of noisy children. Hamish wondered whether they got welfare cases to fill the rooms. An unmarried mother with four children would rake in quite a large government benefit. The thin quiet man seemed to be a perpetual lodger. Hamish saw him coming and said, “Good afternoon,” but the man muttered something and shied away.

The next morning, Dr. Brodie poked around a bowl of something and said to his wife, “I know you’re interested in the protection of birds but there is no need to serve me their droppings for breakfast.”

“That’s muesli,” said Angela in aggrieved tones. “It’s good for you.”

Dr. Brodie looked at her. "I suppose Trixie told you to serve it to me."

"She showed me how to make it up from oatmeal and raisins and nuts," said Angela eagerly. "It's so much cheaper than the packet kind and better for you."

"That woman turned up in my waiting-room yesterday and put non-smoking stickers all over the walls without asking my permission. I wasn't going to tell you about it and worry you but enough is enough. I told her to get knotted and so she is writing to the health authorities to complain about me."

Angela's loyalty was shaken.

"Doctors shouldn't really smoke, dear. You can't really blame her..."

Her voice trailed off before the fury in her husband's eyes. "Listen to me," he said. "I've put up with your Trixie nonsense because I thought it was a passing fad. But my home has become a sterile hospital ward, the cat's shut in the shed and the dog's in a kennel in the garden. My wife has a hairstyle like Harpo Marx and dresses like one of those tiresome women who are always going on marches and demonstrating something. I want steak and chips for dinner and a bottle of wine. Put any more rabbit food in front of me and I will puke all over the table. And I want to see the animals in the house this evening. Mention that woman's name to me again and I will kill her."

Mrs. Maclean hit her husband on the head with a jug when he entered the house. He reeled back, screaming, "What was that for?"

Although the residents of Lochdubh had not directly told her about her husband and Trixie, they had told her in that sideways Highland way of communicating nasty information, apocryphal stories about men they had known who had become silly over Englishwomen, and Mrs. Maclean, being equally Highland, had been able to transcribe the coded messages.

"You've been making up to that Englishwoman, you daft wee scunner," yelled Mrs. Maclean.

"She just wanted a trip out in my boat," he said sulkily, rubbing his head.

"And you held her hand, like a daft schoolboy! Listen to me, Archie Maclean, you go near that woman again and I'll strangle her with my bare hands."

“You’re haverin’,” said Archie, running out of the door before she could hit him again.

He made straight for the pub where Jimmy Fraser was already propping up the bar.

Jimmy greeted him with a wide smile. “How’s the Casanova of the Highlands?” he called.

“Shut your face,” said Archie sulkily. But he joined Jimmy and ordered a pint.

“You’ve just missed herself’s husband,” said Jimmy. “My, how that big fellow was laughing about a certain skipper who had made a pass at his wife and how herself did not know what to do about it for fear of hurting the ugly wee skipper’s feelings. Yon Trixie’s been making a fine joke of you all around the village.”

Archie maintained a dignified silence while black murder raged in his heart.

Iain Gunn was a crofter turned farmer. He had bought the rundown old Sutherland farm over the hill from Lochdubh on Loch Coyle in 1975. Over the years, he had ploughed and seeded and worked hard, clearing more fields of old stones and glacier rocks until he had a moderately prosperous farm. His fields lay on almost the one flat piece of land in the surrounding countryside, looking more Lowland Scottish than Highland with their well-cultivated acres and herds of cattle. There was only one still unsightly area on his property. At the far corner of one of his fields was an old ramshackle two-storied ruin. He had rented a bulldozer and meant to flatten it, clear away the rubble, and then plough over the land on which the ruin stood. He was just advancing over the fields in his rented bulldozer when he noticed a small party of women carrying banners, standing in front of the ruin. As he came nearer, he read with amazement, “Protect Our Bats,” and “Gunn Is a Murderer.” He drove up and climbed down. He recognized Mrs. Wellington, the minister’s wife, Angela Brodie, and various other women from the village. The spokeswoman stepped forward. He wondered who she was and then recognized her as Lochdubh’s latest incomer, Trixie Thomas.

“You shall not pass!” cried Trixie. The women behind her started marching up and down singing, “We shall not be moved.”

He scratched his head. "I do not have the nuclear missiles. What is all this about?"

"You have bats," said Trixie.

"Och, you're bats yourself," said Iain.

"No, I mean there are bats in that old ruin and bats are a protected species. You cannot touch it."

Then Iain saw with relief a white police Land Rover, parking at the edge of the field. "Here's Hamish," he said, "He'll sort you out."

The women began chanting again as Hamish sauntered up.

"Tell these daft biddies to go away," said Iain. "They are after saying I cannot bulldoze that ruin because there are bats in it. Have you ever heard the like?"

"I'm afraid they are right," said Hamish. "Bats are protected, Iain, and you'll need to leave that ruin alone."

"Mighty me. You mean a man cannot do what he likes with his own property?"

"Not when it comes to bats," said Hamish.

Iain's face darkened with anger. "I've a good mind to bulldoze this lot o' harpies."

"Do you hear him, constable?" cried Trixie. "He is threatening to kill us."

"I didn't hear a word," said Hamish crossly. "But you women should be ashamed of yourselves. Yes, you too, Mrs. Wellington! Somehow you heard Iain was going to bulldoze this old ruin. Well, why the h – , why on earth didn't you just write the man a letter? Behaving like silly bairns. You are a right disgrace – all of you."

"A man as full of land greed as Iain Gunn would not have paid attention to any letter," said Trixie.

"Now, I did hear that," said Hamish, "and if you want to sue her, Iain, I will be your witness. Off home with the lot of you and try to behave like grownups. *Shoo!*"

Angela flinched. Hamish's eyes were hard. How silly they all looked, she thought suddenly. Why had she come along? And Trixie had no right to say that about Iain. Crofters never liked farmers but although they occasionally made sour and jealous remarks about Iain Gunn, there was no real animosity in their hearts.

The women trailed off. "I'll walk," said Angela to Trixie. She had come in Trixie's old Ford van.

"Don't be silly, Angela," said Trixie, and Angela felt she would weep if anyone ever called her silly again. "You know how much I rely on you. We had to make a stand. Gunn wouldn't have paid any heed to a letter. Besides, I've got the minutes of the last Anti-Smoking League meeting to type out and I'm hopeless at it. Don't be cross with me. I do rely on you, Angela." Trixie's eyes seemed very large and almost hypnotic. "Everyone's remarked on how much you've changed lately. Why, even Mrs. Wellington was saying only the other day that you were looking younger and prettier than you had done in ages."

Angela melted. Her husband had never once in their marriage commented on her appearance until that remark about her looking like Harpo Marx. Sensitive and insecure, never able to think much of herself, Angela was an easy prey for the dominant Trixie.

With a weak smile, she got in the van beside Trixie.

Iain Gunn watched them go. "Environmentalists should be poisoned like rats," he said.

Angela Brodie typed out the minutes while Trixie worked in the back garden and Paul sat on the wall in front of the house looking at the loch. She glanced guiltily at the clock, remembering her husband's demand for steak. The butchers would be closed quite soon. She stacked the minutes in a neat pile and ran out of the kitchen, calling to Paul to say goodbye to Trixie for her. Again, Angela felt a slight unease about Trixie, but she fought it down. Her drab life was now colourful and full of events because of Trixie. She was proud of her clean house and seemed to be on a constant high of energy and hard work. She could not go back to being the lazy, dreamy person she had been for so long. But she bought the steak.

Trixie put down her spade and walked around from the back garden to the front. She saw Priscilla Halburton-Smythe walking along the road. Trixie ran into the house and emerged a little while later with a navy-blue sweater slung over her shoulders. Ignoring her blank-eyed husband she stepped out into the road just as Priscilla was

approaching. “Good afternoon, Priscilla,” she called cheerfully.

“Good afternoon, Mrs. Thomas,” said Priscilla. Her eyes fell on the sweater and a little frown marred the smooth surface of her brow. “That looks like one of Hamish’s sweaters,” she said.

Trixie lifted it from her shoulders and held it out to Priscilla. “Would you hand it back to him?” she said, “I’d be too embarrassed.”

“Why?” asked Priscilla, ignoring the proffered sweater.

Trixie giggled. “Our romantic policeman’s a bit sappy about me. He gave it to me to wear, you know, just like an American college kid giving his girlfriend his football sweater.”

Priscilla looked down her nose. “Give it to him yourself,” she snapped, and walked around Trixie and off down the road.

## TASK 6

*1. Match the words to their definitions and learn them:*

1) measure	a) to deliberately pay no attention to something or someone
2) groan	b) to take action in order to deal with a difficult situation
3) vow	c) to not succeed in achieving something
4) entertain	d) to find the size, quantity, etc. of something in standard units
5) ignore	e) to appear or come out from somewhere
6) handle	f) to make a long deep sound because you are annoyed, upset or in pain, or with pleasure
7) fail	g) to talk or write about something or someone, usually quickly and without saying very much or giving details
8) emerge	h) to walk with long steps, as with vigor, haste, impatience, or arrogance
9) stride	i) to keep a group of people interested or enjoying themselves
10) mention	j) to make a serious promise to yourself or someone else

2. *Build up situations based on the context around the following words and expressions using them in your answer:*

to get to work, to go on at smb., after a while, to make an exception, to be caught up, to turn smb. against smb., to make straight for somewhere, for fear of doing smth., to be ashamed of oneself, to rely on smb., a demand for smth., to feel an unease about smth. / smb., to fight smth. down.

3. *Make use of the above mentioned word combinations in the situations of your own.*

4. *Find the English equivalents to the following words in the fragment:*

домашній (побутовий), залишити в спокої, спокуса, злобний, сентиментальний, добробут, допомога від держави, постійний мешканець, бормотіти, засмучено (з гіркотою), не запитавши дозволу, сумнівні історії, стадо великої рогатої худоби, майно, зубожілий, вирівняти, охоронювані види тварин, нудне життя, похмурий погляд / насупитися, хихикати.

5. *Translate these phrases into your native language:*

- 1) Angela with her ridiculously curly hair now wore a perpetually harried look and was thinner than ever.
- 2) I can practically see the steam coming out your ears.
- 3) She eyed Hamish with disfavour.
- 4) I told her to get knotted and so she is writing to the health authorities to complain about me.
- 5) I've put up with your Trixie nonsense because I thought it was a passing fad.
- 6) Archie maintained a dignified silence while black murder raged in his heart.
- 7) Over the years, he had ploughed and seeded and worked hard, clearing more fields of old stones and glacier rocks until he had a moderately prosperous farm.
- 8) Crofters never liked farmers but although they occasionally made sour and jealous remarks about Iain Gunn, there was no real animosity in their hearts.

6. *Answer the following questions:*

1. What Trixie's idea made Hamish groan inwardly?
2. Why did Hamish want Trixie to leave Dr. Brodie alone?

3. Dwell on Hamish's conversation with Jimmy Fraser.
4. How do you understand the phrase "the perfect wife had fallen off her pedestal"?
5. What was Dr. Brodie's response to the muesli?
6. How did Mrs. Maclean account for hitting her husband on the head with a jug?
7. Who was Iain Gunn and what happened when he was about to put his only unsightly area in order? Was Hamish helpful?

*7. Describe how Trixie managed to persuade Angela to get in the van beside her using the following words and word combinations:*

to weep, to rely on smb., to make a stand, to pay heed to smth., minutes, to type out, to be hopeless at smth., to be cross with smb., to remark on smth., the other day, to melt, to comment on smth., sensitive, insecure, to think much of oneself, an easy prey.

*8. Describe Trixie and Priscilla's conversation. What is it that Trixie might have been planning? Does her conduct appeal to you?*

## UNIT 7

Angela Brodie waited and waited but her husband did not return home. The cat was sleeping by the fire along with the dogs, its claws dug into the carpet in case it should be lifted up and banished to the garden again. The clock ticked slowly, marking off the time. Angela phoned the surgery but only got the answering machine referring callers to the house number. He must have been called out on an emergency, she thought, but then she had a feeling he was deliberately staying away. She tried to read but reading did not bring the old comfort. She turned on the television. There was a party political broadcast on one channel, a sordid play on another, a wildlife programme about snakes on the third, and on the fourth, a ballet with screeching music and white-faced performers in black tights. She switched it off. She opened the cupboard under the sink and took out dusters and polish and began to clean the clean house all over again.

At ten o'clock, she phoned the police station. Hamish Macbeth said he would go and find the doctor. She had a feeling that Hamish knew where the doctor was.

At half past ten, the kitchen door opened and the doctor entered, or rather was helped in by Hamish. He giggled when he saw his wife and sang to the tune of Loch Lomond, “Oh, I’ve just killed Trixie Thomas, the rotten harpie’s dead.”

“Come to bed, doctor,” said Hamish. “Come away. Where’s the bedroom?”

“Upstairs,” said Angela weakly.

She waited, listening to the sounds as the doctor sang loudly about having killed Trixie and Hamish patiently coaxed him into bed.

She could not ever remember her husband being drunk before. But Trixie had warned her that all that smoking and junk food would cause a deterioration in him sooner or later. At the very corner of her mind was a niggling little voice accusing her of having driven her husband to drink, but she did not listen to it. Instead she tucked her sneakered feet – those gleaming white sneakers so like Trixie’s – under her on the sofa and waited for Hamish to descend.

Trixie Thomas could be harsh with her husband for his own good. The fact that Paul did not want to go to the dentist in Inverness and the fact that Trixie was determined he *should* go was all over Lochdubh by lunchtime as the couple’s row on the subject had taken place in their front garden.

“Afraid o’ the dentist like a wee wean,” jeered Archie Maclean who had had all his teeth pulled out at the age of twenty-one and had never had to worry about a dentist since.

Paul was eventually seen driving off in the van. At one o’clock, Mrs. Kennedy, the boarder, returned to The Laurels with her sticky children to see if she could coax Trixie into making them all some sandwiches. The rain was falling steadily and the children were fractious and bored. But there was no sign of Trixie and her bedroom door was locked.

Angela Brodie turned up at two. Mrs. Kennedy was cheerfully raiding the pantry. “Mrs. Thomas must be having a wee lie down,” she said. “I cannot get a reply.”

Angela ran up the stairs and knocked on Trixie’s door. Trixie had a separate room from her husband, an odd luxury in a couple who claimed they needed to rent

out every available space to boarders. Angela hesitated. Then she knocked louder and called and waited. Silence.

It was a big, rambling Victorian villa. A large fly buzzed monotonously against the stained glass window on the landing. From below came the wails of the Kennedy children demanding ‘more jelly pieces’ by which they meant more jam sandwiches.

Angela knew Paul had gone to Inverness to the dentist. Everyone knew that.

The silence from behind Trixie’s door was un –

Suddenly alarmed, Angela began to hammer at the door and shout.

Again she waited. Again that silence. The Kennedy family had fallen silent now. The fly buzzed against the glass and the rain drummed on the roof.

Angela decided to go for help. She would look a fool if they burst into that bedroom and found Trixie fast asleep. But she remembered stories in the papers of people who had not interfered for fear of looking foolish and because of that fear, someone had died.

She thought Hamish would laugh at her, but he put on his peaked cap and followed her to The Laurels. His face was set and grim. He tried to tell himself his feeling of foreboding was the weather. The midges danced through the raindrops, stinging his face and he automatically fished in his pocket for his stick of repellent.

He walked up the stairs past the Kennedy family who were gathered at the foot. The children were strangely silent, their jam-covered faces turned upwards.

He went up to Trixie’s room and hammered on the door. Then he tilted his head on one side and listened to the quality of the silence.

“Stand back,” he said curtly to Angela.

He kicked at the lock with all his might and there came a splintering sound and the door burst open.

Trixie Thomas lay half across the bed, her hair spilled over her face. He gently put back her hair and looked down at her contorted face and then he felt her pulse.

“Get your husband here,” he said over his shoulder.

“Is she...?” Angela put her hands up to her mouth.

“Yes. But get him anyway.”

Angela ran down the stairs and along the waterfront towards the surgery. Rain water poured down her face like the tears she could not yet shed.

The receptionist called something as she ran past and burst into the consulting room.

“Come quickly,” Angela called.

Dr. Brodie was examining Mrs. Wellington’s bared bosom with a stethoscope. Angela reflected wildly that she had never seen such enormous breasts before.

“Mrs. Brodie!” screeched the outraged minister’s wife, seizing a brassiere the size of a hammock.

“It’s Trixie. She’s dead,” said Angela, and then the tears came and great suffocating sobs.

“Dear me. Dear me,” said Mrs. Wellington, encasing her girth rapidly in underwear and Harris tweed.

Dr. Brodie seized his bag and ran out of the surgery to his car. Hamish was waiting for him in Trixie’s bedroom. “Don’t move the body if you can,” he said when he saw the doctor. “I’ll have a look around outside.”

The doctor spent only a short time in the room. Hamish was coming along the corridor when Dr. Brodie emerged outside.

“I’ll just write the death certificate,” said the doctor. “Heart attack. No doubt about it.”

Hamish’s eyes narrowed and he said quietly, “Go back in there and try again. It’s a case of poisoning, if ever I saw one. It’s murder, doctor. Pure and straightforward murder!”

#### Chapter 4

*The very pink of perfection.*

—*Oliver Goldsmith.*

The day after Trixie’s death was perfect. The clouds rolled back and the sun blazed down on a glittering, wet landscape. Beds hummed among the roses tumbling over the police station door as Hamish Macbeth waited for news from the laboratory

in Strathbane.

He had to ask a lot of questions – starting with Dr. Brodie. Why had the doctor been so keen to diagnose a heart attack? But there was always the slim hope in Hamish's mind that somehow it would turn out to be food poisoning.

He had reported his suspicions to Mr. Daviot. That gentleman had finished his holiday and had been packing to leave when Hamish had arrived at the hotel. To Hamish's surprise, he treated the news of Trixie's death lightly. Hamish did not know that because of Hamish's addled behaviour at the Halburton-Smythe's dinner party, the superintendent had swung round to Blair's view of the village constable, which was that Macbeth had a slate missing.

But Mr. Daviot had called at The Laurels, been satisfied that the forensic boys had taken away everything possible from the kitchen for analysis, and then had driven off.

Hamish still shuddered when he remembered the ordeal of breaking the news to Paul Thomas. The big man had seemed to crumple up and shrivel inside his clothes. Dr. Brodie had given him a sedative. Now all Trixie's fan club was in attendance on the bereaved husband.

The arrival of Detective Chief Inspector Blair was imminent, but surely there would not be the hordes of press that had attended the last two murders in Lochdubh...if it should prove to be murder. The murder of a housewife in the Highlands would be of interest only to the local press.

He went out into the front garden carrying a battered old deck chair and stretched out in the sun. Why had Trixie had such a hold over the women of Lochdubh?, he wondered. She had, of course, quite a powerful personality. Then the village women themselves were mostly of the old school, that is, they were housewives rather than wage earners. There was no cinema in Lochdubh, no theatre, no discos, or parties. The wonder of television had long worn off. Trixie, Hamish decided, had given them all a purpose. They were still housewives in an age that had been taught to despise housewives. The days of the enormous families had gone. Time, Hamish supposed, must lie heavily on a woman's hands. It was all right for

him to be lazy and stretch out in the sun when he had the chance. Apart from his police work, he had his garden, his sheep, and his hens to look after. The only thing which made a demand on his affections was Towser. He reached down and scratched the dog behind the ears. Even when their husbands died, he mused, the women of Lochdubh did not promptly travel to Inverness or Strathbane looking for work. Most of them had never gone out to work in their lives, having got married as soon as they left school. Of course a lot of them worked very hard, doing most of the gardening and, if the husband had a croft, an equal share of the work load. But there were the long winter months where everything ground to a halt and they were not paid for their labours. Anything they did was part of their wifely duties.

A lot of the local men, he knew, married not out of love but because their mothers had died or because they wanted a home of their own with someone to cook the meals and iron the shirts.

Priscilla had been right about Angela Brodie. She had the soul of an academic. Good intelligence there and absolutely no commonsense whatsoever. Incapable of judging character, Hamish fervently hoped for both the Brodies' sakes that Angela would revert to her old self. But would she? She had become accustomed to interests outside her books.

Hamish rose and ambled into the office and searched through a file of phone numbers that he had jotted down from time to time in the hope that they would prove useful. At last he found what he wanted. He phoned the Open University in Milton Keynes and said he was phoning for a Mrs. Brodie who was interested in taking a science degree and would they send her the necessary papers? When he put down the phone, he had a feeling of satisfaction. Studying for a degree at home would be just the thing for Angela Brodie and a science degree would give her something difficult and practical to work on. The Open University enabled men and women to work for University degrees at home.

He returned to his deck chair.

He lay back and closed his eyes and listened to the sounds of the village, the chugging of a donkey engine on a boat out of the loch, snatches of song from a radio,

the harsh scream of the wheeling seagulls, and the lazy drone of a car winding its way through the hills behind. It was a pity, he thought, that all the skylarks seemed to have gone. He could remember them in his youth, the very sound of summer, climbing to the heavens and sending down a cascade of glorious sound. No-one could remain an atheist with larks around, he thought dreamily.

“Wouldn’t that make you sick,” said a harsh voice, and a shadow fell across him.

Hamish opened his eyes and struggled up. Blocking out the sun was the square bulk of Detective Chief Inspector Blair. Standing behind him were his two sidekicks, Detectives Jimmy Anderson and Harry MacNab.

Blair was in a bad temper. Daviot had said the prices at the Lochdubh Hotel were much too high and so Blair and his team must commute daily from Strathbane, a drive of an hour and a half over twisting Highland roads. The sight of Hamish lounging at his ease in the sun did nothing to help his temper.

“We’ve just had the lab report,” said Blair. “Thon Thomas woman was poisoned with arsenic.”

“Arsenic!” Hamish got to his feet. “What from? Rat poison?”

“Straight arsenic as far as I know,” said Blair.

“What were the contents of the stomach?”

“Curry, rice, bread, and cake. They think it was probably in the curry.”

Hamish hesitated. It was his duty to tell Blair about the odd behaviour of the doctor. He liked Dr. Brodie and did not like to think of him being bullied by Blair. On the other hand, Dr. Brodie was well able to take care of himself. Perhaps the best thing was to suggest that he, Hamish, should interview the doctor.

“I’d better tell you about this,” said Hamish. “When Dr. Brodie first examined the body, he was going to sign a death certificate saying she had died of a heart attack. I stopped him doing that.”

“What!” Blair’s piggy eyes gleamed.

“So maybe I had better go along to the surgery and see him,” said Hamish.

“Listen, laddie, you just go about your rural duties,” said Blair with a fat grin.

“But I tell you what – I’ll let you in on the case. Go down to Inverness tomorrow and interview that dentist Paul Thomas went to see.”

“One phone call to Inverness police could get that done now,” said Hamish with surprise.

“Do as you’re told,” snapped Blair. He marched off, a squat figure, sweating in a heavy tweed suit, and followed by his two detectives.

Hamish sighed. He may as well just look forward to a pleasant day in Inverness. Let Blair solve this one. He did not care very much who had murdered Trixie.

## TASK 7

1. Match the words to their definitions and learn them:

1) banish	a) to laugh or shout insults at someone to show you have no respect for them
2) giggle	b) to travel back and forth regularly (as between a suburb and a city)
3) warn	c) to pierce or wound with a poisonous or irritating process
4) jeer	d) to give notice to beforehand especially of danger or evil
5) grim	e) honest and not likely to hide their opinions
6) sting	f) to think carefully, especially about possibilities and opinions
7) reflect	g) to laugh with repeated short catches of the breath
8) enormous	h) coming or likely to happen very soon
9) straightforward	i) ghastly, repellent, or sinister in character
10) imminent	j) of or relating to the country, country people or life, or agriculture
11) commute	k) to drive out or remove from a home or place of usual resort
12) rural	l) extremely large

2. Find the English equivalents to the following words in the fragment:

погіршення, виривати зуби, звинувачувати в чомусь, розкіш, коливатися, щосили стукати в двері, міцно спати, передчувати (передвіщати), сказати різко

(грубо), перевірити пульс, проливати сльози, нижня білизна, ставити діагноз, слабка надія, харчове отруєння, «гвинтиків не вистачає; з привітом», судмедексперти, здригнутися, важке випробування, заспокійливе, скорбний (втратив близьку людину), шезлонг, обов'язки дружини, полум'яно (натхненно), виявитися корисним, вміст шлунку, свідоцтво про смерть, потіти.

3. *Describe how Angela waited for her husband using the following words and word collocations:*

in case, to mark off, to banish, to refer to smth., on an emergency, deliberately, sordid, to polish.

4. *Build up situations based on the context around the following words and expressions using them in your answer:*

to coax smb. into (2), for fear of doing smth., with all smb's might, to treat smth. lightly, to break the news (to smb.), to be of interest to smb., to have a hold over smb., of the old school, to wear off, apart from, to be (in) capable of doing smth. + for smb's sake + to become accustomed to smth., from time to time, to be in a bad temper, to die of a heart attack.

5. *Translate these phrases into your native language:*

- 1) At the very corner of her mind was a niggling little voice accusing her of having driven her husband to drink, but she did not listen to it.
- 2) The fly buzzed against the glass and the rain drummed on the roof.
- 3) At one o'clock, Mrs. Kennedy, the boarder, returned to The Laurels with her sticky children to see if she could coax Trixie into making them all some sandwiches.
- 4) Trixie had a separate room from her husband, an odd luxury in a couple who claimed they needed to rent out every available space to boarders.
- 5) The only thing which made a demand on his affections was Towser.
- 6) The sight of Hamish lounging at his ease in the sun did nothing to help his temper.

6. *Answer the following questions:*

1. What made Archie Maclean jeer (at) Paul Thomas?
2. Do you agree that the Kennedy children were well-bred?
3. Give a detailed account of how Trixie was found.
4. Why did Mr. Daviot treat the news of Trixie's death lightly?
5. What made Hamish phone the Open University in Milton Keynes?
6. What was the reason for Blair's bad temper?
7. Why do you think Hamish hesitated before telling Blair about Dr Brodie's strange conduct?
8. If you "marry not out of love" (like most men in Lochdubh), what do you marry for?

## UNIT 8

But as he looked along the road, he could see the slumped figure of Paul Thomas, sitting on his garden wall. Calling to Towser, Hamish went along to talk to him.

But before he could reach him, he was waylaid by the Glasgow woman, Mrs. Kennedy. "How long are we going to have to stay here?" she complained. "I want to get the wee yins back to Glasgow."

"Should be a few more days," said Hamish.

"But this was supposed to be a holiday and I'm having to do all the cooking, and buy the food, for the police took everything out of the kitchen. I felt Mr. Thomas he wasn't getting any money from me." She was a fat, sloppy woman wearing a print apron over a mud-coloured dress and carpet slippers on her swollen feet. The children all looked about six years old, but they could hardly all be the same age. They had white pinched faces and old, old eyes: three boys called Elvis, Clarke, and Gregory and a girl called Susan.

Hamish promised to see what he could do about letting them go and then went on to speak to Paul. Paul looked at him with dull eyes.

"Terrible business," said Hamish gently.

Paul's eyes filled with tears. "Who could have done such a thing? Everybody

loved her.”

“This is a small village and we’ll soon find out who did it,” said Hamish soothingly.

Paul put his hands on Hamish’s shoulders. “You find out,” he said. “Don’t leave it to that fool, Blair.”

“I promise,” said Hamish gently. “Is anyone with you?”

“People have been very kind.” Tears ran down Paul’s cheeks and he wiped them away with his sleeve.

“I met Mrs. Kennedy, but where’s your other boarder?”

“Oh, him? He’s about somewhere.”

“Staying a long time, isn’t he? What does he do for a living?”

“He’s a writer. Hammering at that typewriter of his day and night.”

“What’s his name? I’ve forgotten.”

“John Parker.”

“Ah, yes. Maybe I’ll have a word with him. Hadn’t you better go and lie down? You look awful.”

“I can’t lie down.” Paul’s face twisted with distress. “Every time I close my eyes, I see her dead face.”

“Well, maybe you’d better tire yourself out. You still doing the garden?”

“I was, but Trixie took over and she seemed to be better at it than me and so…”

“Well, let’s go around and have a look,” said Hamish.

The two men walked around to the back garden. “Hasn’t been touched for a bit,” said Hamish. “Look at the weeds. Why don’t you get started again?”

Paul nodded dumbly and started to weed between the rows of vegetables.

Hamish heard a car arriving and left him and walked around the front. John Parker, the writer, was just getting out.

“Bad business,” he said when he saw Hamish.

“Has the CID asked you about your movements on the day of the murder yet?” asked Hamish.

“Not yet.”

“They’ll be along shortly. So you’re a writer, are you? I’m trying to remember if I’ve seen the name John Parker on the bookshelves.”

“Well, you won’t. I write under the name of Brett Saddler.”

“You’re Brett Saddler? The man who writes the Westerns?”

“That’s me,” said John with a faint smile.

“I always thought Brett Saddler was an American.”

“I’ve always liked Westerns,” said John. “Must have seen about every Western movie ever made. I give them the good old-fashioned stuff. As a matter of fact, Westerns have made a come-back. I sold the film rights of my last one, that is why I’m able to take this long holiday.”

“My! You must be a millionaire.”

“Far from it,” said John. “I got twenty-five thousand dollars, and by the time you take agent’s fees off that, and British tax, there isn’t all that much left. If you want to know where I was when Trixie died, I was off driving up in the hills. I like it up there. So quiet.”

“Anyone see you?”

“No, I didn’t meet a soul,” he said cheerfully.

“Do you know if anyone else had any of that curry she had been eating?”

“I shouldn’t think so. She must have had it for lunch. The Kennedys had sandwiches and Mrs. Kennedy is of the opinion that curry is foreign muck. I wasn’t here and Paul was in Inverness.”

“Did the forensic boys find any pot that had been used to cook the curry?”

“No, everything in the kitchen had been scrubbed clean. Trixie was the perfect housewife.”

“Did you know her before?”

“No. Now I’ve got to get back to my writing.” He gave a lethargic wave of his hand and went into the house.

Hamish then thought of Archie Maclean, who had been seen holding hands with Trixie. It had been all over Lochdubh. Had Mrs. Maclean known?

He was walking back along the waterfront when he saw Priscilla’s Volvo

approaching at a slow pace. He felt in his bones that for some reason she was going to drive right past him so he stood in the middle of the road and held up his hand.

“What is it, copper?” asked Priscilla. “You can hardly accuse me of speeding.”

“Just wanted a chat.”

“I’m a bit busy.”

“Now, now, what *is* the matter? You have eyes like the North Sea.”

Priscilla stared straight ahead, her hands resting on the wheel. She was angry with Hamish over Trixie’s tale about that sweater. Although she knew Trixie must have been lying, she could not help remembering old stories about Hamish’s various flirtations. Priscilla was completely unaware that Hamish Macbeth was attracted to her. She knew he liked her but thought he looked on her sometimes as being rather young and silly.

When Priscilla did not reply, Hamish said, “Someone has been saying something to put your back up. It cannot be your father, for he’s said about everything there is to say. So who could it be?”

“I feel you made a bit of a fool of yourself over Trixie.”

“And me the only person in Lochdubh who couldn’t stand the female,” said Hamish, “apart from Brodie, that is.”

“I met her wearing one of your old sweaters,” said Priscilla. “She said you gave it to her and made a pass at her or something.”

“I never gave her anything,” said Hamish in amazement. He frowned and then said, “I have it. She went out driving with your father and your father must have told her about his worries that you might run off with the local bobby. She came round to me and said she was going to the toilet and she was away for a long time and then she left by the front. She must have picked up my sweater just to annoy you.” He leaned on the car. “I am very flattered it did annoy you.”

“It only annoyed me because I would not like to see any friend of mine making a fool of himself over such a woman,” said Priscilla. “I’ve got to go, Hamish. I’m expected at home.”

“What about dropping in tomorrow for a chat?” asked Hamish.

“I can’t. I’m taking this car over to Golspie for its annual Ministry of Transport check tomorrow – I don’t trust any other garage – and then taking the train to Inverness to do some shopping for mother.”

“I’m going to Inverness myself,” said Hamish. “What time will your train get in?”

“Twelve-thirty.”

“What if I meet you at the station and then we can go for lunch and I’ll drive you back.” Hamish waited anxiously.

“All right,” said Priscilla. “Now do get out of the way.”

Hamish stood back and watched her go with a grin on his face.

Then he decided to go and call on Mrs. Maclean. Mrs. Maclean had not been one of the women at the bat demonstration. Trixie’s hold had been on the middle-class and lower-middle-class women who had kitchens full of labour-saving devices and therefore more time on their hands.

Mrs. Maclean was down on her knees, scrubbing her stone-flagged kitchen floor with ammonia. Not for her the easy road with mop and up-to-date cleanser.

The radio was blaring out Scottish country dance music. He called to her, but she didn’t hear him so he switched off the radio and she looked up.

“What do you want, you glaiket loon?” she said, wringing the floor cloth savagely and throwing it into the bucket.

Hamish sighed. The trouble with being a policeman in a small, normally law-abiding village was that you did not strike fear or terror into the heart of anyone.

“I’m making inquiries into the death of Trixie Thomas,” he said.

“Why?” Mrs. Maclean sat back on her heels. “That woman’s better off dead.”

“Maybe,” he said. “But since you had no reason to like her, you are one of my suspects.” He looked at her sternly, but she gave a contemptuous snort.

“She made a fool o’ that silly man o’ mine. He thought she fancied him when all that moodier wanted was a bit o’ free fish. Take the sugar out o’ your tea, that one would. It’s my opinion the Thomases had money enough, but they was always talking about being hard up and scrounging everything they could get. The minister’s wife

goes around saying Mrs. Thomas was the perfect housewife. She was perfect when it came to getting other people to do the work for her. Those women like Mrs. Wellington and that Mrs. Brodie haven't enough to do. Microwaves and washing machines. A disgrace I call it."

A strong smell of bleach rose from a huge copper pot of sheets on the wood burning stove. Mrs. Maclean was famous for her 'whites,' boiling everything and hanging it over the bushes in the garden to bleach further on a sunny day. Perhaps that was why Archie Maclean's clothes always looked too tight for him, reflected Hamish. She probably boiled his suits.

"Well, you'll have the detectives around soon asking you questions as well," said Hamish. "They'll want to know where you were when she was murdered."

Mrs. Maclean picked up the scrubbing brush again and scrubbed an area of already clean floor. "They can ask away," she said, "for I was right here all day, and my neighbours all saw me coming and going between the house and the garden."

"And Archie?"

"Himself was down at the nets."

Hamish all at once remembered Dr. Brodie singing about Trixie being dead and felt cold. That was something he should have told Blair as well. Damn Blair.

"Anyway," said Mrs. Maclean, picking out the floor cloth and wringing it out and wiping the wet floor, "you'll probably find it was that husband o' hers what did it."

"He was in Inverness at the dentist."

Mrs. Maclean sniffed. "So *he* says."

When Hamish left by the garden gate, he heard a burst of music. Mrs. Maclean had turned on the radio again.

He remembered his promise to Paul. Somewhere in Lochdubh, there was a murderer. But it was hard to think such a thing had happened. The sun beat down on a perfect scene. The eighteenth-century cottages along the waterfront gleamed white. Roses scented the air and the still waters of the loch reflected the hills and woods and the gaily painted hulls of the fishing boats.

Trixie had gone and something nasty in the atmosphere had gone with her. And yet she had not been an evil woman. And the women of Lochdubh would have got wise to her in time.

## TASK 8

*1. Match the words to their definitions and learn them:*

1) various	a) worried and nervous
2) amaze	b) to disturb or irritate especially by repeated acts
3) frown	c) extremely violent, wild, or frightening
4) annoy	d) occurring or happening every year or once a year
5) flatter	e) to contract the brow in displeasure or concentration
6) annual	f) disgustingly filthy, sharply unpleasant
7) anxious	g) a pleasant natural smell
8) savage	h) wicked, wrong, sinful; likely to cause or bring trouble
9) scent	i) to praise excessively especially from motives of self-interest
10) nasty	j) to cause someone to be extremely surprised
11) evil	k) having a number of different aspects or characteristics

*2. Describe how Hamish was waylaid by Mrs. Kennedy using the following words and expressions:*

**to be waylaid by smb.**, to complain (about), to do the cooking, a printed apron, mud-coloured, swollen feet, pinched faces, **to let smb. go.**

*3. Give a detailed account of Hamish's conversation with John Parker.*

*4. Describe Hamish's conversation with Priscilla using the following words and expressions:*

to feel in one's bones, for some reason, to accuse smb. of doing smth., to stare straight ahead, can't help doing smth., to be unaware (of smth.), to be attracted to smb., to put one's back up, to make a fool of smb., to make a pass at smb., to run off with smb., to come round to smb's place, to lean on smth., to be flattered, to drop in for a chat, to take a train to, to do the shopping.

5. Use the words in bold print to make up a story of your own (8 sentences at most). Write it on a separate piece of paper.

6. Dwell on Hamish's conversation with Mrs. Maclean using the following words and expressions:

to call on smb., to scrub, to wring, to strike fear or terror into the heart of smb., to make inquiries into smth., to give a contemptuous snort, to fancy smb., to be hard up, to boil and bleach things, to pick up smth., to feel cold.

7. Find the English equivalents to the following words in the fragment:

викривлене від горя обличчя; працювати до знемоги; безмовно кивнути; смутна посмішка; знову входити в моду; радісно; дотримуватися думки; перевищення швидкості; виводити з себе (сердити), неспокійно; пристрої, зберігаючі людську працю; законослухняний; ганьба.

8. Translate these phrases into your native language:

- 1) Tears ran down Paul's cheeks and he wiped them away with his sleeve.
- 2) What does he do for a living?"
- 3) The trouble with being a policeman in a small, normally law-abiding village was that you did not strike fear or terror into the heart of anyone.
- 4) She was perfect when it came to getting other people to do the work for her.

9. What syllable is stressed in the word **suspect**? Do you know any more words of this type?

10. Do these expressions mean the same: **to do the shopping** and **to go shopping**?

## UNIT 9

He saw Blair and his two detectives driving out of the village and made his way to the doctor's surgery.

Dr. Brodie said he would see Hamish. "Quiet day," he said when Hamish walked into the consulting room. "Monday's the busy day when they all come in with their bad backs. It's the Highland disease. Every Monday morning, a bad back strikes them and they want a line so they do not have to go to work."

“How did you get on with Blair?” asked Hamish.

“He tried to bully me. Threatened to arrest me. You told him about me diagnosing a heart attack.”

“I had to,” said Hamish quietly. “Why did you do that?”

“As I told that fat lump, it looked like a heart attack to me.”

“Oh, come on, John,” said Hamish, exasperated. “It looked like nothing of the kind. Spit out the truth, man! It looked bad. You had been drunk out your skull the night before and singing about how you had killed Trixie. Did you know her real name was Alexandra?”

“Yes. But she’s the sort of woman – she was the sort of woman – who would think a name like Trixie cute. Well, Hamish, I’ll tell you but don’t tell Blair unless you think it necessary. I knew she had been poisoned. You had told me Paul Thomas was in Inverness but it went right out of my head. I thought maybe he had done it. I was glad she was dead. I didn’t want anyone to get the blame. I lost my head. Can you blame me? My wife’s a changed woman. I can’t remember the last time I saw her in a skirt and heels. I’ve been living with a carbon copy of Trixie – smocks and jeans and those bloody sneakers squeaking over the floorboards.”

“She should be all right now,” said Hamish awkwardly.

“Oh, no, Trixie’s memory must not die. Angela’s taken over the bird thing and the smoking thing and the clean up Lochdubh rubbish. Either I eat salads or eat out. She’s hard as nails.”

“Shock, maybe. Look, women of your wife’s age don’t change for life. You’ll have her back soon. Just go along with it for a bit.”

“She thinks I murdered Trixie.”

“Don’t be daft.”

“It’s a fact. I see her watching me with those hard, hard eyes. She’s moved her bed into the spare room. If you find out who did it, let me know first, Hamish. I want to shake that man by the hand.”

“It might be a woman,” said Hamish.

Dr. Brodie leaned back in his chair and lit a cigarette. “It might at that,” he said

slowly.

Hamish had imagined his visit to Inverness would prove to be blessed with another sunny day. But to his annoyance, the weather had turned dark and rainy.

He called on the dentist, a Mr. Jones, who was justifiably annoyed at his call, having already been interviewed by the Inverness police. Hamish was not surprised. He knew Blair had sent him to Inverness to get him out of the way.

“You are such an important witness, Mr. Jones,” he said, “that I am afraid you have to be questioned all over again. I will not be taking up much of your time.”

“Oh, well,” said the dentist, mollified. “There’s not much to tell. What a baby that man was. He had a bad toothache because one of his back teeth was rotten. The root was all right so I said I would drill it and put in a filling. He started to shake and tremble and begged me to pull it out. Wouldn’t take no for an answer. Insisted on having gas. When he came round, I showed him his X-rays and said he needed a lot of work done and then he really panicked. He staggered out of the chair and ran for the door. It’s a good thing I’d got his National Health number before I’d started or I would have ended up doing that extraction for free. He should have rested a bit till the effects of the gas wore off.”

A bluebottle landed on the dentist’s white coat and he brushed it off with a shudder. “I’ve never seen so many flies as we’ve had this summer,” said Mr. Jones. “But the air’s so warm and clammy, I can’t keep the windows closed.”

Hamish put away his notebook and headed for the station. He would just be in time to meet Priscilla’s train.

He put all thoughts of the case from his mind and concentrated on the simple pleasure of waiting for her to arrive. He found he was imagining sort of *Brief Encounter* situations. She would run towards him through the steam, her fair hair bobbing on her shoulders, and throw herself into his arms. But the days of steam trains were long over. He did not want to abandon one bit of his rosy fantasy. So the steam remained. Rain thudded down on the station roof and the restless seagulls of Inverness called overhead.

Twelve-thirty came and went and there was no sign of the train. He went up to

the information kiosk but there was no-one there. He went into the Travel Centre where he was told the train would be half an hour late due to signal failure. He returned to the platform and waited, and again in that dream Priscilla endlessly ran towards him.

After three quarters of an hour, he returned to the Travel Centre. He was again told the story about signal failure and that the train should be in any minute. The loudspeaker in the station burst into song. It was one of those Scottish songs written to the beat of a Scottish waltz and sung through the nose.

“Oh, there’s the purple o’ the heather, And the ships about the bay, And it’s there that I would wander, At the closing of the day,” sang the voice and the rain fell harder on the roof and the wheeling seagulls screamed louder as if to compete with the singer.

Hamish went back to the Travel Centre with that feeling of impotence that assails the average Britisher in dealing with British Rail. A young man in a tartan jacket and with a sulky ‘get lost’ expression on his face eventually phoned the station manager’s office after Hamish had told him quietly what he would do to him if he didn’t look more willing. There was a broken rail outside Inverness, said the young man. But the train would be moving soon.

Back again went Hamish. At two-fifteen, the train crawled into the platform.

He waited by the barrier.

He nearly missed her. She was walking with her head down, her hair covered by a depressing rain hat.

“Priscilla!” he called.

She swung round. “Oh, there you are,” she said coolly. “Rotten train. I’m starving. Where are we going?”

Hamish blinked at her. He had been dreaming so long of that passionate arrival that he had forgotten to think about where to take her.

“We could try the Caledonian Hotel,” he said.

They walked in silence along to the hotel that overlooks the River Ness to find that it stopped serving lunches at two. Hamish found a phone box and tried several

other places to find they had stopped serving lunch at two as well.

“Hamish, let’s just pick somewhere cheap and easy,” said Priscilla. Water was dripping from the brim of her hat on to her nose.

Hamish looked around desperately. There was a cheap-looking restaurant called the Admiral’s Nook. The bow window was festooned with fishing nets.

“This’ll do,” he said.

They went inside and sat at a crumby table.

Hamish looked at the menu. There was a wide choice. Waitresses were standing in a group at the back of the restaurant, talking. He waved his hand. Several blank stares were directed towards him and then they all went on talking again.

“Pick out what you want,” said Hamish.

“What about spaghetti bolognese?” said Priscilla. “These places usually have a Scottish-Italian cook.”

“All right.” Hamish approached the waitresses. “Two plates of spaghetti bolognese,” he ordered. They all looked at him as if he had said several obscene words and then one peeled off from the group and headed for the kitchen.

Hamish returned to the table. He wondered if Priscilla was thinking of that John Burlington, who would probably have organized things better.

The waitress approached with two plates piled high with spaghetti and topped with a sort of grey sludge . Her hands were covered in scabs “Where’s the parmesan cheese?” asked Hamish, faint but pursuing.

“What?”

“Parmesan cheese,” said Priscilla in icy tones.

“We didn’t have any o’ that,” said the waitress triumphantly.

“Well, brush the crumbs off the table,” said Hamish crossly. She slouched off and did not return.

“This smells like feet,” said Priscilla. “I daren’t eat it.”

“Come away,” said Hamish, putting down his fork. “This damn place reeks of salmonella. No, I’m not calling for the bill, nor am I going to protest. It would take all day.” He checked the menu for the price and left several Scottish pound notes on the

table and marched Priscilla outside.

“Where now?” asked Priscilla bleakly.

“Follow me,” said Hamish grimly. He led her to where his Land Rover was parked. “Stay there,” he said, holding open the door for her.

He came back after some time carrying two packets of fish and chips, a bottle of wine, a bottle of mineral water, two glasses, and a corkscrew.

“This wine’s for you,” he said, uncorking it.

“Food at last,” said Priscilla.

They ate in a contented silence. “Sorry I was so grumpy,” said Priscilla. “How did you get on?”

“Oh, Thomas was at that dentist all right.”

“But it doesn’t mean he didn’t do it,” said Priscilla.

“Why?”

“He could have put the arsenic in something he knew she would eat before he left.”

“They’ve got everything out of the kitchen and there’s not a smell of arsenic anywhere. Except the curry. Can’t find any of that.”

“Curry? Oh, I know about the curry,” said Priscilla. “She made some for herself and gave the rest to Mrs. Wellington for the minister’s supper.”

Hamish realized he was looking at her with mouth open. “Better get back,” he said. “If she hasn’t eaten it, it might still be in her fridge. No better still, wait here and I’ll phone.”

He returned after ten minutes, his face triumphant. “She didn’t touch the curry. Trixie took some for herself out of the pot and gave the rest in the pot to Mrs. Wellington. She’s still got it. I’ve phoned Blair.”

“I’d better do that shopping for mother,” said Priscilla. “Do you want to wait here?”

“Yes, how long will you be?”

“About an hour.”

Hamish sat in the station car park and thought about the case. But after almost

an hour was up, he kept glancing in his rearview mirror to see if there was any sign of Priscilla coming back.

And that was when he saw a car just leaving the car park. On the roof rack was a chair covered in transparent plastic sheeting. He was sure he recognized that chair. He started up the engine, swung the Land Rover around, and started off in pursuit.

The car in front was travelling very fast. It went around the roundabout and headed out on the A9 towards Perth. Hamish put on the siren but the car in front only seemed to go faster.

He caught up with it twenty miles out on the Perth road and signalled to the driver to halt. The driver, a small, ferrety, red-haired man rolled down the window and the reason why he had not heard the police siren became apparent as a blast of sound from his tape deck struck Hamish like a blow.

“What is it?” said the man crossly.

“You were doing over the limit for a start,” said Hamish. “Where did you get that chair?”

“At the auction rooms in Inverness. I’m a dealer.” He handed over a grimy business card.

“Get out and let’s have a look at it and I’ll maybe forget about the speeding.”

“I’ll just lift up a corner of the sheeting,” said the dealer, whose name was Henderson. “Don’t want it to get wet.”

Hamish peered under the plastic. It was the Brodies’ chair that he had last seen when Trixie had been carrying it along the road.

“How much did you pay for it?” asked Hamish.

“A hundred and fifty.”

Hamish whistled. “And where are you taking it?”

“Down to London eventually. I’ve got several more auctions to go to. Get a better price for it there. It’s a Victorian nursing chair. Good condition. Look at the bead work.”

“Do you know where it came from?”

“Auctioneer said some knocker from the north brought it in.”

“Knocker?”

“One of those women that goes around houses spotting antiques where the owners don’t know the value. Usually offers them a fiver for something worth a few hundred.”

“Or gets it for nothing,” said Hamish, half to himself. Aloud he said, “I won’t be booking you this time, Mr. Henderson, but go carefully. I might be getting in touch with you.”

“It isn’t stolen, is it?” asked the dealer anxiously.

“No, but don’t sell it for another week. It may be connected with a murder.”

Hamish drove back. The rain was coming down heavier than ever. He remembered Priscilla and put his foot down on the accelerator.

She was not in the car park. He went into the station and looked around. No Priscilla. He looked at the indicator board and saw a train for the north was just leaving. He ran to the platform in time to see the back of it disappearing around the curve of the track.

So much for *Brief Encounter*, he thought miserably.

He drove to the auction rooms and found that Trixie had put the chair in for sale along with some other pieces of furniture and china ornaments.

“We had an auction last evening,” said the auctioneer. “I was about to send Mrs. Thomas her cheque.”

“How much?”

“Nearly a thousand pounds. She could have got a lot more in London but I wasn’t about to tell her that.”

Hamish told him to hold the cheque until they found out if Trixie had left a will.

He drove through the slashing rain and winding roads until he reached the police station at Lochdubh.

He phoned Tommel Castle and asked for Priscilla without remembering to disguise his voice.

“Miss Halburton-Smythe is not here,” said Jenkins.

Hamish wondered whether she was still waiting in Inverness.

He phoned the castle again and, disguising his voice, stated he was John Burlington. This time Priscilla answered the phone.

“Oh, it’s you, Hamish,” she said in a flat voice.

“I’m awfully sorry, Priscilla,” said Hamish. He told her about the chair.

“That’s all right,” said Priscilla, although her voice sounded distant. “There’s a little bit of information that might interest you. Jessie, the maid, says she saw Trixie going over to the seer at Coyle. You could ask him what he told her.”

When Hamish put down the phone, he thought about going over to the seer that evening, but decided to leave it till the morning. Angus Macdonald, the seer, had built up a reputation for being able to predict the future. Hamish thought he was an old fraud, but the local people were proud of him and believed every word he said. On the other hand, it would be unlike Trixie to go alone. She probably had taken some of her acolytes with her. He asked Angela Brodie, Mrs. Wellington, and several others but they knew nothing about it. He asked Mrs. Kennedy and the boarder, John Parker, and then Paul, without success.

Then he remembered that Colonel Halburton-Smythe had said he was going to take Trixie over to Mrs. Haggerty’s old cottage. He looked at his watch. They would be finishing dinner at the castle and so the colonel could not accuse him of scrounging and perhaps he could talk to Priscilla and apologize again for having left her in Inverness.

But the colonel was determined Hamish was not going to be allowed anywhere near his daughter.

He told Hamish curtly that Trixie had taken several bits and pieces of old furniture.

“I’d better go and look at the place,” said Hamish, “if that’s all right with you.”

“I suppose I’d better let you have the key,” said the colonel, “but I can’t see what it’s got to do with a murder investigation.”

“I’ll look anyway,” said Hamish. “She sold some of that furniture and a chair that Angela Brodie gave her for nearly a thousand pounds at the auction in Inverness.”

“I find that hard to believe,” blustered the colonel. “Fine woman, she was. Very womanly, if you know what I mean. That lout of a husband probably sold the stuff when he was down at the dentist’s. She would not have tricked me.”

“Maybe. Let me have the key anyway. Did she say anything about going over to Angus Macdonald?”

“Not that I remember. I hope that’s an end to your questions, Macbeth. If I thought for one moment you suspected me of this murder, I would report you to your superiors.”

Hamish sadly left the castle. Priscilla must know he had been visiting for the servants would have told her. But there was no sign of her. The castle door slammed behind him, a bleak finality in the sound. He was disgusted with himself. He thought of his fevered fantasies at the station, of the way that kiss had started him dreaming again, and put Priscilla Halburton-Smythe firmly from his mind.

But there seemed to be a great black emptiness there for she had occupied his thoughts for so long.

## TASK 9

*1. Match the words to their definitions and learn them:*

1) exasperate	a) containing or being language regarded as taboo in polite
2) blame	b) to leave a place, thing, or person, usually for ever
3) beg	c) to recognize, notice or pick out someone or something, usually because you are looking hard
4) abandon	d) to cause irritation or annoyance to smb.
5) crawl	e) to ask very earnestly or in a humble way
6) obscene	f) easily seen or understood usage
7) apparent	g) a substance that through its chemical action usually kills, injures, or impairs an organism
8) spot	h) to move slowly or with difficulty, especially with your body stretched out along the ground or on hands and knees

9) poison	i) to say or think that someone or something did something wrong or is responsible for something bad happening
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2. *What parts of speech are these words and how were they formed? What other derivatives with the same root can you name?*

Threaten, awkwardly, justifiably, endlessly, desperately, triumphantly, eventually, miserably, finality, emptiness.

3. *Build up situations based on the context around the following words and expressions using them in your answer:*

to get on with smb., hard as nails + to go along with, to come round, to compete with, to do over the limit, to get in touch with smb., to be connected with smth./smb., to apologize for doing smth., to suspect smb. of smth., to be disgusted with oneself.

4. *Make use of the above mentioned word combinations in a story of your own.*

5. *Find the English equivalents to the following words in the fragment:*

говори правду!, напиться до неосудності, вилетіти з голови, втратити голову, не будь ідіотом!, заспокоювати, дратівливий, дзеркало заднього виду, окружна (кільцева дорога), кинутися в погоню, педаль газу.

6. *Make up 5 interesting questions to the fragment and don't show them to your groupmates (by no means). We'll discuss all the questions and choose 3 most interesting ones.*

7. *Can you find the synonym to the verb 'grim' in the extract?*

8. *Find three words denoting 'тремтіння; тремтіти' in the extract.*

9. *Translate these phrases into your native language:*

- 1) But to his annoyance, the weather had turned dark and rainy.
- 2) He called on the dentist, a Mr. Jones, who was justifiably annoyed at his call, having already been interviewed by the Inverness police.
- 3) He should have rested a bit till the effects of the gas wore off.

- 4) He put all thoughts of the case from his mind and concentrated on the simple pleasure of waiting for her to arrive.
- 5) Several blank stares were directed towards him and then they all went on talking again.
- 6) Angus Macdonald, the seer, had built up a reputation for being able to predict the future.

## UNIT 10

### Chapter 5

*I know of no way of judging the future*

*but by the past.*

—Patrick Henry.

Hamish was just moving out of the police station in the Land Rover in the morning when Blair appeared, holding up a beefy hand.

“I hear you’re going to consult the oracle,” he said with a grin.

“Meaning what?”

“It’s all over the village that Angus Macdonald is going to solve the case by looking at his crystal balls.”

“Want to go yourself?” asked Hamish.

“I’ve got more to do with my time. Typed out your report from the dentist?”

“Why bother?” said Hamish laconically. “It’s the same stuff you got from the police in Inverness. But there’s something you should know.” He told Blair about the dealer.

“Bugger it,” said Blair. That complicates things.

“She’d probably made off with someone’s family heirloom.”

“You should ask Halburton-Smythe,” said Hamish maliciously. “He was driving her around while she looked for antiques.”

Blair’s face darkened. The Daviots had been bragging about their dinner at the castle and he had no desire to run foul of the new super by putting the colonel’s back up. “Aye, well, I might send Anderson up. This is the devil of a case. There was no

arsenic in that curry. Must have been in something else.”

Towser, who was sitting beside Hamish, growled softly.

“You look right daft with that mongrel beside you,” sneered Blair.

“This is a highly trained police dog,” said Hamish, “and I’ve already been offered five hundred pounds for him.”

Blair’s mouth dropped in surprise as Hamish drove off.

“It wasn’t really a lie,” Hamish told Towser. “If they had any sense in this place, I’m sure they would have given me an offer for you.” Towser lolled his tongue and put a large affectionate paw on Hamish’s knee.

“Should be a woman’s hand on my knee,” said Hamish, “and not a mangy dog like you.”

The seer lived in a small white-washed cottage on the top of a round green hill with a winding path leading up to it. It looked like a child’s drawing. Hamish parked his vehicle at the foot of the path and began to walk up. Black storm clouds rolled across the heavens and the wind roared through a pylon overhead with a dismal shriek. At least the wind is keeping away the flies and midges, thought Hamish, leaning against its force as he walked towards the cottage. A thin column of grey smoke from one of the cottage’s chimneys was being whipped and shredded by the wind.

Angus Macdonald was a tall, thin man in his sixties. He had a thick head of white hair and a craggy face with an enormous beak of a nose. His eyes were very pale grey.

He opened the door as Hamish reached it. “So you’ve come at last,” he said. “I knew you’d be by. Cannot solve the case?”

“And I suppose you can,” said Hamish, following the seer into his small kitchen-cum-living room.

“Aye, maybe, maybe,” said Angus. “What have you brought me?”

“Nothing. What did you want? Your palm crossed with silver?”

“Folks eye bring me something. A bit of salmon, or a piece of venison or a homemade cake.”

“I am here to ask you to tell me as an officer of the law what you know about Trixie Thomas.”

“She’s dead,” said the seer and cackled with laughter.

“When she came to see you, what did you tell her?”

Angus lifted a black kettle from its chain over the open fire and took it over to the sink and filled it with water and then hung it back on the hook. “I’ve a bad memory these days,” he said. “Seems to me that there’s nothing like a wee dram for bringing it to life.”

“I haven’t brought any whisky with me,” said Hamish crossly.

The seer turned from the fire and bent a penetrating gaze on Hamish. “She’ll never marry you,” he said.

The Highland part of Hamish repressed a superstitious shudder. The policeman part decided to be diplomatic.

“Look, you auld scunner,” he said, “I’ll be back in a bit with a dram. You’d better get your brains working by then.”

Angus smiled when Hamish had left and then set about making a pot of tea. The wind howled and screeched about his cottage like a banshee. He could hear nothing but the fury of the wind. He hoped Hamish would be back soon with that whisky. The wind depressed him. It seemed like a live thing, some monster howling about his cottage, seeking a way in.

It was probably playing havoc with his garden at the back. He put the teapot on the hearth beside the fire and then opened the back door. His raspberry canes were flattened and the door of his garden shed was swinging wildly on its hinges. He went out into the small garden and shut the shed door and wedged a brick against it.

A fitful gleam of watery sunlight struck through the clouds as he turned and shone on something lying beside his back door. He went and looked down. A full bottle of whisky.

He grinned. Just like devious Hamish Macbeth. Leaving the whisky and hoping he’d get well oiled before the constable came back to ask his questions.

He carried the bottle inside. Time to switch on the television and watch the long-

range forecast. People were always amazed at his ability to predict the weather so accurately although they watched the same programme themselves. He settled down in his battered armchair by the fire and poured himself a glass of whisky, noticing that the top had already been opened. “Decided to have a dram himself and thought the better of it,” reflected Angus with amusement.

The wind increased in force and shrieked and battered at his cottage like a maniac. As he raised his glass to his lips, the room whirled away and he suddenly saw his long dead mother. She was looking surprised and delighted, the way she had looked when he had unexpectedly come home on leave during the war. And then the vision faded. He sat very still and then put the glass down on the floor beside him with a shaking hand.

As a youth, he had been sure he had been gifted with the second sight, as that ability to see into the future is called in the Highlands. He had had it during the war. He had seen in his mind’s eye his friend getting shot by the Germans and sure enough that’s exactly what had happened. He had gradually built up the reputation of a seer. The gift had never come back, but he had found it easy to impress the locals as he knew all about them anyway and listened to every bit of gossip.

He was sitting, staring into space, when Hamish came back.

“Here’s your whisky,” said Hamish, holding up a half bottle. “Why, you greedy auld pig, you’ve got a whole bottle there.”

“It’s death,” said the seer in a thin voice. “Oh, take it away, Hamish. I saw death in it.”

He was white and trembling.

“Where did you get it from?” asked Hamish sharply.

“It was outside the kitchen door – at the back. People aye leave me things, you know that, Hamish. I didn’t hear anyone because of that damn wind.”

“And what stopped you?” asked Hamish, looking at him intently.

Angus shook his head as if to clear it. “I saw my mother,” he said. “She was standing by the door and she looked surprised to see me as if I’d just crossed over to the other side.”

“And you hadn’t been drinking anything before that?” asked Hamish cynically.

“No, man, no. I swear it.”

Hamish took out a clean handkerchief and lifted the bottle of whisky. “Have you a bit of kitchen paper or something so I can take the glass as well?” he asked.

Angus nodded in the direction of the sink where there was a roll of kitchen paper standing on the draining board.

“I’ll just be off,” said Hamish, tenderly carrying both glass and bottle.

“Didn’t leave me,” wailed Angus, getting to his feet.

“Aye, I suppose you’d better come with me to Blair, although what he’s going to make of this, I shudder to think.”

Blair was in the police station office when Hamish returned with the seer. The police station, like most of the houses in Lochdubh, was hardly ever locked.

“I know you’re not staying at the hotel,” said Hamish crossly, “but I thought Johnson had given you the free use of a room.”

“Aye, well I just happened to be passing and needed to use the phone. Who’s he? And what are you doing stinking of whisky?” Hamish was carefully carrying a glass of whisky and the bottle he had taken from Angus.

Hamish and the seer sat down and Hamish in a colourless voice recounted Angus’s vision.

Blair laughed and laughed, slapping his knees in delight. “Daviot’s arrived from Strathbane. He’s along at the hotel now to see how the investigation’s going on. Wait till he hears about this.”

Blair gleefully picked up the phone and started to dial. If ever the superintendent needed extra proof that Hamish Macbeth was a simpleton, this was it.

“You’ll never guess what I have to tell you, sir,” said Blair. “Macbeth has brought the local seer, Angus Macdonald in. Someone left this local weirdo a bottle of whisky on his doorstep and he’s about to drink some of it when he sees his dead mother calling to him from the other side and decides it’s poisoned.” Blair laughed and laughed. The voice at the other end of the phone squawked and the laughter died on Blair’s lips. Mr. Daviot was a Lowland Scot in love with the Highlands and

everything Highland. Seers were Highland and therefore to be treated with respect. “Well, if you say so, sir,” mumbled Blair and put the phone down.

“I’ve to take this whisky to Strathbane for analysis,” he growled, “and you and Macdonald here are to go along to the hotel and see the super. They’ll be nothing in that bottle but straight Scotch, and then you’ll look like the fools you are.”

Mr. Daviot treated Angus with great courtesy, ushering him tenderly to an armchair and handing him a cup of coffee.

Angus told his story to an appreciative audience this time. “And I gather that Macbeth here went to see you to ask what Mrs. Thomas had wanted to know,” said Mr. Daviot. “Did you tell him?”

“I was about to,” said Angus, “when I got that fright. Oh, she didn’t want to know anything. She offered me a fiver for those wally duggs on my mantel, but I cannot they’re worth a bit these days. I told her greed would be the end of her.”

“And why did you say that?” asked Mr. Daviot sharply.

“I have the second sight,” said the seer.

“You may just have had it today,” said Hamish. “But it’s my guess you’d heard about Trixie already and you were cross because she was trying to cheat you out of your china dogs. I’d better take you back, and look about and we’d better get forensic up to your cottage.”

“You gang along yourself,” whined the seer. “I’ve a mind to stay here with Mr. Daviot. He has the sign of greatness in his face.”

That was enough for Mr. Daviot so Hamish left with only Towser for company.

The wind had dried the ground and he was doubtful whether the forensic team would be able to find a footprint. The path to the back door was formed of paving stones and outside the back gate was springy heather moorland.

If someone had tried to poison Angus then that someone must have known Hamish was going to call on him. But according to Blair, the whole village knew of Hamish’s proposed visit. He strolled over the moorland at the back of the cottage and found himself looking down on Iain Gunn’s farm. He wondered whether either Blair or his detectives had interviewed Gunn. He had not told Blair about the bats, having

felt it to be of not much importance. Now with the cloud shadows chasing each other across the moorland and with the souging of the wind, Iain Gunn seemed like someone who ought to be taken seriously. All he would have had to do was to run up the hill to the back of the seer's cottage and leave that whisky. Hamish suddenly remembered the look of hate on Iain's face as he watched Trixie leaving. He would need to tell Blair and Blair would rightly point out that he had been withholding valuable information.

Iain Gunn was in his farmhouse kitchen, just removing his Wellington boots, when Hamish arrived. His son, a tall, gangling youth, was sitting at the kitchen table and Mrs. Gunn was stirring something on a pot on the stove.

"It's you, Hamish," said Iain cheerfully. "Sit down."

"I would like a wee word with you in private," said Hamish.

Iain and his wife exchanged an odd look and then he said slowly, "Come ben."

Hamish followed him through to the living-room. It was bleak and cold and had a little-used look despite the new, fitted carpet on the floor, the plastic flowers in vases, the noisily patterned nylon curtains at the window, and the three-piece suite of acid green uncut moquette.

There was a large television set in one corner but Hamish was sure the Gunn family hardly ever had time to look at it. They all worked hard.

"What's the trouble?" asked Iain.

"Trixie Thomas's death's the trouble. I have to interview everyone who might have had a grudge against her. Now Angus Macdonald is swearing blind someone left a poisoned bottle of whisky outside his back door today."

"Angus drinks so much it's no wonder that whisky tastes like poison to him now," said Iain. "And what could I have had to do with that silly bitch's death?"

"With her out of the road, you could go ahead and bulldoze that ruin," pointed out Hamish.

Iain gave a derisive laugh. "That damn fool bird society she started has no doubt written letters to every other bird society, telling them about the bats. I'll have bird watchers trekking over my land and making a pest of themselves. Do you mind the

days, Hamish, when bird watchers were nice kindly people you were glad to see? Oh, a lot of them are still fine, but there's a new breed of militants. The men have got beards and wear camouflage jackets and those wee half-moon glasses and they've got bad teeth and the women have got their fat bums stuffed into jeans and wear anoraks covered with badges. I'd shoot the lot of them if I thought I could get away with it. No, I didn't poison Mrs. Thomas, Hamish." He leaned forward. "Look, just think of all the hassle a man has to put up with from the government these days. Look how Scotland has changed with value added tax hit squads and petty little bureaucrats enjoying throwing their muscle around. There's a lot more folk I had better reason to kill than Trixie Thomas. You'll probably find her man bumped her off. It's aye the husband."

"Why?"

"Imagine living with a woman who irons creases in her jeans and wears white sneakers."

"Aye, it's enough to turn the strongest stomach," said Hamish with a grin. Then his face grew serious. "Look, Iain, I didn't tell Blair about the bats and I'll need to tell him, so prepare yourself for a hassle."

"Don't worry. I had the income-tax inspector round last week. If I can put up with an income-tax inspector, I can put up with Blair."

Hamish made his way back up past Angus's cottage and met the seer coming up the hill.

"They are not interested in my story any more mair," said Angus peevishly. "They have arrested the husband."

"Paul Thomas? Why?"

"No' him. Her first husband."

"Her – ?"

"Aye, it turns out that lodger of theirs, John Parker, used to be married to her."

Hamish went straight to the hotel. John Parker was closeted with Blair and his two detectives in the hotel room allocated to the police. Hamish put his head round the door.

“Get lost,” snarled Blair.

Hamish walked away. He wondered where Daviot was. As the local policeman, he, Hamish Macbeth, should have been in on the interrogation.

He saw the hotel manager in the forecourt. “Where’s Mr. Daviot?” asked Hamish.

“He’s gone back to Strathbane. There’s been a successful drug raid on one of the ships,” said Mr. Johnson. “This murder’s become small beer.”

Hamish made his way to The Laurels. Paul Thomas was working in the garden.

“What’s all this about her first husband?” demanded Hamish.

Paul straightened up from his weeding slowly and passed an earthy hand over his forehead. “It was a surprise to me,” he said in a bewildered way. “Why didn’t Trixie tell me?”

“Did you hear them having a row or anything?”

“No, they went on like strangers. It was probably him that did it. And I don’t care any more. Nothing’s going to bring her back.” Tears rolled down his cheeks and Hamish patted him awkwardly on the shoulder.

“Can I have a look at his room?”

“It’s full of forensic people, dusting everything in sight although they’ve already dusted everything and I don’t know what they hope to find. I wish everyone would go away and leave me alone.”

Hamish went back to the police station in time to meet Priscilla who was just driving up.

Although he was glad to see her, he found with surprise that his heart no longer gave a lurch. They sat in the kitchen and Hamish told her about the seer and the first husband.

“You would think it would be one of the locals trying to poison Angus,” said Priscilla after listening in attentive silence.

“Why?”

“Well, someone was very afraid that Angus might have divined something, and only the locals would think that. I can’t see either Paul Thomas or this first husband

believing in the second sight.”

Hamish poured more tea. “I think that a frightened murderer might be prepared to believe anything. I hope he doesn’t go ahead and arrest John Parker without any evidence. I would like to have a word with him.”

“Blair’s capable of anything. Oh, that’s clever,” said Priscilla, noticing the screen door.

“It was a couple of American tourists gave me the idea,” said Hamish. “I wish I could have a word with that Carl Steinberger. He was staying there at the Thomases for a couple of nights. Where was he from again? I know, Greenwich, Connecticut. He may be back home now. Excuse me a minute, Priscilla. I’ll phone the police in Greenwich and ask them if they know Carl Steinberger’s phone number.”

He was halfway out of the kitchen when Priscilla rose to her feet. “Don’t worry, Hamish,” she said. “I think I’ll call on Angela Brodie. I’m worried about her.”

Hamish stopped. “Why?”

“She makes me uneasy. You can’t go around taking on someone else’s personality without something cracking,” said Priscilla.

She drove down to the doctor’s house, thinking about Hamish Macbeth. Although he had been as friendly as ever, something had gone out of that friendship. Hamish was no longer shy of her, she thought, nor was his whole mind on her when she was there. She felt uneasily that part of his mind had dismissed her.

## TASK 10

1. Match the **verbs** to their definitions and learn them:

1) consult	a) to ask the advice or opinion of
2) complicate	b) to make something more difficult to deal with, do, or understand
3) roar	c) to make a loud, deep, hoarse sound

4) shriek	d) to cry out in a high-pitched voice
5) impress	e) to cause someone to admire or respect you
6) lift	f) to move something from a lower to a higher position
7) increase	g) to make or become greater in size, amount, degree, value, power, etc.
8) fade	h) to lose colour, brightness, or strength gradually
9) dial	i) to press the buttons or turn the dial on a telephone in order to make a telephone call
10) mumble	j) to utter words in a low confused indistinct manner

2. *What parts of speech are these words and how were they formed? What other derivatives with the same root can you name?*

Laconically, affectionate, penetrating, cynically, tenderly, colourless, gleefully, courtesy, appreciative, greatness, doubtful, valuable, peevishly.

3. *Build up situations based on the context around the following words and expressions using them in your answer:*

to brag about + to have no desire to do smth + to run foul of smb, to lead up to + at the foot of smth + at least + to keep smb away, to be in one's sixties, to think the better of smth, in the direction of, to get to one's feet, to treat smb with respect, to cheat smb out of smth, according to smb, to be of no (not much) importance, to point out smth + to withhold information, in private + to exchange an odd look, to have a grudge against smb + to swear blind, to get away with smth + to put up with smth, to go on like strangers, to go ahead.

4. *Make up sentences with the above mentioned words, using two at a time (it'll make 12-13 sentences).*

5. *Find the English equivalents to the following words in the fragment:*

фамільна цінність, паршивий, забобонний, виробляти безлад, лукавий (виверткий), довгостроковий прогноз, передбачати погоду точно, жадібний, пильно, простак, жадібність, порода, податок на додану вартість (ПДВ), нудити, дрібниці, спантеличено.

6. *Can you find any examples of personification in the text?*

7. *Translate these phrases into your native language:*

- 1) The Highland part of Hamish repressed a superstitious shudder. The policeman part decided to be diplomatic.
- 2) The wind depressed him. It seemed like a live thing, some monster howling about his cottage, seeking a way in.
- 3) She was looking surprised and delighted, the way she had looked when he had unexpectedly come home on leave during the war.
- 4) As a youth, he had been sure he had been gifted with the second sight, as that ability to see into the future is called in the Highlands.
- 5) The voice at the other end of the phone squawked and the laughter died on Blair's lips.
- 6) It (the living-room) was bleak and cold and had a little-used look despite the new, fitted carpet on the floor, the plastic flowers in vases, the noisily patterned nylon curtains at the window, and the three-piece suite of acid green uncut moquette.
- 7) Look how Scotland has changed with value added tax hit squads and petty little bureaucrats enjoying throwing their muscle around.
- 8) Although he was glad to see her, he found with surprise that his heart no longer gave a lurch.
- 9) Hamish was no longer shy of her, she thought, nor was his whole mind on her when she was there. She felt uneasily that part of his mind had dismissed her.

*8. Answer the following questions:*

1. Give an account of the conversation between Blair and Hamish.
2. Was Angus Macdonald helpful and supportive with Hamish? Why?
3. What happened when Angus Macdonald raised the glass of whiskey to his lips?
4. What was Blair's response to Angus's story? How did his call to Daviot influence the situation?
5. What was the purpose of Hamish's call on Iain Gunn?
6. What news made Hamish dash to The Laurels? What did he get from Paul?
7. How had Hamish's feelings towards Priscilla changed? Did Priscilla notice the change?

## **UNIT 11**

Priscilla walked up the path to the kitchen door and then stood motionless, with her hand on the doorknob. From inside came a faint humming sound, a familiar sound. A picture of Trixie rose vividly in Priscilla's mind. She pushed open the door and went in.

Angela was sitting spinning wool, her thin face intent. She was wearing jeans and sneakers and a shapeless white T-shirt with the legend Save The Bats emblazoned on the front.

She looked up and saw Priscilla. "Oh, Miss Halburton-Smythe," said Angela, getting to her feet. "Would you like a cup of coffee?"

Priscilla looked around the gleaming and sterile kitchen. Angela put beans – from Nicaragua, where else? thought Priscilla – into the coffee grinder. Priscilla sat down at the kitchen table. It was amazing, reflected Priscilla, how a hairstyle could alter a woman. Angela's perm showed no signs of growing out. Hard little curls rioted over her head, making her hair look like one of those cheap wigs from Woolworths. Her mouth appeared to have become thinner with little tight lines at the corner of the mouth.

"I didn't know you had a spinning wheel," said Priscilla.

“Paul gave it to me,” said Angela. “Poor man. He didn’t want to keep it in the house. He said every time he looked at it, he could see Trixie sitting there.”

“How are things going?” asked Priscilla.

“Not very well,” said Angela, feeding coffee into the machine. “The meeting of the Anti-Smoking League was last night. And do you know how many turned up? Two. And one of them was that layabout, Jimmy Fraser, who thought it was a stop smoking class.”

“That might be a better idea,” said Priscilla. “You might get more results by helping people to stop smoking than by putting a sort of prohibition ban on the stuff.”

“Anyone in their right mind should know it’s dangerous to smoke.”

“But it’s an addiction, like drinking, like eating too much sugar. I read an article which said that addicts are more open to suggestion as to how to stop than outright militant bans. Look at Prohibition in the States with people drinking disgusting things like wood alcohol and going blind. I’m sure a lot of people drank more during Prohibition than they would have done if the stuff was available.”

Angela folded her lips into a stubborn line. “Trixie used to say that people didn’t know what was good for them. They need to be taken in hand.”

“You can make a lot of enemies, Mrs. Brodie, if you try to be nanny to the world.”

“That’s a bitchy thing to say!”

“And so it was,” said Priscilla contritely. “I’m concerned for you, Mrs. Brodie. You seemed a happier person before Trixie Thomas arrived on the scene.”

“I was half alive,” said Angela fiercely. “There’s so much to be done in the world. Trixie used to say that if everyone just sat around doing nothing, then nothing would be done.” She took a deep breath and said triumphantly. “I am declaring Lochdubh to be a nuclear-free zone.”

“Oh, Mrs. Brodie! You yourself?”

“I’m forming a committee.”

Priscilla felt at a loss. There was something badly wrong with Angela Brodie. She wondered whether the doctor’s wife was at the menopause. She had grown even

thinner, not the willowy slimness she had had before, but a brittle thinness. Her fingers were like twigs and there were deep hollows in her cheeks. Priscilla suddenly wanted to get out. An old-fashioned fly paper was hanging from the kitchen light and dying flies buzzed miserably, trapped on its sticky coating.

“I’ve suddenly remembered something,” lied Priscilla, getting to her feet. She could not wait any longer in this suffocating atmosphere for that coffee to fill the pot, drip by slow drip.

She turned in the doorway. “Do you know, Mrs. Brodie, that Angus Macdonald claims someone tried to poison him today by leaving a bottle of poisoned whisky outside his door?”

“Silly old man,” snapped Angela. “It’s years since he did a day’s work. Him and his silly predictions.”

Priscilla went outside and took a deep breath of warm damp air. The wind had dropped and a thin drizzle was falling. She wondered how Hamish was getting on with his phone call.

Hamish had found everything remarkably easy. The police in Greenwich, Connecticut, knew Carl Steinberger. He owned a small electronics factory outside the town. They gave Hamish the number and Hamish dialed and asked for Carl Steinberger.

In his usual Highland way, Hamish did not get right to the point but waffled on about the screen door and the flies and the weather until Mr. Steinberger interrupted him gently with, “Look, officer, it’s great talking with you, but I’m a busy man.”

“Can you tell me what you made of the Thomases?” asked Hamish. “The wife’s been poisoned.”

“Jesus! What with?”

“Arsenic.”

“Rat poison? Something like that?”

“We can’t find anything,” said Hamish. “That other lodger, John Parker, turns out to be her first husband.”

“I can’t tell you anything,” said Mr. Steinberger, “except that we didn’t like her.

My wife said she had a knack of making her husband look like a fool, but we didn't pay much attention. The place was clean and the food was good. She was a great baker. We must have put on pounds. But there was no fun in eating her cakes because her husband was on a diet and he would sit at the table and glare at every crumb of cake we put in our mouths. That John Parker took his meals in his room and typed when he wasn't out walking. Can't tell you any more."

Hamish thanked him and put down the phone. He wondered what John Parker was saying to the detectives. He went along to the grocery store and bought a bottle of whisky, wondering whether he should go out with his gun that night and bag a few brace of the colonel's grouse to sell in Strathbane and so make up for all the whisky he was having to buy.

He wandered back along to the hotel and stood outside, looking at the fishing boats.

At last, he heard Blair's loud voice. He went to the wall of the hotel. Blair was standing with his back to him facing his two detectives. There was no sign of John Parker. One of the detectives, Jimmy Anderson, looked across to where Hamish's head was appearing above the wall. Hamish raised the bottle of whisky and Anderson gave a brief nod.

Hamish then went back to the police station and settled down to wait.

After half an hour, Anderson appeared. "If you want me to tell you about it," he said, "give us a drink first. Blair's fit to be tied. Can't make a case against Parker."

Hamish poured the detective a glass of whisky and said, "So what's Parker's background?"

"Ex-drug addict. Hash and a bit of cocaine. Out of work. Along comes Trixie Thomas. Social worker. Takes him in hand. Sees his writing. Badgers publishers and agents. Gets him started. Gets him off drugs. Gets him earning. And then what do you think she does?"

"She divorces him," said Hamish.

"How did you know?"

"I don't know," said Hamish slowly. "Just a lucky guess. Anyway, is he still in

love with her? Did Paul Thomas know he was her ex? He must have known when he married her. Told me he didn't, but surely he did."

"No, he says Trixie reverted to her maiden name after the divorce."

"Still, he must have known. She'd need to have her divorce papers, surely."

Anderson grinned. "Seems the managing Trixie arranged everything and all he can remember is standing in the registrar's office saying yes."

"And when did all this take place?"

"This year."

"And when did she divorce Parker?"

"Ten years ago."

"Any children?"

"No, she couldn't have any. What about some more whisky?"

Hamish poured him another glass. "So how did Parker know where to find her?" he asked.

"She wrote to him. She'd heard about him selling the film rights. Must have been in some magazine. She said she needed boarders and he owed her something because she never had asked him for alimony, and she didn't want Paul to know, but it would be a nice way of paying her back for the start she had given him in life and all that crap. So the wimp comes up. He was paying her two hundred pounds a week. Paul didn't know. She collected the money...cash. No income tax, no VAT."

"Leave a will?" asked Hamish.

"Aye, left everything to Paul. He owns the house already but she left twenty thousand pounds."

"Not bad for someone who was aye pleading poverty," said Hamish. "But not enough to kill for. Look, maybe you can help me out of a jam." He told Anderson about Iain Gunn and the bats.

"I'll tell Blair," said Anderson. "He's so hell bent on proving Parker did it, he'll hardly listen."

"Look," said Hamish urgently. "I'm going along to have a word with Parker. If the results of that bottle of whisky come through, let me know."

“OK,” said Anderson, draining his glass. “Keep the bottle handy.”

John Parker was typing in his room when Hamish called.

“Now, Mr. Parker,” said Hamish severely, “what I want to know is why you told an outright lie when you said that you hadn’t known Trixie Thomas before?”

“I’ve got a lot of work to do,” said John. “I didn’t murder her and I didn’t want to be the subject of a police inquiry. You’ve probably heard I used to be on drugs and I’ve been on the wrong side of the law several times in the past. I have no great liking for policemen.”

“And I have no great liking for liars,” said Hamish coldly.

“Sorry about that, copper, but that’s the way it is.”

“So tell me about your marriage.”

“There’s nothing much to tell. I was a right mess when Trixie found me. She got me into a drug clinic, paid for it herself, found my manuscripts when I was in there, and when I came out, she took me around agents and publishers. She corrected my manuscripts and typed them. She did everything but go to the toilet for me,” he said with sudden savagery. “Look, it’s hard when you have to be perpetually grateful to someone. When she said she was divorcing me, I could hardly believe my luck.”

Hamish raised his eyebrows. “Then why did you come back?”

He sighed, a little thin sigh. “I suppose I still felt grateful to her – really grateful. I wanted to see her again.”

“And when you saw her?”

“It was all right.” His voice held a note of amazement. “She not only had Paul, she had the village women in her control. The lodgings were comfortable and the place is pretty. I’ve got a lot of work done.”

Hamish looked at the typewriter. The author was beginning chapter ten of a book, witness to the fact he spoke the truth. “Luke Mulligan,” Hamish read, “smiled down at Lola who was holding on to his stirrup and an odd look of tenderness flitted across his craggy features.”

Beside him on the desk lay a pile of manuscript with the title page on the top. It read, “The Amazon Women of Zar.”

Hamish pointed to it. "Doesn't sound like a Western."

John Parker's grey, neat features took on an even more closed look. "It's science fiction," he said curtly. He rose and picked up the manuscript and opened a battered suitcase and popped it inside. All at once Hamish longed to see what it was about.

"What were the relations between Mr. and Mrs. Thomas?" he asked.

"Fair enough," said John. "Regular marriage. She fussed over him like a mother hen, but he seemed to like it."

Hamish stood up. "I suppose you have been told not to leave the village."

"Yes. That man, Blair, is determined to accuse me of the murder. In fact, he would have done so if I hadn't threatened to sue him for wrongful arrest." Hamish stood up to leave. His eyes roamed around the room. Whatever antique furniture Trixie had managed to get from the locals, she must have taken it all down to the auction rooms. John's room furnishings were white and modern, the sort of units bought in Inverness and assembled at home.

"I believe from the village gossip that you're a friend of the Halburton-Smythes," said John Parker.

Hamish looked surprised. "I am by way of being a friend of the daughter," he said. "Colonel Halburton-Smythe does not have much time for me. Why do you ask?"

"I would like a look around the castle."

"It's not very old," said Hamish. "It's one of those Gothic monstrosities built in Victorian times."

"Nonetheless, I might be able to use it in a book."

Hamish thought quickly. If he could be sure John Parker was up at the castle, then he might be able to get a look at that manuscript he had been so anxious to hide.

"I think I could fix that for you," said Hamish. "What about tomorrow?"

"Suits me."

"I'll phone Miss Halburton-Smythe and then come back and tell you what she says."

Hamish went back to the police station just as the detective, Jimmy Anderson,

was arriving.

“Let’s have another drink,” pleaded Anderson. “Blair’s fuming and shouting. It was arsenic, all right, in that old fortune-teller’s bottle.”

“That’ll bring the press in droves,” said Hamish gloomily. “Good story. I Saw My Own Death, Says Seer. So what’s Blair up to?”

“He’s threatening to arrest Angus Macdonald tomorrow.”

“Why?”

“Impeding the police. He says the auld gnaff put the stuff in the whisky himself so as to get the press to write about him.”

“Could be.”

“Now Daviot’s breathing fire and vengeance. Says if Blair doesn’t wrap up the case fast, he’ll put someone else on it.”

Hamish shook his head sadly. “It’s a daft thing to say to a man like Blair. He’ll now arrest the first person he thinks of.”

“Well, let’s have that drink.”

They sat talking about the case until Anderson realized that Blair would be anxious to get back to Strathbane and would be looking for him.

After he had left, Hamish phoned Tommel Castle and asked to speak to Priscilla.

“Miss Halburton-Smythe is not at home,” said Jenkins.

“Look, get her to the phone, you horrible snob, and do it fast or I’ll come up there and knock your teeth in,” said Hamish pleasantly.

When Priscilla answered the phone, she said, “What did you say to Jenkins? He was cringing and creeping and saying he didn’t know I was in the castle and yet he’d just served me a drink before you called.”

“Never mind. I want you to do something for me.” Hamish told her about John Parker and asked her to keep him at the castle for an hour at least.

“Oh, very well,” said Priscilla. “What about having dinner with me at the hotel tomorrow night?”

“I don’t know if I’ll manage to be free by that time,” said Hamish. “I feel I’m getting on to something on this case.”

There was a short silence and then Priscilla said, "All right. Another time, maybe."

Hamish thanked her and put the phone down. Priscilla stood by the phone, looking thoughtfully at the receiver before she replaced it. Hamish Macbeth would never have turned down an invitation to dinner before. Perhaps he had a girlfriend. Priscilla suddenly felt very bad-tempered indeed and went off to give the butler a lecture about lying to friends who tried to get her on the telephone.

Hamish picked up his cap, called to Towser, and went out on his rounds. It was Friday night and he would need to go to the pub to make sure no-one was thinking of drinking and driving.

As he was passing the Maclean's cottage, he heard angry voices and then a woman screamed loudly. He ran to their door, opened it, and walked in.

Archie and his wife were standing on either side of the kitchen table. She was holding her cheek as if she had just been struck.

"What's going on here?" demanded Hamish.

"You interfering, bastard," howled Archie. He came round the table towards Hamish with his fists raised. Towser crept under the kitchen table and lay down. Hamish stretched out a long arm and seized Archie by the wrist and then deftly twisted his arm up his back. "Tell me what's going on, Archie, or I'll break your arm."

"Leave my man alone," screeched Mrs. Maclean. "We were having a wee bit row, that's all." Hamish's quick eye noticed she was standing, holding something behind her back, and he was sure that if she had not been so determined to conceal that something then she would have leapt to her husband's defence.

"Aye, leave us be," growled Archie.

Hamish released him and shoved him into a kitchen chair. He took out his notebook and pencil. "Begin at the beginning," he ordered. "What happened?"

"What are you taking notes for?" raged Archie. "I'll have you for this, MacBeth. Have you a search warrant? What right have you to walk into a man's home?"

One minute it seemed to the Macleans as if Hamish was standing at his ease,

looking down at his notebook; the next, he had moved like a flash around the back of Mrs. Maclean and wrested what she was holding from her hand. She shouted something and tried to claw his face, but he jumped back. Under the table Towser whimpered dismally.

Hamish looked at the can in his hand. Dead-O Rat Poison.

“Well, now,” he said quietly, looking at their stricken faces. “Well, now.”

“It’s nothing’s to do with this,” said Mrs. Maclean. “We have the rats. I got that from the grocers the other day.”

“You realize I shall question Mr. Patel and find out exactly when you bought it,” said Hamish.

There was a long silence. “She didn’t get it from him,” said Archie at last. “I got it myself from Iain Gunn over at Coyle.” He rounded on his wife. “If you had kept your mouth shut...”

“Me!” she said furiously. “Then what was it doing at the back of your drawer of underpants?” She put her hands up to her mouth and stared at Hamish with frightened eyes.

“Well, Archie?” asked Hamish, and when he did not reply, “It’s tell me or come with me to Strathbane and tell Blair.”

“I’ll tell you,” said Archie wearily. He looked at his wife. “I found it at the back o’ the kitchen cupboard, hidden in that old tin marked *flour*. I took it to my room for safekeeping.”

“You silly wee man,” said his wife. “Did you no’ remember our Jean and the weans were coming for tea? Wee Rory’s only two year,” she explained to Hamish, “and he’s aye under the kitchen sink, taking out things. I hid it so the child wouldn’t find it. I’ve had it for a year. We had rats in the shed in the garden.” Hamish ran over in his mind what he knew of the Maclean family. Jean was their daughter and she had three small children, the ferreting two-year-old, Rory, being one of them.

“So,” said Hamish, “you thought, Archie, that your wife might have poisoned Mrs. Thomas, and you, Mrs. Maclean, thought your husband might have done it. My, my, Trixie Thomas must have caused some rare rows. I’ll need to take this. Where

did you get it?"

"I got it from Patel a year ago," mumbled Mrs. Maclean. "You cannot blame me. Holding hands with that woman. He never held hands with me, not even when we was courting." She put out a red hand towards Hamish with an oddly pathetic, pleading movement. It was almost deformed with years of being immersed in boiling water, bleach, and ammonia. Her wedding ring was embedded in the swollen flesh below the red shiny knuckles.

"I'll need to report this to Blair the morrow," said Hamish sadly. "I'll take this can with me."

As Hamish looked at the couple, he thought viciously that had Trixie Thomas still been alive, he might have murdered her himself. The Macleans' marriage, which had plodded along for years quite happily, would never be the same again.

He whistled to Towser and walked outside. It was a clear night, the rain had lifted, and great stars burned in the heavens. Towser slunk behind his master. "You," said Hamish looking down at the animal, "are a coward." Towser licked Hamish's hand and slowly wagged his tail. "But you're a decent dog and I'd rather have you a coward than savaging the sheep," said Hamish. He stooped and scratched the doe behind his ears and leapt up and down in an ecstasy of joy at being forgiven.

## TASK 11

1. *Match the words to their definitions and learn them:*

1) familiar	a person who is not brave, one who runs away from danger
2) alter	to have or hold as property
3) stubborn	the total of a person's experience, knowledge, and education
4) own	to be in debt, to have to pay
5) background	to interfere with or slow the progress of smb./smth.
6) owe	to hide, to keep secret
7) correct	easy to recognize because of being seen, met or heard before
8) fix	to make or become different, to change
9) impede	obstinate, unchanging in opinions, not reasonable

10)conceal	to take out the mistakes in smth. or mark them
11) coward	to arrange, decide, settle

2. *What parts of speech are these words and how were they formed? What other derivatives with the same root can you name?*

motionless, vividly, shapeless, prohibition, addiction, fiercely, urgently, savagery, perpetually, dismally, furiously, wearily.

3. *Build up situations based on the context around the following words and expressions using them in your answer:*

to go blind, to be concerned for smb., to take a breath, to get right to the point, to interrupt smb. with smth., to turn out to be, have a knack of (doing) smth. + to pay attention (to smth.), to leave a will, to get someone out of a jam, to be on drugs + to be on the wrong side of the law, to be grateful to smb., to be determined to do smth., to sue smb. for smth., to turn down an invitation + to feel bad-tempered, to have a row + to leap to smb's defence, to keep one's mouth shut.

4. *Make up a story with some of the above mentioned words (up to 10 sentences).*

5. *Find the English equivalents to the following words in the fragment:*

стерильний; кавомолка; при здоровому глузді; метиловий спирт; з ... щось було не так, схуднути; задушлива обстановка; тріпатися (говорити дурниці); кивнути; (випадкова) здогадка; податок на прибуток; податок на додану вартість; лізти геть зі шкіри; щоб зробити щось; осушити келих; тримати під рукою (напоготові); відверта брехня (брехня чистої води); об'єкт поліцейського розслідування; носитися з кимось, як курка з яйцем; мене влаштовує (мені підходить); завершити справу; скулитися (раболіпствувати); покласти трубку; схопити за зап'ястя; ордер на обшук; виляти хвостом.

6. *In Task 9 you've come across two collocations, meaning 'подобатися': 'to fancy smb.' and 'to be attracted'. Can you find another equivalent in this extract?*

7. Can you find 2 English equivalents to the idiom 'купити від злості, рвати і мамати' in the fragment?

8. Translate these phrases into your native language:

- 1) Angela's perm showed no signs of growing out. Hard little curls rioted over her head, making her hair look like one of those cheap wigs from Woolworths.
- 2) I read an article which said that addicts are more open to suggestion as to how to stop than outright militant bans.
- 3) We must have put on pounds. But there was no fun in eating her cakes because her husband was on a diet and he would sit at the table and glare at every crumb of cake we put in our mouths.
- 4) Blair was standing with his back to him facing his two detectives.
- 5) John Parker's grey, neat features took on an even more closed look.
- 6) The Macleans' marriage, which had plodded along for years quite happily, would never be the same again.

9. Answer the following questions:

1. Did Priscilla approve of Angela's new image?
2. What information did Hamish manage to fish out of Jimmy Anderson?
3. Give an account of Hamish's conversation with John Parker.
4. What news did Jimmy Anderson share when Hamish came back to the police station?
5. What was Jenkins's response to Hamish's phone call? What was the purpose of that call?
6. Why did Archie Maclean call Hamish "an interfering bastard"?
7. Why do you think Hamish thought that had Trixie Thomas still been alive, he might have murdered her himself?

## UNIT 12

The Patels' shop was in darkness, but Hamish went around the side and mounted the stairs that led to the flat over the shop. After some time, Mrs. Patel, wearing a bright red sari, answered the door.

“Och, Mr. Macbeth,” she said impatiently, “what d’you want at this time o’ night?”

It always surprised Hamish to hear a Scottish accent emitting from such exotic features. He said he wanted to speak to her husband and Mrs. Patel reluctantly let him in. Their living-room was bright and gaudy with a three-piece plush suite in bright red, still covered with the plastic casing it had been delivered in. A huge display of plastic tulips in a woven gilt basket sat on a carved table top, which was supported by four carved elephants. Everything smelled strongly of curry. Mr. Patel came in. He was a small brown man with liquid brown eyes and a beak of a nose.

“Evening, Mr. Macbeth,” he said. “Will you be having a wee dram?”

“Not tonight. Mr. Patel, you were asked if you had sold any rat poison and you said you hadn’t and yet Mrs. Maclean told me she had bought some here a year ago. It’s called Dead-O.”

“I thought you meant recently! Aye, I got about two dozen from a wholesaler in Strathbane a year ago. Used it myself. No’ very good. Didn’t even slow them up.”

“You realize what this means?” said Hamish gloomily. “Blair will want me to go around every house in the village tomorrow collecting cans of rat poison.”

“Keep you out of trouble,” said Mr. Patel with a grin. “Why bother yer heid about Blair anyways? That man’s a pillock.”

“A pillock who is senior to me in rank. Now, Mr. Patel, I don’t suppose you can remember who bought it?”

“I can remember Mrs. Wellington had a can for the mice in the church. I hadn’t any mouse poison and she didn’t want traps so she said she’d try the rat stuff. Then there was Mrs. Brodie, the doctor’s wife. Mice, too.”

“Anyone else?”

“Let me see. Oh, I ken. The estate agent for the Willets, them that used to own the Thomases’ place. It had been standing empty for so long that they were getting rats in, or so they thought.”

Hamish thanked him and then phoned and left a message for Blair about the rat poison. Then he went to see John Parker, who told him that Miss Halburton-Smythe

had phoned and had invited him up to the castle at ten in the morning. Hamish knew Blair would have him searching for all those other cans of poison, but that would give him a good excuse to read that manuscript John Parker had been so anxious to hide.

He said good night and then made his way back along the waterfront to the pub. An ordinary common or garden Scottish Highland drunk would come as a relief.

## Chapter 6

I am silent in the club,  
I am silent in the pub,  
I am silent on a bally peak in Darien;  
For I stuff away for life.  
Shoving peas in with a knife,  
Because I am at heart a Vegetarian.  
No more the milk of cows.  
Shall pollute my private house.  
Than the milk of the wild mares of the Barbarian;  
I will stick to port and sherry,  
For they are so very, very.  
So very, very, very Vegetarian.  
—G. K. Chesterton.

It was the detective Jimmy Anderson who arrived at the police station first thing in the morning with the expected orders from Blair to search the village for rat poison. “Anything left in that bottle?” he said hopefully. “At eight o’clock in the morning!” exclaimed Hamish. “Come back later. Is Blair all ready to meet the press?”

“He’s blinding and blasting but he’s got his Sunday suit on and his hair all slicked down about his horrible ears,” said Anderson with a grin.

Hamish shut Towser out in the garden and set off. Mrs. Wellington, the minister’s wife, was his first call. She was in her kitchen. Her husband was poking

distastefully at a bowl of muesli with his spoon. “Sit down,” ordered Mrs. Wellington when she saw Hamish, “and I’ll give you a cup of coffee.”

Hamish sat down at the kitchen table. “That’s a good, healthy breakfast,” said Hamish to the minister. Mr. Wellington put down his spoon with a sigh. “I cannot think starvation is good for anyone,” he said. “I feel like a child again – if you don’t eat it, you won’t get anything else.”

“Well, that’s the road to the Kingdom of Heaven,” said Hamish cheerfully. “You know, become like a little child again.”

“Don’t quote the scriptures to me, Macbeth,” said the minister testily. “Why are you here?”

Mrs. Wellington put a mug of coffee in front of Hamish. He took a sip and coughed. “I am here to look for a rat poison called Dead-O. What is this coffee, Mrs. Wellington?”

“It’s dandelion coffee. Mrs. Thomas showed me how to make it.”

Hamish sadly pushed his mug away.

“You see what I mean?” said the minister. “Why not stay for lunch? We’re having nettle soup.”

Hamish ignored him. “The rat poison,” he said. “You bought some from Patel about a year ago. You had the mice.”

“So we did,” called Mrs. Wellington over one large tweed shoulder. She was scrubbing dishes in the sink with ferocious energy. “Not very good. I think the mice just left of their own accord.”

“Have you any of the stuff left?” asked Hamish patiently.

“No, I threw it out months ago.”

“You are sure?”

Mrs. Wellington turned around and put her soapy hands on her hips. “I am not in the habit of lying, Mr. Macbeth.”

“I’d better go and try somewhere else,” said Hamish, getting to his feet.

“Oh, but you haven’t had your coffee,” said the minister sweetly.

“It’s all rush.” Hamish picked up his hat and headed for the kitchen door. The

minister followed him outside. “When is it all going to end?” he asked mournfully. “I dream of large T-bone steaks and mounds of fried potatoes. You know, Mr. Macbeth, I think all that wretched Thomas woman did was give the women of Lochdubh an opportunity to persecute their husbands. There’s a strong bullying streak in women, lying down in there, always waiting to be tapped.”

“Perhaps when the murder is solved, they’ll all go back to normal,” said Hamish. “When’s the funeral?”

“It’s today, at three this afternoon.”

“It surprises me to know Mrs. Thomas was a member of the Church of Scotland.”

“She wasn’t,” said the minister. “She wasn’t a member of anything. But her husband wants her to have a Christian burial.”

“Are any of her family from England going to be present?”

“No. That’s the odd thing. Her parents are dead and she had no sisters or brothers, but usually someone has some sort of aunt or uncle or friend who would like to come along. Perhaps she was unpopular.”

“Yes,” said Hamish slowly. “I think if she had lived, she would have gradually become very unpopular here. Mind you, someone hated her enough to murder her. Did she get any furniture from you, any ornaments?”

“Yes,” said Mr. Wellington, growing angry. “We had a Victorian ewer and basin that belonged to my grandparents. My wife gave her that. I was furious. Those things are valuable these days.”

Hamish stood for a moment, looking across the rain pocked loch. “While I’m searching for rat poison,” he said, “I may as well try to find out if she got her hands on anything really valuable.”

“An as yet unrecognized Rembrandt?” said the minister. “It was amazing what she sot out of people when you consider that the dealers are always calling around these old croft houses and village houses in the hope of a bargain. Why, old Mrs. MacGowan on the other side has been plagued by dealers for years but she’s too crafty to let anything go. Mrs. Thomas was going to call on her. I wonder whether she

was successful or not?”

Hamish had not called on Mrs. MacGowan for some time. She was a lonely, crusty old woman and he did not enjoy visiting her, but felt it his duty to call in on her from time to time and make sure she was well. She could easily drop dead one of these days, he reflected, and no-one would know.

“I’d better be on my way,” Hamish said, taking out a stick of repellent and wiping his face with it, “before the midges make a meal of me. Blair will be in a bad temper. The attempted murder of Angus Macdonald is bound to bring the press in hordes.”

“I wouldn’t be too sure of that,” said the minister. “Angus was interviewed by television and several newspapers before the last election for his prediction. He got it all wrong and since then no-one outside Lochdubh has shown any interest in him. Do you think he really saw something?”

“Yes,” said Hamish. “For once in his lying life, I think he must have actually had some sort of forewarning.”

He made several more calls in his search for rat poison and then at ten o’clock, he made his way to The Laurels. Paul was chopping logs. He was fatter, his stomach hanging over his trouser belt as he bent to his work. When Hamish said he was going to take a look at John Parker’s room but did not want the writer to know, Paul answered with an indifferent shrug and went on with his work.

Hamish climbed the uncarpeted staircase to John Parker’s room. In Victorian times when the villa had been built the stairs would have been thickly carpeted and the rooms over-furnished. There was a bleak air about it now, a smell of pine and disinfectant and wood smoke and cheap soap, rather like a youth hostel.

John Parker’s room was not locked. Hamish opened the door and went inside. There was no sign of that suitcase but he found it eventually on top of the wardrobe and lifted it down. He opened it and took out the pile of manuscript. He sat down on the bed and started to skim quickly through ‘The Amazon Women of Zar.’

Hamish reflected he had read some silly stories in the past, but this took the biscuit. The men were the slaves of the women and there were several colourful

purple passages about how the men were called in each night of the full moons – Zar had five moons – and made to have sex with the women. He yawned and read on. Then the hero, Luke Jensen, who, like the Luke Mulligan of the Western, also had a craggy face, got hold of the rare and forbidden plant, Xytha, which was guarded by a three-headed monster, Zilka, and brewed a poison from it which killed the leader of the Amazon women, whereupon her bossy acolytes turned into nubile брачный blonde bimbos, cooing over the men, and thanking Luke for having turned them back into ‘real women’ again.

Hamish put down the manuscript. Had Trixie been John’s Amazon woman? The leader of the women bore a startling resemblance to Trixie although she wore a brass brassiere and chain and leather loincloth instead of unbleached linen smock, blue jeans, and sneakers.

He carefully returned the manuscript to the suitcase and the suitcase to the top of the wardrobe and went downstairs. Mrs. Kennedy was in the kitchen with her pallid children.

“I thought you would have been allowed home by now,” said Hamish.

“Aye, we’re going in a couple o’ days,” said Mrs. Kennedy. “I decided to stay on. I’m no’ payin’ rent and the fresh air’s good for the bairns.”

“I’m sure you’ve told the CID this already,” said Hamish. “But what brought you here? I know Mrs. Thomas advertised in the *Glasgow Herald*.”

“I phoned up the Sutherland tourist board,” said Mrs. Kennedy, “and they told me this new place was cheap.”

“What does your husband do, Mrs. Kennedy?”

“I haven’t got one,” she said cheerfully.

“Then, what does the father of your children do?”

“Which father?” she said with a coarse laugh. “I cannot remember them all.”

“You shouldn’t say such things in front o’ the children,” said Hamish furiously.

“Ach, take yoursel’ off, your damp soda scone,” jeered Mrs. Kennedy.

And Hamish did that, cursing himself for having wasted his time trying to appeal to the finer feelings of what was surely a Glaswegian prostitute. Despite the

regeneration of that city, Glasgow still had some of the ugliest prostitutes in the world, and Mrs. Kennedy probably shoved her bulk into a corset on Saturday nights and her swollen feet into high heels and trawled the pubs looking for someone blind drunk enough to buy her services.

He decided to drive up to Tommel Castle and get the key to Mrs. Haggerty's cottage and try to find out if Trixie had found anything valuable. It was only when he drove up and parked in the front of the castle that he realized with amazement and with a sharp sense of loss that his mind was totally on the case and he was not hoping for a meeting with Priscilla.

But Colonel Halburton-Smythe did not know that. He said with obvious relish that Priscilla was out in the grounds somewhere with Mr. Parker, and handed over the cottage key.

Hamish hesitated. "I would like to ask you again – what was your opinion of Mrs. Thomas?" he asked.

"I've already told your superior officers all I know," snapped the colonel and turned away.

Hamish went out and drove over to Mrs. Haggerty's cottage. It had an abandoned, lost air about it. He unlocked the door and went in. There was an old-fashioned kitchen with a box bed in a recess, a small dark hall, a living-room crammed with furniture and knickknacks and photographs, and a toilet. No bathroom. Although he knew very little about antiques, Hamish was sure there was nothing of value left in the crowded living-room. There were sepia photographs on the walls and on the tables of men with walrus moustaches and women in enormous hats. Mrs. Haggerty had died at the age of ninety-eight and had not left a surviving relative behind, or any that anyone knew of. Still, the colonel should not have allowed Trixie to take anything until it became absolutely sure that no-one was left to inherit the bits and pieces. And there were many of those. Mrs. Haggerty had obviously found it hard to throw anything away. There were cupboards full of old Christmas cards and magazines and recipes and jam jars and bottles.

There was even a bundle of fly papers, brown and smooth to the touch. He

wondered whether their stickiness had vanished with age.

He heard a sound outside and then the door of the living-room opened and Priscilla walked in. She looked cool and neat in a white silk blouse and tweed skirt, sheer tights, and polished brogues. As usual, her bright hair fell in a smooth curve to her shoulders and the calm oval of her face was luminous in the gloom of the cottage parlour.

“Thank goodness Parker has left,” she said. “Gave me the creeps. Oily little man.”

Hamish looked at her with interest. “I thought he was quite ordinary and pleasant. What’s up with him?”

“Oh, he’s perfectly polite, but too polite, if you know what I mean. Kept thanking me and thanking me and saying what a lot of trouble he must be putting me to until I felt like smacking him, like a fly, splat!”

“You should read about the strong silent men in his books,” said Hamish, “with their whipcord muscles and their craggy faces softening with tenderness.”

“Inside every weak man there’s a macho man who only gets out on paper?” said Priscilla with a laugh. “I know a woman in London who writes romances and hasn’t got one romantic thought in her mind off paper. Oh, look at this old photograph. What splendid hats the women wore then.”

Did Priscilla ever have any romantic thoughts, Hamish wondered, studying her as she bent her head over the framed photograph she had picked up. And yet, she had had an inner glow when John Burlington had been around.

“Heard from that Burlington fellow?” he asked.

“Mmm? Oh, yes, he writes and phones regularly. He seems to be making tons of money.”

“And you like that?”

“I admire successful people, and talking about success, how’s the case going, Sherlock?”

“I’m still groping about in the dark,” said Hamish mournfully.

“Suspects,” said Priscilla briskly. “There’s the husband, Paul. All that shattering

grief could be an act.”

“Aye, and then there’s Parker. Sneaky and weak enough to use poison. Who else?”

“Well, there’s poor Dr. Brodie. He’s been drinking a lot recently. Looks miserable. Says he feels his wife has been taken over by a creature from another planet.”

“Archie Maclean or Mrs. Maclean,” said Hamish. “Trixie Thomas ruined that marriage.”

“And there’s Iain Gunn.”

“What, over a lot o’ wee bats?”

“The bats are no more. You should have servants, Hamish. An endless source of useful gossip. It fell down last night, Gunn says.”

“Then he probably did it himself and I’ll have the devil of a job proving it,” said Hamish. “But he wouldn’t kill just to get a wee bit more land.”

“Oh, yes he would. Or rather, that’s the gossip. He craves land and more land. You know what land greed’s like.”

“Fair enough, but I thought all that talk about Gunn’s greed was just caused by jealousy. Maybe they could be right. Either there’s someone else we haven’t thought of or that’s the lot o’ suspects.”

“Has Mrs. Kennedy’s background been gone into?”

“It would have been and if there had been anything there, Anderson would have told me.”

“Well, there’s Angus Macdonald.”

“Why him?”

“Look at it this way.” Priscilla leaned forward eagerly and he caught a whiff of French perfume. “He lost face over that wrong prediction about the general election. He could have poisoned that whisky himself.”

“And killed Trixie Thomas first? Come on, Priscilla.”

“I suppose it is rather far-fetched. But he could still have poisoned that whisky. I mean, Hamish, you don’t believe in the second sight, do you?”

“Yes, I do. I think there’s a handful of people who get a brief insight about something that’s going to happen about once in their lives. It’s hard to prove. So many people say after a disaster or a death that they had a premonition.”

“Where are you off to now?” asked Priscilla in surprise as Hamish made for the door.

“I’m off to continue to look for cans of rat poison called Dead-O. Could you ask the housekeeper if she ever bought any? Here’s the key for the cottage.”

He raised his hand in farewell and walked out. Priscilla crossed to the window and watched him go. She felt a little sad that Hamish did not seem to show the old eagerness to be in her company.

## TASK 12

### 1. Match the words to their definitions and learn them:

1) gaudy	a) receive (money, property, or a title) as an heir at the death of the previous holder
2) reluctant	b) use or expend carelessly, extravagantly, or to no purpose
3) deliver	c) feel a powerful desire for something
4) quote	d) having an even and regular surface; free from perceptible projections, lumps, or indentations
5) chop	e) a person who is legally owned by someone else and has to work for that person
6) slave	f) to take goods, letters, parcels, etc. to people's houses or places of work
7) waste	g) mention or refer to someone or something to provide evidence or authority for a statement or opinion
8) inherit	h) cut something into pieces with repeated sharp blows of an axe or knife
9) smooth	i) bright in a vulgar way
10) crave	j) not willing to do something and therefore slow to do it

2. *Build up situations based on the context around the following words and expressions using them in your answer:*

to give an excuse to do smth, to come as a relief, to have smth on, of one's own accord, to be in the habit of doing smth, to be present, to let smth go, to be bound to do smth, to take a look at smb. or smth., to go on with smth, to take the biscuit, get hold of + to be guarded by smb, to bear a resemblance to smb, to appeal to smth/smb, one's mind totally on smth, to keep doing smth, to grope about in the dark, to be caused by smth/smb.

3. *Make up a story with some of the above mentioned words (up to 10 sentences).*

4. *Find the English equivalents to the following words in the fragment:*

оптовик, похмуро, старший за званням, з огидою, роздратовано (у запалі), стейк на кісті (челогач), цінний, підступний (хитрий) (2 слова), сварливий, впасти замертво, з надлишком меблів, воркувати, блідий, з раптово нахлинувшою гіркотою втрати, мати занедбаний вигляд, кидати в дрож (викликати відразу), світилася зсередини, отримувати звістки від когось, джерело пліток, неймовірно важка робота, «притягнутий за вуха», передчуття, підняти руку в прощальному жесті.

5. *You've already come across 3 English equivalents to the idiom 'kunimu від злості, рвати і метати'. Can you identify another one in the fragment?*

6. *Answer the following questions:*

1. Was Mrs. Patel glad to see Hamish? What was it that always surprised Hamish when she spoke to her?
2. What information did Hamish manage to fish out of Mr. Patel?
3. What kind of food did Mrs. Wellington serve to her husband and how did he feel about it? Did Hamish like the coffee he was treated to?
4. Had Trixie get any furniture from the Wellingtons?
5. Did Hamish have a pleasant conversation with Mrs. Kennedy? Why hadn't she left by that time?
6. What was Priscilla's opinion of John Parker?

7. Whom did Hamish and Priscilla consider to be the suspects?
8. Did Hamish show the old eagerness to be in Priscilla's company?

### UNIT 13

Hamish drove into the village and parked outside the Brodies' house.

Angela was in the kitchen, sitting at the table, reading something. He brightened, thinking she had returned to her old ways until he saw she was reading a recipe for vegetarian lasagne.

"I came to ask you if you bought some rat poison called Dead-O about a year ago," said Hamish.

"No, we've never had rats. Wait a bit. We had mice and I bought some rat poison."

"Have you still got it?"

"Come out to the shed and we'll have a look."

He followed her into the garden. The shed was scrubbed and clean. All the cans of pesticide on the shelf about the door were gleaming, and forks and hoes and spades were all polished as well.

"I'm proud of this," said Angela. "I gave it a good clean out only the other day."

Hamish took out a handkerchief and gently lifted down a can of Dead-O. He twisted open the top. It was half full.

"You used a lot," he said.

"I hate mice. Nasty things. Of course, I was slapdash then, I never read the instructions, just put down saucers of the stuff all over the place. It certainly got rid of the mice. Now, is there anything else? I'm very busy."

"You'll be going to the funeral," said Hamish.

"Yes, of...of course."

Hamish touched his cap. "I'll see you there."

Everyone had turned out for Trixie Thomas's funeral, even Mrs. Kennedy and her brood. The church was noisy with the sound of women weeping as Mr. Wellington read the service and grew louder as the congregation followed the coffin

to the graveside in the churchyard on the hill above the church.

Paul Thomas was being supported by two of the men from the village and looked on the point of collapse. Dr. Brodie was standing beside Hamish. "I'd better give that man a sedative and put him to bed as soon as this is over," he said.

"I'd look to your wife as well," said Hamish. "She's in a bad way."

The doctor's face hardened. "Silly bitch," he said viciously and Hamish wondered whether he meant Trixie Thomas or his wife.

After the graveside service was over, everyone went to The Laurels where Mrs. Wellington was presiding over the funeral baked meats. Whisky was poured out all round and gradually the atmosphere began to lighten. One man told a joke, another capped it, and soon the gathering began to sound like a party.

The men of the village were glad that Trixie Thomas had been laid to rest.

Hamish saw Iain Gunn and went over to join him. "I'm surprised to see you here," said Hamish.

"I never miss a funeral," said Iain, taking another glass of whisky from a selection of full glasses on a table.

"I hear that old building of yours mysteriously fell down," said Hamish.

"Aye, providential that. I'll have no more trouble from the bird people."

"But you'll have trouble from me," said Hamish. "I have to investigate that building and make sure you didn't do anything to it to make it collapse."

"Wouldn't you be better off finding the murderer than harassing a poor farmer over some flying rats?" sneered Iain. "But you'll find nothing, I can assure you o' that."

"Did a good job on it, did you?" said Hamish cynically.

Blair came rolling up, a glass in one meaty hand. "Listen, copper," he snarled, "have yet got all these cans o' rat poison yet?"

"No, I'm still looking."

"In the bottom o' a glass? Hop to it, sonny."

Iain Gunn sniggered as Hamish left.

Hamish walked around The Laurels and went in the door at the back. The small

Kennedy child called Susie was eating a huge lump of cake.

“Bad for your teeth,” said Hamish.

“Get lost,” said the child, her voice muffled by the cake. He made for the door and she said, “or give me some money for sweeties.”

“No,” said Hamish. “Not a penny will you get. Didn’t Mrs. Thomas put you all on a vegetarian diet?”

“Naw, only her man. She couldnae risk scaring off her lodgers with that rubbishy stuff, my maw says. Went on and on about sugar bein’ bad and stuffing her face with cakes the whole time when she thought nobody was looking.” Her sharp face took on an evil, gloating look. “Want to know what she and her man got up to in the bedroom?”

“No, I do not,” said Hamish roundly and made his way through the door from the kitchen that led into the main body of the house. He edged back into the sitting-room where the funeral reception was being held in time to see Blair taking his leave. He waited a moment and then edged his way into the room and called loudly for silence. They all turned to face him. Priscilla was there, he noticed. Of course, she would be. It was expected of her. She was wearing a black dress and a small black hat.

“I am looking for cans of a stuff called Dead-O,” said Hamish. “Patel was selling it a year ago. It’s a rat poison. If you have any, bring it along to the police station as soon as you can.”

Mrs. Wellington bustled up, looking outraged. “How dare you make such an announcement at a funeral?” she demanded. “It’s mercy poor Mr. Thomas has gone to lie down.”

“I have to find those cans of poison,” said Hamish patiently. “Pretty much the whole of Lochdubh is in here. It saves me going all around the houses.” By evening, he was satisfied with the result. He had fifteen cans of rat poison in front of him. Not a bad haul out of the two dozen that had been sold a year ago. The cans were all neatly labelled by Hamish with the name of the person who had bought it.

Dr. Brodie stood in the doorway of the kitchen and surveyed first his wife and

then his dinner. Salad with goat cheese. He had told her and told her he could not eat such food and she had told him that she was not going to poison him by serving him with greasy steaks and chips any more. She was as hard as flint.

He felt he was not addressing Angela but some strange creature who had invaded his home.

“I want a divorce,” he said.

Angela looked startled. “Don’t be silly. Don’t you realize I am doing all this for you? The healthy food, the clean house, no wine or spirits?”

“You’re doing it because you are a nasty little bully like your friend, Trixie. I’m glad someone poisoned her. I hope she had a bad time dying. I’ve phoned Pollet, the lawyer, in Strathbane already and told him to draw up the divorce papers.”

Angela’s face was as white as paper. “On what grounds?” she demanded.

“Breakdown of marriage. Oh, well, thank goodness the hotel’s gone back to old-fashioned cooking. Good night, *dear*”.

Dr. Brodie walked along to the hotel. He did not feel anything much at all. His wife had died some time ago, as far as he was concerned, and he was merely getting divorced from the domestic monster who had taken her place. There was something lightening about the idea that that Trixie woman was six feet under. “Pushing up organic daisies,” he said, and began to laugh.

“What’s the joke?” asked Police Constable Hamish Macbeth. He, too, was heading towards the hotel, carrying a box of eggs under his arm.

“Come and celebrate,” said the doctor. “I’ve just phoned Strathbane and arranged for the divorce papers to be drawn up.”

## Chapter 7

The common cormorant or shag  
Lays eggs inside a paper bag.  
The reason you will see no doubt.  
It is to keep the lightning out.

But what these unobservant birds.  
Have never noticed is that herds.  
Of wandering bears may come with buns.  
And steal the bags to hold the crumbs.

—Anon

Look,” said Hamish awkwardly, “I know you have had the hard time, but couldn’t you wait a bit?”

“No,” said the doctor, “I’ve made up my mind.”

“Aren’t you being a bit hard on Mrs. Brodie? Have you ever considered she might be suffering from the menopause? Women go a bit odd then.”

Dr. Brodie snorted. “That’s all a lot of cobblers. It’s all in the mind. Women have been told they go odd at the menopause and use it as an excuse.”

“Well, you’re the doctor, but there’s been an awful lot about it in the newspapers lately,” said Hamish. “And there’s been an awful lot about lazy National Health doctors who don’t keep up with the latest research. I know Mrs. Thomas was an awful woman, but the trouble with her was a lot of the things she said were right. You know smoking’s bad for people and high cholesterol food’s bad for people...”

“I’ve never had a day’s illness in my life,” snapped the doctor. “It was being treated like a child that I couldn’t bear. Eat your greens, pah! No sudden rush into vegetarianism. Coax the child with smaller and smaller portions of meat and larger and larger bowls of salad, until it’s only salad with the occasional nut cutlet thrown in for comic relief. She even served me dandelion coffee but I took the lot and threw it in the loch. Don’t interfere in my life. I’ve made up my mind and that’s that.”

The television screen above the bar flickered into life. Angus Macdonald’s face beamed down on them. He began to tell a highly embroidered account of his vision.

“I didn’t think they’d bother with Angus, considering he got the election results wrong,” said Hamish.

“Too good a story,” said Dr. Brodie, “They were all up at the hotel today and then they went on up to Angus’s cottage. He’ll be drunk for a month.”

Angus’s image faded, to be replaced by the strong features of Mrs. Wellington.

“Mrs. Thomas was the perfect wife,” said Mrs. Wellington. “She brought new life into the village. No-one here wished her ill. It must have been some maniac from outside.”

“Join me for dinner,” offered Dr. Brodie, draining his glass.

Hamish shook his head. “Why don’t you take your wife? You used to do that. Wouldn’t it be a good idea to sit down and discuss this divorce like a couple of grownups?”

Dr. Brodie sighed. “Maybe you’re right. I’ll see.”

Hamish looked around the bar. Bert Hook, the crofter, was getting very drunk. Hamish went over and removed his car keys and told him to collect them at the police station in the morning.

He went outside and walked along the waterfront, wishing with all his heart that the murderer could be found and that the village could return to its normal quiet. He loved his peaceful, uneventful life in a way that Priscilla, say, could never understand. In fact, this was not the age when anyone could understand an unambitious man. The night was calm and still and a full moon floated through the clouds.

“Hamish?”

Hamish stopped and looked down at the man in front of him. Hamish had been so engrossed in his thoughts the man had not seen him approach. He was small and dapper, wearing a good tweed jacket and flannels, collar and tie. He had neat, clever features and thin hair.

“Good evening,” said Hamish cautiously.

“Don’t you recognize me?”

Hamish slowly shook his head.

“It’s me. Harry. Harry Drummond!”

“Neffers!” Hamish turned Harry round so that the light on the harbour wall fell full on his face. “Harry Drummond,” he marvelled.

For Harry had been the village drunk before he left to go to Inverness to get treatment. He had been a swollen, hairy bundle of evil-smelling rags when Hamish

had seen him last.

“You’ve changed beyond recognition,” said Hamish. “Are you back here again?”

“No, I’ve got a good job as a bricklayer in Inverness.”

“You’ll be taking the wife down there to live with you, then?”

“No, Hamish. The fact is, she wants a divorce.”

Hamish stared at him in amazement. Phyllis Drummond’s devotion to her drunken husband had been the talk of the village. She stood by him through thick and thin, taking on cleaning jobs to keep food on the table, suffering the occasional beating with never a word of complaint.

“But why?” asked Hamish. “Is the whole of Lochdubh going in for divorce? Man, she should be delighted with you the way you are now, and you with a good job and all.”

“No, she ups and says she cannot stand me, that I was better when I was on the drink. Women! I’ve been up here trying to get her to change her mind but she willnae listen.”

They both turned as D. Brodie came running up. “She’s gone,” he panted. “Angela’s gone.”

“Mrs. Brodie’s probably up at the church hall at one of her meetings,” said Hamish soothingly.

“No, I’m telling you, she’s gone. She’s smashed up the kitchen and she’s gone.”

“I’ll phone for reinforcements and then I’ll look for her,” said Hamish. “Harry, go round and get all the men in the village.”

He ran back to the police station and phoned Strathbane. Then he got in his Land Rover with Towser beside him and drove off. Clouds had covered the moon and the night was pitch black. Where on earth should he begin to look for her? In the loch? On the moors? In the sea?

He searched all night, unwilling to give up although reinforcements had arrived from Strathbane and policemen were combing the lochside and policemen and villagers were fanned out over the moors and a police helicopter hummed overhead.

The next morning was sunny although the air was still heavy and damp and the sunlight had that threatening, glaring look which heralded bad weather to come.

He finally stopped the Land Rover and stared bleakly through the windscreen. If Angela Brodie were suicidal, then where would she go? Or if she were merely badly distressed, where would she go to put a distance between herself and her husband? He looked up at the twisting, soaring peaks of the Two Sisters, the giant mountains above Lochdubh. He left Towser fast asleep in the car and began to climb.

Bees droned in the heather and heather flies danced in the sleepy air. Up he went through the heather and bracken. He took off his jersey and laid it down on a rock and put his cap on top of it. He rolled up the sleeves of his blue shirt and set off again. Once, when he had been very upset by Priscilla – how long ago and far away that seemed now! – he had climbed high above the village to a ledge of rock to sit and be alone with his misery. It was a chance, a slim chance, that Angela Brodie might have chosen the same route. The ground rose steeply and he sweated in the warm air. Midges stung his face as his sweat washed the repellent from it. For an hour he toiled upwards towards where he remembered the ledge to be. His disappointment was sharp when he at last reached it and found no-one there. He sat down, unshaven and exhausted. Below him he could see the small figures of the searching police on the moors and then, as he watched, a van drove up to the harbour and frogmen got out. He was so very tired. His head swam and he longed to lie down and sleep. But somewhere in all the miles of mountain and moor and loch was Angela Brodie.

And then his eyes sharpened. A tiny figure was struggling down far below the ledge. He leapt to his feet and tumbled down from the ledge and began to run. His feet went from under him and he slithered down, grabbing at heather roots to break his fall. At last he stopped and stood up, panting, and looked wildly around. There was the figure still below him and staggering on from side to side like a drunk.

His long legs bore him towards that fleeing figure until with a feeling of pure gladness he saw that it was Angela Brodie. A final burst of speed brought him up to her and he flung himself on her and brought her down onto the heather.

He sat up and turned her over. Her face was swollen with crying.

“Come along,” he said gently. “You’re in a bad way.”

“Can’t go back,” she said drearily.

“We all have to go back to it sometime,” he said. “Come along. I’ve got a flask of brandy in the Rover.”

He helped her to her feet. She made an effort to pull herself away and then collapsed in a heap at his feet. He picked her up in his arms and carried her down towards where the Land Rover was parked. He laid her down in the shade of it and got the flask of brandy from the glove compartment and forced it between her lips. She spluttered and her eyes opened.

“That’s better,” said Hamish. “Now, you’ll soon be home.”

“I don’t w-want to go home,” she said. Tears spilled down her cheeks. He took out a handkerchief and wiped them away.

He gathered her in his arms and stroked her hair. “There, there,” he said. “Tell Hamish all about it.”

“John wants a divorce.”

“That’s what he says, but men often say things in a temper they don’t mean.”

“He meant it. John never says anything he doesn’t mean.”

“Maybe not before. But you gave the man every reason to lose his temper. He wasn’t divorcing you, but Trixie. He wasn’t living with you, but Trixie. You even tried to look like the woman.”

She shivered despite the heat. “I feel so lost and empty,” she wailed.

“That’s maybe a good sign. You feel a bit empty when an obsession’s left you,” said Hamish, thinking of Priscilla.

“You see, Trixie seemed to have all the answers,” said Angela mournfully. “I’ve felt so useless for years. I go down to Glasgow or Edinburgh or even Inverness and people say, what do you do, and I say, I’m a housewife, and they say, is that *all*? Trixie said that housewifery was a noble art and if it were done properly then it could be very satisfying. I got a high from all the work and all the committees. It was like being drunk. She praised me and no-one had done that in ages. She told me John was

killing himself with his cigarettes and cheap wine and greasy meals. I Move John.”

“He seemed awfy happy with you the way you were,” said Hamish, still gently stroking her hair. “Come on back with me.”

She twisted away from him. “I can’t.”

He looked at her thoughtfully. There was more up with Angela Brodie than the sudden loss of her adopted personality.

“You think your husband killed Trixie,” he said flatly.

She went very still.

“Look, I felt like killing her myself,” said Hamish. “But I didn’t do it.”

“*Yet each man kills the thing he loves*”, quoted Angela drearily.

He looked at her oddly. “You’re really in a bad way. Home and bed for you.”

“But there’s a meeting of the bird society tonight. Lord Glenbader, the Duke of Anstey’s son, is bringing over some specimens from the castle collection!”

“I’ll see to it myself.”

Hamish rose and snapped his fingers and Towser leapt into the back. He helped Angela into the Land Rover. He ran back up the hillside and collected his jersey and cap. Clouds were covering the sky and the wind had a chill edge to it now. He took a flare gun out of the back of the Land Rover and fired it into the sky and watched for a moment while one green star hung against the tumbling black clouds to tell the searchers below that Angela Brodie had been found.

Mrs. Wellington and two of the village women arrived at Dr. Brodie’s and silently began to clean up the shattered mess of the kitchen, sweeping up shards of crockery and glass, wiping up the mess of flour and coffee grounds and broken jars of jam from the floor.

Hamish helped them, putting the broken glass and china into cartons, taping it up and driving it off to the council tip. When he returned, Mrs. Wellington was taking mugs out of a box and hanging them up on the hooks. “Poor Mrs. Brodie didn’t leave anything to drink out of,” she said, “and I had these put by for the church sale. Put on the kettle, Mr. Macbeth, and we’ll have a cup of tea.”

“Is it just the kitchen she wrecked?” asked Hamish. He opened a cupboard and

took out a can of cat food and two cans of dog food to feed the family pets.

“No, come and look in the living room.”

Hamish put down the can opener and followed her into the other room. The mirror above the fireplace had been smashed.

“Couldnae stand the sight of herself,” he said mournfully.

“Havers ,” said the minister’s wife, who had no time for psychology, “she was probably drunk.”

They returned to the kitchen. Hamish fed the spaniels and the cat and put the kettle on. Dr. Brodie came downstairs from the bedroom. “How is she?” asked Hamish.

“Sleeping,” he said wearily. “Will this misery never end?”

“Be very kind to her when she wakes,” said Hamish anxiously. “If she’s still in a bad way, you might consider taking her down to Strathbane for some therapy or something like that.”

“I don’t believe in all that rubbish. If everyone just pulled themselves together and got on with life, there would be no time for crackpot psychiatrists.”

“For a village doctor, you’re a walking disaster,” said Hamish crossly. “I am glad I am never ill. What would you prescribe? Eye of newt?”

“Leave the doctor alone,” ordered Mrs. Wellington. “Have you no feelings?”

Hamish went out and left them to it. He headed for the police station, dying for sleep. Then he saw the press standing outside it, interviewing Blair.

He swore under his breath and drove straight past. Blair saw him and shouted something but Hamish was too tired to care. He drove up to Tommel Castle. As he swung in at the gates, he saw one of the gamekeepers and stopped and rolled down the window. “Colonel at home?” he asked.

“No,” said the gamekeeper. “Himself and the wife has gone to Inverness.”

“Good,” said Hamish and drove on to the castle entrance.

Jenkins would dearly have loved to tell him that Priscilla was not at home but the young lady had given him such a ribbing about lying to Hamish that he did not dare. Priscilla came running down the stairs and stopped short at the sight of Hamish.

“You look awful,” she said. “What’s happened to you?”

“It’s Angela Brodie,” said Hamish, stifling a yawn. “She’s cracked. But she’s back home in bed now.”

“Oh, you found her. I heard she had gone missing. How is she?”

“Physically, she’s all right. I hope her mind’s in better shape when she wakes up. I need sleep, Priscilla, and Blair’s at the police station. Can you spare me a bed for an hour?”

“Yes, I’ll take you up to one of the guest rooms. Where’s Towser?”

“In the car.”

“Wait here. I’ll fetch him.”

Soon Towser came lolloping in at her heels. She led master and dog up the shadowy staircase and into a guest room and turned down the blankets. “There’s a bathroom through there, Hamish, and you’ll find disposable razors in the cabinet. There are clean towels and everything. John was hoping to fly up. He’s got his own helicopter now. But he couldn’t make it. Put your shirt and underwear outside the door and I’ll have them washed for you. When do you want up?”

“Give me two hours,” said Hamish. “Oh, Priscilla, there’s that damn bird society tonight. I told Mrs. Brodie I’d run it for her, Lord Glenbader’s coming to give a talk.”

“You amaze me, Hamish. He doesn’t preserve birds except under aspic.”

“I know, he’s a pill. But I have a feeling there won’t be much of an audience. People are losing interest in all these societies and committees. Could you round up a few people?”

“Certainly. I’ll get on the phone right away. Now, go to bed.”

She went out and closed the door. Hamish removed his clothes and put his underwear and shirt outside the door and then climbed into bed. Towser leapt on the bed and stretched out across his feet. “Get down,” ordered Hamish sleepily. Towser rolled his eyes and stayed where he was.

### **TASK 13**

*1. Match the words to their definitions and learn them:*

1) collapse	a) to take something or someone away from somewhere, or off something
2) join	b) to enter an area of activity in a forceful and noticeable way
3) harass	c) a usually large amount of something that has been stolen or is illegal
4) dare	d) to destroy or badly damage something
5) haul	e) liquid that forms on your skin when you are hot
6) address	f) the failure or end of something such as communication or a relationship
7) invade	g) to get involved in an activity or journey with another person or group
8) remove	h) to speak or write directly to
9) marvel	i) to be brave enough to do something difficult or dangerous, or to be rude or silly enough to do something that you have no right to do
10) sweat	j) to keep annoying or upsetting someone, for example by criticizing them, attacking them, or treating them in a way that is offensive to them
11) breakdown	k) to fall down suddenly because of pressure or having no strength or support
12) wreck	l) to show or experience great surprise or admiration

2. *Build up situations based on the context around the following words and expressions using them in your answer:*

to give smth. (a place) a good clean + the other day, to get rid of smth./smb., presiding over + to cap a joke, to be laid to rest, to take one's leave, to draw up papers + to get divorced from smb., to be hard on smb. + to use smth. as an excuse + to keep up with smb./smth., to wish smb. ill, to be engrossed in one's thoughts, to see to smth., to consider doing smth. + to pull oneself together, to give smb. a ribbing + at the sight of + stifle a yawn + to go missing.

3. *Make up a story with some of the above mentioned words (up to 10 sentences).*

4. *Find the English equivalents to the following words in the fragment:*

загадковим чином, ти б краще зайнявся пошуками вбивці, хихикати, відлякувати, обличчя прийняло злорадний вираз, прикріплювати ярлик, як кремінь, на якій підставі?, всім серцем бажати, змінитися до невпізнання, бути поруч і в горі, і в радості; підкріплення, прочісувати місцевість, погладити по голові, знадження, консервний ніж, розгромити, ходяче непорозуміння, прописати (призначити), вилятися про себе (напівголосно), впасти духом (зламатися), плентатися позаду, у нього не вийшло (він не зміг), зануда, зібрати людей.

5. *Make up a question plan of about 10 points covering the contents of the fragment and get ready to retell the text sticking to it.*

## UNIT 14

Two hours later, Priscilla came in carrying his clean clothes over her arm. Constable Hamish Macbeth was lying fast asleep, his ridiculously long eyelashes fanned out over his thin cheeks. Towser opened one eye and lazily wagged his tail.

The bedclothes were down around Hamish's waist. It was amazing how muscular Hamish was, thought Priscilla, looking at his naked chest and arms. His red hair flamed against the whiteness of the pillowcases and he looked young and vulnerable in sleep.

He opened his hazel eyes suddenly and looked straight at her. A look of pure happiness shone in his eyes and then it slowly died, like a light being turned down.

“Two hours up already,” groaned Hamish. “I could have slept all day.”

“Here are your clothes,” said Priscilla briskly, “and I've got some people to go to the bird meeting. Come downstairs when you're ready and we'll have tea.”

It was a black day in the life of Jenkins, the butler. To have to serve Hamish

Macbeth tea in the drawing-room hurt his very soul.

When Hamish returned to the police station it was to find the detective, Jimmy Anderson, waiting for him.

“So you’re back,” said Anderson. “I’ve been left here to give you a row for sloping off.”

“I see you’ve made yourself at home,” said Hamish. Anderson was sitting in the police station office with his feet on the desk and a glass of whisky in his hand.

“Aye, thanks. Blair’s right sore at you for finding that Brodie woman. Daviot turned up to see how the search was going on and Blair told the super that it was thanks to *his* brilliant detective work that Mrs. Brodie had been found. He was well launched on his story when my friend and colleague, Detective MacNab, who had been insulted earlier by Blair pipes up and says, “Oh, but it was Macbeth what found her. Brought her down from the hill himself. We was all looking in the wrong direction.” Blair looks fit to kill. The super accuses him of trying to take credit away from you, and Blair says he was simply describing how the operation had worked, and that he had sent you up the mountain himself. “That cannae be true,” says MacNab, “Weren’t you just saying you hadn’t seen Macbeth?” You should have seen Blair’s face. I couldn’t bear it any longer and walked away, but it wouldn’t surprise me if Blair doesn’t get MacNab back walking the beat before a month is up. Blair’s gone off to grill Parker again, just for the hell o’ it.”

“How did you get on with Halburton-Smythe?” asked Hamish.

Anderson groaned. “What a bad-tempered wee man! How dare you waste my time when you could be out looking for the murderer. That sort o’ thing. Asked him what Mrs. Thomas had taken from the cottage and he looked sulky and said it was some old china and glass and bits of furniture and odds and ends in a box. She was a sterling woman, according to his nibs. She certainly seemed to have a way with her. Was she all that attractive?”

“Not strictly speaking,” said Hamish. “But she had a very forceful personality. Type of person you love or loathe.”

“Well, I’d better be toddling along,” said Anderson. “Consider yourself

reprimanded. What are you going to do now?"

"I think I'll just go along to The Laurels and see how Paul Thomas is getting on," said Hamish. "I like that man. I think when he gets over his wife's death, he'll settle down here all right."

Paul Thomas was sawing up a dead tree at the back of the house.

"Feeling better?" asked Hamish.

"Still a bit shattered," said Paul. "But I find work helps. I'll be glad to see the back of that Kennedy woman and her rotten kids. Trixie could cope with that sort of person and pointed out we had to take anyone while we were getting started, but she whines the whole time and the only reason she stayed on was because I couldn't bring myself to charge her rent, because that would have meant shopping for her and cooking for her."

"How do you get on with Parker, now that you know he's her ex?"

"We've become pretty friendly. In fact, he's been a great help. I want to talk about her, you know, and he's prepared to listen."

"You know we found Mrs. Brodie?"

"Yes, it was all over the village."

"I'm running that bird society for her tonight. Want to come?"

"No, thanks. I'll stay here and get on with my work. Truth is, I don't know anything about birds."

He should have come, thought Hamish that evening as Lord Glenbader started his lecture. It would have made two of them. Lord Glenbader obviously didn't know much about birds either. He was also very drunk. The coloured slides of birds had got mixed up with his recent holiday in India, a fact of which he seemed quite unaware since he talked down his nose and with his eyes closed.

"And this," he said, operating the switch, "is a great barn owl." His audience solemnly studied a slide of his lordship on an elephant.

"Wrong slide," said Hamish.

His lordship raised his heavy eyelids. "Is it? Dear me. Find the right one, constable. There's a good chap."

Hamish looked despairingly at the great pile of slides. "It would take all night to look through these," he complained.

"Then stop interrupting." Lord Glenbader's eyelids drooped again. "And this is a house martin," he slurred. A smiling Indian beggar appeared, holding out a hand for baksheesh.

Priscilla came in carrying a pot of coffee, poured a cup of it, and handed it to Lord Glenbader. "Thanks," he said. "And here's a lot of tits." He peered down Priscilla's low-necked blouse and Hamish sniggered. But the slide did show three blue tits and two coal tits. It was hit and miss from then on, Lord Glenbader only occasionally describing the right slide. The audience sat, numb with boredom.

Priscilla steadily poured coffee. Lord Glenbader's lids gradually rose. "What a bore all this is," he said crossly after the hundredth slide. "What I need is a good drink."

"What are all these plastic bags?" asked Priscilla.

"Oh, them. They're Victorian specimens of stuffed birds from my great grandfather's collection. I'll pass them round. Don't take them out of the bags. Just peer inside. You'll get arsenic poisoning if you handle them."

"Why arsenic?" asked Hamish sharply.

"That's the way the Victorians kept the bugs at bay," said Lord Glenbader. "It was their sort of DDT. The fellow who arranged these things in the glass cases ten years ago got a chesty cough and running at the eyes and jelly limbs. Brodie diagnosed flu. Went to hospital in Strathbane, not believing Brodie and found he'd got arsenic poisoning from handling the birds. Brodie's a fool."

The Highland audience of men, women, and children politely peered inside the bags and then showed the first signs of interest that evening as Priscilla started laying out plates of cakes and biscuits beside an enormous pot of tea. "Least I could do," whispered Priscilla to Hamish. "Rodney Glenbader is a crashing bore."

Lord Glenbader was now obviously in a very bad mood indeed, made worse by the fact that there was nothing stronger to drink than tea and by the knowledge that he was not being paid for his services. There is nothing more outraged than a British

aristocrat who finds he has performed a service for nothing. Lord Glenbader came from a long line of grasping ancestors. He snatched up his birds and stuffed them in a sack and went out, slamming the door behind him.

“Help me with the tea, Hamish,” said Priscilla. “You’re off in a dream. What are you thinking of?”

“I’m thinking of arsenic,” said Hamish. He joined her nonetheless and took the heavy teapot from her hands.

Mr. Daviot, the police superintendent, came in. “I’m going back to Strathbane,” he said to Hamish. “Congratulations on finding Mrs. Brodie.”

“I had luck on my side,” said Hamish.

“We could do with a few able men like you on the force in Strathbane,” said Mr. Daviot.

Hamish opened his mouth but Priscilla said eagerly, “You couldn’t have a better man, Mr. Daviot. He’s a genius at solving crime.”

“Well, I wish he would solve this one,” said Mr. Daviot. He waved his hand in farewell.

“I wish you wouldn’t speak for me, Priscilla,” said Hamish crossly. “I have no mind to leave Lochdubh.”

“But you *must* have, Hamish. You can’t want to remain an ordinary copper for the rest of your life.”

Hamish sighed. “When will you get it through your head that it’s not clod-hopping stupidity or shyness that keeps me here. I love Lochdubh, I like the people, I’m happy. Why should I go and get a rank and money to please society’s accepted idea of success? I *am* successful, Priscilla. Very few folk are contented these days.”

“I made a mistake about that Macbeth fellow,” said Mr. Daviot as he undressed for bed that night. “I think he’s very bright.”

“Are you sure?” His wife adjusted a hair net over her rollers. “The colonel and Mrs. Halburton-Smythe didn’t seem to like him at all.”

“But the daughter does, and I think there might be a marriage in the offing.”

“Oh.” His wife digested this piece of intelligence. “Why don’t we ask them for

dinner?”

“Wait till this case is solved, if it ever is solved,” said her husband, climbing into bed.

Hamish went to The Laurels after the meeting was over. Paul Thomas answered the door himself. “Come in,” he said. “I was watching television.”

Hamish went in to the sitting-room. The Kennedy family were lined up in front of the set. In front of them was a coffee table with a plate of sticky cakes. From the electric light above their heads, a fly paper hung, brown and flyless.

From upstairs sounded the busy rattle of John Parker’s typewriter.

“What can I do for you?” asked Paul, nicking you a cake and stuffing it whole into his mouth. His eyes were fixed on the television screen. *LA Law* was showing.

“Wondered if there was anything I could do for you?” said Hamish.

Paul did not reply. He picked up another cake and sat down on a chair beside the Kennedys, his eyes still on the screen.

Hamish decided if the man was that interested in watching television, he must have made a good recovery from his breakdown at the funeral.

No-one in the room noticed Hamish leaving.

Hamish drove over to inspect the ruin on Iain Gunn’s farm. Three quarters of the building had collapsed, leaving one end standing up, the two floors still showing scraps of coloured wallpaper on the cracked plaster.

He pattered among the ruins, shining his torch. If there was any proof that Iain had done the job himself then that proof was buried under the rubble.

And then he heard a faint squeak. He shone his torch up to the rafters of the bit of the house which was still left standing. Small furry bodies hung in rows upside down.

Bats.

He heard the noise of an engine and switched off his torch and walked outside on to the field. Iain Gunn was approaching in a bulldozer.

*But! I have done a thousand dreadful things .*

*As willingly as one would kill a fly .*

*—Shakespeare .*

Hamish felt irritated. Iain had no right to attempt to bulldoze the building until he got the all clear. As he walked forward and held up his hand, he was vividly reminded of that day when the women had mounted their protest. He could still see Trixie, the leader of the women – leader of the Amazons? – her eyes glowing with excitement and hear that cockneyfied voice of hers.

The bulldozer ground to a halt.

“You can’t go on with it, Iain,” called Hamish. “You’ve still got bats in the bit that’s left and anyway, you shouldn’t have attempted to knock it down until you got the OK.”

Iain looked at him, a blind, flat look. He started up the bulldozer again.

“Stop!” shouted Hamish, standing in front of it.

The bulldozer moved steadily towards him.

Hamish swore and leapt to one side and as the bulldozer came alongside, he jumped on it and ripped the keys from the ignition.

Iain Gunn punched him on the face and sent him flying.

Hamish scrambled up from the ground and leapt back on the bulldozer and seized the farmer by his jacket and dragged him out so that he fell face down on the ground. He knelt on his back and handcuffed him, deaf to the stream of abuse that was pouring from the farmer’s mouth.

“Now, on your feet,” said Hamish grimly.

Iain staggered to his feet and stood, head down.

“Leave me alone, Hamish,” he said wearily. “I’m sorry I hit you, but don’t you understand what a load o’ rubbish this all is? Here’s a man who needs more land and there’s a bloody stupid law that says he can’t do it because o’ a lot o’ flying vermin. It’s *my* land and I should be able to do what I like with it. Damn that Thomas woman for an interfering bitch!”

Hamish looked at him. He should arrest the farmer and charge him with

assaulting a police officer and all sorts of other fiddles. It meant paperwork. It meant a court case. It might mean Iain going to prison.

“Turn around,” he snapped.

He unlocked the handcuffs and tucked them away and then he took off his cap and threw it on the ground and put up his fists.

“Come on, Iain,” said Hamish. “We’ll settle this ourselves.”

Iain sized up Hamish’s thin, gangling form and began to smile. “OK, Hamish, but don’t blame me if ye get sore hurt.”

But Iain found it impossible to hit Hamish. The constable weaved and ducked, dancing lightly on his feet, diving under the farmer’s guard to land his punches. At last, Hamish said, “Let’s finish this,” and that was the last thing Iain heard for about ten minutes as a massive punch landed full on his jaw.

When he recovered consciousness. Hamish was kneeling beside him on the ground. “All right?” he asked anxiously.

“Man, you’ve got a sore punch,” whispered the farmer.

“Well, now that the law in its way has been enforced,” said Hamish cheerfully, “can I have your word that you’ll leave the bats alone?”

“Aye, you have my word.”

Hamish helped him to his feet, gave him a swig of brandy from his flask and helped him back into his bulldozer and stood waiting while the bulldozer churned its way back over the soft ground.

He decided to go and pay a visit on old Mrs. MacGowan and see if Trixie had managed to winkle anything valuable out of her. Perhaps it was simple greed which had caused the murder and Trixie had got hold of something worth killing for.

But as he drove into Lochdubh, he saw he was approaching Harry Drummond’s house and, in his usual, nosey, Highland way, decided to find out first what on earth had persuaded Mrs. Drummond to divorce a sober and working man when she would not divorce the drunk.

Mrs. Drummond was at home. She was a soft, shapeless, dyed blonde of a woman with a face covered in a layer of thick make-up and a sour little painted red

mouth like a wound. “Whit’s he done?” she asked when she saw Hamish on the doorstep and he could swear there was a certain amount of hope in her eyes.

“Harry? Nothing,” said Hamish. “Can I come in a minute?”

She shrugged by way of an answer and led the way through to the living-room, removing a tattered pile of women’s magazines from a chair so that he could sit down.

Flies buzzed about the room and she seized a can of fly spray and sent a cloud of it up to the ceiling. Hamish sat in a gentle rain of insecticide and asked, “Why are you going to divorce Harry? He’s looking great and he’s got a good job.”

She lit a cigarette and took an enormous drag on it. “I’m in love wi’ somebody else,” she said.

“Who?”

“Buckie Graham, him over at Crask.”

“But Buckie Graham’s a terrible drunk with a nasty temper!” exclaimed Hamish.

“All he needs is someone to look after him,” said Mrs. Drummond defiantly. “We’re getting married as soon as the divorce comes through.”

She offered Hamish a cup of tea in a half-hearted way and he refused. He spent several more minutes trying to persuade her of the folly of marrying Buckie, but she only became extremely angry.

“Women!” he thought, as he drove over to Mrs. MacGowan’s on the other side of the loch.

The cottage was tucked away at the edge of the pine forest. Hamish climbed down from the Land Rover and took a deep breath of sweet pine-scented air. He knew that the inside of Mrs. MacGowan’s cottage was going to smell as horrible as usual.

“So you’ve finally decided to come and see me,” said the old woman when she opened the door.

She was bent and gnarled and twisted like an old willow tree but her black eyes sparkled with intelligence. Hamish edged his way into her small parlour. It was

crammed with furniture and china and photographs, reminding him of Mrs. Haggerty's cottage. Dust lay everywhere and the awful smell of Mrs. MacGowan pervaded the close atmosphere.

"I'll just open the window," said Hamish hopefully.

"Leave it be," she said. "The flies just come in."

"You seem to have caught plenty already," said Hamish, looking up at the fly paper, black with dead flies, which dangled from the ceiling light. "Where do people get these things from?"

"It was that Mrs. Thomas. Herself got Patel, that wee Pakistani..."

"He's Indian."

"Oh, well, what does it matter. She starts on about this ozone layer, whatever that might be in the name o' creation, and says these sticky ones are better than spray cans and the wee Indian got some from somewhere."

"I want to ask you about Mrs. Thomas. Did she call on you often?"

"Oh, aye, herself came a lot."

"What for?"

"She said she was sorry for me and brought me cakes and scones. But I knew what she was after."

"That being?" prompted Hamish.

She nodded her head towards a Welsh dresser. "That."

"The dresser?"

"That platter wi' the three women and the man on it."

Hamish went over and examined it. It had a gold edge and a painted scene showing three ladies in eighteenth-century dress surrounding a courtier. The colours were exquisite.

"Offer you any money?" asked Hamish.

"Och, aye," she cackled with laughter, "A fiver."

"I would say it's worth a lot more than that."

"When I saw her getting that keen on having it and trying no' to look it, I got Andy, the postie, to bring round his Polaroid and take a picture. I sent the picture tae

the Art Galleries in Glasgow and they sent me a wee note. It's up on the shelf above it." Hamish took down the dusty letter and opened it. The museum had pleasure in informing Mrs. MacGowan that her platter appeared to be Meissen, around 1745, with a scene painted after Watteau, but they could not be sure until they examined the platter themselves.

Hamish whistled silently. "And did you tell her?"

"Not me. I just kept her coming round wi' the cakes and biscuits and hinting I was ready to give it away to her."

"You know you could get a lot of money for that?"

"Aye, but I'll leave it to my great grand-daughter in my will. She can sell it if she wants."

"So she didn't get anything out of you?" asked Hamish.

"Not a thing, although it wasn't for the want o' trying."

Hamish asked after her health, made her a pot of tea, presented her with a packet of chocolate biscuits, and got up to leave. He looked in distaste at the fly paper with its load of dead flies.

"If you've got another of these things, I'll hang up a fresh one for you," he said.

"No, I havnae. I don't like them anyway. I liked the good old-fashioned kind. Herself was going to get me some. Not from Patel. He could only get the sticky ones. The flies did not stick to the old-fashioned ones. They just smelled it and dropped dead."

Hamish got out of the cottage with the usual feeling of relief at finding himself back in the fresh air. He drove slowly back to Lochdubh, wondering what to do next. A movement to the side of the road caught his eye. It was almost as if someone had ducked down when they saw the car.

He stopped and jumped down and walked back a bit. A small bottom was sticking out from behind a bush.

"Come out," ordered Hamish.

The little figure backed out. Susan Kennedy, the evil-eyed child from The Laurels.

“I thought you were going home today,” said Hamish.

“I’m no’ going,” said the child. “I want tae stay here.”

“Well, you can’t. You have to go back to school. Come on. I’ll give you a lift back. I’ve got some sweeties in the car.”

“What kind?”

“Chocolate fudge.”

“OK.” She walked back with him and climbed into the passenger seat. Hamish fished in the box of sweets he kept handy for the local children and handed her a small bag.

“I love sweeties,” she said, putting two in her mouth at once. “Im o is bid assem.”

“What?”

She swallowed and then said clearly. “I’m not as bad as them.”

“Who?”

“The Thomases. I tried to tell you about what they got up to in the bedrooms.”

Hamish eyed her cautiously. “Is this about sweets?”

“Aye. She wouldn’t let him have any, so he bought cakes and hid them in a box under his bed in his own bedroom. She would wait till he was out, then she would sneak in and steal some. She was greedier than him any day. He shouted at me and told me I was pinching them and she gave me a bar o’ chocolate to shut up.”

Hamish drove her to where Mrs. Kennedy was standing at the bus stop with the rest of her brood and a large canvas suitcase. She did not seem either glad or surprised at the return of her missing child. Hamish drove up to The Laurels, wondering whether Mrs. Kennedy had even noticed the child was missing.

Paul was out but he could hear the clatter of the typewriter from upstairs. He made his way up to John Parker’s room.

“Where’s Paul?” he asked the writer. “Out, I suppose.”

“Tell me, did Mrs. Thomas have a sweet tooth?” John Parker laughed. “It was like a drug with her. She was like a binge drinker, you know, who can leave the stuff alone for weeks and then goes out and gets stoned. She tried to stop Paul from eating

the stuff, but she was as bad as he was.”

“It’s a wonder she didn’t get fat.” “I think she burnt it up in nervous energy.” A fly buzzed furiously against the window. Hamish stared at it and then to the writer’s surprise, he got up and left the room. He went downstairs to the sitting-room and gazed up at the fly paper. Then he stood on a chair and lifted it down. Back at the police station he sat down and put a call through to the forensic department at Strathbane.

In answer to his question, they said they would find out and call him back.

He sat at his desk and thought and thought, pieces of conversation buzzing around in his head the way that fly had buzzed in John Parker’s room.

Trixie had liked cakes. Trixie had had no time for John Parker after he had come off drugs and got on his feet. Mrs. Drummond wanted a divorce from Harry now that he was sober. Lord Glenbader saying arsenic was the Victorian’s DDT. Trixie holding hands with Archie Maclean. Dr. Brodie singing about killing Trixie. Angela Brodie quoting Oscar Wilde up on the mountain. John Parker and The Amazon Women of Zar. Mrs. MacGowan saying Trixie had promised to bring the good old-fashioned kind. The flies just smelled it and dropped dead. Dead...dead...dead. And so his thoughts went on and on.

Would the phone never ring? It was quiet, except for the howl of the Sutherland wind that had sprung up out of nowhere.

Then the phone rang, loud and harsh.

He jumped nervously and picked it up. He listened intently and then slowly put it down. His face was pale and set. He should tell Blair. But this was one arrest he was going to make by himself.

He walked to The Laurels and mounted the stairs towards the sound of that chattering typewriter. He opened the door.

“Where’s Paul Thomas?” he asked.

“Went rushing off,” said the writer. “I said you’d been around asking about his Trixie’s sweet tooth, and he rushes off like a bat out of hell.”

Hamish ran out of the room and down the stairs. John Parker shrugged and

began to type again.

Hamish ran towards the police station, stopping everyone he could on the way, asking for news of Paul. He had been seen heading out through the village and last seen going along the long promontory which divided the loch from the sea.

There was no road along the promontory. Hamish started to run harder. The wind screamed and tore at his clothes. He ran round the side of the hotel and out along the promontory. Jimmy Anderson stood at the hotel window and watched him go. He turned around. "Something's up," he said to Blair who was slouched in an armchair watching television. "Macbeth's just gone running past."

"Probably the water bailiffs after him." said Blair, keeping his eyes on the screen.

The promontory ended on the Atlantic side in a small cliff. Silhouetted above the tumbling clouds and right at the edge of the cliff, Hamish saw Paul Thomas. He slowed his frantic pace and walked slowly up to the man and stood beside him. Down below, waves as high as houses, cold and green and stained with the black of sea wrack, crashed on to the rocks below.

"Don't do it," said Hamish quietly. "She wasnae worth it."

Paul sat down suddenly and Hamish sat down beside him on the springy turf.

"How did you know?" he asked.

"I think this is what happened," said Hamish. "You were getting on your feet and controlling your overeating with Trixie's help. You came up here to start a new life. You liked doing things, painting the house and working in the garden. But Trixie did not like you doing things and showing any independence whatever and so she undermined you by taking over and doing them better. You began to eat cakes on the quiet again and she knew that and at last you found out she knew where you hid them and thieved a few for herself. But you loved her, so something bad must have happened. It didn't need to be a man. Maybe she wasn't all that interested in sex. A woman would do for interest. She had Angela Brodie to take over and the rest of the women. She didn't need you any longer. Perhaps she might have guessed that when the novelty wore off, people would like you and not her. So she asked for a divorce."

Paul Thomas remained silent. A huge wave rolled in, the wind whipping the white spray back from the top of it.

Hamish's voice was low and clear and Paul could hear every word despite the tumult of the wind and water.

“You knew if you said you had a toothache and were frightened of the dentist then she would make you go. You had probably been nursing a bad tooth on the quiet for weeks. Before you left, you put the cakes in the box under the bed. But before you did that, you took some of the old fly papers Trixie had brought back from Mrs Haggerty's cottage. I saw that one hanging up in your sitting room and wondered why it wasn't sticky. It was impregnated with arsenic. Trixie told you that. You soaked them in a jug of water and then evaporated the water and got enough arsenic crystals to kill her. Maybe you had read of that Victorian poisoning case where someone did the same thing. Forensic at Strathbane told me about it. I began to remember all sorts of things about the use of arsenic in the last century. It was believed that Napoleon died because of the arsenic in the wallpaper paste in his bedroom. Arsenic was also used widely to keep down bugs. Trixie found that bundle of fly papers. An ordinary person would have found them smooth and decided they were no use and thrown them away. But not Trixie. There had to be a use for everything. She was acquisitive. And so she found out that the old fly papers were covered in arsenic, told you, put the papers away maybe intending to take them over to old Mrs. MacGowan some time, and probably forgot about them for the time being. But you didn't. You put arsenic in the cakes under the bed, or perhaps just one cake, to make sure. It's a wonder that Kennedy girl didn't eat it by mistake. And so you murdered her.”

“And now I'm going to kill myself,” said Paul, wiping his eyes with his sleeves. “I hated her so much for wanting rid of me. The house was in her name. She wasn't going to let me have a thing. I was so fat and down and miserable before she came along. No-one had ever cared for me so much, not even my own mother. She married me and kept me on a diet. I would have done anything for her. We were, going to be so happy here. I laughed about her flirting with Archie Maclean, but I knew she had

done it to spite me. She was finished with me and she was out to destroy me. But when she died, I was left with the same mess. Myself. I can't go on living, Hamish. Life hurts, people hurt, I'll just kill myself with food."

"Now, now, man, isn't prison just the answer?" said Hamish bracingly. "Think o' it, man. Locked away from cakes. Good exercise, lots of reading, no cruel world to cope with. Better than a health farm any day."

Can I really be saying all this, wondered Hamish wildly.

"I don't deserve to live," said Paul.

"Maybe not. But prison will be a hard enough life to make you feel you're atoning for your sins. Discipline. Told what to do from morning to night. What on earth possessed you to try and poison auld Macdonald? You're not a Highlander. You didn't believe he could guess the murderer?"

"I thought she might have told him about the divorce. She didn't want to tell anyone in the village because she wanted to appear the perfect wife until the last minute before the divorce. I heard he was going about saying he could solve the case. I panicked."

"You're a bad man, Paul," said Hamish severely. "Prison's just the place for you. You'll be looked after."

"Will you come and see me?" Paul sounded like a lost child.

"Aye, I might at that. Come along, man, and get it over with. Now, I'll jist put these nice handcuffs on you to make it all official." And talking to the big man as if he were a child, Hamish led him back along the promontory out of the sound of the sea.

Mr. Daviot, the police superintendent, had made another surprise call on Blair. He was demanding a rundown on the progress of the Thomas poisoning when Anderson, from his post at the window, turned around with a grin on his face and said, "Here's Macbeth, bringing in his man."

"Caught a poacher?" said Blair, getting to his feet, while inside he prayed, "Look God, please do not let it turn out that Macbeth has found the murderer. Just do that for me and I'll never swear again."

Detectives MacNab and Anderson, Blair and Daviot all crowded at the window watching as Hamish led Paul Thomas down towards the hotel. The constable was talking the whole time and Paul Thomas had tears running down his face. Hamish stopped and took out a handkerchief and wiped the man's tears away and got him to blow his nose.

"Quick!" said Mr. Daviot. "Downstairs. It looks as if the husband did it after all."

Hamish had reached the forecourt of the hotel when they came running out.

He looked at Mr. Daviot, not at Blair. "I have charged Paul Thomas with the murder of his wife, Alexandra Thomas."

"Has he confessed?" asked Mr. Daviot.

"Yes," said Hamish.

Blair heaved a sigh of relief. It didn't take much brains to solve a murder when the murderer just walked up and said he'd done it.

"I'll just take the suspect off to Strathbane," said Blair pompously.

"Wait a minute," said Mr. Daviot. "Come inside, Hamish, and tell us what happened."

Hamish, thought Blair furiously. The super called him Hamish!

They all walked in to the manager's office and explained to Mr. Johnson that they would be using it for a bit. When they were all seated, Hamish told Mr. Daviot how the murder had taken place and why.

When he had finished, Blair ground his teeth. The super was looking at Hamish with admiration.

Mr. Daviot then turned to the big man who was slouched in his chair. "Do you understand what is going on, Mr. Thomas? You know you are being charged with your wife's murder?"

"Yes," said Paul wearily. "I wanted to kill myself but Hamish said I would be better off in prison. He said no-one could hurt me in prison. I wouldn't have to think for myself."

Blair opened his mouth to say something and Mr. Daviot flashed him a warning

look. “Yes, yes,” said Mr. Daviot soothingly. “Hamish is quite right. Now, we’ll just take a statement. See to it, Anderson.”

Mr Daviot took Hamish aside while Paul was drearily confessing to the murder. “Brilliant work, Hamish,” he said. “My wife and I would be honoured if you would join us for dinner tonight. We’ll drive over here. Eight o’clock, say? And do ask Priscilla to join us.”

Blair moved away. He was shocked and furious. Like a horrible dream arose the vision of Hamish Macbeth as his superior.

At last, Hamish stood outside the hotel and watched them all drive away. He watched the car bearing Anderson, Blair, MacNab, Daviot, and Paul climbing up the long hill out of Lochdubh until it dwindled to the size of a toy.

Then he strolled back to the police station to phone Priscilla Halburton-Smythe and tell her about the end of the case and that invitation to dinner.

Blair sat in the corner of the dining-room at the Lochdubh Hotel that evening. He was no longer furious. He was too miserable for that. His was a dark corner, but he knew the super had seen him, for Daviot had nodded curtly in his direction before turning back to his guests. It wasn’t fair, thought Blair, who had turned up in the hope of being included in the party.

Priscilla Halburton-Smythe was wearing a flame-coloured chiffon dress that clung to her figure. Beside her, looking like the lord of the manor, thought Blair, enviously, sat Hamish Macbeth, resplendent in a tuxedo which Blair assumed Priscilla had lent him, not knowing Hamish had bought it from a second-hand clothes shop in Inverness that year.

Then Blair noticed that the festive air about the party seemed to be dying fast. He wondered what was up.

Mr. Daviot had discussed with his wife Hamish’s transfer to Strathbane while they were driving over to Lochdubh. “Poor chap,” said Mr. Daviot. “He must have hated being tucked away in that backwater. He’ll be delighted.”

At first, when he told Hamish the plans for his future over dinner, he did not notice that Hamish was beginning to look more miserable by the minute. “It means

more money and promotion, of course,” said Mr. Daviot happily. “The accommodation is comfortable enough for single men. You won’t be able to have your dog there, but I’m sure we’ll find him a place in the police kennels.”

“Well,” giggled Mrs. Daviot. “I’m sure Hamish won’t be single for long.” She gave Priscilla a coy nudge in the ribs with her elbow.

Priscilla laughed. “Hamish and I are just good friends.”

“Can I have a word in private with you, Mr. Daviot?” said Hamish, deciding it would be better to start addressing the superintendent in a more formal manner.

Mr. Daviot looked surprised. Then he looked at his wife who was winking at him and pointing to Priscilla. The superintendent’s face cleared. Hamish obviously wanted to talk about marriage plans.

They walked through to the lounge. “Look, Mr Daviot,” said Hamish urgently, “you need a policeman here and I am perfectly happy with the job. I do not want promotion. I do not want to work in the town.”

“Why, in heaven’s name?”

“I have my home here and my sheep and hens and geese. I have my friends and neighbours. I am a very happy man.”

Mr. Daviot looked up at him curiously. “Are you really happy?”

“As much as a man can be.”

The superintendent felt a pang of pure envy.

“Well, if that’s the way you want it. What does Priscilla think about settling down in the village police station?”

“Priscilla is not marrying me. We’re just friends. As a matter of fact, she’s got a fellow in London.”

Priscilla herself was saying very much the same thing to Mrs. Daviot. She was feeling uncomfortable under Mrs. Daviot’s prying questions and had answered them coldly and then haughtily. Both looked up in relief as the men rejoined them.

Mrs. Daviot then saw Detective Chief Inspector Blair for the first time. She was smarting after Priscilla’s cold behaviour. Blair was such a nice man, thought Mrs. Daviot, meaning that he could be guaranteed to grovel. “Dehrling,” she said to her

husband, “there’s that nice Mr. Blair. Do ask him over to join us for coffee.”

Blair came over, almost at a run. Mr. Daviot felt himself begin to relax. There was something so reassuring about Blair. Typical detective. Hamish was odd, eccentric, and upsetting. No-one really likes to come across a happy and contented man. Besides, as he was not going to marry Priscilla Halburton-Smythe, there was no longer any need to think of him as a social equal.

After dinner, Priscilla and Hamish walked together along the waterfront. She had a long white silk stole about her shoulders and the fringed ends fluttered in the breeze. The wind had dropped and the stars shone briefly overhead.

“So you refused promotion,” said Priscilla flatly. “What is to become of you, Hamish?”

“Nothing I hope,” he said lazily. “Obsession’s a funny thing,” he said, half to himself, thinking about Angela Brodie, Paul Thomas...and himself. It was so peaceful to be able to stroll along beside Priscilla without being in the grip of that old, terrible yearning.

“People who want to get on in life are not obsessed,” said Priscilla crossly.

“Like John Burlington?”

“Yes, like him. What would the world be like if everyone were like Hamish Macbeth?”

“I don’t know,” said Hamish mildly, “and I don’t care either. I don’t go about lecturing people on the folly of pursuing a career. That would be silly. Ambition’s a grand thing. I wonder what it’s like? Still hear from John Burlington?”

“Yes, I’m going back in two weeks’ time and he’s going to meet me at the airport.”

“And will you marry him?”

“I don’t know. I might.”

“Poor Priscilla.”

“It’s poor Hamish. I don’t believe you’re unambitious. I think you’re as big a coward as Paul Thomas. I think you’re frightened of the big outside world.”

“I don’t like it, I’ll admit,” he said, still in that placid, happy voice which was

beginning to get on Priscilla's nerves. "If you choose to think I'm frightened, then you are entitled to your opinion. Well, there we are. Home."

The blue lamp over the porch of the police station shone down through the rambling roses. Towser was standing on his back legs, his paws on the gate. Priscilla's car was parked outside.

"Coming in for a nightcap?" offered Hamish.

Priscilla hesitated. "Oh, all right," she said.

She sat in the living-room while Hamish made coffee and fished out a small bottle of brandy. He stood looking at the bottle. He remembered he had bought it in the hope of just such an occasion as this. He put it on a tray along with the cups and coffee jug and two glasses and carried it through to the sitting-room.

"Let's look at television," said Hamish. "I just want to catch what's on the news." He switched on the set and then settled himself in the armchair after seeing that Priscilla had her coffee and brandy.

As Hamish leaned back and watched the news, Priscilla studied him. He was not only free from the pangs of ambition, but, she realized with a little shock, he was free from her. She had never known Hamish had been in love with her, but now that it was gone, she realized for the first time what was missing. Had he fallen out of love with her because of John? Was that kiss which had seemed to her exciting a big disappointment to him?

Hamish's eyelids began to droop. She leaned forward and took the brandy glass from his hand and put it on the table. In minutes, he was fast asleep. She felt she ought to leave but suddenly could not find the will to get up and go. Towser lay at her feet, snoring. The news finished and a showing of *Casablanca* came on. Priscilla sat and watched it through to the end, and then, without disturbing Hamish, she let herself out of the police station and made her way home.

Two weeks later, Hamish decided to pluck up courage and call on the Brodies. He had not seen the doctor in the pub, and heard from the gossips that the doctor had actually given up smoking.

The clammy weather had gone and the days were crisp and sunny and cool with

a hint of frost to herald the early Highland autumn.

He walked around to the Brodies' kitchen door and rang the bell.

"Walk in!" came the doctor's voice.

Angela and her husband were seated at either side of the kitchen table. He was reading a book and had a pile of books on his side of the table and his wife had her pile of books on the other and was studying one which was propped up against the jam jar. Between them lay the cat, resting its chin on top of the cheese dish.

"Oh, it's yourself, Hamish," said the doctor. "Help yourself to coffee and find a chair." Angela looked up and smiled at him vaguely and returned to her books.

Hamish poured himself a cup of coffee and sat down. "This looks like a university library," he said.

"It is in a way," said the doctor. "Angela is studying for a degree in science at the Open University, and I'm getting back to my studies. I'm away behind the times .

"You were that," said Hamish. "I hear you've given up smoking. Maybe Mrs. Thomas did you some good after all."

"I hate to say a good word about that woman," said Dr. Brodie. "But I'll tell you this much, Angela recovered pretty quickly and she said she would make me one of my old breakfasts, you know, fried everything with ketchup. Well, I wolfed it down and as I was walking to the surgery, I felt downright bad-tempered and queasy. Seem to have got a taste for muesli and salads." Hamish glanced at the title of the book the doctor had been reading, *Women and the Menopause*.

"So, I decided it was high time I moved with the times," said Dr. Brodie. "There's a lot in this mind over matter business. I mean, I've got some patients who think they're on special tranquillizers when they're actually taking milk of magnesia tablets and yet they swear they've never felt better."

Angela rose from the table. She was wearing quite a pretty dress and her perm was growing out. She scooped up an armful of books. "Excuse me," she said. "There's a programme I want to watch on television."

"So everything's all right," said Hamish.

"Oh, yes, I was afraid Angela's mind was going to snap. And all over what?"

Some silly English housewife.”

Hamish reflected that the silly English housewife had at least stopped the doctor smoking and got him back to his medical books.

After he left them, he strolled along the waterfront. The sky was a pale green and the first star was just appearing. The peace of the world surrounded Hamish Macbeth.

Along at the harbour, the fishing boats were getting ready to set out. As he came nearer, he saw Mrs. Maclean and Archie. Mrs. Maclean handed her husband a packet of sandwiches and a thermos and then she put her arms about him and gave him a hug.

“Well, I never!” said Hamish Macbeth. He shoved his hands in his pockets and began to whistle as soft night fell and the little fishing boats with their bobbing lights made their way out to sea.

Priscilla Halburton-Smythe opened the door to her flat in Lower Sloane Street in London’s Chelsea. She was feeling tired and cross. John Burlington had not turned up at the airport to meet the Inverness plane and so she had taken the underground train and it had broken down outside Acton for an hour.

She picked up the post from the doormat and carried it through to the kitchen along with a copy of the *Evening Standard* that she had bought in Sloane Square.

She flicked through the post and noticed someone had sent her a newspaper from America. She slit open the brown paper wrapper. Her friend, Peta Bently, now living in Connecticut, had sent her a copy of the *Greenwich Times*. “See page five,” Peta had scrawled on the front of it.

Priscilla turned to page five. There was a picture of Hamish Macbeth standing with Towser under the roses outside the Lochdubh police station.

The caption read, “Local businessman, Carl Steinberger, took this photograph of a Highland bobby while on holiday in Scotland. A far cry from *Hill Street Blues*.”

The photograph had been printed in colour.

“He might have told them about the murder,” muttered Priscilla. She unfolded the *Evening Standard*. John Burlington’s face seemed to leap up at her from the front

page. His face bore a tortured look and he was surrounded by detectives.

“Arrested for insider trading at his Belgravia home, stockbroker socialite, John Burlington,” Priscilla read.

The phone rang and she went to answer it.

The voice of her friend. Sarah James, came shrilly down the line. Wasn't it just too awful about poor John? As the voice went on and on, Priscilla looked out of the window. The traffic in Lower Sloane Street was belching fumes out in the air. She turned slowly and looked at the newspapers, lying side by side on the kitchen table, at the frantic face of John Burlington and at the happy face of PC Macbeth.

### TASK 14

*1. Match the words to their definitions and learn them:*

1) unaware	a) identify the nature of (an illness or other problem) by examination of the symptoms
2) snigger	b) evidence or argument establishing a fact or the truth of a statement
3) numb	c) a selfish and excessive desire for more of something (such as money) than is needed
4) specimen	d) stand, move, or sit in a lazy, drooping way
5) diagnose	e) to spread through the whole of something and become a very obvious feature of it
6) proof	f) unable to feel anything in a particular part of your body especially as a result of cold or anesthesia
7) assault	g) having no knowledge of a situation or fact
8) greed	h) an individual animal, plant, piece of a mineral, etc. used as an example of its species or type for scientific study or display
9) pervade	i) a violent physical or verbal attack
10) slouch	j) laugh in a half-suppressed, typically scornful way

*2. Build up situations based on the context around the following words and expressions using them in your answer:*

give smb a row for smth + to slope off, to make oneself at home, to be sore at smb for doing smth, to go on + thanks to smth, to pipe up + to look fit to kill, to have a way with smb, to toddle along, to settle down, to point out, to get mixed up with smb + to talk down one's nose, to keep the bugs at bay, to have luck on one's side + to be able to (can) do with smth, to remind smb of smth, to charge smb with smth, to recover consciousness, to wrinkle smth out of smb, to persuade smb of smth, to present smb with smth, to duck down, to give smb a lift, to keep one's eye on smb, to undermine smb + to take over, to be no use, to spite smb, to heave a sigh of relief, to flash smb a warning look + to take a statement, to take smb aside, to confess to the murder, to be up, to feel a pang of pure envy + if that's the way you want it, at a run + to come across smb + a social equal, to lecture smb on smth + to pursue a career, to be frightened of smth/smb, to fall out of love with smb, to pluck up courage, to be away behind the times, to move with the times.

*3. Make use of the above mentioned word combinations in the situations of your own.*

*4. Translate these phrases into your native language:*

1) A look of pure happiness shone in his eyes and then it slowly died, like a light being turned down.

2) To have to serve Hamish Macbeth tea in the drawing-room hurt his very soul.

3) Why should I go and get a rank and money to please society's accepted idea of success?

4) His wife digested this piece of intelligence.

5) He knelt on his back and handcuffed him, deaf to the stream of abuse that was pouring from the farmer's mouth.

6) She was a soft, shapeless, dyed blonde of a woman with a face covered in a layer of thick make-up and a sour little painted red mouth like a wound.

7) She was bent and gnarled and twisted like an old willow tree but her black eyes sparkled with intelligence.

*5. Make up a list of 10-15 questions to cover the contents of the chapter.*

6. *Are the events presented in a chronological order? What function does the retrospection perform?*
7. *Can you find cases of irony in the novel? Dwell on the effect irony creates.*
8. *Can you supply examples of the onomatopoeic words? What is their function?*
9. *Pick up examples of metaphor in the novel and account for their usage.*

## PART 2

**Muriel Spark**

### THE DRIVER'S SEAT

*Before you read*

The novella «**The Driver's Seat**» was written in 1970 by a famous Scottish novelist, short story writer and poet **Muriel Spark**, well-known for her masterpiece, «The Prime of Miss Jean Brodie».

Her father was Jewish, and came from Lithuania. She taught English for a brief time, and then worked as a secretary in a department store. She married Sidney Oswald Spark, and soon followed him to Zimbabwe. Their son Samuel Robin was born there. Within months she discovered that her husband was manic depressive and prone to violent outbursts. When her son was 2, Muriel left Sidney and Robin. She returned to Britain. She worked in Military Intelligence up to the end of World War II. She provided money at regular intervals to support her son. Spark maintained it was her intention for her family to set up home in England, but Robin returned to Britain with his father later to be brought up by his maternal grandparents in Scotland.

In 1965 she moved to New York for some years, then moved to Rome, where she met artist and sculptor Penelope Jardine in 1968. In the early 1970s they settled in Tuscany, in the village of Oliveto, of which in 2005 Spark was made an honorary citizen.

She was the subject of frequent rumours of lesbian relationships from her time in New York onwards, although Spark and her friends denied their validity. She left her entire estate to Jardine, taking measures to ensure that her son received nothing.

Spark died in 2006 and is buried in the cemetery of Sant'Andrea Apostolo in Oliveto.

The novella THE DRIVER'S SEAT was advertised as "a metaphysical shocker". It belongs to the **psychological thriller genre**, dealing with themes of alienation, isolation and loss of spiritual values.

## UNIT 1

ONE

‘And the material doesn’t stain,’ the salesgirl says. ‘Doesn’t stain?’

‘It’s the new fabric,’ the salesgirl says. ‘Specially treated. Won’t mark. If you spill like a bit of ice-cream or a drop of coffee, like, down the front of this dress it won’t hold the stain.’

The customer, a young woman, is suddenly tearing at the fastener at the neck, pulling at the zip of the dress. She is saying, ‘Get this thing off me. Off me, at once.’

The salesgirl shouts at the customer who, up to now, has been delighted with the bright coloured dress. It is patterned with green and purple squares on a white background, with blue spots within the green squares, cyclamen spots within the purple. This dress has not been a successful line; other dresses in the new stainless fabric have sold, but this, of which three others, identical but for sizes, hang in the back storeroom awaiting the drastic reductions of next week’s sale, has been too vivid for most customers’ taste. But the customer who now steps speedily out of it, throwing it on the floor with the utmost irritation, had almost smiled with satisfaction when she had tried it on. She had said, ‘That’s my dress.’ The salesgirl had said it needed taking up at the hem. ‘All right,’ the customer had said, ‘but I need it for tomorrow.’ ‘We can’t do it before Friday, I’m sorry,’ the salesgirl had said. ‘Oh, I’ll do it myself, then,’ the customer had said, and turned round to admire it sideways in the long mirror. ‘It’s a good fit. Lovely colours,’ she said.

‘And it doesn’t stain,’ the salesgirl had said, with her eye wandering to another unstainable and equally unsaleable summer dress which evidently she hoped, now, to offer the satisfied customer.

‘Doesn’t stain?’

The customer has flung the dress aside.

The salesgirl shouts, as if to assist her explanation. ‘Specially treated fabric... If you spill like a drop of sherry you just wipe it off. Look, Miss, you’re tearing the neck.’

‘Do you think I spill things on my clothes?’ the customer shrieks. ‘Do I look as if I

don't eat properly?'

'Miss, I only remarked on the fabric, that when you tell me you're going abroad for your vacation, there is always the marks that you pick up on your journey. Don't treat our clothes like that if you please. Miss, I only said stain-resisting and then you carry on, after you liked it.'

'Who asked you for a stain-resisting dress?' the customer shouts, getting quickly, with absolute purpose, into her own blouse and skirt.

'You liked the colours, didn't you?' shouts the girl. 'What difference does it make, so it resists stains, if you liked the fabric before you knew?'

The customer picks up her bag and goes to the door almost at a run, while two other salesgirls and two other customers gasp and gape. At the door she turns to look back and says, with a look of satisfaction at her own dominance over the situation with an undoubtable excuse, 'I won't be insulted!'

She walks along the broad street, scanning the windows for the dress she needs, the necessary dress. Her lips are slightly parted; she, whose lips are usually pressed together with the daily disapprovals of the accountants' office where she has worked continually, except for the months of illness, since she was eighteen, that is to say, for sixteen years and some months. Her lips, when she does not speak or eat, are normally pressed together like the ruled line of a balance sheet, marked straight with her old-fashioned lipstick, a final and a judging mouth, a precision instrument, a detail-warden of a mouth; she has five girls under her and two men. Over her are two women and five men. Her immediate superior had given her the afternoon off, in kindness, Friday afternoon. 'You've got your packing to do, Lise. Go home, pack and rest.' She had resisted. 'I don't need a rest. I've got all this work to finish. Look — all this.' The superior, a fat small man, looked at her with frightened eyeglasses. Lise smiled and bent her head over her desk. 'It can wait till you get back,' said the man, and when she looked up at him he showed courage and defiance in his rimless spectacles. Then she had begun to laugh hysterically. She finished laughing and started crying all in a flood, while a flurry at the other desks, the jerky backward

movements of her little fat superior, conveyed to her that she had done again what she had not done for five years. As she ran to the lavatory she shouted to the whole office who somehow or other were trying to follow or help her. 'Leave me alone! It doesn't matter. What does it matter?' Half an hour later they said, 'You need a good holiday, Lise. You need your vacation.' 'I'm going to have it,' she said, 'I'm going to have the time of my life,' and she had looked at the two men and five girls under her, and at her quivering superior, one by one, with her lips straight as a line which could cancel them all out completely.

Now, as she walks along the street after leaving the shop, her lips are slightly parted as if to receive a secret flavour. In fact her nostrils and eyes are a fragment more open than usual, imperceptibly but thoroughly they accompany her parted lips in one mission, the sensing of the dress that she must get.

She swerves in her course at the door of a department store and enters. Resort Department: she has seen the dress. A lemon-yellow top with a skirt patterned in bright V's of orange, mauve and blue. 'Is it made of that stain-resisting material?' she asks when she has put it on and is looking at herself in the mirror. 'Stain-resisting? I don't know, Madam. It's a washable cotton, but if I were you I'd have it dry-cleaned. It might shrink.' Lise laughs, and the girl says, 'I'm afraid we haven't anything really stain-resisting. I've never heard of anything like that.' Lise makes her mouth into a straight line. Then she says, 'I'll have it.' Meanwhile she is pulling off a hanger a summer coat with narrow stripes, red and white, with a white collar; very quickly she tries it on over the new dress. 'Of course, the two don't go well together,' says the salesgirl. 'You'd have to see them on separate.'

Lise does not appear to listen. She studies herself. This way and that, in the mirror of the fitting room. She lets the coat hang open over the dress. Her lips part, and her eyes narrow; she breathes for a moment as in a trance.

The salesgirl says, 'You can't really see the coat at its best, Madam, over that frock.' Lise appears suddenly to hear her, opening her eyes and closing her lips. The girl is saying, 'You won't be able to wear them together, but it's a lovely coat, over a plain dress, white or navy, or for the evenings ...'

‘They go very well together,’ Lise says, and taking off the coat she hands it carefully to the girl. ‘I’ll have it; also, the dress. I can take up the hem myself.’ She reaches for her blouse and skirt and says to the girl, ‘Those colours of the dress and the coat are absolutely right for me. Very natural colours.’

The girl, placating, says, ‘Oh, it’s how you feel in things yourself, Madam, isn’t it? It’s you’s got to wear them.’ Lise buttons her blouse disapprovingly. She follows the girl to the shop-floor, pays the bill, waits for the change and, when the girl hands her first the change then the large bag of heavy paper containing her new purchases, she opens the top of the bag enough to enable her to peep inside, to put in her hand and tear a corner of the tissue paper which enfolds each garment. She is obviously making sure she is being handed the right garments. The girl is about to speak, probably to say, ‘Everything all right?’ or ‘Thank you, Madam, goodbye,’ or even, ‘Don’t worry; everything’s there all right.’ But Lise speaks first; she says, ‘The colours go together perfectly. People here in the North are ignorant of colours. Conservative; old-fashioned. If only you knew! These colours are a natural blend for me. Absolutely natural.’ She does not wait for a reply; she does not turn towards the lift, she turns, instead, towards the down escalator, purposefully making her way through a short lane of dresses that hang in their stands.

She stops abruptly at the top of the escalator and looks back, then smiles as if she sees and hears what she had expected. The salesgirl, thinking her customer is already on the escalator out of sight, out of hearing, has turned to another black-frocked salesgirl. ‘All those colours together!’ she is saying. ‘Those incredible colours! She said they were perfectly natural. Natural! Here in the North, she said ...’ Her voice stops as she sees that Lise is looking and hearing. The girl affects to be fumbling with a dress on the rack and to be saying something else without changing her expression too noticeably. Lise laughs aloud and descends the escalator.

‘Well, enjoy yourself Lise,’ says the voice on the telephone. ‘Send me a card.’

‘Oh, of course,’ Lise says, and when she has hung up she laughs heartily. She does not stop. She goes to the wash-basin and fills a glass of water, which she drinks,

gurgling, then another, and still nearly choking she drinks another. She has stopped laughing, and now breathing heavily says to the mute telephone, 'Of course. Oh, of course.' Still heaving with exhaustion she pulls out the hard wall-seat which adapts to a bed and takes off her shoes, placing them beside the bed. She puts the large carrier-bag containing her new coat and dress in a cupboard beside her suitcase which is already packed. She places her hand-bag on the lamp-shelf beside the bed and lies down.

Her face is solemn as she lies, at first staring at the brown pinewood door as if to see beyond it. Presently her breathing becomes normal. The room is meticulously neat. It is a one-room flat in an apartment house. Since it was put up the designer has won prizes for his interiors, he has become known throughout the country and far beyond and is now no longer to be obtained by landlords of moderate price. The lines of the room are pure; space is used as a pattern in itself, circumscribed by the dexterous pinewood outlines that ensued from the designer's ingenuity and austere taste when he was young, unknown, studious and strict-principled. The company that owns the apartment house knows the worth of these pinewood interiors. Pinewood alone is now nearly as scarce as the architect himself, but the law, so far, prevents them from raising the rents very much. The tenants have long leases. Lise moved in when the house was new, ten years ago. She has added very little to the room; very little is needed, for the furniture is all fixed, adaptable to various uses, and stackable. Stacked into a panel are six folding chairs, should the tenant decide to entertain six for dinner. The writing desk extends to a dining table, and when the desk is not in use it, too, disappears into the pinewood wall, its bracket-lamp hingeing outward and upward to form a wall-lamp. The bed is by day a narrow seat with overhanging bookcases; by night it swivels out to accommodate the sleeper. Lise has put down a patterned rug from Greece. She has fitted a hopsack covering on the seat of the divan. Unlike the other tenants she has not put unnecessary curtains in the window; her flat is not closely overlooked and in summer she keeps the venetian blinds down over the windows and slightly opened to let in the light. A small pantry-kitchen adjoins this room. Here, too, everything is contrived to fold away into the dignity of unvarnished

pinewood. And in the bathroom as well, nothing need be seen, nothing need be left lying about. The bed-supports, the door, the window frame, the hanging cupboard, the storage space, the shelves, the desk that extends, the tables that stack — they are made of such pinewood as one may never see again in a modest bachelor apartment. Lise keeps her flat as clean-lined and clear to return to after her work as if it were uninhabited. The swaying tall pines among the litter of cones on the forest floor have been subdued into silence and into obedient bulks.

Lise breathes as if sleeping, deeply tired, but her eye-slits open from time to time. Her hand moves to her brown leather bag on the lamp-shelf and she raises herself, pulling the bag towards her. She leans on one elbow and empties the contents on the bed. She lifts them one by one, checking carefully, and puts them back; there is a folded envelope from the travel agency containing her air ticket, a powder compact, a lipstick, a comb. There is a bunch of keys. She smiles at them and her lips are parted. There are six keys on the steel ring, two Yale door-keys, a key that might belong to a functional cupboard or drawer, a small silver-metal key of the type commonly belonging to zip-fastened luggage, and two tarnished car-keys. Lise takes the car-keys off the ring and lays them aside; the rest go back in her bag. Her passport, in its transparent plastic envelope, goes back in her bag. With straightened lips she prepares for her departure the next day. She unpacks the new coat and dress and hangs them on hangers.

Next morning she puts them on. When she is ready to leave she dials a number on the telephone and looks at herself in the mirror which has not yet been concealed behind the pinewood panels which close upon it. The voice answers and Lise touches her pale brown hair as she speaks. ‘Margot, I’m just off now,’ Lise says. ‘I’ll put your car-keys in an envelope and I’ll leave them downstairs with the doorkeeper. All right?’

The voice says, ‘Thanks. Have a good holiday. Have a good time. Send me a card.’

‘Yes, of course, Margot.’

‘Of course,’ Lise says when she has replaced the receiver. She takes an envelope from a drawer, writes a name on it, puts the two car-keys in it and seals the envelope.

Then she telephones for a taxi, lifts her suitcase out to the landing, fetches her hand-bag and the envelope, and leaves the flat.

When she reaches the street floor, she stops at the windows of the porter's wood-lined cabin. Lise rings the bell and waits. No one appears, but the taxi has pulled up outside. Lise shouts to the driver, 'I'm just coming!' and indicates her suitcase which the taxi-driver fetches. While he is stacking it in the front of the cab a woman with a brown overall comes up behind Lise. 'You want me, Miss?'

Lise turns quickly to face the woman. She has the envelope in her hand and is about to speak when the woman says, 'Well, well, my goodness, what colours!' She is looking at Lise's red and white striped coat, unbuttoned, and the vivid dress beneath, the purple, orange and blue V-patterns of the skirt and the yellow top. The woman laughs hugely as one who has nothing to gain by suppressing her amusement, she laughs and opens the pinewood door into the porter's office; there she slides open the window panel and laughs aloud in Lise's face. She says, 'Are you going to join a circus?' Then again she throws back her head, looking down through half-closed lids at Lise's clothes, and gives out the high, hacking cough-like ancestral laughter of the streets, holding her breasts in her hands to spare them the shake-up. Lise says, with quiet dignity, 'You are insolent.' But the woman laughs again, now no longer spontaneously but with spiteful and deliberate noise, forcing the evident point that Lise habitually is mean with her tips, or perhaps never tips the porter at all.

Lise walks quietly out to the cab, still holding in her hand the envelope which contains the car-keys. She looks at this envelope as she goes, but whether she has failed to leave it at the door-keeper's desk by intention, or whether through the distraction of the woman's laughter, one could not tell from her serene face with lips slightly parted. The woman comes to the street door emitting noise like a brown container of laughing-gas until the taxi is out of her scope.

## TWO

Lise is thin. Her height is about five-foot-six. Her hair is pale brown, probably tinted, a very light streaked lock sweeping from the middle of her hair-line to the top of her

crown; her hair is cut short at the sides and back, and is styled high. She might be as young as twenty-nine or as old as thirty-six, but hardly younger, hardly older. She has arrived at the airport; she has paid the taxi-driver quickly and with an expression of abstract eagerness to be somewhere else. Likewise, with the porter, while he takes her bag and follows her to the desk to have it weighed-in. She seems not to see him.

There are two people in front of her. Lise's eyes are widely spaced, blue-grey and dull. Her lips are a straight line. She is neither good-looking nor bad-looking. Her nose is short and wider than it will look in the likeness constructed partly by the method of identikit, partly by actual photography, soon to be published in the newspapers of four languages.

Lise looks at the two people in front of her, first a woman and then a man, swaying to one side and the other as she does so, either to discern in the half-faces visible to her someone she might possibly know, or else to relieve, by these movements and looks, some impatience she might feel.

When it comes to her turn she heaves her luggage on to the scale and pushes her ticket to the clerk as quickly as possible. While he examines it she turns to look at a couple who are now waiting behind her. She glances at both faces, then looks back to the clerk, regardless of their returning her stares and their unanimous perception of her bright-coloured clothes.

'Any hand-luggage?' says the clerk, peering over the top of the counter.

Lise simpers, placing the tips of her upper teeth over her lower lip, and draws in a little breath.

'Any hand-luggage?' The busy young official looks at her as much as to say, 'What's the matter with you?' And Lise answers in a voice different from the voice in which she yesterday spoke to the shop assistant when buying her lurid outfit, and has used on the telephone, and in which early this morning she spoke to the woman at the porter's desk; she now speaks in a little-girl tone which presumably is taken by those within hearing to be her normal voice even if a nasty one. Lise says, 'I only have my hand-bag with me. I believe in travelling light because I travel a lot and I know how terrible it is for one's neighbours on the plane when you have great huge pieces of

hand-luggage taking up everybody's foot-room.'

The clerk, all in one gesture, heaves a sigh, purses his lips, closes his eyes, places his chin in his hands and his elbow on the desk. Lise turns round to address the couple behind her. She says, 'When you travel as much as I do you have to travel light, and I tell you, I nearly didn't bring any luggage at all, because you can get everything you want at the other end, so the only reason I brought that suitcase there is that the customs get suspicious if you come in and out without luggage. They think you're smuggling dope and diamonds under your blouse, so I packed the usual things for a holiday, but it was all quite unnecessary, as you get to understand when you've travelled about as you might say with experience in four languages over the years, and you know what you're doing —'

'Look, Miss,' the clerk says, pulling himself straight and stamping her ticket, 'you're holding up the people behind you. We're busy.'

Lise turns away from the bewildered-looking couple to face the clerk as he pushes her ticket and boarding card towards her. 'Boarding card,' says the clerk. 'Your flight will be called in twenty-five minutes' time. Next please.'

Lise grabs the papers and moves away as if thinking only of the next formality of travel. She puts the ticket in her bag, takes out her passport, slips the boarding card inside it, and makes straight towards the passport boxes. And it is almost as if, satisfied that she has successfully registered the fact of her presence at the airport among the July thousands there, she has fulfilled a small item of a greater purpose. She goes to the emigration official and joins the queue and submits her passport. And now, having received her passport back in her hand, she is pushing through the gate into the departure lounge. She walks to the far end, then turns and walks back. She is neither good-looking nor bad-looking. Her lips are slightly parted. She stops to look at the departures chart, then walks on. The people around her are mostly too occupied with their purchases and their flight-numbers to notice her, but some of those who sit beside their hand-luggage and children on the leather seats waiting for their flights to be called look at her as she walks past, noting without comment the lurid colours of her coat, red and white stripes, hanging loose over her dress, yellow-topped, with its

skirt of orange, purple and blue. They look, as she passes, as they look also at those girls whose skirts are specially short, or those men whose tight-fitting shirts are patterned with flowers or are transparent. Lise is conspicuous among them only in the particular mixture of her colours, contrasting with the fact that her hem-line has been for some years an old-fashioned length, reaching just below her knees, as do the mild dresses of many other, but dingy, women travellers who teem in the departure lounge. Lise puts her passport into her hand-bag, and holds her boarding card.

She stops at the bookstall, looks at her watch and starts looking at the paperback stands. A white-haired, tall woman who has been looking through the hardback books piled up on a table, turns from them and, pointing to the paperbacks, says to Lise in English, 'Is there anything there predominantly pink or green or beige?'

'Excuse me?' says Lise politely, in a foreignly accented English, 'what is that you're looking for?'

'Oh,' the woman says, 'I thought you were American.'

'No, but I can speak four languages enough to make myself understood.'

'I'm from Johannesburg,' says the woman, 'and I have this house in Jo'burg and another at Sea Point on the Cape. Then my son, he's a lawyer, he has a flat in Jo'burg. In all our places we have spare bedrooms, that makes two green, two pink, three beige, and I'm trying to pick up books to match. I don't see any with just those pastel tints.'

'You want English books,' Lise says. 'I think you find English books on the front of the shop over there.'

'Well, I looked there and I don't find my shades. Aren't these English books here?'

Lise says 'No. In any case they're all very bright-coloured.' She smiles then, and with her lips apart starts to look swiftly through the paperbacks. She picks out one with bright green lettering on a white background with the author's name printed to look like blue lightning streaks. In the middle of the cover are depicted a brown boy and girl wearing only garlands of sunflowers. Lise pays for it, while the white-haired woman says, 'Those colours are too bright for me. I don't see anything.'

Lise is holding the book up against her coat, giggling merrily, and looking up to the

woman as if to see if her purchase is admired.

‘You going on holiday?’ the woman says.

‘Yes. My first after three years.

‘You travel much?’

‘No. There is so little money. But I’m going to the South now. I went before, three years ago.

‘Well, I hope you have a good time. A very good time. You look very gay.

The woman has large breasts, she is clothed in a pink summer coat and dress. She smiles and is amiable in this transient intimacy with Lise, and not even sensing in the least that very soon, after a day and a half of hesitancy, and after a long midnight call to her son, the lawyer in Johannesburg, who advises her against the action, she nevertheless will come forward and repeat all she remembers and all she does not remember, and all the details she imagines to be true and those that are true, in her conversation with Lise when she sees in the papers that the police are trying to trace who Lise is, and whom, if anyone, she met on her trip and what she had said. ‘Very gay,’ says this woman to Lise, indulgently, smiling all over Lise’s vivid clothes.

‘I look for a gay time,’ Lise is saying.

‘You got a young man?’

‘Yes, I have my boy-friend!’

‘He’s not with you, then?’

‘No. I’m going to find him. He’s waiting for me. Maybe I should get him a gift at the duty-free shop.’

They are walking towards the departures chart. ‘I’m going to Stockholm. I have three-quarters of an hour wait,’ says the woman.

Lise looks at the chart as the amplified voice of the announcer hacks its way through the general din. Lise says, ‘That’s my flight. Boarding at Gate 14.’ She moves off, her eyes in the distance as if the woman from Johannesburg had never been there. On her way to Gate 14 Lise stops to glance at a gift-stall. She looks at the dolls in folk-costume and at the corkscrews. Then she lifts up a paper-knife shaped like a scimitar of brass-coloured metal with inset coloured stones. She removes it from its curved

sheath and tests the blade and the point with deep interest. 'How much?' she asks the assistant who is at that moment serving someone else. The girl says impatiently aside to Lise, 'The price is on the ticket.'

'Too much. I can get it cheaper at the other end,' Lise says, putting it down.

'They're all fixed prices at the duty-free,' the girl calls after Lise as she walks away towards Gate 14.

A small crowd has gathered waiting for embarkation. More and more people straggle or palpitate, according to temperament, towards the group. Lise surveys her fellow-passengers, one by one, very carefully but not in a manner to provoke their attention. She moves and mingles as if with dreamy feet and legs, but quite plainly, from her eyes, her mind is not dreamy as she absorbs each face, each dress, each suit of clothes, all blouses, blue-jeans, each piece of hand-luggage, each voice which will accompany her on the flight now boarding at Gate 14.

## TASK 1

1. *Look up the following words in the dictionary and learn them:*

stain, fabric, reduction, vivid, shriek, gasp, gape, scan, disapproval, continually, resist, flurry, quiver, imperceptibly, thoroughly, shrink, placate, disapprovingly, enfold, noticeably, heartily, gurgle, meticulously, circumscribe, ensue, adaptable, stackable, divan, tarnish, insolent, spontaneously, habitually, discern, lurid, presumably, smuggle, submit, conspicuous, dingy, teem, hesitancy, palpitate.

*Which of these words are grammatical homonyms?*

2. *Supply and learn all three forms of these irregular verbs.*

To spill, to bend, to tear, to fling, to hang.

3. *Find the English equivalents to the following words:*

застібка, в зелено-пурпурні квадратах на білому тлі, радикальний, поспішно, в крайньому роздратуванні, підробити, збоку, бігом, захлинаючись, згортати, тим часом, предмет одягу, возитися з чимось, спускатися, раковина, захлинутися, урочистий, у всій країні і далеко за її межами, за доступною ціною, майстерно зроблений, контури, майстерність, строгий смак, старанний,

оренда, настінний світильник, вміщати, строкатий килимок, жалюзі, примикати, гідність, висипати вміст, один за іншим, зв'язка ключів, прозорий, розхристаний, безтурботний, фоторобот, клерк, одноголосний, посміхатися, наркотики, спантеличений, зал очікування, облягаючий, переважно, пастельні відтінки, зображати, доброзичливий, національний костюм, змішуватися.

4. At page 2 you come across the expression **to do the packing**. What other chores following the pattern **to do the ...ing** can you name?

5. Build up situations based on the context around the following expressions using them in your answer:

to try smth on + to be a good fit, to wipe smth off, to make a difference, to have employees under smb, some period off (an afternoon off), to have smth dry-cleaned + to go well together, to peep inside, to be about to do smth + to be ignorant of smth, to affect to do smth, to prevent smb from doing smth, to dial a number, by intention, to have smth weighed-in, to hold up smb, to join the queue, to be occupied with smth/doing smth, to be clothed in smth, to glance at smb/smth.

6. Use these collocations in a story of your own.

7. Translate these phrases into your first language:

- ‘And it doesn’t stain,’ the salesgirl had said, with her eye wandering to another unstainable and equally unsaleable summer dress which evidently she hoped, now, to offer the satisfied customer.
- with a look of satisfaction at her own dominance over the situation.
- out of sight, out of hearing,
- Stacked into a panel are six folding chairs, should the tenant decide to entertain six for dinner.
- The woman laughs hugely as one who has nothing to gain by suppressing her amusement,
- and gives out the high, hacking cough-like ancestral laughter of the streets,
- forcing the evident point that Lise habitually is mean with her tips, or perhaps never tips the porter at all.

- her hair is cut short at the sides and back, and is styled high,
- When it comes to her turn she heaves her luggage on to the scale and pushes her ticket to the clerk as quickly as possible.

8. *Topics for discussion:*

- 1) Render Lise's exchange with her immediate superior that lead to her laughing hysterically.
- 2) What is unusual in the word arrangement in the following phrases: *She has five girls under her and two men. Over her are two women and five men?*
- 3) Describe Lise's room. When did she move in? Has she added much to the room?
- 4) Describe Lise's appearance. Is she good-looking?
- 5) Dwell on the episode with a busy young official at the luggage control.
- 6) Retell Lise's conversation with an elderly woman at the bookstall. What did Lise say about her intentions?
- 7) What item caught her attention at the gift-stall? Did she purchase it?
- 8) What phrases are repeated? Why do you think?
- 9) Pick up all the allusions to what will happen to Lise later in the book.
10. Do you believe Lise was a well-organized person?
11. Can you name the city and the country she is from? What country is she travelling to?

## UNIT 2

### THREE

She will be found tomorrow morning dead from multiple stab-wounds, her wrists bound with a silk scarf and her ankles bound with a man's necktie, in the grounds of an empty villa, in a park of the foreign city to which she is travelling on the flight now boarding at Gate 14.

Crossing the tarmac *in*occe to the plane Lise follows, with her quite long stride, closely on the heels of the fellow-passenger whom she appears finally to have chosen to adhere to. This is a rosy-faced, sturdy young man of about thirty; he is dressed in a

dark business suit and carries a black briefcase. She follows him purposefully, careful to block the path of any other traveller whose aimless hurry might intervene between Lise and this man. Meanwhile, closely behind Lise, almost at her side, walks a man who in turn seems anxious to be close to her. He tries unsuccessfully to catch her attention. He is bespectacled, half-smiling, young, dark, long-nosed and stooping. He wears a check shirt and beige corduroy trousers. A camera is slung over his shoulders and a coat over his arm.

Up the steps they go, the pink and shiny business man, Lise at his heels, and at hers the hungrier-looking man. Up the steps and into the plane. The air-hostess says good morning at the door while a steward farther up the aisle of the economy class blocks the progress of the staggering file and helps a young woman with two young children to bundle their coats up on the rack. The way is clear at last. Lise's business man finds a seat next to the right-hand window in a three-seat row. Lise takes the middle seat next to him, on his left, while the lean hawk swiftly throws his coat and places his camera up on the rack and sits down next to Lise in the end seat.

Lise begins to fumble for her seat-belt. First she reaches down the right-hand side of her seat which adjoins that of the dark-suited man. At the same time she takes the left-hand section. But the right-hand buckle she gets hold of is that of her neighbour. It does not fit in the left-hand buckle as she tries to make it do. The dark-suited neighbour, fumbling also for his seat-belt, frowns as he seems to realize that she has the wrong part, and makes an unintelligible sound. Lise says, 'I think I've got yours.' He fishes up the buckle that properly belongs to Lise's seat-belt.

She says, 'Oh yes. I'm so sorry.' She giggles and he formally smiles and brings his smile to an end, now fastening his seat-belt intently and then looking out of the window at the wing of the plane, silvery with its rectangular patches.

Lise's left-hand neighbour smiles. The loudspeaker tells the passengers to fasten their seat-belts and refrain from smoking. Her admirer's brown eyes are warm, his smile, as wide as his forehead, seems to take up most of his lean face. Lise says, audibly above the other voices on the plane, 'You look like Red Riding-Hood's grandmother. Do you want to eat me up?'

The engines rev up. Her ardent neighbour's widened lips give out deep, satisfied laughter, while he slaps her knee in applause. Suddenly her other neighbour looks at Lise in alarm. He stares, as if recognizing her, with his brief-case on his lap, and his hand in the position of pulling out a batch of papers. Something about Lise, about her exchange with the man on her left, has caused a kind of paralysis in his act of fetching out some papers from his brief-case. He opens his mouth, gasping and startled, staring at her as if she is someone he has known and forgotten and now sees again. She smiles at him; it is a smile of relief and delight. His hand moves again, hurriedly putting back the papers that he had half drawn out of his brief-case. He trembles as he unfastens his seat-belt and makes as if to leave his seat, grabbing his brief-case.

On the evening of the following day he will tell the police, quite truthfully, 'The first time I saw her was at the airport. Then on the plane. She sat beside me.

'You never saw her before at any time? You didn't know her?'

'No, never.'

'What was your conversation on the plane?'

'Nothing. I moved my seat. I was afraid.'

'Afraid?'

'Yes, frightened. I moved to another seat, away from her.'

'What frightened you?'

'I don't know.'

'Why did you move your seat at that time?'

'I don't know. I must have sensed something.'

'What did she say to you?'

'Nothing much. She got her seat-belt mixed with mine. Then she was carrying on a bit with the man at the end seat.'

Now, as the plane taxis along the runway, he gets up. Lise and the man in the aisle seat look up at him, taken by surprise at the abruptness of his movements. Their seat-belts fasten them to their seats and they are unable immediately to make way for him, as he indicates that he wants to pass. Lise looks, for an instant, slightly senile, as if

she felt, in addition to bewilderment, a sense of defeat or physical incapacity. She might be about to cry or protest against a pitiless frustration of her will. But an air-hostess, seeing the standing man, has left her post by the exit—door and briskly comes up the aisle to their seat. She says. ‘The aircraft is taking off. Will you kindly remain seated and fasten your seat-belt?’

The man says, in a foreign accent, ‘Excuse me, please. I wish to change.’ He starts to squeeze past Lise and her companion.

The air-hostess, evidently thinking that the man has an urgent need to go to the lavatory, asks the two if they would mind getting up to let him pass and return to their seats as quickly as possible. They unfasten their belts, stand aside in the aisle, and he hurries up the plane with the air-hostess leading the way. But he does not get as far as the toilet cubicles. He stops at an empty middle seat upon which the people on either side, a white-haired fat man and a young girl, have dumped hand-luggage and magazines. He pushes himself past the woman who is seated on the outside seat and asks her to remove the luggage. He himself lifts it, shakily, his solid strength all gone. The air-hostess turns to remonstrate, but the two people have obediently made the seat vacant for him. He sits, fastens his seat-belt, ignoring the air-hostess, her reproving, questioning protests, and heaves a deep breath as if he had escaped from death by a small margin.

Lise and her companion have watched the performance. Lise smiles bitterly.

The dark man by her side says, ‘What’s wrong with him?’

‘He didn’t like us,’ Lise says.

‘What did we do to him?’

‘Nothing. Nothing at all. He must be crazy. He must be nutty.’

The plane now comes to its brief halt before revving up for the takeoff run. The engines roar and the plane is off, is rising and away. Lise says to her neighbour, ‘I wonder who he is?’

‘Some kind of a nut,’ says the man. ‘But it’s all the better for us, we can get acquainted.’ His stringy hand takes hers; he holds it tightly. ‘I’m Bill,’ he says.

‘What’s your name?’

‘Lise.’ She lets him grip her hand as if she hardly knows that he is holding it. She stretches her neck to see above the heads of the people in front, and says, ‘He’s sitting there reading the paper as if nothing had happened.’

The stewardess is handing out copies of newspapers. A steward who has followed her up the aisle stops at the seat where the dark-suited man has settled and is now tranquilly scanning the front page of his newspaper. The steward inquires if he is all right now, sir?

The man looks up with an embarrassed smile and shyly apologizes.

‘Yes, fine. I’m sorry ...’

‘Was there anything the matter, sir?’

‘No, really. Please. I’m fine here, thanks. Sorry ... it was nothing, nothing.’

The steward goes away with his eyebrows mildly raised in resignation at the chance eccentricity of a passenger. The plane purrs forward. The no-smoking lights go out and the loudspeaker confirms that the passengers may now unfasten their seat-belts and smoke.

Lise unfastens hers and moves to the vacated window seat.

‘I knew,’ she says. ‘In a way I knew there was something wrong with him.’

Bill moves to sit next to her in the middle seat and says, ‘Nothing wrong with him at all. Just a fit of puritanism. He was unconsciously jealous when he saw we’d hit it off together, and he made out he was outraged as if we’d been doing something indecent. Forget him; he’s probably a clerk in an insurance brokers’ from the looks of him. Nasty little bureaucrat. Limited. He wasn’t your type.’

‘How do you know?’ Lise says immediately as if responding only to Bill’s use of the past tense, and, as if defying it by a counter-demonstration to the effect that the man continues to exist in the present, she half-stands to catch sight of the stranger’s head, eight rows forward in a middle seat, at the other side of the aisle, now bent quietly over his reading.

‘Sit down,’ Bill says. ‘You don’t want anything to do with that type. He was frightened of your psychedelic clothes. Terrified.’

‘Do you think so?’

‘Yes. But I’m not.’

The stewardesses advance up the aisle bearing trays of food which they start to place before the passengers. Lise and Bill pull down the table in front of their seats to receive their portions. It is a midmorning compromise snack composed of salami on lettuce, two green olives, a rolled-up piece of boiled ham containing a filling of potato salad and a small pickled something, all laid upon a slice of bread. There is also a round cake, swirled with white and chocolate cream, and a corner of silver-wrapped processed cheese with biscuits wrapped in cellophane. An empty plastic coffee cup stands by on each of their trays.

Lise takes from her tray the transparent plastic envelope which contains the sterilized knife, fork and spoon necessary for the meal. She feels the blade of the knife. She presses two of her fingers against the prongs of her fork. ‘Not very sharp,’ she says.

‘Who needs them, anyway?’ says Bill. ‘This is awful food.’

‘Oh, it looks all right. I’m hungry. I only had a cup of coffee for my breakfast. There wasn’t time.’

‘You can eat mine too,’ says Bill. ‘I stick as far as possible to a very sensible diet. This stuff is poison, full of toxics and chemicals. It’s far too Yin.’

‘I know,’ said Lise. ‘But considering it’s a snack on a plane —’

‘You know what Yin is?’ he says.

She says, ‘Well, sort of ...’ in a vaguely embarrassed way, ‘but it’s only a snack, isn’t it?’

‘You understand what Yin is?’

‘Well, something sort of like this — all bitty.’

‘No, Lise,’ he says.

‘Well it’s a kind of slang, isn’t it? You say a thing’s a bit too yin ...’; plainly she is groping.

‘Yin,’ says Bill, ‘is the opposite of Yang.’

She giggles and, half-rising, starts searching with her eyes for the man who is still on her mind.

‘This is serious,’ Bill says, pulling her roughly back into her seat. She laughs and

begins to eat.

‘Yin and Yang are philosophies,’ he says. ‘Yin represents space. Its colour is purple. Its element is water. It is external. That salami is Yin and those olives are Yin. They are full of toxics. Have you ever heard of macrobiotic food?’

‘No, what is it?’ she says cutting into the open salami sandwich.

‘You’ve got a lot to learn. Rice, unpolished rice is the basis of macrobiotics. I’m going to start a centre in Naples next week. It is a cleansing diet. Physically, mentally and spiritually.’

‘I hate rice,’ she says.

‘No, you only think you do. He who hath ears let him hear.’ He smiles widely towards her, he breathes into her face and touches her knee. She eats on with composure. ‘I’m an Enlightenment Leader in the movement,’ he says.

The stewardess comes with two long metal pots. ‘Tea or coffee?’ ‘Coffee,’ says Lise, holding out her plastic cup, her arm stretched in front of Bill. When this is done, ‘For you, sir?’ says the stewardess.

Bill places his hand over his cup and benignly shakes his head.

‘Don’t you want anything to eat, sir?’ says the stewardess, regarding Bill’s untouched tray.

‘No, thank you,’ says Bill.

Lise says, ‘I’ll eat it. Or at least, some of it.’

The stewardess passes on to the next row, unconcerned.

‘Coffee is Yin,’ says Bill.

Lise looks towards his tray. ‘Are you sure you don’t want that open sandwich? It’s delicious. I’ll eat it if you don’t want it. After all, it’s paid for, isn’t it?’

‘Help yourself,’ he says. ‘You’ll soon change your eating habits, though, now that we’ve got to know each other.’

‘Whatever do you eat when you travel abroad?’ Lise says, exchanging his tray for hers, retaining only her coffee.

‘I carry my diet with me. I never eat in restaurants and hotels unless I have to. And if I do, I choose very carefully. I go where I can get a little fish, maybe, and rice, and

perhaps a bit of goat's cheese. Which are Yang. Cream cheese — in fact butter, milk, anything that comes from the cow — is too Yin. You become what you eat. Eat cow and you become cow.

A hand, fluttering a sheet of white paper, intervenes from behind them.

They turn to see what is being offered. Bill grasps the paper. It is the log of the plane's flight, informing the passengers as to the altitude, speed and present geographical position, and requesting them to read it and pass it on.

Lise continues to look back, having caught sight of the face behind her. In the window seat, next to a comfortably plump woman and a young girl in her teens, is a sick-looking man, his eyes yellow-brown and watery, deep-set in their sockets, his face pale green. It was he who had handed forward the chart. Lise stares, her lips parted slightly, and she frowns as if speculating on the man's identity. He looks away, first out of the window, then down towards the floor, embarrassed. The woman does not change her expression, but the young girl, understanding Lise to be questioning by her stare the man behind, says, 'It's only the flight chart.' But Lise stares on. The sick-looking man looks at his companions and then down at his knees, and Lise's stare does not appear to be helping his sickness.

A nudge from Bill composes her so far that she turns and faces forward again. He says, 'It's only the flight chart. Do you want to see it?' And since she does not reply he thrusts it forward to bother it about the ears of the people in front until they receive it from his hand.

Lise starts to eat her second snack. 'You know, Bill,' she says, 'I think you were right about that crazy man who moved his seat. He wasn't my type at all and I wasn't his type. Just as a matter of interest, I mean, because I didn't take the slightest notice of him and I'm not looking to pick up strangers. But you mentioned that he wasn't my type and, of course, let me tell you, if he thought I was going to make up to him he made a mistake.'

'I'm your type,' Bill says.

She sips her coffee and looks round, glimpsing through the partition of the seats the man behind her. He stares ahead with glazed and quite unbalanced eyes, those eyes

far too wide open to signify anything but some sort of mental distance from reality; he does not see Lise now, as she peers at him, or, if so, he appears to have taken a quick turn beyond caring and beyond embarrassment.

Bill says, 'Look at me, not at him.'

She turns back to Bill with an agreeable and indulgent smile. The stewardesses come efficiently collecting the trays, cluttering one upon the other. Bill, when their trays are collected, puts up first Lise's table and then his own. He puts his arm through hers.

'I'm your type,' he says, 'and you're mine. Are you planning to stay with friends?'

'No, but I have to meet somebody.'

'No chance of us meeting some time? How long are you planning to stay in the city?'

'I have no definite plans,' she says. 'But I could meet you for a drink tonight. Just a short drink.'

'I'm staying at the Metropole,' he says. 'Where will you be staying?'

'Oh, just a small place. Hotel Tomson.'

'I don't think I know Hotel Tomson.'

'It's quite small. It's cheap but clean.'

'Well, at the Metropole,' Bill says, 'they don't ask any questions.'

'As far as I'm concerned,' Lise says, 'they can ask any questions they like. I'm an idealist.'

'That's exactly what I am,' Bill says. 'An idealist. You're not offended, are you? I only meant that if we get acquainted, I think, somehow, I'm your type and you're my type.'

'I don't like crank diets,' Lise says. 'I don't need diets. I'm in good form.'

'Now, I can't let that pass, Lise,' Bill says. 'You don't know what you're talking about. The macrobiotic system is not just a diet, it's a way of life.'

She says, 'I have somebody to meet some time this afternoon or this evening.'

'What for?' he says. 'Is it a boy-friend?'

'Mind your own business,' she says.. 'Stick to your yin and your yang.'

'Yin and Yang,' he says, 'is something that you've got to understand. If we could

have a little time together, a little peaceful time, in a room, just talking, I could give you some idea of how it works. It's an idealist's way of life. I'm hoping to get the young people of Naples interested in it. I should think there would be many young people of Naples interested. We're opening a macrobiotic restaurant there, you know.'

Lise peers behind her again at the staring, sickly man. 'A strange type,' she says.

'With a room behind the public dining hall, a room for strict observers who are on Regime Seven. Regime Seven is cereals only, very little liquid. You take such a very little liquid that you can pee only three times a day if you're a man, two if you're a woman. Regime Seven is a very elevated regime in macrobiotics. You become like a tree. People become what they eat.'

'Do you become a goat when you eat goat's cheese?'

'Yes, you become lean and stringy like a goat. Look at me, I haven't a spare piece of fat on my body. I'm not an Enlightenment Leader for nothing.'

'You must have been eating goat's cheese,' she says. 'This man back here is like a tree, have you seen him?'

'Behind the private room for observers of Regime Seven,' Bill says, 'there will be another little room for tranquillity and quiet. It should do well in Naples once we get the youth movement started. It's to be called the Yin-Yang Young. It does well in Denmark. But middle-aged people take the diet too. In the States many senior citizens are on macrobiotics.'

'The men in Naples are sexy.'

'On this diet the Regional Master for Northern Europe recommends one orgasm a day. At least. In the Mediterranean countries we are still researching that aspect.'

'He's afraid of me,' Lise whispers, indicating with a jerk of her head the man behind her. 'Why is everybody afraid of me?'

'What do you mean? I'm not afraid of you.' Bill looks round, impatiently, and as if only to oblige her. He looks away again. 'Don't bother with him,' he says. 'He's a mess.'

Lise gets up. 'Excuse me,' she says, 'I have to go and wash.'

‘See you come back,’ he says.

She passes across him to the aisle, holding in her hand both her hand-bag and the paperback book she bought at the airport, and as she does so she takes the opportunity to look carefully at the three people in the row behind, the ill-looking man, the plump woman and the young girl, who sit without conversing, as it seems unconnected with each other. Lise stands for a moment in the aisle, raising the arm on which the hand-bag is slung from the wrist, so that the paperback, now held between finger and thumb, is visible. She seems to display it deliberately, as if she is one of those spies one reads about who effect recognition by pre-arranged signals and who verify their contact with another agent by holding a certain paper in a special way.

Bill looks up at her and says, ‘What’s the matter?’

She starts moving forward, at the same time answering Bill: ‘The matter?’

‘You won’t need that book,’ Bill says.

She looks at the book in her hand as if wondering where it came from and with a little laugh hesitates by his side long enough to toss it on to her seat before she goes up the plane towards the toilets.

Two people are waiting in line ahead of her. She takes her place abstractedly, standing in fact almost even with the row where her first neighbour, the business man, is sitting. But she does not seem to be aware of him or to care in the slightest that he glances up at her twice, three times, at first apprehensively and then, as she continues to ignore him, less so. He turns a page of his newspaper and folds it conveniently for reading, and reads it without looking at her again, settling further into his seat with the slight sigh of one whose visitor has left and who is at last alone.

It has turned out that the sick-looking man is after all connected with the plump woman and the young girl who sat beside him on the plane. He is coming out of the airport building, now, not infirmly but with an air of serious exhaustion, accompanied by the woman and the girl.

Lise stands a few yards away. By her side is Bill; their luggage is on the pavement

beside them. She says, 'Oh there he is!' and leaves Bill's side, running up to the sick-eyed man. 'Excuse me!' she says.

He hesitates, and makes an awkward withdrawal: two steps backward, and with the steps he seems to withdraw even more his chest, shoulders, legs and face. The plump woman looks at Lise inquiringly while the girl just stands and looks.

Lise addresses the man in English. She says, 'Excuse me, but I wondered if you wanted to share a limousine to the centre. It works out cheaper than a taxi, if the passengers agree to share, and it's quicker than the bus, of course.'

The man looks at the pavement as if inwardly going through a ghastly experience. The plump woman says, 'No, thank you. We're being met.' And touching the man on the arm, moves on. He follows, as if bound for the scaffold while the girl stares blankly at Lise before walking round and past her. But Lise quickly moves with the group, and once again confronts the man. 'I'm sure we've met somewhere before,' she says. The man rolls his head slightly as if he has toothache or a headache. 'I would be so grateful,' Lise says, 'for a lift.'

'I'm afraid—' says the woman. And just then a man in a chauffeur's uniform comes up. 'Good morning, m' lord,' he says. 'We're parked over there. Did you have a good trip?'

The man has opened his mouth wide but without making a sound; now he closes his lips tight.

'Come along,' says the plump woman, while the girl turns in an unconcerned way. The plump woman says sweetly to Lise, while brushing past her, 'I'm sorry, we can't stop at the moment. The car's waiting and we have no extra room.'

Lise shouts, 'But your luggage — you've forgotten your luggage.'

The chauffeur turns cheerily and says over his shoulder, 'No luggage, Miss, they don't bring luggage. Got all they need at the villa.' He winks and breezes about his business.

The three follow him across the street to the rows of waiting cars and are followed by other travellers who stream out of the airport building.

Lise runs back to Bill. He says, 'What are you up to?'

‘I thought I knew him,’ Lise says. She is crying, her tears fall heavily. She says, ‘I was sure he was the right one. I’ve got to meet someone.’

Bill says, ‘Don’t cry, don’t cry, people are looking. What’s the matter? I don’t get it.’ At the same time he grins with his wide mouth as if to affirm that the incomprehensible needs must be a joke. ‘I don’t get it,’ he says, pulling out of his pocket two men’s-size paper handkerchiefs, and, selecting one, handing it to Lise. ‘Who did you think he was?’

Lise wipes her eyes and blows her nose. She clutches the paper handkerchief in her fist. She says, ‘It’s a disappointing start to my holidays. I was sure.’

‘You’ve got me for the next few days if you like,’ Bill says. ‘Don’t you want to see me again? Come on, we’ll get a taxi, you’ll feel better in a taxi. You can’t go on the bus, crying like that. I don’t get it. I can give you what you want, wait and see.’

On the pavement, further up, among a cluster of people waiting for a taxi is the sturdy young man in his business suit, holding his briefcase. Lise looks listlessly at Bill, then beyond Bill, and just as listlessly takes in the man whose rosy face is turned towards her. He lifts his suitcase immediately he catches sight of her and crosses the road amongst the traffic, moving quickly away and away. But Lise is not watching him any more, she does not even seem to have remembered him.

In the taxi she laughs harshly when Bill tries to kiss her. Then she lets him kiss her, emerging from the contact with raised eyebrows as who should say, ‘What next?’ ‘I’m your type,’ Bill says.

The taxi stops at the grey stone downtown Hotel Tomson. She says, ‘What’s all that on the floor?’ and points to a scatter of small seeds. Bill looks at them closely and then at his zipper-bag which has come unzipped by a small fraction.

‘Rice,’ he says. ‘One of my sample packs must have burst and this bag isn’t closed properly.’ He zips up the bag and says, ‘Never mind.’

He takes her to the narrow swing doors and hands her suitcase to the porter. ‘I’ll look for you at seven in the hall of the Metropole,’ he says. He kisses her on the cheek and again she raises her eyebrows. She pushes the swing door and goes with it, not looking back.

## FOUR

At the hotel desk she seems rather confused as if she is not quite sure where she is. She gives her name and when the concierge asks for her passport she evidently does not immediately understand, for she asks him what he wants first in Danish, then French. She tries Italian, lastly English. He smiles and responds to Italian and English, again requesting her passport in both languages.

‘It is confusing,’ she says in English, handing over her passport.

‘Yes, you left part of yourself at home,’ the concierge says. ‘That other part, he is still en route to our country but he will catch up with you in a few hours’ time. It’s often the way with travel by air, the passenger arrives ahead of himself. Can I send you to your room a drink or a coffee?’

‘No, thank you.’ She turns to follow the waiting page-boy, then turns back. ‘When will you be finished with my passport?’

‘Any time, any time, Madam. When you come down again. When you go out. Any time.’ He looks at her dress and coat, then turns to some other people who have just arrived. While the boy waits, dangling a room-key, to take her up, Lise pauses for a moment to have a good look at them. They are a family: mother, father, two sons and a small daughter all speaking German together volubly. Lise is meanwhile gazed back at by the two sons. She turns away, impatiently gesturing the page-boy towards the lift, and follows him.

In her room she gets rid of the boy quickly, and without even taking her coat off lies down on the bed, staring at the ceiling. She breathes deeply and deliberately, in and out, for a few minutes. Then she gets up, takes off her coat, and examines what there is of the room.

It is a bed with a green cotton cover, a bedside table, a rug, a dressing-table, two chairs, a small chest of drawers; there is a wide tall window which indicates that it had once formed part of a much larger room, now partitioned into two or three rooms in the interests of hotel economy; there is a small bathroom with a bidet, a lavatory, a washbasin and a shower. The walls and a built-in cupboard have been a yellowish

cream but are now dirty with dark marks giving evidence of past pieces of furniture now removed or rearranged. Her suitcase lies on a rack-table. The bedside light is a curved chromium stand with a parchment shade. Lise switches it on. She switches on the central light which is encased in a mottled glass globe; the light flicks on, then immediately flickers out as if, having served a long succession of clients without complaint, Lise is suddenly too much for it.

She tramps heavily into the bathroom and first, without hesitation, peers into the drinking-glass as if fully expecting to find what she does indeed find: two Alka-Seltzers, quite dry, having presumably been put there by the previous occupant who no doubt had wanted to sober up but who had finally lacked the power or memory to fill the glass with water and drink the salutary result.

By the side of the bed is a small oblong box bearing three pictures without words to convey to clients of all languages which bell-push will bring which room attendant. Lise examines this with a frown, as it were deciphering with the effort necessary to those more accustomed to word-reading the three pictures which represent first a frilly maid with a long-handled duster over her shoulder, next a waiter carrying a tray and lastly a man in buttoned uniform bearing a folded garment over his arm. Lise presses the maid. A light goes on in the box illuminating the picture. Lise sits on the bed and waits. Then she takes off her shoes and, watching the door for a few seconds more, presses the buttoned valet who likewise does not come. Nor does room-service after many more minutes. Lise lifts the telephone, demands the concierge and complains in a torrent that the bell-pushes bring no answer, the room is dirty, the tooth-glass has not been changed since the last guest left, the central light needs a new bulb, and that the bed, contrary to the advance specifications of her travel agency, has a too-soft mattress. The concierge advises her to press the bell for the maid.

Lise has started reciting her list over again from the beginning, when the maid does appear with a question-mark on her face. Lise puts down the receiver rather loudly and points to the light which the maid tries for herself, then, nodding her understanding of the case, makes to leave. 'Wait!' says Lise, first in English then in

French, to neither of which the maid responds. Lise produces the glass with its Alka-Seltzers nestled at the bottom. 'Filthy!' Lise says in English. The maid obligingly fills the glass from the tap and hands it to Lise. 'Dirty!' Lise shouts in French. The maid understands, laughs at the happening, and this time makes a quick getaway with the glass in her hand.

Lise slides open the cupboard, pulls down a wooden hanger and throws it across the room with a clatter, then lies down on the bed. Presently she looks at her watch. It is five past one. She opens her suitcase and carefully extracts a short dressing-gown. She takes out a dress, hangs it in the cupboard, takes it off the hanger again, folds it neatly and puts it back. She takes out her sponge-bag and bedroom slippers, undresses, puts on her dressing-gown and goes into the bathroom, shutting the door. She has reached the point of taking a shower when she hears voices from her room, a scraping sound, a man's and a girl's. Putting forth her head from the bathroom door, she sees a man in light brown overalls with a pair of steps and an electric light bulb, accompanied by the maid. Lise comes out in her dressing-gown without having properly dried herself in the evident interest of protecting her hand-bag which lies on the bed. Her dressing-gown clings damply to her. 'Where is the tooth-glass?' Lise demands. 'I must have a glass for water.' The maid touches her head to denote forgetfulness and departs with a swish of her skirt, never to return within Lise's cognizance. However, Lise soon makes known her need for a drinking-glass on the telephone to the concierge, threatening to leave the hotel immediately if she doesn't get her water-glass right away.

While waiting for the threat to take effect Lise again considers the contents of her suitcase. This seems to present her with a problem, for she takes out a pink cotton dress, hangs it in the cupboard, then after hesitating for a few seconds she takes it off the hanger again, folds it carefully and lays it back in her case. It may be that she is indeed contemplating an immediate departure from the hotel. But when another maid arrives with two drinking-glasses, apologies in Italian and the explanation that the former maid had gone off duty, Lise continues to look through her belongings in a puzzled way, taking nothing further out of her suitcase.

This maid, seeing laid out on the bed the bright-coloured dress and coat in which Lise had arrived, inquires amiably if Madam is going to the beach.

‘No,’ says Lise.

‘You American?’ says the maid.

‘No,’ Lise says.

‘English?’

‘No.’ Lise turns her back to continue her careful examination of her clothes in the suitcase, and the maid goes out with an unwanted air, saying, ‘Good day.’

Lise is lifting the corners of her carefully packed things, as if in absent-minded accompaniment to some thought, who knows what? Then, with some access of decision, she takes off her dressing-gown and slippers and starts putting on again the same clothes that she wore on her journey. When she is dressed she folds the dressing-gown, puts the slippers back in their plastic bag, and replaces them in her suitcase. She also puts back everything that she has taken out of her sponge-bag, and packs this away.

Now she takes from an inside pocket of her suitcase a brochure with an inset map which she spreads out on the bed. She studies it closely, finding first the spot where the Hotel Tomson is situated and from there traces with her finger various routes leading into and away from the centre of the town. Lise stands, bending over it. The room is dark although it is not yet two in the afternoon. Lise switches on the central light and pores over her map.

It is marked here and there with tiny pictures which denote historic buildings, museums and monuments. Eventually Lise takes a ballpoint pen from her bag and marks a spot in a large patch of green, the main parkland of the city. She puts a little cross beside one of the small pictures which is described on the map as ‘The Pavilion’. She then folds up the map and replaces it in the pamphlet which she then edges in her hand-bag. The pen lies, apparently forgotten, on the bed. She looks at herself in the glass, touches her hair, then locks her suitcase. She finds the car-keys that she had failed to leave behind this morning and attaches them once more to her key-ring. She puts the bunch of keys in her hand-bag, picks up her paperback book

and goes out, locking the door behind her. Who knows her thoughts? Who can tell? She is downstairs at the desk where, behind the busy clerks, numbered pigeon-holes irregularly contain letters, packages, the room-keys, or nothing, and above them the clock shows twelve minutes past two. Lise puts her room-key on the counter and asks for her passport in a loud voice causing the clerk whom she addresses, another clerk who sits working an adding machine, and several other people who are standing and sitting in the hotel lobby, to take notice of her.

The women stare at her clothes. They, too, are dressed brightly for a southern summer, but even here in this holiday environment Lise looks brighter. It is possibly the combination of colours — the red in her coat and the purple in her dress — rather than the colours themselves which draws attention to her, as she takes her passport in its plastic envelope from the clerk, he looking meanwhile as if he bears the whole of the eccentricities of humankind upon his slender shoulders.

Two girls, long-legged, in the very brief skirts of the times, stare at Lise. Two women who might be their mothers stare too. And possibly the fact that Lise's outfit comes so far and unfashionably below her knees gives an extra shockingness to her appearance that was not even apparent in the less up-to-date Northern city from which she set off that morning. Skirts are worn shorter here in the South. Just as, in former times, when prostitutes could be discerned by the brevity of their skirts compared with the normal standard, so Lise in her knee-covering clothes at this moment looks curiously of the street-prostitute class beside the mini-skirted girls and their mothers whose knees at least can be seen.

So she lays the trail, presently to be followed by Interpol and elaborated upon with due art by the journalists of Europe for the few days it takes for her identity to be established.

## TASK 2

1. *Look up the following words in the dictionary and learn them:*

adhere, sturdy, hawk, abruptness, frustration, squeeze, evidently, solid, remonstrate, obediently, tranquilly, eccentricity, purr, defy, psychedelic, cleanse,

composure, benignly, retain, grasp, glimpse, recognition, toss, abstractedly, apprehensively, inwardly, clutch, cluster, scatter.

*Which of these words are grammatical homonyms?*

2. *Supply and learn all three forms of these irregular verbs.*

To bind, to sling.

3. Find the English equivalents to the following words:

ножове поранення, безцільний, на території, майже наступаючи на п'яти, перешкодити, в окулярах, сутулий, хитатися, пристебнути ремені безпеки, пачка паперів, безжальний, кабіна, збезглузджений, жилава рука, смиренність, відстебнути ремені, несвідомо, обурений, непристойний, загорнутий в целофан, зубці виделки, наскільки це можливо, байдужий, вподобання щодо їжі, міркувати, означати, наскільки мені відомо, образитися, болючий, спокій, скористатися можливістю, підтверджувати, віддалення, запитально, підтверджувати, незрозумілий, міцний, байдуже.

4. a) *Build up situations based on the context around the following expressions using them in your answer:*

to refrain from doing smth, to rev up, to be taken by surprise, to take off, to get acquainted, **hit it off (with someone)**, **to stick to a diet**, **to let smth pass**, to stick to smth, to oblige smb, ahead of smb, to address smb + to work out, to confront smb, to be up to smth, to blow one's nose.

b) *Build up 3 situations around the expression **to catch sight of** (it was used 3 times in the fragment).*

5. *Use some of the collocations from task 4 to form a story of your own.*

6. *Translate these phrases into your first language:*

a) A steward farther up the aisle of the economy class blocks the progress of the staggering file and helps a young woman with two young children to bundle their coats up on the rack.

b) He opens his mouth, gasping and startled, staring at her as if she is someone he has known and forgotten and now sees again.

c) The plane now comes to its brief halt before revving up for the takeoff run.

- d) It was he who had handed forward the chart.
- e) A nudge from Bill composes her so far that she turns and faces forward again.
- f) He does not see Lise now, as she peers at him, or, if so, he appears to have taken a quick turn beyond caring and beyond embarrassment.

7. *Dwell on the following topics:*

- a) What do we come to know about Lise at the beginning of the chapter? What effect does this breach of narration create?
- b) Describe the procession of three people crossing the tarmac to the plane.
- c) Give the picture of Lise's fumbling for her seat-belt.
- d) Describe the alarm and anxiety that Lise caused in the her neighbour, the business man.
- e) What would he tell the police on the evening of the following day?
- f) Give the picture of the man's escape from his seat. How did the air-hostess respond?
- g) How did Lise and her admirer interpret the business man's behavior?
- h) What food was served to the passengers? Why didn't Lise's neighbour touch it?
- i) What food did Lise's neighbour you eat when he travelled abroad?
- j) Describe the man who attracted Lise's attention when the flight chart was being passed.
- k) What does Lise's neighbour hope for?
- l) Comment on the phrase *People become what they eat*.
- m) What made the business man feel relieved?
- n) Why did Lise address the sick-looking man in the airport building?
- o) How does Lise respond when the sick-looking man leaves accompanied by the chauffeur and his family?
- p) How come Lise left the airport with Bill in a taxi?

### UNIT 3

‘I want a taxi,’ Lise says loudly to the uniformed boy who stands by the swing door. He goes out to the street and whistles. Lise follows and stands on the pavement. An elderly woman, small, neat and agile in a yellow cotton dress, whose extremely wrinkled face is the only indication of her advanced age, follows Lise to the pavement. She, too, wants a taxi, she says in a gentle voice, and she suggests to Lise that they might share. Which way is Lise going? This woman seems to see nothing strange about Lise, so confidently does she approach her. And in fact, although this is not immediately apparent, the woman’s eyesight is sufficiently dim, her hearing faint enough, to eliminate, for her, the garish effect of Lise on normal perceptions.

‘Oh,’ says Lise, ‘I’m only going to the Centre. I’ve no definite plans. It’s foolish to have plans.’ She laughs very loudly.

‘Thank you, the Centre is fine for me,’ says the woman, taking Lise’s laugh for acquiescence in the sharing of the taxi.

And, indeed, they do both load into the taxi and are off.

‘Are you staying here long?’ says the woman.

‘This will keep it safe,’ says Lise, stuffing her passport down the back of the seat, stuffing it down till it is out of sight.

The old lady turns her spry nose towards this operation. She looks puzzled for an instant, but soon complies with the action, moving forward to allow Lise more scope in shoving the little booklet out of sight.

‘That’s that,’ says Lise, leaning back, breathing deeply, and looking out of the window. ‘What a lovely day!’

The old lady leans back too, as if leaning on the trusting confidence that Lise has inspired. She says, ‘I left my passport in the hotel, with the Desk.’

‘It’s according to your taste,’ Lise says opening the window to the slight breeze. Her lips part blissfully as she breathes in the air of the wide street on the city’s outskirts.

Soon they run into traffic. The driver inquires the precise point at which they wish to be dropped.

‘The Post Office,’ Lise says. Her companion nods.

Lise turns to her. ‘I’m going shopping. It’s the first thing I do on my holidays. I go

and buy the little presents for the family first, then that's off my mind.'

'Oh, but in these days,' says the old lady. She folds her gloves, pats them on her lap, smiles at them.

'There's a big department store near the Post Office,' Lise says. 'You can get everything you want there.'

'My nephew is arriving this evening.'

'The traffic!' says Lise.

They pass the Metropole Hotel. Lise says, 'There's a man in that hotel I'm trying to avoid.'

'Everything is different,' says the old lady.

'A girl isn't made of cement,' Lise says, 'but everything is different now, it's all changed, believe me.'

At the Post Office they pay the fare, each meticulously contributing the unfamiliar coins to the impatient, mottled and hillocky palm of the driver's hand, adding coins little by little, until the total is reached and the amount of the tip equally agreed between them and deposited; then they stand on the pavement in the centre of the foreign city, in need of coffee and a sandwich, accustoming themselves to the lay-out, the traffic crossings, the busy residents, the ambling tourists and the worried tourists, and such of the unencumbered youth who swing and thread through the crowds like antelopes whose heads, invisibly antlered, are airborne high to sniff the prevailing winds, and who so appear to own the terrain beneath their feet that they never look at it. Lise looks down at her clothes as if wondering if she is ostentatious enough.

Then, taking the old lady by the arm, she says, 'Come and have a coffee. We'll cross by the lights.'

All perky for the adventure, the old lady lets Lise guide her to the street-crossing where they wait for the lights to change and where, while waiting, the old lady gives a little gasp and a jerk of shock; she says, 'You left your passport in the taxi!'

'Well, I left it there for safety. Don't worry,' Lise says. 'It's taken care of.'

'Oh, I see.' The old lady relaxes, and she crosses the road with Lise and the waiting herd. 'I am Mrs Fiedke,' she says. 'Mr Fiedke passed away fourteen years ago.'

In the bar they sit at a small round table, place their bags, Lise's book and their elbows on it and order each a coffee and a ham-and-tomato sandwich. Lise props up her paperback book against her bag, as it were so that its bright cover is addressed to whom it may concern. 'Our home is in Nova Scotia,' says Mrs Fiedke, 'where is yours?'

'Nowhere special,' says Lise waving aside the triviality. 'It's written on the passport. My name's Lise.' She takes her arms out of the sleeves of her striped cotton coat and lets it fall behind her over the back of the chair. 'Mr Fiedke left everything to me and nothing to his sister,' says the old lady, 'but my nephew gets everything when I'm gone. I would have liked to be a fly on the wall when she heard.'

The waiter comes with their coffee and sandwiches, moving the book while he sets them down. Lise props it up again when he has gone. She looks around at the other tables and at the people standing up at the bar, sipping coffee or fruit-juice. She says, 'I have to meet a friend, but he doesn't seem to be here.'

'My dear, I don't want to detain you or take you out of your way.'

'Not at all. Don't think of it.'

'It was very kind of you to come along with me,' says Mrs Fiedke, 'as it's so confusing in a strange place. Very kind indeed.'

'Why shouldn't I be kind?' Lise says, smiling at her with a sudden gentleness.

'Well, I'll be all right just here after we've finished our snack. I'll just take a look round and do a bit of shopping. I won't keep you, my dear.'

'You can come shopping with me,' Lise says, very genially. 'Mrs Fiedke, it's a pleasure.'

'How very kind you are!'

'One should always be kind,' Lise says, 'in case it might be the last chance. One might be killed crossing the street, or even on the pavement, any time, you never know. So we should always be kind.' She cuts her sandwich daintily and puts a piece in her mouth.

Mrs Fiedke says, 'That's a very, very beautiful thought. But you mustn't think of accidents. I can assure you, I'm terrified of traffic.'

‘So am I. Terrified.’

‘Do you drive an automobile?’ says the old lady.

‘I do, but I’m afraid of traffic. You never know what crackpot’s going to be at the wheel of another car.’

‘These days,’ says Mrs Fiedke.

‘There’s a department store not far from here,’ Lise says. ‘Want to come?’

They eat their sandwich and drink their coffee. Lise then orders a rainbow ice while Mrs Fiedke considers one way or another whether she really wants anything more, and eventually declines.

‘Strange voices,’ says the old lady looking round. ‘Look at the noise.’

‘Well, if you know the language.’

‘Can you speak the language?’

‘A bit. I can speak four.’

Mrs Fiedke marvels benevolently while Lise bashfully plays with crumbs on the tablecloth. The waiter brings the rainbow ice and while Lise lifts the spoon to start Mrs Fiedke says, ‘It matches with your outfit.’

Lise laughs at this, longer than Mrs Fiedke had evidently expected. ‘Beautiful colours,’ Mrs Fiedke offers, as one might offer a cough-sweet. Lise sits before the brightly streaked ice-cream with her spoon in her hand and laughs on. Mrs Fiedke looks frightened, and more frightened as the voices of the bar stop to watch the laughing one; Mrs Fiedke shrinks into her old age, her face dry and wrinkled, her eyes gone into a far retreat, not knowing what to do. Lise stops suddenly and says, ‘That was funny.’

The man behind the bar, having started coming over to their table to investigate a potential disorder, stops and turns back, muttering something. A few young men round the bar start up a mimic laugh-laugh-laugh but are stopped by the barman.

‘When I went to buy this dress,’ Lise says to Mrs Fiedke, ‘do you know what they offered me first? A stainless dress. Can you believe it? A dress that won’t hold the stain if you drop coffee or ice-cream on it. Some new synthetic fabric. As if I would want a dress that doesn’t show the stains!’

Mrs Fiedke, whose eager spirit is slowly returning from wherever it had been to take cover from Lise's laughter, looks at Lise's dress and says, 'Doesn't hold the stains? Very useful for travelling.'

'Not this dress,' Lise says, working her way through the rainbow ice; 'it was another dress. I didn't buy it, though. Very poor taste, I thought.' She has finished her ice. Again the two women fumble in their purses and at the same time Lise gives an expert's glance at the two small tickets, marked with the price, that have been left on the table. Lise edges one of them aside. 'That one's for the ice,' she says, 'and we share the other.'

'The torment of it,' Lise says. 'Not knowing exactly where and when he's going to turn up.'

She moves ahead of Mrs Fiedke up the escalator to the third floor of a department store. It is ten minutes past four by the big clock, and they have had to wait more than half an hour for it to open, both of them having forgotten about the southern shopping hours, and in this interval have walked round the block looking so earnestly for Lise's friend that Mrs Fiedke has at some point lost the signs of her initial bewilderment when this friend has been mentioned, and now shows only the traces of enthusiastic cooperation in the search. As they were waiting for the store to open, having passed the large iron-grated shutters again and again in their ambles round the block, Mrs Fiedke started to scan the passers-by.

'Would that be him, do you think? He looks very gaily dressed like yourself.'

'No, that's not him.'

'It's quite a problem, with all this choice. What about this one? No this one, I mean, crossing in front of that car? Would he be too fat?'

'No, it isn't him.'

'It's very difficult, my dear, if you don't know the cast of person. "He could be driving a car," Lise had said when they at last found themselves outside the shop at the moment the gates were being opened.'

They go up, now, to the third floor where the toilets are, skimming up with the escalator from which they can look down to see the expanse of each floor as the stairs depart from it. 'Not a great many gentlemen,' Mrs Fiedke remarks. 'I doubt if you'll find your friend here.'

'I doubt it too,' says Lise. 'Although there are quite a few men employed here, aren't there?'

'Oh, would he be a shop assistant?' Mrs Fiedke says.

'It depends,' says Lise.

'These days,' says Mrs Fiedke.

Lise stands in the ladies' room combing her hair while she waits for Mrs Fiedke. She stands at the basin where she has washed her hands, and, watching herself with tight lips in the glass, back-combs the white streak, and with great absorption places it across the darker locks on the crown of her head. At the basins on either side of her two other absorbed young women are touching up their hair and faces. Lise wets the tip of a finger and smooths her eyebrows. The women on either side collect their belongings and leave. Another woman, matronly with her shopping, bustles in and swings into one of the lavatory cubicles. Mrs Fiedke's cubicle still remains shut. Lise has finished tidying herself up; she waits. Eventually she knocks on Mrs Fiedke's door. 'Are you all right?'

She says again, 'Are you all right?' And again she knocks. 'Mrs Fiedke, are you all right?'

The latest comer now bursts out of her cubicle and makes for the wash-basin. Lise says to her, while rattling the handle of Mrs Fiedke's door, 'There's an old lady locked in here and I can't hear a sound. Something must have happened.' And she calls again, 'Are you all right, Mrs Fiedke?'

'Who is she?' says the other woman.

'I don't know.'

'But you're with her, aren't you?' The matron takes a good look at Lise.

'I'll go and get someone,' Lise says, and she shakes the handle one more time. 'Mrs Fiedke! Mrs Fiedke!' She presses her ear to the door. 'No sound,' she says, 'none at

all.’ Then she grabs her bag and her book from the wash-stand and dashes out of the ladies’ room leaving the other woman listening and rattling at the door of Mrs Fiedke’s cubicle.

Outside, the first department is laid out with sports equipment. Lise walks straight through, stopping only to touch one of a pair of skis, feeling and stroking the wood. A salesman approaches, but Lise has walked on, picking her way among the more populated area of School Clothing. Here she hovers over a pair of small, red fur-lined gloves laid out on the counter. The girl behind the counter stands ready to serve. Lise looks up at her. ‘For my niece,’ she says. ‘But I can’t remember the size. I think I won’t risk it, thank you.’ She moves across the department floor to Toys, where she spends some time examining a nylon dog which, at the flick of a switch attached to its lead, barks, trots, wags its tail and sits. Through Linen, to the down escalator goes Lise, scanning each approaching floor in her descent, but not hovering on any landing until she reaches the ground floor. Here she buys a silk scarf patterned in black and white. At a gadgets counter a salesman is demonstrating a cheap electric food-blender. Lise buys one of these, staring at the salesman when he attempts to include personal charm in his side of the bargain. He is a thin, pale man of early middle age, eager-eyed. ‘Are you on holiday?’ he says. ‘American? Swedish?’ Lise says, ‘I’m in a hurry.’ Resigned to his mistake, the salesman wraps her parcel, takes her money, rings up the till and gives her the change. Lise then takes the wide staircase leading to the basement. Here she buys a plastic zipper-bag in which she places her packages. She stops at the Records and Record-Players department and loiters with the small group that has gathered to hear a new pop-group disc. She holds her paperback well in evidence, her hand-bag and the new zipper-bag slung over her left arm just above the wrist, and her hands holding up the book in front of her chest like an identification notice carried by a displaced person.

Come on over to my place

For a sandwich, both of you,

Any time ...

The disc comes to an end. A girl with long brown pigtails is hopping about in front of Lise, continuing the rhythm with her elbows, her blue-jeans, and apparently her mind, as a newly beheaded chicken continues for a brief time, now squawklessly, its panic career. Mrs Fiedke comes up behind Lise and touches her arm. Lise says, turning to smile at her, 'Look at this idiot girl. She can't stop dancing.'

'I think I fell asleep for a moment,' Mrs Fiedke says. 'It wasn't a bad turn. I just dropped off. Such kind people. They wanted to put me in a taxi. But why should I go back to the hotel? My poor nephew won't be there till 9 o'clock tonight or maybe later; he must have missed the earlier plane. The porter was so kind, ringing up to find out the time of the next plane. All that.'

'Look at her,' Lise says in a murmur. 'Just look at her. No, wait! —She'll start again when the man puts on the next record.'

The record starts, and the girl swings. Lise says, 'Do you believe in macrobiotics?'

'I'm a Jehovah's Witness,' says Mrs Fiedke. 'But that was after Mr Fiedke passed on. I have no problems any more. Mr Fiedke cut out his sister you know, because she had no religion. She questioned. There are some things which you can't. But I know this, if Mr Fiedke was alive today he would be a Witness too. In fact he was one in many ways without knowing it.'

'Macrobiotics is a way of life,' Lise says. 'That man at the Metropole, I met him on the plane. He's an Enlightenment Leader of the macrobiotics. He's on Regime Seven.'

'How delightful!' says Mrs Fiedke.

'But he isn't my type,' Lise says.

The girl with the pigtails is dancing on by herself in front of them, and as she suddenly steps back Mrs Fiedke has to retreat out of her way. 'Is she what they call a hippy?' she says.

'There were two others on the plane. I thought they were my type, but they weren't. I was disappointed.'

'But you are to meet your gentleman soon, won't you? Didn't you say?'

‘Oh, he’s my type,’ Lise says.

‘I must get a pair of slippers for my nephew. Size nine. He missed the plane.’

‘This one’s a hippy,’ says Lise, indicating with her head a slouching bearded youth dressed in tight blue-jeans, no longer blue, his shoulders draped with an assortment of cardigans and fringed leather garments, heavy for the time of year.

Mrs Fiedke looks with interest and whispers to Lise, ‘They are hermaphrodites. It isn’t their fault.’ The young man turns as he is touched on the shoulder by a large blue-suited agent of the store. The bearded youth starts to argue and gesticulate, but this brings another, slighter, man to his other shoulder. They lead him protesting away towards the emergency exit stairway. A slight disturbance then occurs amongst the record-hearing crowd, some of whom take the young man’s part, some of whom do not. ‘He wasn’t doing any harm!’ ‘He smelt awful!’ ‘Who do you think you are?’

Lise walks off towards Televisions, followed anxiously by Mrs Fiedke. Behind them the pigtailed girl is addressing her adjacent crowd: ‘They think they’re in America where if they don’t like a man’s face they take him out and shoot him.’ A man’s voice barks back: ‘You couldn’t see his face for the hair. Go back where you came from, little whore! In this country, we ...’

The quarrel melts behind them as they come to the television sets where the few people who have been taking an interest in the salesman appear now to be torn between his calm rivulet of words and the incipient political uprising over at Records and Record-Players. Two television screens, one vast and one small, display the same programme, a wild-life documentary film which is now coming to an end; a charging herd of buffalo, large on one screen and small on the other, cross the two patches of vision while music of an unmistakably finale nature sends them on their way with equal volume from both machines. The salesman turns down the noise from the larger set, and continues to address his customers, who have now dwindled to two, meanwhile keeping an interested eye on Lise and Mrs Fiedke who hover behind.

‘Would that be your gentleman?’ Mrs Fiedke says, while the screens give a list of names responsible for the film, then another and another list of names. Lise says, ‘I was just wondering myself. He looks a respectable type.’

‘It’s up to you,’ says Mrs Fiedke. ‘You’re young and you have your life in front of you.’

A well-groomed female announcer comes on both televisions, small and large, to give out the early evening headlines, first stating that the time is 17.00 hours, then that a military coup has newly taken place in a middle-eastern country details of which are yet unknown. The salesman, abandoning his potential clients to their private deliberations, inclines his head towards Mrs Fiedke and inquires if he can help her.

‘No thank you,’ Lise replies in the tongue of the country. Whereupon the salesman comes close up and pursues Mrs Fiedke in English. ‘We have big reductions, Madam, this week.’ He looks winningly at Lise, eventually approaching to squeeze her arm. Lise turns to Mrs Fiedke. ‘No good,’ she says. ‘Come on, it’s getting late,’ and she guides the old lady away to Gifts and Curios at the far end of the floor. ‘Not my man at all. He tried to get familiar with me,’ Lise says. ‘The one I’m looking for will recognize me right away for the woman I am, have no fear of that.’

‘Can you credit it?’ says Mrs Fiedke looking back indignantly in the direction of Televisions. ‘Perhaps we should report him. Where is the Office?’

‘What’s the use?’ Lise says. ‘We have no proof.’

‘Perhaps we should go elsewhere for my nephew’s slippers.’

‘Do you really want to buy slippers for your nephew?’ Lise says.

‘I thought of slippers as a welcome present. My poor nephew — the hotel porter was so nice. The poor boy was to have arrived on this morning’s flight from Copenhagen. I waited and I waited. He must have missed the plane. The porter looked up the timetable and there’s another arriving tonight. I must remember not to go to bed. The plane gets in at ten-twenty but it may be eleven-thirty, twelve, before he gets to the hotel, you know.’

Lise is looking at the leather notecases, embossed with the city’s crest. ‘These look good,’ Lise says. ‘Get him one of these. He would remember all his life that you gave it to him.’

‘I think slippers,’ says Mrs Fiedke. ‘Somehow I feel slippers. My poor nephew has

been unwell, we had to send him to a clinic. It was either that or the other, they gave us no choice. He's so much better now, quite well again. But he needs rest. Rest, rest and more rest is what the doctor wrote. He takes size nine.

Lise is playing with a corkscrew, then with a ceramic-handled cork. 'Slippers might make him feel like an invalid,' she says. 'Why don't you buy him a record or a book? How old is he?'

'Only twenty-four. It comes from the mother's side. Perhaps we should go to another shop.'

Lise leans over the counter to inquire which department is men's slippers. Patiently she translates the answer to Mrs Fiedke. 'Footwear on the third floor. We'll have to go back up. The other stores are much too expensive, they charge you what they like. The travel folder recommends this place as they've got fixed prices.'

Up they go, once more, surveying the receding departments as they rise; they buy the slippers; they descend to the ground floor. There, near the street door, they find another gift department with a miscellany of temptations. Lise buys another scarf, bright orange. She buys a striped man's necktie, dark blue and yellow. Then, glimpsing through the crowd a rack from which dangles a larger assortment of men's ties, each neatly enfolded in transparent plastic, she changes her mind about the coloured tie she has just bought. The girl at the counter is not pleased by the difficulties involved in the refund of money, and accompanies Lise over to the rack to see if an exchange can be effected.

Lise selects two ties, one plain black knitted cotton, the other green. Then, changing her mind once more, she says, 'That green is too bright, I think.' The girl conveys exasperation, and in a manner of vexed resignation Lise says, 'All right, give me two black ties, they're always useful. Please remove the prices.' She returns to the counter where she had left Mrs Fiedke, pays the difference and takes her package. Mrs Fiedke appears from the doorway where she has been examining, by daylight, two leather notecases. A shopman, who has been hovering by, in case she should be one of those who make a dash for it, goods in hand, follows her back to the counter. He says, 'They're both very good leather.'

Mrs Fiedke says, 'I think he has one already.' She chooses a paperknife in a sheath. Lise stands watching. She says, 'I nearly bought one of those for my boy-friend at the airport before I left. It was almost the same but not quite.' The paper-knife is made of brassy metal, curved like a scimitar. The sheath is embossed but not, like the one Lise had considered earlier in the day, jewelled. 'The slippers are enough,' Lise says.

Mrs Fiedke says, 'You're quite right. One doesn't want to spoil them.' She looks at a key-case, then buys the paper-knife.

'If he uses a paper-knife,' Lise says, 'obviously he isn't a hippy. If he were a hippy he would open his letters with his fingers.'

'Would it be too much trouble,' she says to Lise, 'to put this in your bag? And the slippers — oh, where are the slippers?'

Her package of slippers is lost, is gone. She claims to have left it on the counter while she had been to the door to compare the two leather notecases. The package has been lifted, has been taken away by somebody. Everyone looks around for it and sympathizes, and points out that it was her own fault.

'Maybe he has plenty of slippers, anyway,' Lise says. 'Is he my type of man, do you think?'

'We ought to see the sights,' says Mrs Fiedke. 'We shouldn't let this golden opportunity go by without seeing the ruins.'

'If he's my type I want to meet him,' Lise says.

'Very much your type,' says Mrs Fiedke, 'at his best.'

'What a pity he's coming so late,' Lise says. 'Because I have a previous engagement with my boyfriend. However, if he doesn't turn up before your nephew arrives I want to meet your nephew. What's his name did you say?'

'Richard. We never called him Dick. Only his mother, but not us. I hope he gets the plane all right. Oh — where's the paper-knife?'

'You put it in here,' says Lise, pointing to her zipper-bag. 'Don't worry, it's safe. Let's get out of here.'

As they drift with the outgoing shoppers into the sunny street, Mrs Fiedke says, 'I hope he's on that plane. There was some talk that he would go to Barcelona first to

meet his mother, then on here to meet up with me. But I wouldn't play. I just said No! No flying from Barcelona, I said. I'm a strict believer, in fact, a Witness, but I never trust the airlines from those countries where the pilots believe in the afterlife. You are safer when they don't. I've been told the Scandinavian airlines are fairly reliable in that respect.'

Lise looks up and down the street and sighs. 'It can't be long now. My friend's going to turn up soon. He knows I've come all this way to see him. He knows it, all right. He's just waiting around somewhere. Apart from that I have no plans.'

'Dressed for the carnival!' says a woman, looking grossly at Lise as she passes, and laughing as she goes her way, laughing without possibility of restraint, like a stream bound to descend whatever slope lies before it.

## FIVE

'It is in my mind,' says Mrs Fiedke; 'it is in my mind and I can't think of anything else but that you and my nephew are meant for each other. As sure as anything, my dear, you are the person for my nephew. Somebody has got to take him on, anyhow, that's plain.'

'He's only twenty-four,' considers Lise. 'Much too young.'

They are descending a steep path leading from the ruins. Steps have been roughly cut out of the earthy track, outlined only by slats of wood which are laid at the edge of each step. Lise holds Mrs Fiedke's arm and helps her down one by one.

'How do you know his age?' says Mrs Fiedke.

'Well, didn't you tell me, twenty-four?' Lise says.

'Yes, but I haven't seen him for quite a time you know. He's been away.'

'Maybe he's even younger. Take care, go slowly.'

'Or it could be the other way. People age when they've had unpleasant experiences over the years. It just came to me while we were looking at those very interesting pavements in that ancient temple up there, that poor Richard may be the very man that you're looking for.'

‘Well, it’s your idea,’ says Lise, ‘not mine. I wouldn’t know till I’d seen him. Myself, I think he’s around the corner somewhere, now, any time.’

‘Which corner?’ The old lady looks up and down the street which runs below them at the bottom of the steps.

‘Any corner. Any old corner.’

‘Will you feel a presence? Is that how you’ll know?’

‘Not really a presence,’ Lise says. ‘The lack of an absence, that’s what it is. I know I’ll find it. I keep on making mistakes, though.’ She starts to cry, very slightly sniffing, weeping, and they stop on the steps while Mrs Fiedke produces a trembling pink face-tissue from her bag for Lise to dab her eyes with and blow her nose on. Sniffing, Lise throws the shredded little snitch of paper away and again takes Mrs Fiedke’s arm to resume their descent. ‘Too much self-control, which arises from fear and timidity, that’s what’s wrong with them. They’re cowards, most of them.’

‘Oh, I always believe that,’ says Mrs Fiedke. ‘No doubt about it. The male sex.’

They have reached the road where the traffic thunders past in the declining sunlight.

‘Where do we cross?’ Lise says, looking to right and left of the overwhelming street.

‘They are demanding equal rights with us,’ says Mrs Fiedke. ‘That’s why I never vote with the Liberals. Perfume, jewellery, hair down to their shoulders, and I’m not talking about the ones who were born like that. I mean, the ones that can’t help it should be put on an island. It’s the others I’m talking about. There was a time when they would stand up and open the door for you. They would take their hat off. But they want their equality today. All I say is that if God had intended them to be as good as us he wouldn’t have made them different from us to the naked eye. They don’t want to be all dressed alike any more. Which is only a move against us. You couldn’t run an army like that, let alone the male sex. With all due respects to Mr Fiedke, may he rest in peace, the male sex is getting out of hand. Of course, Mr Fiedke knew his place as a man, give him his due.’

‘We’ll have to walk up to the intersection,’ Lise says, guiding Mrs Fiedke in the direction of a distant policeman surrounded by a whirlpool of traffic. ‘We’ll never get a taxi here.’

‘Fur coats and flowered poplin shirts on their backs,’ says Mrs Fiedke as she winds along, conducted by Lise this way and that to avoid the oncoming people in the street. ‘If we don’t look lively,’ she says, ‘they will be taking over the homes and the children, and sitting about having chats while we go and fight to defend them and work to keep them. They won’t be content with equal rights only. Next thing they’ll want the upper hand, mark my words. Diamond earrings, I’ve read in the paper.’

‘It’s getting late,’ says Lise. Her lips are slightly parted and her nostrils and eyes, too, are a fragment more open than usual; she is a stag scenting the breeze, moving step by step, inhibiting her stride to accommodate Mrs Fiedke’s pace, she seems at the same time to search for a certain air-current, a glimpse and an intimation.

‘I clean mine with toothpaste when I’m travelling,’ confides Mrs Fiedke. ‘The better stuff’s in the bank back home, of course. The insurance is too high, isn’t it? But you have to bring a few bits and pieces. I clean them with my toothbrush and ordinary toothpaste, then I rub them with the hand-towel. They come up very nicely. You can’t trust the jewellers. They can always take them out and replace them with a fake.’

‘It’s getting late,’ says Lise. ‘There are so many faces. Where did all the faces come from?’

‘I ought to take a nap,’ says Mrs Fiedke, ‘so that I won’t feel too tired when my nephew arrives. Poor thing. We have to leave for Capri tomorrow morning. All the cousins, you know. They’ve taken such a charming villa and the past will never be mentioned. My brother made that clear to them. I made it clear to my brother.’

They have reached the circular intersection and turn into a sidestreet where a few yards ahead at the next corner there is a taxi-rank occupied by one taxi. This one taxi is taken by someone else just as they approach it.

‘I smell burning,’ says Mrs Fiedke as they stand at the corner waiting for another taxi to come along. Lise sniffs, her lips parted and her eyes moving widely from face to face among the passers-by. Then she sneezes. Something has happened to the people in the street, they are looking round, they are sniffing too. Somewhere nearby a great deal of shouting is going on.

Suddenly round the corner comes a stampede. Lise and Mrs Fiedke are swept apart

and jostled in all directions by a large crowd composed mainly of young men, with a few smaller, older and grimmer men, and here and there a young girl, all yelling together and making rapidly for somewhere else. 'Tear-gas!' someone shouts and then a lot of people are calling out, 'Tear-gas!' A shutter on a shop-front near Lise comes down with a hasty clatter, then the other shops start closing for the day. Lise falls and is hauled to her feet by a tough man who leaves her and runs on.

Just before it reaches the end of the street which joins the circular intersection the crowd stops. A band of grey-clad policemen come running towards them, in formation, bearing tear-gas satchels and with their gas-masks at the ready. The traffic on the circular intersection has stopped. Lise swerves with her crowd into a garage where some mechanics in their overalls crouch behind the cars and others take refuge underneath a car which is raised on a cradle in the process of repair.

Lise fights her way to a dark corner at the back of the garage where a small red Mini-Morris, greatly dented, is parked behind a larger car. She wrenches at the door, forcefully, as if she expects it to be locked. It opens so easily as to throw her backwards, and as soon as she regains her balance she gets inside, locks herself in and puts her head down between her knees, breathing heavily, drawing in the smell of petrol blended faintly with a whiff of tear-gas. The demonstrators form up in the garage and are presently discovered and routed out by the police. Their exit is fairly orderly bar the shouting.

Lise emerges from the car with her zipper-bag and her hand-bag, looking to see what damage has been done to her clothes. The garage men are vociferously commenting on the affair. One is clutching his stomach proclaiming himself poisoned and vowing to sue the police for the permanent damage caused him by tear-gas. Another, with his hand to his throat, gasps that he is suffocating. The others are cursing the students whose gestures of solidarity, they declare in the colourful derisive obscenities of their mother-tongue, they can live without. They stop when Lise limps into view. There are six of them in all, including a young apprentice and a large burly man of middle age, without overalls, wearing only a white shirt and trousers and the definite air of the proprietor. Apparently seeing in Lise a tangible remnant of the troubles lately

visited upon his garage, this big fellow turns on her to vent his fury with unmastered hysteria. He advises her to go home to the brothel where she came from, he reminds her that her grandfather was ten times cuckolded, that she was conceived in some ditch and born in another; after adorning the main idea with further illustrations he finally tells her she is a student.

Lise stands somewhat entranced; by her expression she seems almost consoled by this outbreak, whether because it relieves her own tensions after the panic or whether for some other reason. However, she puts a hand up to her eyes, covering them, and in the language of the country she says, 'Oh please, please. I'm only a tourist, a teacher from Iowa, New Jersey. I've hurt my foot.' She drops her hand and looks at her coat which is stained with a long black oily mark. 'Look at my clothes,' Lise says. 'My new clothes. It's best never to be born. I wish my mother and father had practised birth-control. I wish that pill had been invented at the time. I feel sick, I feel terrible.'

The men are impressed by this, one and all. Some are visibly cheered up. The proprietor turns one way and another with arms outstretched to call the whole assembly to witness his dilemma. 'Sorry, lady, sorry. How was I to know? Pardon me, but I thought you were one of the students. We have a lot of trouble from the students. Many apologies, lady. Was there something we can do for you? I'll call the First Aid. Come and sit down, lady, over here, inside my office, take a seat. You see the traffic outside, how can I call the ambulance through the traffic? Sit down, lady.' And, having ushered her into a tiny windowed cubicle, he sits Lise in its only chair beside a small sloping ledger-desk and thunders at the men to get to work.

Lise says, 'Oh please don't call anyone. I'll be all right if I can get a taxi to take me back to my hotel.'

'A taxi! Look at the traffic!'

Outside the archway that forms the entrance to the garage, there is a dense block of standing traffic.

The proprietor keeps going to look up and down the street and returning to Lise. He calls for benzine and a rag to clean Lise's coat. No rag clean enough for the purpose

can be found and so he uses a big white handkerchief taken from the breast pocket of his coat which hangs behind the door of the little office. Lise takes off her black-stained coat and while he applies his benzine-drenched handkerchief to the stain, making it into a messy blur, Lise takes off her shoes and rubs her feet. She puts one foot up on the slanting desk and rubs. 'It's only a bruise,' she says, 'not a sprain. I was lucky. Are you married?'

The big man says, 'Yes, lady, I'm married,' and pauses in his energetic task to look at her with new, appraising and cautious eyes. 'Three children — two boys, one girl,' he says. He looks through the office at his men who are occupied with various jobs and who, although one or two of them cast a swift glance at Lise with her foot up on the desk, do not give any sign of noticing any telepathic distress signals their employer might be giving out.

The big man says to Lise, 'And yourself? Married?'

'I'm a widow,' Lise says, 'and an intellectual. I come from a family of intellectuals. My late husband was an intellectual. We had no children. He was killed in a motor accident. He was a bad driver, anyway. He was a hypochondriac, which means that he imagined that he had every illness under the sun.'

'This stain,' said the man, 'won't come out until you send the coat to the dry-cleaner.' He holds out the coat with great care, ready for her to put on; and at the same time as he holds it as if he means her, temptress in the old-fashioned style that she is, to get out of his shop, his eyes are shifting around in an undecided way.

Lise takes her foot off the desk, stands, slips into her shoes, shakes the skirt of her dress and asks him, 'Do you like the colours?'

'Marvellous,' he says, his confidence plainly diminishing in confrontation with this foreign distressed gentlewoman of intellectual family and conflicting appearance.

'The traffic's moving. I must get a taxi or a bus. It's late,' Lise says, getting into her coat in a business-like manner.

'Where are you staying, lady?'

'The Hilton,' she says.

He looks round his garage with an air of helpless, anticipatory guilt. 'I'd better take

her in the car,' he mutters to the mechanic nearest him. The man does not reply but makes a slight movement of the hand to signify that it isn't for him to give permission.

Still the owner hesitates, while Lise, as if she had not overheard his remarks, gathers up her belongings, holds out her hand and says 'Good-bye. Thank you very much for helping me.' And to the rest of the men she calls 'Good-bye, good-bye, many thanks!'

The big man takes her hand and holds on to it tightly as if his grasp itself was a mental resolution not to let go this unforeseen, exotic, intellectual, yet clearly available treasure. He holds on to her hand as if he was no fool, after all. 'Lady, I'm taking you to your hotel in the car. I couldn't let you go out into all this confusion. You'll never get a bus, not for hours. A taxi, never. The students, we have the students only to thank.' And he calls sharply to the apprentice to bring out his car. The boy goes over to a brown Volkswagen. 'The Fiat!' bellows his employer, whereupon the apprentice moves to a dusty cream-coloured Fiat 125, passes a duster over the outside of the windscreen, gets into it and starts to manoeuvre it forward to the main ramp.

Lise pulls away her hand and protests. 'Look, I've got a date. I'm late for it already. I'm sorry, but I can't accept your kind offer.' She looks out at the mass of slowly-moving traffic, the queues waiting at the bus-stops, and says, 'I'll have to walk. I know my way.'

'Lady,' he says, 'no argument. It's my pleasure.' And he draws her to the car where the apprentice is now waiting with the door open for her.

'I really don't know you,' Lise says.

'I'm Carlo,' says the man, urging her inside and shutting the door. He gives the grinning apprentice a push that might mean anything, goes round to the other door, and drives slowly towards the street, slowly and carefully finding a gap in the line of traffic, working his way in to the gap, blocking the oncoming vehicles for a while until finally he joins the stream.

### TASK 3

1. *Describe Lise's meeting the elderly woman and their trip in the taxi, using the following words and word collocations:*

the uniformed boy, the swing door, whistle, the pavement, agile, apparent, sufficiently, garish, effect on smb/ smth, acquiescence, out of sight (2), spry, to comply with smth, scope in smth / doing smth, blissfully, on the city's outskirts, the precise point, off one's mind, to be made of smth, mottled, hillocky, little by little, to reach the total, to accustom oneself to smth, ambling tourists, the unencumbered youth, to thread through the crowds, terrain.

2. *Give the picture of Lise and Mrs Fiedke having tea in the café, using the following words and word collocations:*

perky, to guide smb somewhere, to whom it may concern, to wave smth aside, triviality, to sip, to detain smb, genially, daintily, crackpot, to be at the wheel of a car, to decline, benevolently, bashfully, to match with the outfit, a cough-sweet, to shrink, mimic, eager spirit, to take cover from smth.

3. *How had Mrs Fiedke's attitude to Lise changed by the time they came to the department store?*

4. *What is Mrs Fiedke scanning the passers-by for?*

5. *Describe the incident in the ladies' room, using the following words and word collocations:*

To back-comb, with great absorption, the crown of one's head, to touch up one's hair and face, to wet the tip of a finger, belongings, matronly, to bustle in, to tidy oneself up, to take a good look at smb, to grab smth, to dash, to rattle.

6. *Describe Lise's actions while Mrs Fiedke wasn't with her, using the following words and word collocations:*

To be laid out with smth, to pick one's way, to hover over smth, fur-lined gloves, to examine smth, eager-eyed, resigned to one's mistake, to wrap smth, to ring up the till, a zipper-bag, to loiter with smb, well in evidence, an identification notice, to come to an end, to hop about, a newly beheaded chicken, squawklessly, panic career.

*Do you believe Lise did all she could to help Mrs Fiedke?*

*7. How did Mrs Fiedke explain her disappearance? Why wasn't she going back to the hotel?*

*8. Why had Mr Fiedke cut out his sister?*

*9. Give the picture of the disturbance in the crowd, using the following words and word collocations:*

fringed leather garments, a hermaphrodite, to gesticulate, the emergency exit stairway, disturbance, to take smb's part, to do harm, pigtailed, adjacent, to bark smth back.

*10. Describe Lise and Mr Fiedke's conduct at the television sets department, using the following words and word collocations:*

A wild-life documentary film, to come to an end, to turn down the noise, to address smb, up to smb, well-groomed, a headline, a military coup, to taken place, to abandon smb to smb, to pursue smb, reductions, winningly, to squeeze smb's arm, to guide smb away, to get familiar with smb.

*11. What facts about her nephew did Mr Fiedke provide? Why was she so settled on buying slippers for him? Use the following words in your answer:*

a welcome present, either that or the other, to give no choice, to takes size #...

*12. Summarize Lise's purchases. Has she ever changed her mind about any of the items?*

*13. What things was Mrs Fiedke considering buying but finally dismissed? What did she actually buy?*

*14. Why was Mrs Fiedke against her nephew's flying from Barcelona?*

*15. What conclusion had Mrs Fiedke leapt at by the time they were going past the ruins?*

*16. What made Lise cry at some moment during their walk?*

*17. Describe how Lise and Mrs Fiedke lost each other again, using the following words and word collocations:*

To be surrounded by a whirlpool of traffic, to wind along, oncoming people, to

inhibit one's stride, to accommodate to smb's pace, to confide, a fake, to take a nap, to make smth clear to smb, a passer-by, to jostle, to be composed of, to take refuge, to fight one's way, a dented car, to wrench, to sue the police for smth, to suffocate, colourful derisive obscenities, mother-tongue.

*18. Give the picture of Lise's conduct at the garage, using the following words and word collocations:*

overalls, the definite air of the proprietor, a tangible remnant of the troubles, cuckolded, ditch, entranced, consoled by the outbreak, to be impressed by smth, to cheer up, to usher smb into smth, a breast pocket, sprain, cautious, a late husband, to come out, with great care, in an undecided way, in confrontation with, with an air of helpless, anticipatory guilt, to give permission, to hesitate, to overhear, to manoeuvre a car.

*Did Lise tell the garage owner the truth about himself? Do you think the questions she asked him were modest? What other stories of her life did she provide for different people throughout the novella?*

*19. Make up a story of your own using the underlined word collocations in the task.*

## UNIT 4

It is also getting dark, as big Carlo's car alternately edges and spurts along the traffic, Carlo meanwhile denouncing the students and the police for causing the chaos. When they come at last to a clear stretch Carlo says, 'My wife I think is no good. I heard her on the telephone and she didn't think I was in the house. I heard.'

'You must understand,' Lise says, 'that anything at all that is overheard when the speaker doesn't know you're listening takes on a serious note. It always sounds far worse than their actual intentions are.'

'This was bad,' mutters Carlo. 'It's a man. A second cousin of hers. I made a big trouble for her that night, I can tell you. But she denied it. How could she deny it? I heard it.'

'If you imagine,' Lise says, 'that you are justifying any anticipations you may have with regards to me, you're mistaken. You can drop me off here, if you like. Otherwise, you can come and buy me a drink at the Hilton Hotel, and then it's good night. A soft drink. I don't take alcohol. I've got a date that I'm late for already.'

'We go out of town a little way,' says Carlo. 'I know a place. I brought the Fiat, did you see? The front seats fold back. Make you comfortable.'

'Stop at once,' Lise says. 'Or I put my head out of the window and yell for help. I don't want sex with you. I'm not interested in sex. I've got other interests and as a matter of fact I've got something on my mind that's got to be done. I'm telling you to stop.' She grabs the wheel and tries to guide it into the curb.

'All right, all right,' he says, regaining control of the car which has swerved a little with Lise's interference. 'All right. I'm taking you to the Hilton.'

'It doesn't look like the Hilton road to me,' Lise says. The traffic lights ahead are red but as there is very little traffic about on this dark, wide residential boulevard, he chances it and skims across. Lise puts her head out of the window and yells for help.

He pulls up at last in a side lane where, back from the road, there are the lights of two small villas; beyond that the road is a mass of stony crevices. He embraces her and kisses her mightily while she kicks him and tries to push him off, gurgling her

protests. When he stops for breath he says, 'Now we put back the seats and do it properly.' But already she has jumped out of the car and has started running towards the gate of one of the houses, wiping her mouth and screaming, 'Police! Call the police!' Big Carlo overtakes her at the gate. 'Quiet!' he says. 'Be quiet, and get into the car. Please. I'll take you back, I promise. Sorry, lady, I haven't done any harm at all to you, have I? Only a kiss, what's a kiss.'

She runs and makes a grab for the door of the driver's seat, and as he calls after her, 'The other door!' she gets in, starts up, and backs speedily out of the lane. She leans over and locks the other door just in time to prevent him from opening it. 'You're not my type in any case,' she screams. Then she starts off, too quickly for him to be able to open the back door he is now grabbing at. Still he is running to catch up, and she yells back at him, 'If you report this to the police I'll tell them the truth and make a scandal in your family.' And then she is away, well clear of him.

She spins along in expert style, stopping duly at the traffic lights. She starts to sing softly as she waits:

Inky-pinky-winky-wong

How do you like your potatoes done?

A little gravy in the pan

For the King of the Cannibal Islands.

Her zipper-bag is on the floor of the car. While waiting for the lights to change she lifts it on to the seat, unzips it and looks with a kind of satisfaction at the wrapped-up objects of different shape, as it might be they represent a good day's work. She comes to a crossroad where some traffic accumulates. Here, a policeman is on duty and as she passes at his bidding she pulls up and asks him the way to the Hilton.

He is a young policeman. He bends to give her the required direction.

'Do you carry a revolver?' Lise says. He looks puzzled and fails to answer before Lise adds, 'Because, if you did, you could shoot me.'

The policeman is still finding words when she drives off, and in the mirror she can

see him looking at the retreating car, probably noting the number. Which in fact he is doing, so that, on the afternoon of the following day, when he has been shown her body, he says, 'Yes, that's her. I recognize the face. She said, "If you had a revolver you could shoot me."' Which is to lead to many complications in Carlo's private life when the car is traced back to him, he being released by the police only after six hours of interrogation. A photograph of Carlo and also a picture of his young apprentice who holds a lively press conference of his own, moreover will appear in every newspaper in the country.

But now, at the Hilton Hotel her car is held up just as it enters the gates in the driveway. There is a line of cars ahead, and beyond them a group of policemen. Two police cars are visible in the parking area on the other side of the entrance. The rest of the driveway is occupied by a line of four very large limousines each with a uniformed driver standing by.

The police collect on either side of the hotel doorway, their faces picked out by the bright lights, while there emerge down the steps from the hotel two women who seem to be identical twins, wearing black dresses and high-styled black hair, followed by an important-looking Arabian figure, sheikh-like in his head-dress and robes, with a lined face and glittering eyes, who descends the steps with a floating motion as if his feet are clearing the ground by an inch or two; he is flanked by two smaller bespectacled, brown-faced men in businesslike suits. The two black-dressed women stand back with a respectful housekeeperly bearing while the robed figure approaches the first limousine; and the two men draw back too, as he enters the recesses of the car. Two black-robed women with the lower parts of their faces veiled and their heads shrouded in drapery then make their descent, and behind them another pair appear, menservants with arms raised, bearing aloft numerous plastic-enveloped garments on coat-hangers. Still in pairs, further components of the retinue appear, each two moving in such unison that they seem to share a single soul or else two well-rehearsed parts in the chorus of an opera by Verdi. Two men wearing western clothes but for their red fezes are duly admitted to one of the waiting limousines and, as Lise gets out of her car to join the watchers, two ramshackle young Arabs with

rumpled grey trousers and whitish shirts end the procession, bearing two large baskets, each one packed with oranges and a jumbo-sized vacuum-flask which stands slightly askew among the fruit, like champagne in an ice-bucket.

A group of people who are standing near Lise on the driveway, having themselves got out of their held-up taxis and cars, are discussing the event: 'He was here on vacation. I saw it on the television. There's been a coup in his country and he's going back.' — 'Why should he go back?' — 'No, he won't go back, believe me. Never.' — 'What country is it? I hope it doesn't affect us. The last time there was a coup my shares regressed so I nearly had a breakdown. Even the mutual funds ...'

The police have gone back to their cars, and escorted by them the caravan goes its stately way.

Lise jumps back into Carlo's car and conducts it as quickly as possible to the car park. She leaves it there, taking the keys. Then she leaps into the hotel, eyed indignantly by the doorman who presumably resents her haste, her clothes, the blurred stain on her coat, the rumpled aspect that she has acquired in the course of the evening and whose built-in computer system rates her low on the spending scale.

Lise makes straight for the ladies' toilets and while there, besides putting her appearance to rights as best she can, she takes a comfortable chair in the soft-lit restroom and considers, one by one, the contents of her zipper-bag which she lays on a small table beside her. She feels the outside of the box containing the food-blender and replaces it in her bag. She also leaves unopened a soft package containing the neckties, but, having rummaged in her hand-bag for something which apparently is not there, she brings forth her lipstick and with it she writes on the outside of the soft package, 'Papa'. There is an unsealed paper bag which she peers into; it is the orange scarf.

She puts it back into place and takes out another bag containing the black and white scarf. She folds this back and with her lipstick she traces on the outside of the bag in large capitals, 'Olga'. Another package seems to puzzle her. She feels round it with half-closed eyes for a moment, then opens it up. It contains the pair of men's slippers which Mrs Fiedke had mislaid in the shop having apparently in fact put them in

Lise's bag. Lise wraps them up again and replaces them. Finally she takes out her paperback book and an oblong package which she opens. This is a gift-box containing the gilded paper-opener in its sheath, also Mrs Fiedke's property.

Lise slowly returns the lipstick to her handbag, places the book and the box containing the paperknife on the table beside her, places the zipper-bag on the floor, then proceeds to examine the contents of her hand-bag. Money, the tourist folder with its inset map of the city, the bunch of six keys that she had brought with her that morning, the keys of Carlo's car, the lipstick, the comb, the powder compact, the air ticket. Her lips are parted and she leans back in a relaxed attitude but that her eyes are too wide open for restfulness. She looks again at the contents of her hand-bag. A notecase with paper money, a purse with loose change. She gathers herself together in such an abrupt manner that the toilet attendant who has been sitting vacantly in a corner by the wash-basins starts to her feet. Lise packs up her belongings. She puts the paper-knife box back in the zipper-bag, carefully tucking it down the side, and zips the bag up. Her hand-bag is also packed tidily again, except for the bunch of six keys that she had brought on her travels. She holds the book in her hand, and, placing the bunch of six keys with a clatter on the plate left out for the coins, the attendant's reward, she says to the woman, 'I won't be needing these now.' Then, with her zipper-bag, her book, her handbag, her hair combed and her face cleaned up, she swings out of the door and into the hotel lounge. The clock above the reception desk says nine thirty-five. Lise makes for the bar, where she looks round. Most of the tables are occupied by chattering groups. She sits at a vacant but rather out-of-the-way table, orders a whisky, and bids the tentative waiter hurry. 'I 'ye got a train to catch.' She is served with the drink together with a jug of water and a bowl of peanuts. She drenches the whisky with water, sips a small part of it and eats all the peanuts. She takes another small sip from her glass, and, leaving it nearly full, stands up and motions the waiter to bring her bill. She pays for this high-priced repast with a note taken from her bag and tells the waiter to keep the change, which amounts to a very high tip. He accepts it with incredulous grace and watches her as she leaves the bar. He, too, will give his small piece of evidence to the police on the following day,

as will also the toilet attendant, trembling at the event which has touched upon her life without the asking.

Lise stops short in the hotel lounge and smiles. Then without further hesitation she goes over to a group of armchairs, only one of which is occupied. In it sits a sickly-looking man. Bending over him deferentially to listen to something the man is saying is a uniformed chauffeur who presently turns to go, waved away by the seated man, just as Lise approaches.

‘There you are!’ says Lise. ‘I’ve been looking for you all day. Where did you get to?’ The man shifts to look at her. ‘Jenner’s gone to have a bite. Then we’re off back to the villa. Damn nuisance, coming back in to town all this way. Tell Jenner he’s got half-an-hour. We must be off.’

‘He’ll be back in a minute,’ Lise says. ‘Don’t you remember we met on the plane?’

‘The Sheikh. Damn rotters in his country have taken over behind his back. Now he’s lost his throne or whatever it is he sits on. I was at school with him. Why did he ring me up? He rang me up. On the telephone. He brings me back to town all this way and when we get here he says he can’t come to the villa after all, there’s been a coup.’

‘I’ll take you back to the villa,’ Lise says. ‘Come on, get in the car with me. I’ve got a car outside.’

The man says, ‘Last time I saw the Sheikh it was ‘38. He came on safari with me. Rotten shot if you know anything about big game. You’ve got to wait for the drag. They call it the drag, you see. It kills its prey and drags it into the bush then you follow the drag and when you know where it’s left its prey you’re all right. The poor bloody beast comes out the next day to eat its prey, they like it high. And you only have a few seconds. You’re here and there’s another fellow there and a third over here. You can’t shoot from here, you see, because there’s another hunter there and you don’t want to shoot him. You have to shoot from over here or over there. And the Sheikh, I’ve known him for years, we were at school together, the bloody fool shot and missed it by five feet from a fifteen-foot range.’

His eyes look straight ahead and his lips quiver.

‘You’re not my type after all,’ Lise says. ‘I thought you were, but I was away out.’

‘What? Want a drink? Where’s Jenner?’

She gathers up the handles of her bags, picks up her book and looks at him and through him as if he were already a distant memory and leaves without a good-bye, indeed as if she had said good-bye to him long ago.

She brushes past a few people at the vestibule who look at her with the same casual curiosity with which others throughout the day have looked at her. They are mainly tourists; one exceptional sight among so many others does not deflect their attention for very long. Outside, she goes to the car park where she has left Carlo’s car, and does not find it.

She goes up to the doorman. ‘I’ve lost my car. A Fiat 125. Have you seen anyone drive off with a Fiat?’

‘Lady, there are twenty Fiats an hour come in and out of here.’

‘But I parked it over there less than an hour ago. A cream Fiat, a bit dirty, I’ve been travelling.’

The doorman sends a page-boy to find the parking attendant who presently comes along in a vexed mood since he has been called from conversation with a more profitable client. He owns to having seen a cream-coloured Fiat being driven away by a large fat man whom he had presumed to be the owner.

‘He must have had extra keys,’ says Lise.

‘Didn’t you see the lady drive in with it?’ the doorman says.

‘No, I didn’t. The royalty and the police were taking up all my time, you know that. Besides, the lady didn’t say anything to me, to look after her car.’

Lise says, opening her bag, ‘Well, I meant to give you a tip later. But I’ll give you one now.’ And she holds out to him the keys of Carlo’s car.

The doorman says, ‘Look, lady, we can’t take responsibility for your car. If you want to see the porter at the desk he can ring the police. Are you staying at the hotel?’

‘No,’ says Lise. ‘Get me a taxi.’

‘Have you got your licence?’ says the parking attendant.

‘Go away,’ Lise says. ‘You’re not my type.’ He looks explosive. Another of tomorrow’s witnesses.

The porter is meanwhile busy helping some newcomers out of a taxi. Lise calls out to the taxi-driver, who nods his agreement to take her on.

As soon as the passengers are out, Lise leaps into the taxi.

The parking attendant shouts, 'Are you sure it was your own car, lady?'

She throws Carlo's keys out of the window on to the gravel and directs the taxi to the Hotel Metropole with tears falling over her cheeks.

'Anything the matter, lady?' says the driver.

'It's getting late,' she says, weeping. 'It's getting terribly late.'

'Lady, I can't go faster. See the traffic.'

'I can't find my boy-friend. I don't know where he's gone.'

'You think you'll find him at the Metropole?'

'There's always a chance,' she says. 'I make a lot of mistakes.'

## SIX

The chandeliers of the Metropole, dispensing a vivid glow upon the just and unjust alike, disclose Bill the macrobiotic seated gloomily by a table near the entrance. He jumps up when Lise enters and falls upon her with a delight that impresses the whole lobby, and in such haste that a plastic bag that he is clutching, insufficiently sealed, emits a small trail of wild rice in his progress towards her.

She follows him back to his seat and takes a chair beside him. 'Look at my coat,' she says. 'I got mixed up in a student demonstration and I'm still crying from the effect of tear-gas. I had a date at the Hilton for dinner with a very important Sheikh but I was too late, as I went to buy him a pair of slippers for a present. He'd gone on safari. So he wasn't my type, anyway. Shooting animals.'

'I'd just about given you up,' says Bill. 'You were to be here at seven. I've been desperate.' He takes her hand, smiling with glad flashes of teeth and eyes. 'You wouldn't have been so unkind as to have dinner with someone else, would you? I'm hungry.'

'And my car got stolen,' she says.

‘What car?’

‘Oh, just a car.

‘I didn’t know you had a car. Was it a hired car?’

‘You know nothing whatsoever about me,’ she says.

‘Well I’ve got a car,’ he says. ‘A friend has lent me it. I’m taking it to Naples as soon as possible to get started on the Yin-Yang Young Culture Centre. I’m opening with a lecture called “The World —Where is it Going?” That will be a general introduction to the macrobiotic way of life. It’ll bring in the kids, all right.’

‘It’s getting late,’ she says.

‘I was nearly giving you up,’ he says, squeezing her hand. ‘I was just about to go out and look for another girl. I’m queer for girls. It has to be a girl.’

‘I’ll have a drink,’ she says. ‘I need one.’

‘Oh no, you won’t. Oh no, you won’t. Alcohol is off the diet. You’re coming to supper with me at a house I know.’

‘What kind of a house?’ she says.

‘A macrobiotic family I know,’ he says. ‘They’ll give us a good supper. Three sons, four daughters, the mother and father, all on macrobiotics. We’ll have rice with carrots followed by rice biscuits and goat’s cheese and a cooked apple. No sugar allowed. The family eat at six o’clock, which is the orthodox system, but the variation that I follow lets you eat late. That way, we’ll get through to the young. So we’ll go there and heat up a meal. Come on!’

She says, ‘That tear-gas is still affecting me.’ Tears brim in her eyes. She gets up with him and lets him, trailing rice, lead her past every eye of the Metropole lobby into the street, up the road, and into a small black utility model which is parked there.

‘It’s wonderful,’ says Bill as he starts up the car, ‘to think we’re together again at last.’

‘I must tell you,’ says Lise, sniffing, ‘that you’re not my type. I’m sure of it.’

‘Oh, you don’t know me! You don’t know me at all.’

‘But I know my type.’

‘You need love,’ he says with a hand on her knee.

She starts away from him. 'Take care while you're driving. Where do your friends live?'

'The other side of the park. I must say, I feel hungry.'

'Then hurry up,' she says.

'Don't you feel hungry?'

'No, I feel lonely.'

'You won't be lonely with me.'

They have turned into the park.

'Turn right at the end of this road,' she says. 'There should be a road to the right, according to the map. I want to look at something.'

'There are better places farther on.'

'Turn right, I say.'

'Don't be nervy,' he says. 'You need to relax. The reason why you're so tense, you've been eating all the wrong things and drinking too much. You shouldn't have more than three glasses of liquid a day.'

You should pass water not more than twice a day. Twice for a woman, three times for a man. If you need to go more than that it means you're taking in too much fluid.'

'Here's the road. Turn right.'

Bill turns right, going slowly and looking about him. He says, 'I don't know where this leads to. But there's a very convenient spot farther up the main road.'

'What spot?' she says. 'What spot are you talking about?'

'I haven't had my daily orgasm. It's an essential part of this particular variation of the diet, didn't I tell you? Many other macrobiotic variations have it as an essential part. This is one of the main things the young Neapolitans must learn.'

'If you think you're going to have sex with me,' she says, 'you're very much mistaken. I have no time for sex.'

'Lise!' says Bill.

'I mean it,' she says. 'Sex is no use to me, I assure you.' She gives out her deep laughter.

The road is dimly lit by lamps posted at far intervals. Bill is peering to right and left.

‘There’s a building over there,’ she says. ‘That must be the Pavilion. And the old villa behind — they say in the brochure that it’s to be restored and turned into a museum. But it’s the famous Pavilion that I want.’

At the site of the Pavilion several cars and motor bicycles are parked. Another road converges, and a band of teenaged boys and girls are languidly leaning against trees, cars and anything else that can prop them up, looking at each other.

‘There’s nothing doing here,’ says Bill.

‘Stop, I want to get out and look around.’

‘Too many people. What are you, thinking of?’

‘I want to see the Pavilion, that’s all.’

‘Why? You can come by daylight. Much better.’

Some iron tables are scattered on the ground in front of the Pavilion, a graceful three-storey building with a quaint gilded frieze above the first level of the facade.

Bill parks the car near the others, some of which are occupied by amorous couples. Lise jumps out as soon as the car stops. She takes with her the hand-bag leaving the zipper-bag and her book in the car. He runs after her, putting an arm round her shoulders, and says, ‘Come on, it’s getting late. What do you want to see?’

She says, ‘Will your rice be safe in the car? Have you locked it?’

He says, ‘Who’s going to steal a bag of rice?’

‘I don’t know,’ says Lise, making her way along the path which leads to the Pavilion.

‘Maybe those young people might feel very intensely about rice.’

‘The movement hasn’t got started yet, Lise,’ says Bill. ‘And red beans are also allowed. And sesame-flour. But you can’t expect people to know about it till you tell them.’

The ground floor of the Pavilion is largely glass-fronted. She goes up to it and peers in. There are bare cafes; tables and chairs piled high in the classic fashion of restaurants closed for the night. There is a long counter and a coffee machine at the far end, with an empty glass sandwich-bar. There is nothing else except an expanse of floor, which in the darkness can only be half-seen, patterned in black-and-white chequered pavements. Lise cranes and twists to see the ceiling which obscurely

seems to be painted with some classical scene; the hind-leg of a horse and one side of a cupid are all that is visible.

Still she peers through the glass. Bill tries to draw her away, but again she starts to cry. 'Oh,' she says, 'the inconceivable sorrow of it, those chairs piled up at night when you're sitting in a cafe, the last one left.'

'You're getting morbid, dear,' says Bill. 'Darling, it's all a matter of chemistry. You've been eating toxic foods and neglecting the fact that there are two forces in the world, centrifugal which is Yin and centripetal which is Yang. Orgasms are Yang.'

'It makes me sad,' she says. 'I want to go home, I think. I want to go back home and feel all that lonely grief again. I miss it so much already.'

He jerks her away and she calls out, 'Stop it! Don't do that!' A man and two women who are passing a few yards away turn to look, but the young group pays no attention.

Bill gives a deep sigh. 'It's getting late,' he says, pinching her elbow.

'Let me go, I want to look round the back. I've got to see how things are round here, it's important.'

'You'd think it was a bank,' Bill says, 'that you were going to do a stick-up in tomorrow. Who do you think you are? Who do you think I am?' He follows her as she starts off round the side of the building, examining the track. 'What do you think you're doing?'

She traverses the side of the building and turns round to the back where five large dust-bins stand waiting for tomorrow's garbagemen, who will also find Lise, not far off, stabbed to death. At this moment, a disturbed cat leaves off its foraging at one of the half-closed dust-bins and flows into an adjacent blackness.

Lise surveys the ground earnestly.

'Look,' says Bill, 'Lise, darling, over by the hedge. We're all right.'

He pulls her towards a hedge separating the back yard of the Pavilion from a foot-path which can be seen through a partly-open iron gate. A band of very tall fair young men all speaking together in a Scandinavian-sounding language passes by and stops to watch and comment buoyantly on the tussle that ensues between Bill and Lise, she

proclaiming that she doesn't like sex and he explaining that if he misses his daily orgasm he has to fit in two the next day. 'And it gives me indigestion,' he says, getting her down on the gravel behind the hedge and out of sight, 'two in one day. And it's got to be a girl.'

Lise now shrieks for help in four languages, English, French, Italian and Danish. She throws her hand-bag into the hedge; then, 'He's taken my purse!' she cries in four languages. 'He's gone off with my hand-bag!' One of the onlookers tries to creak open the stiff iron gate, but meantime another has started to climb it, and gets over.

'What's going on?' he says to Lise in his own language. 'We're Swedes. What's wrong?'

Bill who has been kneeling to hold her down gets up and says, 'Go away. Clear off. What do you think's going on?'

But Lise has jumped to her feet and shouts in English that she never saw him before in her life, and that he is trying to rob her, and rape her. 'I just got out of my car to look at the Pavilion, and he jumped on me and dragged me here,' she screams, over and over again in four languages. 'Get the police!'

The other men have come into the yard. Two of them take hold of Bill who grins, trying hard to convince them that this turmoil is Lise's joke. One of them says he is going to find a policeman. Lise says, 'Where's my bag? He's got rid of it somewhere. What has he done with it?' Then, in a burst of spontaneous composure she says, quietly, 'I'm going to find a policeman, too,' and walks off to the car. Most of the other parked cars have gone, as have also the young loiterers. One of the Swedes runs after her, advising her to wait till his friend brings a policeman.

'No, I'm going to the police-station right away,' she says in a calm voice as she gets in and shuts the door. She has already made off, already thrown the bag of wild rice out of the window, when the police arrive on the scene. They hear the Swedes' account, they listen to Bill's protests, they search for Lise's bag, and find it. Then they ask Bill what the girl's name was since she was, as he claims, a friend of his. 'Lise,' he says. 'I don't know her other name. We met on the plane.'

They take Bill into custody anyway, mercifully for him as it turns out, since in the

hours logically possible for the murder of Lise on that spot Bill is safely in a police cell, equally beyond suspicion and the exercise of his diet.

## SEVEN

It is long past midnight when she arrives at the Hotel Tomson which stands like the only living thing in the shuttered street. Lise parks the little black car in a spot near the entrance, takes her book and her zipper-bag and enters the hall.

At the desk the night-porter is on duty, the top three buttons of his uniform unfastened to reveal his throat and the top of his under-vest, a sign that the deep night has fallen and the tourists have gone to bed. The porter is talking on the desk telephone which links with the bedrooms. Meanwhile the only other person in the hall, a youngish man in a dark suit, stands before the desk with a brief-case and a tartan hold-all by his side.

‘Please don’t wake her. It isn’t at all necessary at this late hour. Just show me my room -’ She’s on her way down. She says to tell you to wait, she’s on her way.

‘I could have seen her in the morning. It wasn’t necessary. It’s so late.’ The man’s tone is authoritative and vexed.

‘She’s wide awake, sir,’ says the porter. ‘She was very definite that we were to let her know as soon as you arrived.’

‘Excuse me,’ Lise says to the porter, brushing against the dark-suited man as she comes up to the desk beside him. ‘Would you like a book to read?’ She holds out her paperback. ‘I don’t need it any more.’

‘Oh, thanks, Miss,’ says the porter, good-naturedly taking the book and holding it at arm’s length before his eyes the better to see what the book is all about. Meanwhile the new arrival, having been jostled by Lise, turns to look at her. He starts, and bends to pick up his bags.

Lise touches him on the arm. ‘You’re coming with me,’ she says.

‘No,’ he says, trembling. His round face is pink and white, his eyes are wide open with fear. He looks neat in his business suit and white shirt, as he did this morning

when Lise first followed and then sat next to him on the plane.

‘Leave everything,’ says Lise. ‘Come on, it’s getting late. ‘She starts propelling him to the door.

‘Sir!’ calls the porter. ‘Your aunt’s on her way —’

Lise, still holding her man, turns at the door and calls back, ‘You can keep his luggage. You can have the book as well; it’s a whydunnit in q-sharp major and it has a message: never talk to the sort of girls that you wouldn’t leave lying about in your drawing-room for the servants to pick up.’ She leads her man towards the door.

There, he puts up some resistance: ‘No, I don’t want to come. I want to stay. I came here this morning, and when I saw you here I got away. I want to get away.’ He pulls back from her.

‘I’ve got a car outside,’ says Lise, and pushes open the narrow swing-door. He goes with her as if he is under arrest. She takes him to the car, lets go of his arm, gets into the driver’s seat and waits while he walks round the front of the car and gets in beside her. Then she drives off with him at her side.

He says, ‘I don’t know who you are. I never saw you before in my life.’

‘That’s not the point,’ she says. ‘I’ve been looking for you all day. You’ve wasted my time. What a day! And I was right first time. As soon as I saw you this morning I knew that you were the one. You’re my type.’

He is trembling. She says, ‘You were in a clinic. You’re Richard. I know your name because your aunt told me.’

He says, ‘I’ve had six years’ treatment. I want to start afresh. My family’s waiting to see me.

‘Were the walls of the clinic pale green in all the rooms? Was there a great big tough man in the dormitory at night, patrolling up and down every so often, just in case?’

‘Yes,’ he says.

‘Stop trembling,’ she says. ‘It’s the madhouse tremble. It will soon be over. Before you went to the clinic how long did they keep you in prison?’

‘Two years,’ he said.

‘Did you strangle or stab?’

'I stabbed her, but she didn't die. I never killed a woman.'

'No, but you'd like to. I knew it this morning.'

'You never saw me before in your life.'

'That's not the point,' Lise says. 'That's by the way. You're a sex maniac.'

'No, no,' he says. 'That's all over and past. Not any more.'

'Well you won't have sex with me,' Lise says. She is driving through the park and turns right towards the Pavilion. Nobody is in sight. The wandering groups are null and void, the cars have gone away.

'Sex is normal,' he says. 'I'm cured. Sex is all right.'

'It's all right at the time and it's all right before,' says Lise, 'but the problem is afterwards. That is, if you aren't just an animal. Most of the time, afterwards is pretty sad.'

'You're afraid of sex,' he says, almost joyfully, as if sensing an opportunity to gain control.

'Only of afterwards,' she says. 'But that doesn't matter any more.'

She pulls up at the Pavilion and looks at him. 'Why are you shaking?' she says. 'It will soon be over.' She reaches for her zipper-bag and opens it. 'Now,' she says, 'let's be lucid about this. Here's a present from your aunt, a pair of slippers. You can pick them up later.' She throws them on the back seat and pulls out a paper bag. She peers into it. 'This is Olga's scarf,' she says, putting it back in the bag.

'A lot of women get killed in the park,' he says, leaning back; he is calmer now.

'Yes, of course. It's because they want to be.' She is searching in the bag.

'Don't go too far,' he says quietly.

'I'll leave that to you,' she says and brings out another paper bag. She peers in and takes out the orange scarf. 'This is mine,' she says. A lovely colour by daylight.' She drapes the scarf round her neck.

'I'm getting out,' he says, opening the door on his side. 'Come on.'

'Wait a minute,' she says. 'Just wait a minute.'

'A lot of women get killed,' he says.

'Yes, I know, they look for it.' She brings out the oblong package, tears off the

wrapping and opens the box that contains the curved paper-knife in its sheath. 'Another present for you,' she says. 'Your aunt bought it for you.' She takes the knife from the box which she throws out of the window.

He says, 'No, they don't want to be killed. They struggle. I know that. But I've never killed a woman. Never.'

Lise opens the door and gets out with the paperknife in her hand. 'Come on, it's getting late,' she says. 'I know the spot.'

The morning will dawn, and by the evening the police will place in front of him the map marked with an X at the point where the famous Pavilion is located, the little picture.

'You made this mark.'

'No I didn't. She must have made it herself. She knew the way. She took me straight there.'

They will reveal, bit by bit, that they know his record. They will bark, and exchange places at the desk. They will come and go in the little office, already beset by inquietude and fear, even before her identity is traced back to where she came from. They will try soft speaking, they will reason with him in their secret dismay that the evidence already coming in seems to confirm his story.

'The last time you lost control of yourself didn't you take the woman for a drive in the country?'

'But this one took me. She made me go. She was driving. I didn't want to go. It was only by chance that I met her.'

'You never saw her before?'

'The first time was at the airport. She sat beside me on the plane. I moved my seat. I was afraid.'

'Afraid of what? What frightened you?'

Round and round again will go the interrogators, moving slowly forward, always bearing the same questions like the whorling shell of a snail.

Lise walks up to the great windows of the Pavilion and presses close to look inside, while he follows her. Then she walks round the back and over to the hedge.

She says, 'I'm going to lie down here. Then you tie my hands with my scarf; I'll put one wrist over the other, it's the proper way. Then you'll tie my ankles together with your necktie. Then you strike.' She points first to her throat. 'First here,' she says. Then, pointing to a place beneath each breast, she says, 'Then here and here. Then anywhere you like.'

'I don't want to do it,' he says, staring at her. 'I didn't mean this to happen. I planned everything to be different. Let me go.'

She takes the paper-knife from its sheath, feels the edge and the point, and says that it isn't very sharp but it will do. 'Don't forget,' she says, 'that it's curved.' She looks at the engraved sheath in her hand and lets it fall carelessly from her fingers. 'After you've stabbed,' she says, 'be sure to twist it upwards or it may not penetrate far enough.' She demonstrates the movement with her wrist. 'You'll get caught, but at least you'll have the illusion of a chance to get away in the car. So afterwards, don't waste too much time staring at what you have done, at what you have done.' Then she lies down on the gravel and he grabs at the knife.

'Tie my hands first,' she says, crossing her wrists. 'Tie them with the scarf.'

He ties her hands, and she tells him in a sharp, quick voice to take off his necktie and bind her ankles.

'No,' he says, kneeling over her, 'not your ankles.'

'I don't want any sex,' she shouts. 'You can have it afterwards. Tie my feet and kill, that's all. They will come and sweep it up in the morning.'

All the same, he plunges into her, with the knife poised high.

'Kill me,' she says, and repeats it in four languages.

As the knife descends to her throat she screams, evidently perceiving how final is finality. She screams and then her throat gurgles while he stabs with a turn of his wrist exactly as she instructed. Then he stabs wherever he likes and stands up, staring at what he has done. He stands staring for a while and then, having started to turn away, he hesitates as if he had forgotten something of her bidding. Suddenly he wrenches off his necktie and bends to tie her ankles together with it.

He runs to the car, taking his chance and knowing that he will at last be taken, and

seeing already as he drives away from the Pavilion and away, the sad little office where the police clank in and out and the typewriter ticks out his unnerving statement: 'She told me to kill her and I killed her. She spoke in many languages but she was telling me to kill her all the time. She told me precisely what to do. I was hoping to start a new life.' He sees already the gleaming buttons of the policemen's uniforms, hears the cold and the confiding, the hot and the barking voices, sees already the holsters and epaulets and all those trappings devised to protect them from the indecent exposure of fear and pity, pity and fear.

#### TASK 4

1. *Look up the following words in the dictionary and learn them:*

Edge, spurt, stretch, anticipation, swerve, kick, accumulate, retreat, ramshackle, rumple, languidly, chequered, crane, morbid, traverse, tussle, lucid, beset, bidding.

*Which of these words are grammatical homonyms?*

2. *Find the English equivalents to the following words:*

По черзі, звинувачувати, хаос, підслуховувати, в іншому випадку, ризикнути, тріщина, потужно, як треба, допит, вішалка-плечики, ескорт, добре відрепетируваний, лімузин, гігантський, термос, переворот, акції впали, ритися, довгастиий, спокій, віддалений, трапеза, шанобливо, видобуток, вестибюль, недостатньо, закохані парочки, пограбування, життєрадісно, спостерігач, владний, занепокоєння, виривати.

3. a) *Build up situations based on the context around the following expressions using them in your answer:*

To take on a serious note, with regards to smb + to drop smb off, to have something on one's mind + to regain control of smth, to pull up, to makes a grab for smth+ to prevent smb from doing smth + to start off + catch up + well clear of smb/smth + in expert style, to unzip smth, to be released by the police, to make one's descent, to move in unison, to have a breakdown, to rate smb low on a scale, to make straight for somewhere, to put one's appearance to rights + to bring smth forth,

to zip a bag up, to amount to a high tip + to stop short, to deflect one's attention (from), in a vexed mood, to take responsibility for smth, to look explosive + to nod agreement, to be queer for smb/ smth, to get through to smb + to heat up a meal, by daylight, to feel intensely about smth/smb, to neglect the fact, to take hold of smb/smth, to take smb into custody + mercifully for smb + beyond suspicion, to be wide awake, to start afresh, all over and past, to gain control, to trace back, to reason with smb.

b) *Build up a story of your own around 5 expressions.*

4. *What Lise's traits of character does the episode with Carlo reveal?*

5. *What was Lise's explanation to Bill for being late?*

6. *Why had Bill seemed a possible candidate for Lise? Why did she later choose to dismiss him?*

7. *What is Lise's attitude to sex?*

8. *Do you agree that the novella is a crime story turned inside out?*

9. *Why is the novella called "The driver's seat"?*

10. *Why do you think Lise had chosen to die?*

11. *How can you account for Lise's choice of her outfit, her eccentric behavior throughout her trip? What was she trying to gain this way?*

12. *Can you prove that Lise had a sense of humour? Can you pick up a few examples of its explication?*

13. *What are the main problems touched upon in the novella?*

14. *Why is the novella referred to the genre "metaphysical shocker"?*

*Why is it called "The Driver's seat"?*

# CONTENTS

ПЕРЕДМОВА .....	3
-----------------	---

## **PART 1**

Before you read .....	5
Unit 1 .....	
Task 1 .....	
Unit 2 .....	
Task 2 .....	
Unit 3 .....	
Task 3 .....	
Unit 4 .....	
Task 4 .....	
Unit 5 .....	
Task 5 .....	
Unit 6 .....	
Task 6 .....	
Unit 7 .....	
Task 7 .....	
Unit 8 .....	
Task 8 .....	
Unit 9 .....	
Task 9 .....	
Unit 10 .....	
Task 10 .....	
Unit 11 .....	
Task 11 .....	
Unit 12 .....	
Task 12 .....	
Unit 13 .....	
Task 13 .....	
Unit 14 .....	
Task 14 .....	

## **PART 2**

Before you read .....	
Unit 1 .....	
Task 1 .....	
Unit 2 .....	
Task 2 .....	
Unit 3 .....	
Task 3 .....	

Unit 4 .....  
Task 4 .....  
Навчальне видання

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З ДОМАШНЬОГО ЧИТАННЯ  
АНГЛІЙСЬКОЮ МОВОЮ**

**(M.C.Beaton “DEATH OF A PERFECT WIFE”  
та Muriel Spark “THE DRIVER’S SEAT”)**

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