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**ПРАКТИЧЕСКИЙ КУРС ОСНОВНОГО
ИНОСТРАННОГО ЯЗЫКА**

АНГЛИЙСКИЙ ЯЗЫК

ДОМАШНЕЕ ЧТЕНИЕ

ЮНИТА 3

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ПРАКТИЧЕСКИЙ КУРС ОСНОВНОГО ИНОСТРАННОГО ЯЗЫКА АНГЛИЙСКИЙ ЯЗЫК

ДОМАШНЕЕ ЧТЕНИЕ

Юниты 1-20: Тексты из художественной литературы на английском языке.

ЮНИТА 3

Учебное пособие представляет собой курс уроков английского языка по домашнему чтению, включающих в себя диалоги, ролевые игры, адаптированные тексты художественных произведений. Сопровождается аудиокурсом.

Для студентов факультета лингвистики СГУ

Юнита соответствует профессиональной образовательной программе №4

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* Глоссарий расположен в середине учебного пособия и предназначен для самостоятельного заучивания новых понятий.

ТЕМАТИЧЕСКИЙ ПЛАН

Данная юнита включает в себя рассказы из серии «Подвиги Геракла» известной английской писательницы, мастера детективного жанра, Агаты Кристи. Каждый урок сопровождается комплексом ролевых игр и упражнений, направленных на закрепление новых слов и выражений.

Урок 1. Немейский лев.

Урок 2. Эриманский кабан.

Урок 3. Критский бык.

Урок 4. Стадо Гериона.

Урок 5. Похищение Цербера.

ЛИТЕРАТУРА

Базовый учебник

1. Christie A. Selected Stories. Any edition.

Примечание. Знаком (*) отмечены работы, на основе которых составлен научный обзор.

AGATHA CHRISTIE

АГАТА КРИСТИ

**THE LABOURS
OF HERCULES**

**ПОДВИГИ
ГЕРАКЛА**

LESSON 1

УРОК 1

FOREWORD

The flat of Hercule Poirot was furnished in a modern style. Its armchairs were square and gleamed with chromium.

On one of these chairs sat Hercule Poirot — in the middle of the chair. Opposite him, in another chair, sat Dr. Burton. Dr. Burton was asking a question.

“Tell me,” he said, “Why Hercule?”

“You mean my Christian name? You mean to say that in physical appearance I do not resemble a Hercules?”

Dr. Burton glanced at Hercule Poirot, at his small neat figure in striped trousers, a black jacket and a bow tie.

“Frankly, Poirot,” said Dr. Burton, “you don’t! I think,” he added, “that you have never had much time to study Classics?”

“That is so.”

“It’s a pity. You’ve missed a lot. If I could I’d make everyone study the Classics. Where else can we find such richness of spirit?”

“Alas, mon ami*, it is too late for me now. I’m thinking of retiring.”

“You won’t.”

“But I assure you...”

“You won’t be able to do it. You are too interested in your work.”

“No, indeed — I make all the arrangements. A few more cases — specially selected ones — not, you understand, everything that presents itself — just problems that have a personal appeal.”

Dr. Burton grinned.

“It always will be like this. Just a case or two, just one case more — and so on. Your Labours aren’t the Labours of Hercules. Yours are the labours of love. You’ll see that I am right. I bet that in twelve month’s time you’ll still be here. The Prima Donna’s farewell performance is not for you, Poirot.”

When Dr. Burton left, Hercule Poirot sat down again slowly like a man in a dream and murmured:

“The Labours of Hercules... But yes, that’s an idea... What had Dr. Burton said as he left: “Yours are not the Labours of Hercules ...” Ah, but there he was wrong. There should be, once again, the Labours of Hercules — a modern Hercules. In the period before the final retirement he would accept twelve cases, no more, no less. And those twelve cases should be selected with special reference to the twelve labours of ancient Hercules. Yes, that would not only be amusing, it would be artistic, it would be unique.”

He would not be in a hurry. He would wait for the case that should be the first of the self-imposed Labours.

LABOUR 1

ПОДВИГ 1

THE NEMEAN LION

НЕМЕЙСКИЙ ЛЕВ*

“Anything of interest this morning, Miss Lemon?” he asked as he entered the room the following morning.

He trusted Miss Lemon. She was a woman without imagination, but she had an instinct. She was a born secretary.

“Nothing much, Mr. Poirot. There is just one letter that I thought might interest you. It is from a man who wants you to investigate the disappearance of his wife’s Pekinese dog.”

Poirot reluctantly picked the letter. Yes, it was exactly as Miss Lemon had said. Nothing unusual. But yes, yes, in one small detail Miss Lemon was right. In one small detail there was something unusual.

“Ring up this man,” he ordered, “and make an appointment for me to see him at his office as he suggests.”

* * *

“I’m a rich man, Mr. Poirot,” said Sir Joseph Hoggin.

Hercule Poirot’s eyes rested critically on the fat body, small pig eyes, the bulbous nose and the close-lipped mouth. The whole general effect reminded him of someone or something — but he could not recollect exactly who or what it was... A long time ago... in Belgium... something, surely, to do with soap...

“Yes, I am a rich man, Mr. Poirot, but that does not mean that I’m in the habit of throwing my money about.”

Hercule Poirot said: “You realize that my fees are high?”

“Yes, yes. But this is a very small matter. I made inquiries and I was told that you were the best man at this sort of thing. That’s why I decided to apply

to you. I want you to get to the bottom of this business and I won't grudge the expense."

"You were fortunate," said Hercule Poirot. "Your case, Sir Joseph, is the first of the twelve cases I have decided to accept before retiring. A self-imposed "Labours of Hercules", if I may so describe it. I was attracted to your case," he sighed, "by its striking unimportance."

"Importance?" said Sir Joseph.

"Unimportance was what I said. I have been called in for various causes — to investigate murders, unexplained deaths, robberies, thefts of jewellery. This is the first time that I have been asked to turn my talents to the kidnapping of a Pekinese dog. "

"You surprise me! I was sure you'd had no end of women applying to you about their pet dogs."

"Yes, certainly. But it is the first time that I am applied to by the husband. Now, please, tell me the facts. The dog disappeared, when?"

"Exactly a week ago. But it has been returned."

"Returned? Then, permit me to ask, why have you sent for me?"

"Because I'm sure that I was cheated. Now, Mr. Poirot, I am going to tell you the whole thing. The dog was stolen a week ago — in Kensington Gardens* where he was out with my wife's companion. The next day my wife got a demand for two hundred pounds."

Poirot murmured:

"You did not approve of paying such a sum, naturally?"

"Of course, I didn't. And I would not have paid it. But Milly (my wife) didn't say anything to me. Just sent off the money — to the address given."

"And the dog was returned?"

"That evening the bell rang and there was the little devil sitting on the doorstep. And not a soul to be seen."

"I see. Continue."

"Then, of course, Milly confessed what she had done and I got angry at first. But I calmed down after a while — after all, the thing was done and you can't expect a woman to behave with any sense. I should have forgotten the whole thing if I hadn't met old Samuelson at the Club."

"Yes?"

"Damn it all! Exactly the same thing had happened to him. Three hundred pounds they'd taken from his wife. Well, that was too much. I decided the thing to be stopped. I sent for you."

Hercule Poirot said:

"I must interview your wife."

Sir Joseph nodded and rose to his feet.

"I'll take you along in the car immediately."

II

In a large, hot, richly-furnished drawing-room two women were sitting. As Sir Joseph and Hercule Poirot entered, a small Pekinese dog rushed forward, barking furiously.

“Shan-Shan, come here to mother. Pick him up, Miss Carnaby.”

The second woman hurried forward and Hercule Poirot murmured:

“A veritable lion, indeed.”

Poirot said:

“Now tell me, Lady Hoggin, the full circumstances of this abominable crime.”

Lady Hoggin flushed.

“I’m very glad to hear you say that, Mr. Poirot. For it was a crime. Pekinese dogs are so sensitive — just as sensitive as children. Poor Shan Tung might have died of fright if of nothing else.”

“Well, it was like this. Shan Tung was out for his walk in the Park with Miss Carnaby — “

“Oh, dear me, yes, it was all my fault,” cried the companion. “How could I have been so careless — “

Poirot looked at her.

“What happened?”

“Well, it was the most extraordinary thing. We were walking along a path — Shan Tung was on a lead, of course, and I was just about to go home, when my attention was caught by a baby in a pram — such a lovely baby it was — lovely rosy cheeks and such curls. I couldn’t help speaking to the nurse and asking how old it was — and I’m sure I was only speaking to her for about a minute or two, and then suddenly I looked down and Shan Tung wasn’t there any more. The lead had been cut through — “

“And what happened next?”

“Well, of course, I looked everywhere. And called! And I asked the Park attendant if he’d seen a man carrying a Pekinese dog but he hadn’t noticed anything of the kind — and I went on searching, but at last, of course, I had to come home — “

“And then you received a letter?”

Lady Hoggin continued the story.

“By the first post the following morning. It said that if I wanted to see Shan Tung alive I was to send 200 pounds in one pound notes to Captain Curtis, 38 Bloomsbury Road Square. It said that if I sent the money at once, Shan Tung would be returned the same evening alive and well, but that if — if afterwards I went to the police, it would be Shan Tung who would suffer for it — ”

“But I am not the police, Lady Hoggin,” said Poirot. “You can be sure that Shan Tung will be perfectly safe. That I will guarantee.”

Both ladies seemed relieved by the magic word. Poirot went on.

“You have here the letter?”

Lady Hoggin shook her head.

“No, I was instructed to enclose it with the money.”

“H’m, that is a pity.”

Miss Carnaby said brightly:

“But I have the dog lead still. Shall I get it?”

She left the room. Hercule Poirot profited by her absence to ask a few questions.

“Amy Carnaby? Oh! She’s quite right. A good soul, though foolish, of course. I’m quite sure she had nothing to do with it. I had excellent references with her. She was with old Lady Hartingfield until she died.”

III

Though it seemed unlikely that Miss Carnaby was anything but the foolish woman that she appeared to be, Poirot nevertheless decided to interview the niece of the late Lady Hartingfield.

“Amy Carnaby?” said she. “Of course, I remember her. Amy Carnaby loves dogs. My aunt had a Pekinese. She left it to Miss Carnaby when she died and Miss Carnaby was devoted to it. Oh, yes, she’s a good soul. Not, of course, very intellectual.”

* * *

Poirot’s next visit was to 38 Bloomsbury Road Square.

Numbers 38, 39 and 40 were united together as the Balaclava Private Hotel. Poirot walked up the steps and pushed open the door marked “Office”.

“I was wondering if a friend of mine had been staying here lately. A Captain Curtis,” said Poirot.

“Curtis,” repeated the manageress. “Captain Curtis? Where have I heard that name?”

“It is like this, you see, “ said Hercule, “I wrote a letter to my friend here.”

The woman’s face cleared.

“That explains it. I must have noticed the name on an envelope. Let me see now.”

She looked up at the letter rack.

“It is not here now.”

IV

Mrs. Samuelson was taller than Lady Hoggin and her hair was dyed with peroxide. Her Pekinese was called Nanki Poo. Miss Keble, Mrs. Samuelson's companion, too, had been blamed for Nanki Poo's disappearance.

"But really, Mr. Poirot, it was the most amazing thing. It all happened in a second. In Kensington Gardens it was. A nurse there asked me the time — "

"A nurse? A hospital nurse?"

"No, no — a children's nurse. Such a pretty baby it was. Such lovely rosy cheeks..."

The story followed the same course exactly — the letter — the threats of violence to Nanki Poo... Only two things were different — the sum of money demanded — 300 pounds — and the address to which it was to be sent: this time it was to Commander Blackleigh, Harrington Hotel, 76 Clonmel Gardens, Kensington.

V

Hercule Poirot, sitting in front of his electric radiator, was giving instructions to his assistant.

"You understand, George?"

"Perfectly, sir."

"More probably a flat or maisonette. And it will definitely be near Kensington Gardens."

"I understand perfectly, sir."

Poirot murmured:

"A curious little case. There is evidence here of a very definite talent for organisation. And there is, of course, the surprising invisibility of the star performer — the Nemean Lion himself, if I may so call him. Yes, an interesting little case. I wish I felt more attracted to my client — but he has a strong resemblance to a soap manufacturer who poisoned his wife in order to marry a blonde secretary. One of my early cases."

* * *

It was three days later when the invaluable George said, "This is the address."

Twenty minutes later Hercule Poirot was climbing the stairs of No.10 Rosholm Mansions. He paused to regain his breath on the top landing and from behind the door of No.10 a new sound broke the silence — the sharp bark of a dog.

Hercule Poirot nodded his head with a smile. He pressed the bell of No.10. The barking became louder — footsteps came to the door, it was opened...

Miss Amy Carnaby stepped back.

“You permit me to enter?” said Hercule Poirot, and entered the room without waiting for her reply.

As Poirot came in, a Pekinese dog jumped off the sofa and sniffed him, his intelligent eyes fixed on the man’s face.

“Aha,” said Poirot. “The chief actor! I salute you, my little friend.”

Miss Carnaby murmured faintly:

“So you know?”

Hercule Poirot nodded.

“Yes, I know.” He looked at an elderly woman lying on a sofa. “Your sister, I think?”

“Yes, Emily, this — this is Mr. Poirot.”

Emily gave a gasp. She said: “Oh!”

Amy said in a low voice:

“So you know everything?”

“Yes, I think so. You organized this business — with your dog to help you. You took your employer’s dog for his usual walk, brought him here and went to the Park with yours. Everybody saw you with a Pekinese dog as usual. Then, while you were talking, you cut the lead and your Pekinese, trained by you, slipped off at once and ran back home. A few moments later you gave the alarm that the dog had been stolen.”

Red spots appeared suddenly on Amy Carnaby’s white cheeks. She said:

“I think, that you are a kind man, Mr. Poirot, and that possibly you might understand. You see, I’ve been so terribly afraid.”

“Afraid?”

“Yes, it’s difficult for a gentleman to understand, I think. But, you see, I am not a clever woman at all, and I’ve no training and I’m getting older — and I am terrified for the future. I’ve known so many people like I am — nobody wants you and you live in one room and you can’t have a fire and not very much to eat, and at last you can’t even pay the rent of your room... There are Institutions, of course, but it’s not easy to get into them, unless you have influential friends, and I haven’t. There are many others situated like me — poor companions — untrained useless women with nothing to look forward to but a deadly fear... And so — some of us — got together — and I thought of this. It was really having Augustus to put it into my mind. You see, to most people, one Pekinese is very much like another. (Just as we think the Chinese are.) Really, of course, it is ridiculous. How is it possible to mistake Augustus for Nanki Poo or Shan Tung or any of the other Pekes? He’s far more intelligent, but as I say, to most people a Peke is just a Peke. Augustus

put it into my head — that, combined with the fact that so many rich women have Pekinese dogs.”

Poirot said with a faint smile:

“How many operations have you carried out successfully?”

Miss Carnaby said simply:

“Shan Tung was the sixteenth.”

Poirot raised his eyebrows.

“I congratulate you. Your organisation must have been indeed excellent. As a criminal, Mademoiselle, you are quite in the first rank.”

Amy Carnaby cried out:

“A criminal! Oh, dear, I suppose I am. But — but I never felt like that. I felt that to take a little money away from these people who really wouldn’t miss it and hadn’t been too scrupulous in acquiring it — well, really, it hardly seemed wrong at all.”

Poirot murmured: “A modern Robin Hood!”

“Tell me, Miss Carnaby, did you ever have to carry out the threat you used in your letters?”

Miss Carnaby looked at him in horror.

“Of course, I would never have dreamed of doing such a thing! That was just — just an artistic touch.”

“Very artistic. It worked.”

“I knew it would. The plan worked beautifully every time. In nine cases out of ten the companion was given the letter with the money to post. Once or twice the woman posted it herself. Then, of course, the companion had to go to the hotel and take the letter out of the rack. But that was quite easy too.”

“And the nurse? Why was there always a nurse?”

“Well, you see, old maids are known to be foolishly sentimental about babies. So it seemed quite natural that they should be absorbed over a baby and not notice anything.”

“Your psychology is excellent, your organisation is just first class, and you are also a very fine actress.”

Miss Carnaby said with a faint smile:

“And yet I have been found out.”

“Only by me. But that was inevitable! When I had interviewed Mrs Samuelson I realized that the kidnapping of Shan Tung was one of a series. I had already learned that you have once been left a Pekinese dog and had an invalid sister. I had only to ask my invaluable servant to look for a small flat within a certain radius occupied by an invalid lady who had a Pekinese dog and a sister who visited her once a week.”

Amy Carnaby drew herself up and said:

“Tell me, Mr. Poirot, what will they do to me? I shall be sent to prison, I suppose?”

Hercule Poirot said:

“I think I can help you. But you must promise that there will be no more disappearing dogs.”

“Yes! Oh, yes!”

“And the money you extracted from Lady Hoggin must be returned.”

Amy Carnaby crossed the room, opened the drawer of a bureau and returned with a packet of notes which she handed to Poirot.

“As for you, mon ami*,” said Hercule, addressing Augustus, “there is one thing that I wish you would give me. It is your mantle of invisibility that I need. In all these cases nobody for a moment suspected that there was a second dog involved. Augustus possessed the lion’s skin of invisibility.”

“Of course, Mr. Poirot, according to the legend, Pekinese were lions once. And they still have the hearts of lions!”

VI

Sir Joseph received Hercule Poirot in his study.

“Well, Mr. Poirot? What about my money?”

Hercule rose, crossed to the writing table, wrote out a cheque for two hundred pounds and handed it to the other man.

Sir Joseph said:

“Well, damn it! Who the devil is this fellow?”

Poirot shook his head:

“If you accept the money, there must be no questions asked.”

“That’s a pity. But the money’s the thing. And what do I owe you, Mr. Poirot?”

“My fees will not be very high. This was a very unimportant matter. Nowadays nearly all my cases are murder cases. Curiously enough, you recall to me one of my former clients in Belgium, many years ago — he was very like you in appearance. He was a wealthy soap manufacturer. He poisoned his wife in order to marry his secretary... Yes — the resemblance is very remarkable...”

A faint sound came from Sir Joseph’s lips — they had gone a strange blue colour. His eyes stared at Poirot. Then, with a shaking hand, he drew out a cheque and tore it into pieces.

“Consider it as your fee.”

“Oh, but Sir Joseph, my fee would not have been as large as that.”

“That’s all right. You keep it.”

“I shall send it to a charity organisation.”

“Send it anywhere you damn well like.”

Poirot leaned forward. He said:

“I think, Sir Joseph, that in your position you should be extremely careful.”

Sir Joseph said, his voice almost inaudible:
“You needn’t worry. I shall be careful all right.”

* * *

Lady Hoggin said to her husband:

“Funny, this tonic tastes quite different. It hasn’t got that bitter taste any more. I wonder why?”

Sir Joseph growled:

“Chemists. Careless fellows. Make drugs differently different times.”

Lady Hoggin said doubtfully:

“I suppose that must be it.”

“Of course it is. What else could it be?”

“Has the man found anything about Shan Tung?”

“Yes. He got me my money back.”

“Who was it?”

“He didn’t say. Very smart fellow, Hercule Poirot. But you needn’t worry.”

“He’s a funny little man, isn’t he?”

Sir Joseph gave a little shiver as though he felt the invisible presence of Hercule Poirot behind him. And said:

“He’s a damned clever little devil!”

And he thought to himself: “Greta can go hang! I’m not going to risk my neck for any damned platinum blonde!”

COMMENTS КОММЕНТАРИИ

* “The Nemean Lion” — “Немейский лев”. По преданию, царь Эврисфей поручил Гераклу убить немейского льва, опустошавшего все окрестности. Этот лев обладал даром оставаться невидимым.

* Alas, mon ami — Увы, мой друг (фр.).

* Kensington Gardens — Кенсингтон-Гарденз (большой парк в Лондоне)

* Institutions — имеются в виду благотворительные заведения

* mon ami — мой друг (фр.)

TASKS AND EXERCISES

ЗАДАНИЯ И УПРАЖНЕНИЯ

1. Read the text, paying attention to the words and expressions below. Try to give a summary of the text with the help of them.

to resemble	походить, иметь сходство
to retire	уходить на пенсию, отходить от дел
to investigate	расследовать
to apply to smb.	обращаться к кому-либо
to be cheated	быть обманутым
a demand	требование
careless	неосторожный, неаккуратный
a nurse	няня, гувернантка
to suffer	страдать
a letter rack	полка, ящик для писем
to give instructions	давать указания, инструктировать
to climb the stairs	подниматься вверх по лестнице
the chief actor	исполнитель главной роли, главный актер
to find smb. out	раскрыть, раскусить, обнаружить кого-либо
a mantle of invisibility	невидимая накидка, мантия невидимости

2. Choose only one correct variant from the ones given below.

1. Hercule Poirot decided to accept only 12 more cases
 - A. because he wanted to work only one year more and to accept one case in a month.
 - B. by chance.
 - C. because he wanted to accomplish his own labours of Hercules.
2. In what detail was Mr. Hoggin's case unusual?
 - A. It was the first time when the Pekinese dog was stolen.
 - B. It was the first time the husband applied to Poirot because of the stolen dog of his wife.
 - C. The demand for the dog was too high.
3. Mr. Hoggin was somehow connected with
 - A. soap.
 - B. bread.
 - C. clothes.
4. How much money did Lady Hoggin send for her dog?
 - A. 100 pounds.

- B. 200 pounds
 - C. 300 pounds
5. Where from did Amy Carnaby get her own Pekinese dog?
 - A. She stole it.
 - B. Her former mistress presented it to her.
 - C. She found it in the street.
 6. Hercule Poirot didn't very much like his client, Mr. Hoggin, because
 - A. Hercule thought Mr. Hoggin had earlier killed his wife.
 - B. he was too greedy.
 - C. he was too self-assured.
 7. So who cut the lead of the dog?
 - A. The companion.
 - B. The children's nurse.
 - C. Captain Curtis or Commander Blackleigh.
 8. How many operations had Amy Carnaby carried out successfully?
 - A. 16
 - B. 17
 - C. 18
 9. What did Poirot promise to do with the money Mr. Hoggin gave to him?
 - A. He promised to throw it away.
 - B. He promised to send it to a charity organisation.
 - C. He said he would give it back to Amy Carnaby.
 10. Mr. Hoggin added the poison to his wife's
 - A. coffee.
 - B. tonic.
 - C. cocoa.

3. Give full and detailed answers to the following questions.

1. What did Dr. Burton mean when he told Hercule Poirot: "Yours are not the Labours of Hercules. Yours are the labours of love."?
2. Who was Miss Lemon and why did Poirot trust her?
3. Why did Mr. Hoggin come to Poirot after the stolen dog had been returned?
4. What do you think about Amy Carnaby's intellect? Prove your point of view.
5. When and how did Poirot begin to suspect the truth?
6. Why is a small dog compared to a lion in this story?
7. What were the reasons for Miss Carnaby's actions?
8. Why did Poirot call her "A modern Robin Hood"?
9. What artistic touch did Amy Carnaby use?
10. Who helped Poirot to find the criminal?
11. Why did Mr. Hoggin return the money back to Poirot?

4. Find the following words and expressions in the text. Translate them. Be ready to reproduce the context they are used in.

to make all the arrangements

to have a personal appeal

with special reference to

to be in the habit of

to die of fear if of nothing else

to enclose

she had nothing to do with it

to follow the same course

I wish I felt more attracted to my client

scrupulous

to be absorbed

Consider it as your fee

неохотно

гонорар

не скупиться на расходы

и ни души вокруг

отвратительное, гнусное преступление

Я не могла не поговорить

перевести дыхание

влиятельные друзья

-
-
-
3. Он потребовал, чтобы к тому времени, как он уйдет на пенсию, все его дела были приведены в порядок.
-
-
4. Джек понял, что его обманули, когда узнал, что исполнителем главной роли будет его друг.
-
-
5. Поднимаясь вверх по лестнице, Том остановился, чтобы перевести дыхание, и посмотрел в окно — во дворе не было ни души.
-
-
6. Эмили утверждала, что не имеет никакого отношения к похищению, и что это — дело рук каких-то бесчестных людей.
-
-
7. Нехотя, она призналась, что была, наверное, слишком поглощена книгой, и не заметила незнакомца.
-
-
8. “Я буду, без сомнения, осторожен,” сказал Майк, узнав, что в конверт, который он повезет, вложена крупная сумма денег.
-
-
9. Не скупитесь на расходы, когда дело касается собственного здоровья.
-
-
10. Анна имела привычку вмешиваться в чужие дела, но я знала об этом и вовремя раскусила ее намерения.
-
-
11. Я не мог не рассказать тебе об этом случае, я чуть не умер от страха.
-
-

8. Topics for discussion in class.

1. Divide your group into two parts — one will defend and justify Amy Carnaby, the other will try to prove her guilt. The teacher will decide which group have been more convincing.
2. Is it difficult nowadays to remain scrupulous? Is it a sin to lie and to steal or is it already normal?
3. Talk a bit about your pets. Can they really be as clever as Amy Carnaby's Augustus? Is it good to keep a pet in the house?

LESSON 2

УРОК 2

LABOUR 4 THE ERYMANTHIAN BOAR*

ПОДВИГ 4 ЭРИМАНФСКИЙ КАБАН

I

The accomplishment of the forth Labour of Hercules has brought Hercule Poirot to Switzerland. He decided to take advantage of it and visit some places which were unknown to him. He had spent some days at Chamonix, then went to Aldermatt and finally went on to Rochers Neiges, a little mountain village, ten thousand feet above sea level.

He was mounting to it in a funicular, when the conductor approached him and demanded his ticket. After he had inspected it, he returned it with a bow and at the same time Poirot felt a small sheet of paper pressed into his hand with the ticket.

“That’s for you,” whispered the conductor.

Poirot smoothed out the paper. It was a hurriedly scribbled note written in pencil.

“Impossible,” it ran, “to mistake these moustaches. I salute you, my dear colleague. If you are willing, you can be of great assistance to me. You have, of course, read of the affair of Salley? The killer — Marrascaud — is believed to be meeting here with some members of his gang at Rochers Neiges. So keep your eyes open, my friend. Get in touch with inspector Drouet who is on the spot. It is important that Marrascaud should be taken — he is a wild boar — one of the most dangerous killers alive today. Good hunting! Your old friend Lementeuil.”

Thoughtfully, Hercule Poirot caressed his moustaches. Yes, indeed, impossible to mistake the moustaches of Hercule Poirot. But what was all

this? He had read in the papers the details of the affair of Salley — the cold-blooded murder of a well-known Parisian bookmaker. The identity of the murderer was known. Marrascaud was a member of a well-known gang. He had been suspected of many killings, but he had got away, out of France, it was thought, and the police in every country in Europe were looking for him.

So Marrascaud was said to have a rendezvous at Rochers Neiges... It seemed a fantastic place to choose as the place for rendezvous of a gang of criminals far above civilization.

Hercule Poirot sighed. To hunt a ruthless killer was not his idea of a pleasant holiday.

A wild boar — that was the term Lementeuil had used. It was certainly an odd coincidence. He murmured to himself: “The forth Labour of Hercules. The Erymanthian Boar?”

He carefully examined the passengers of the funicular.

On the seat opposite him was an American tourist. The style of his clothes, his manners, even the guide book in his hand — all gave away in him a small town American seeing Europe for the first time. On the other side of the funicular a tall man with greyish hair and a big nose was reading a German book. He had the strong mobile fingers of a musician or a surgeon. Father away were three men playing cards. There was nothing unusual about them. The only thing that was unusual was the place where they were. One might have seen them in a train or on a sea liner. But in an almost empty funicular — no!

There was one other passenger there — a woman. She was tall and dark. She looked at no one, staring out at the valley below.

II

The manager of the hotel was a big handsome man. He was all politeness, but it seemed to Poirot that this man, for all his easy manner, was not at ease. He was worried about something. Afterwards, as Poirot was sitting in the chaise-longue, the manager came to him and started talking in a confidential manner.

Monsieur must not judge the hotel too hard. It was out of the season. No one came here till the end of July. That lady. Monsieur had noticed her, perhaps? She came at this time every year. This was Madame Grandier. Her husband had been killed climbing three years ago. It was very sad. They have been very devoted.

The elderly gentleman was a famous doctor. Dr. Karl Lutz, from Vienna. He was a nerve specialist — psycho-analyst — that kind of stuff. He had come here, so he said, for peace and rest.

“It is peaceful, yes,” agreed Hercule Poirot. “And these Messieurs there?” he asked, indicating the three horse-like men at a table. “Do they also seek peace, you think?”

The manager shrugged his shoulders. Again there appeared in his eyes that worried look.

“Ah, the tourists, they always wish a new experience... The altitude — that alone is a new sensation.”

That night, when he went to bed, Poirot read through Lementeuil’s letter carefully before putting it in his wallet. As he got into bed he said to himself: “It is curious — I wonder if ...”

* * *

Gustave, the waiter, brought Hercule Poirot his breakfast in his room. Then he went to the door, but instead of leaving the room, he took one quick look around, then shut the door again and returned to the bedside. He said :

“Monsieur Hercule Poirot? I am Drouet, Inspector of Police.”

“Ah,” said Poirot, “I had already suspected something like this.”

Drouet lowered his voice.

“Mr. Poirot, a very bad thing has occurred. There has been an accident to the funicular!”

“An accident? What kind of an accident?”

“Nobody knows the cause. It happened at night. Now it will take many days to repair it and in the meantime we are cut off up here. So early in the season, when the snow is still heavy, it is impossible to communicate with the valley below.”

Hercule Poirot sat up in bed, he said softly:

“That is very interesting.”

The Inspector nodded.

“Yes,” he said. “It shows that our information was correct. Marrascaud has a rendezvous here, and he has arranged that this rendezvous shall not be interrupted.”

Poirot said slowly:

“But if he has a rendezvous here, on this mass of snow, high above the world, that means that Marrascaud himself is here already, since communications are now cut.”

Drouet said quietly: “I know.”

Both men were silent for a minute or two. Then Poirot asked:

“Dr. Lutz? Can he be Marrascaud?”

Drouet shook his head.

“I do not think so. He is a real Dr. Lutz — I have seen his pictures in the papers — a distinguished and well-known man.”

Poirot murmured:

“If Marrascaud is an expert in disguise, he can play the part successfully. What about the American, Schwartz?”

“I was going to ask you that. At first glance he seems to be a normal travelling American. It is perhaps strange that he came here — but Americans when travelling are quite unpredictable. What do you think yourself?”

Hercule Poirot thought a little. He said:

“On the surface, at least, he appears to be a harmless man. He may be a bore, but it seems difficult to regard him as a danger.” He went on: “But there are three more visitors here.”

The Inspector nodded:

“Yes, and they are the type we are looking for. I’m sure, Mr. Poirot, that these three men are at any rate members of Marrascaud’s gang, and one of them may be Marrascaud himself.”

Hercule Poirot thought it over.

“Yes, one of the three might be Marrascaud, but if so, the question comes instantly, why? Why should Marrascaud and two members of his gang travel together and ascend into a rat-trap on the mountains? A meeting surely could be arranged in safer and less fantastic surroundings — in a cafe, in a railway station, in a crowded cinema, in a public park — somewhere but not here far above the world in a wilderness of snow.”

Something of this he tried to tell Inspector Drouet and the latter agreed readily enough. He said, his face worried:

“In that case, we have to examine a second supposition. These three men are members of Marrascaud’s gang and they have come to meet Marrascaud. Who then is Marrascaud?”

Poirot asked: “What about the staff of the hotel?”

Drouet shrugged his shoulders.

“There is no staff to speak of. There is an old woman who cooks, there is her old husband Jacques, and there is the waiter whose place I have taken. That is all.”

Poirot said:

“The manager, he knows, of course, who you are?”

“Naturally, I need his co-operation.”

“Have you ever noticed,” said Hercule Poirot, “that he looks worried? It may be that it is simply the anxiety of being involved in police proceedings. But it may be more than that.”

“You think that he may know something?”

“It occurred to me, that is all. But it would be better, I think, not to let him know of our suspicions. Keep your eye on him, that is all.”

Drouet nodded. He turned to Poirot.

“You’ve no suggestions, Mr. Poirot? What can be the reason for a rendezvous in this place? In fact, the reason for a rendezvous at all?”

“Money,” said Poirot. “This poor fellow Salley was robbed then as well as murdered. He had a very large sum of money which has disappeared.”

“And the rendezvous is for the purpose of sharing this money, you think?”

“It is the most obvious idea.”

III

The day passed without incident. Hercule Poirot went outside and wandered aimlessly round to the kitchen. He tried to speak to the old man, but he was silent and suspicious. His wife, the cook, was more communicative. The conversation came round to the subject of the hotel staff.

Poirot asked:

“There was already a waiter here before Gustave came, wasn’t there?”

“Yes, indeed, a poor kind of a waiter. No skill, no experience. No class at all. He was here a few days only before Gustave replaced him. Naturally he was dismissed. We were not surprised. This is a hotel of good class. Clients must have proper service here.”

Poirot nodded. He asked:

“Where did he go?”

“That Robert, you mean?” She shrugged her shoulders. “I think back to the cafe he came from.”

“Did anyone see him go?”

She stared at him.

“Ah! Do you think that one goes to see off an animal like that? One has one’s own affairs to do.”

“Certainly,” said Hercule Poirot.

He walked slowly away. There was a figure ahead of him — the tall graceful figure of Madame Grandier. Poirot caught her up. He said:

“This accident to the funicular, it is distressing. I hope, Madame, that it has not inconvenienced you?”

She said: “It is a matter of indifference to me. “

She didn’t look at Poirot. She turned aside and went into the hotel by a small side door.

IV

Hercule Poirot went to bed early. He was awakened some time after midnight.

Someone was fumbling with the lock of the door. He sat up, putting on the light. At the same moment the door swung open. Three men stood there,

the three card-playing men. They were, Poirot thought, a bit drunk. He saw the gleam of a razor blade.

The big thickest man came forward.

“You, damn pig of a detective*. Bah!” The three of them advanced on the defenceless man in the bed.

“We shall do a good job on him, boys. He won’t be the first one tonight.”

They came on, steadily, purposefully — the razor blades flashed...

And then a voice said: “Hands up!”

They turned round. Schwartz, dressed in striped pyjamas stood in the doorway. In his hand he held an automatic gun.

“Hands up, boys. I’m pretty good at shooting.”

Three pairs of hands were raised rapidly.

Schwartz said:

“Now, march! There is a big cupboard just along the corridor. No window in it. Just the thing!”

He made them march into it and turned the key on them. He turned to Poirot, his voice breaking with emotion.

“Did you ever see such an ugly bunch of criminals, Mr. Poirot? You know, there were people, who laughed at me, because I said I was going to take a gun abroad with me. “Where do you think you’re going?” they asked. “Into the jungle?” Well, sir, I’d say the laugh is with me.”

Poirot said:

“My dear Mr. Schwartz, you appeared just in time. It might have been a drama! I am very much in your debt.”

“That’s nothing. What shall we do now? We ought to turn these boys over to the police but we can’t do that. Maybe we’d better consult the manager.”

Poirot said:

“Ah, the manager. I think first we will consult the waiter — Gustave — alias* Inspector Drouet.”

Schwartz stared at him.

“So that’s why they did it!”

“That is why who did what?”

“This bunch of criminals got to you second on the list. They had already cut up Gustave.”

“What?”

“Come with me. The doctor is busy on him now.”

Drouet’s room was a small one on the top floor. Dr. Lutz was busy bandaging the injured man’s face. He turned his head as they entered.

Schwartz asked: “Is he in danger?”

“He will not die if that is what you mean. But he must not speak — there must be no excitement. I have dressed the wounds — there will be no risk of sepsis.”

The three men left the room together. Schwartz said to Poirot:

“Did you say Gustave was a police officer?”

Hercule Poirot nodded.

“But what was he doing at Rochers Neiges?”

In a few words Poirot explained the situation.

Dr. Lutz said:

“Marrascaud? I read about the case in the paper. I should like to meet that man. There is some deep abnormality there! I should like to know the particulars of his childhood.”

“As for me,” said Poirot, “I should like to know exactly where he is at this moment .”

Schwartz said:

“Isn't he one of the three we locked in the cupboard?”

“It is possible — yes, but I am not sure... I have an idea — ...”

He broke off staring down at the carpet. And said:

“Footsteps — footsteps, I think, in blood and they lead from the unused wing of the hotel. Come — we must be quick!”

They followed him along a dim, dusty corridor. They turned the corner of it, still following the marks on the carpet until the tracks led them to a half-open doorway.

Poirot pushed the door open and entered.

He uttered a sharp, horrified exclamation. The room was a bedroom. In the middle of the floor lay the body of a man. There were a dozen wounds on his arms and chest and his head and face had been crushed.

Schwartz said faintly:

“Who is this man? Does anyone know?”

“I suppose,” said Poirot, “that he was known here as Robert, a rather unskilful waiter.”

Lutz had gone nearer, bending over the body. He pointed with a finger.

There was a paper pinned to the dead man's breast. The doctor read it:

“Marrascaud will kill no more — nor will he rob his friends!”

Schwartz cried out:

“Marrascaud? So this is Marrascaud! But what brought him up here? And why do you say his name is Robert?”

Poirot said:

“He was here masquerading as a waiter — and of course, he was a very bad waiter. So bad that no one was surprised when he was dismissed. And Marrascaud continued to live in this unused wing with no one but the manager knowing about it. Marrascaud must have offered him a big bribe to allow him to remain hidden in the unused part of the hotel.”

Dr. Lutz said:

“And why was he killed? And who killed him?”

Schwartz said:

“That’s easy. He was to share out the money with his gang. He didn’t. He came here, to this out of the way place, because he thought it was the last place in the world they would think of. He was wrong. Somehow or other they found out where he was and followed him.”

He touched the dead body with the tip of his shoe.

“And they settled his account — like this.”

V

It was three days later that a little party of men appeared in front of the hotel.

It was Hercule Poirot who opened the front door to them.

“Welcome, mon ami.”

Monsieur Lementeuil, Comissaire of Police, seized Poirot by both hands.

“Ah, my friend, with what emotion I greet you! This is a great day. There is no doubt, you think? It is really Marrascaud?”

“It is Marrascaud all right. Come with me.”

They came to the door of Drouet’s room. Poirot flung it open. He announced:

“Here is your wild boar, gentlemen. Take him alive and see to it that he doesn’t cheat the guillotine.”

The man in the bed, his face still bandaged, stated up. But the police officers had him by the arms before he could move.

Schwartz cried bewildered:

“But that’s Gustave, the waiter — that’s Inspector Drouet.”

“It is Gustave — yes, but it is not Drouet. Drouet was the first waiter, the waiter Robert who was imprisoned in the unused part of the hotel and whom Marrascaud killed the same night as the attack was made on me.”

VI

Over breakfast, Poirot explained to the bewildered American.

“You understand, there are certain things one knows — knows quite certainly in the course of one’s profession. One knows, for instance, the difference between a detective and a murderer! Gustave was no waiter — that I suspected at once — but he was not a policeman either. He could pass as a detective to an outsider — but not to a man who was a policeman himself.”

“And so, at once, I became suspicious. And I was right. Late that evening the man came into my room, looked through my things and found the letter in my wallet — where I had left it for him to find! The next morning Gustave comes into my room with my coffee. He greets me by name and acts the part of detective Drouet. But he is afraid — terribly afraid — because the police have got on his track. He is caught up here like a rat in a trap.”

Schwartz said:

“The foolish thing was to come here! Why did he?”

Poirot said gravely:

“It is not so foolish as you think. He needed a retired place away from the world, where he could meet a certain person, and where a certain thing could take place.”

“What person?”

“Dr. Lutz.”

“Dr. Lutz? Is he a criminal too?”

“Dr. Lutz is really Dr. Lutz — but he is not a nerve specialist — not a psycho-analyst. He is a surgeon, mon ami, a surgeon who specializes in facial surgery. He was offered a huge fee to meet a man here and change that man’s appearance by means of his surgical skill. That is why he came to meet Marrascaud here.”

“But matters go wrong. Marrascaud is betrayed. He learns it and begins to act at once. The police officer who is pretending to be a waiter is kidnapped and Marrascaud takes his place. The three men — his bodyguards — wreck the funicular. The following evening Drouet is killed and a paper is pinned on the dead body. They hope that by the time the communications are established with the world Drouet’s body will have been buried as that of Marrascaud. Dr. Lutz performs his operation without delay. But one man must be silenced — Hercule Poirot. So the gang are sent to attack me. Thanks to you, my friend — ...”

Hercule Poirot bowed to Schwartz who said:

“So you knew that it wasn’t Marrascaud?”

“Certainly.”

“Why didn’t you say so?”

Hercule Poirot’s face was suddenly stern.

“Because I wanted to be quite sure of handing the real Marrascaud over to the police.”

He murmured under his breath:

“To capture alive the wild boar of Erymanthea...”

COMMENTS КОММЕНТАРИИ

* “The Erymanthian Boar” — “Эриманфский кабан”

По преданию, Геракл должен был уничтожить эриманфского кабана, убивавшего людей и опустошавшего окрестности. Геракл загнал его в глубокий снег на вершине горы Эриманф; кабан увяз в снегу, и Геракл, бросившись на него, связал и отнес живым в Микены.

* You, damn pig of a detective — Чертов сыщик

* the laugh is with me — смеется тот, кто смеется последним

* alias — иначе называемый

TASKS AND EXERCISES ЗАДАНИЯ И УПРАЖНЕНИЯ

1. Read the text, paying attention to the words and expressions below. Try to give a summary of the text with the help of them.

a funicular	фуникулер, канатная дорога
Good hunting!	Счастливой охоты!
a rendezvous	рандеву
out of the season	не сезон
a wallet	бумажник
an accident to the funicular	авария на канатной дороге
an expert in disguise	мастер маскировки
unpredictable	непредсказуемый
far above the world	высоко над миром
the staff	штат
suspicious	подозрения
to fumble with a lock	возиться с замком
a razor blade	лезвие бритвы
I'm pretty good at shooting	Я отлично стреляю
to bandage	перевязывать, бинтовать
to masquerade	притворяться, выдавать себя за ...
like a rat in a trap	как крыса в ловушке
facial surgery	лицевая (пластическая) хирургия
to hand over to the police	передать в руки полиции

2. Choose only one correct variant from the ones given below.

1. The fourth Labour of Hercules brought Ptolemy to
A. Norway.
B. Sweden.
C. Switzerland.

2. One of the passengers on the funicular was a tourist from
 - A. France.
 - B. America.
 - C. Germany.
3. Dr. Karl Lutz called himself
 - A. a children's doctor.
 - B. a nerve specialist.
 - C. a surgeon.
4. The people at Rochers Neiges could not communicate with the valley below, because
 - A. the funicular was damaged.
 - B. the wind and snow destroyed all the communications.
 - C. they were far above the world.
5. Before he went to Rochers Neiges, Marrascaud killed
 - A. a bookmaker.
 - B. a shopkeeper.
 - C. a businessman.
6. No one was surprised when Gustave replaced the first waiter because
 - A. he was a bad waiter.
 - B. he wanted very much to leave the place.
 - C. it had been planned long ago.
7. Schwartz saved Poirot with the help of
 - A. an automatic gun.
 - B. a revolver.
 - C. a knife.
8. People thought the members of the gang killed Marrascaud because
 - A. he wanted to kill them.
 - B. he didn't want to share the money with them.
 - C. they got sick and tired of him.

3. Give full and detailed answers to the following questions.

1. How did Poirot come to know that Marrascaud was hiding in Switzerland?
2. Why did Poirot decide that one of the passengers on the funicular was a surgeon?
3. What was the manager of the hotel worrying about? Why was he not at ease?
4. Why did the gang of Marrascaud chose such a place for their rendezvous?
5. Why did Schwartz tell Poirot: "The laugh is with me."
6. Why did Dr. Lutz come to Rochers Neiges?
7. Why did Poirot begin to suspect Gustave?

4. Find the following words and expressions in the text. Translate them. Be ready to reproduce the context they are used in.

to take the advantage of

to be on the spot

to be not at ease

to judge hardly

a distinguished man

One has one own affairs to do

to dress the wounds

out of the way place

bewildered

связаться с кем-либо

странное совпадение

что-то в этом роде

следить за кем-либо

беззащитный

как раз то, что надо

что касается меня

взять живым

5. Make a literary translation

- a) of the extract, beginning with the words “The manager of the hotel was...” and ending with the words “...that alone is a new sensation.”

6. Try to describe the affair at Rochers Neiges from the point of view of somebody else there — the manager of the hotel, the old cook and her husband, Lady Grandier or Schwartz. You may also invent some person or present the events as a journalist.

7. Translate the following sentences into English, using the vocabulary of the text.

1. Воспользовавшись своей известностью, он смог легко проникнуть в здание.

2. Это странное совпадение повергло его в замешательство.

3. Джеку было не по себе — он чувствовал, что за ним следят.

4. Что касается меня, я думаю, что каждый должен заниматься своим делом.

5. Она чувствовала себя такой незащищенной в этом богом забытом месте, вдали от цивилизации.

6. На дороге произошла авария — или что-то в этом роде.

7. “Да, я стреляю отлично,” с гордостью сказал Майкл, перевязывая раны противника.

8. У него возникли подозрения, что бумажник украл кто-то из штата гостиницы.

9. Преступник, выдававший себя за члена благотворительной организации, схвачен и передан в руки полиции.

10. Свяжитесь со мной как можно раньше, и мы договоримся о встрече.

11. За этим человеком охотится полиция всего мира — он настолько непредсказуем, что до сих пор никому не удалось поймать его.

8. Topics for discussion in class.

1. Imagine, that the police has learned that there is one more member of Marrascaud's gang at Rochers Neiges. One of you is a police inspector and he interviews the other people and all you together try to find the criminal out.
2. Discuss the idea of spending the time at some distant place, where there are not so many people around. Which of you would probably like it? Why do you think some people go to such places?

LESSON 3

УРОК 3

LABOUR VII THE CRETAN BULL *

ПОДВИГ 7 КРИТСКИЙ БЫК

I

Hercule Poirot looked thoughtfully at his visitor. He saw a pale face, big grey eyes and the blue-black locks of ancient Greece.

Diana Maberly said, and her voice shook a little:

"I've come to you because the man I've been engaged to for over a year has broken off our engagement. You must think that I am completely foolish."

Slowly, Hercule Poirot shook his head:

"On the contrary, Mademoiselle, I am sure that you are extremely intelligent. If you came to me there must be something unusual about the breaking of this engagement. That is so, is it not?"

The girl nodded.

“Hugh broke off our engagement because he thinks he is going mad. He thinks people who are mad should not marry.”

“And you do not agree?”

“I can’t see that there’s anything wrong with Hugh at all. He is the sanest person I know.”

“Then why does he think he is going mad?”

“I don’t know — but there is something wrong.” Diana spoke rapidly. “His name is Hugh Chandler. He’s twenty-four. His father is Admiral Chandler. Hugh’s the only son. He went into the Navy — his father wouldn’t have heard of anything else. And yet — and yet, it was his father who made him leave the Navy.”

“What reason did Admiral Chandler give?”

Diana said slowly:

“He never really gave a reason. Oh! He said it was necessary that Hugh should learn to manage the estate — but that was only a pretext. Even George Frobisher realized that.”

“Who is George Frobisher?”

“Colonel Frobisher. He’s Admiral Chandler’s oldest friend and Hugh’s godfather.”

“And what did Colonel Frobisher think of Admiral Chandler’s determination that his son should leave the Navy?”

“He couldn’t understand it at all. Nobody could.”

“Not even Hugh Chandler himself?”

Diana didn’t answer at once.

“He said — about a week ago — that his father was right — that it was the only thing to be done.”

“Did you ask him why?”

“Of course. But he wouldn’t tell me.”

Hercule Poirot reflected for a minute or two. Then he said:

“Have there been any unusual occurrences lately in your neighbourhood? Something that has given rise to a lot of local talk and rumours?”

Diana said reluctantly:

“There was a fuss about some sheep. Their throats were cut. Oh! It was horrible. But if you think...”

Poirot held up his hand. He said:

“You do not know what I think. Tell me this, has your fiance consulted a doctor?”

“No, he hasn’t. He hates doctors.”

“And his father?”

“I don’t think the Admiral believes much in doctors either.”

Poirot nodded thoughtfully. Then he said:

“Did he approve of his son’s engagement?”

“Oh yes. He was very pleased when Hugh and I fixed it up.”

“And now? What does he say to your engagement being broken off?”

The girl’s voice shook a little. She said:

“I met him yesterday morning. He was looking terrible. He said: “It’s hard for you, my girl. But the boy’s doing the right thing — the only thing he can do.”

“And so,” said Hercule Poirot, “you came to me.”

She nodded and asked: “Can you do anything?”

Poirot replied:

“I do not know. But I can at least come and see for myself.”

II

It was Hugh Chandler’s magnificent physique that impressed Hercule Poirot more than anything else. Tall, well-proportioned with broad chest and shoulders and a mass of hair on a big head.

Poirot murmured:

“He is magnificent — magnificent. He is like a young Bull. A perfect specimen of healthy manhood.”

On their arrival at Diana’s house they found tea waiting on the long terrace. And with the tea, three men. There was Admiral Chandler and his friend Colonel Frobisher. The third man was Hugh.

“Fine specimen, eh?” said Colonel Frobisher. He spoke in a low voice, having noted Poirot’s interest in the young man. Hercule Poirot nodded his head. He and Frobisher were sitting close together on the far side of the tea-table.

Frobisher asked: “Did the girl involve you in this business? I mean I can’t see quite what she expected you could do.”

“Miss Maberly,” said Poirot, “is a fighter.”

“Yes, she’s certainly a fighter. She won’t give in. All the same, you know, there are some things that you can’t fight...”

His face looked suddenly old and tired. Poirot dropped his voice still lower.

“There is insanity, I understand, in the family.”

Frobisher nodded.

“It was a generation or two. Hugh’s grandfather was the last. The old boy became pretty violent in the end. Had to be taken to an asylum. That is what Hugh is afraid of. That’s why he doesn’t want to see a doctor. He is afraid of being shut up and living shut up for years.”

“And Admiral Chandler, how does he feel? Is he very fond of his son?”

“Worships him. You see, his wife was drowned in a boating accident when the boy was ten years old. Since then he’s lived for nothing but the child.”

“Was he very devoted to his wife?”

“Adored her. Everybody adored her. She was one of the loveliest women I’ve ever known.” He was silent for a moment. Then he said: “Do you want to see her portrait?”

“I should like to see it very much.”

Colonel Frobisher led Hercule Poirot to the Picture Gallery. On the panelled walls hung portraits of dead and gone Chandlers.

Finally Frobisher stopped under a portrait at the end of the gallery. They stood looking up at a tall woman, her hand on a greyhound’s collar. A woman with golden hair and an expression of radiant vitality.

They were silent. Poirot turned his head to look at his companion. George Frobisher was still gazing up at the beautiful woman on the wall above him. And Poirot said softly:

“You knew her well...”

“We were brought up together. I went off to India when she was sixteen... When I got back — she was married to Charles Chandler.”

“Did you see much of them after the marriage?”

“Used to spend most of my holidays here. Charles and Caroline always kept my room here — ready and waiting... That’s why I am here now — to help in case I’m wanted.”

“You are aware that Diana Maberly’s engagement to Hugh Chandler has been broken off?”

“Yes, I know that.”

“And you know the reason for it?”

Frobisher frowned. “Have we got to talk about the damned thing? What do you think you can do? Hugh’s done the right thing, poor boy. It’s not his fault, it’s heredity... But when he found out, what else could he do but break the engagement? It’s one of those things that just has to be done.”

“Why did Admiral Chandler force his son to leave the Navy?”

Frobisher was silent.

Poirot murmured softly:

“Was it to do with some sheep being killed?”

The other man said angrily:

“So you’ve heard about that? Oh well, if you want to know it... Chandler heard a noise that night. Went out to investigate. Light in the boy’s room. Chandler went in. Hugh asleep on bed — in his clothes. Blood on the clothes. Basin in the room full of blood. Next morning heard about sheep being found with their throats cut. Questioned Hugh. Boy didn’t know anything about it. Didn’t remember going out — but his shoes found by the bed were muddy. Couldn’t explain the blood in the basin. Couldn’t explain

anything. Then it happened again — three nights later. After that — well, you can see for yourself. The boy had to leave the service. Charles didn't want to have a scandal in the Navy. Yes, it was the only thing to be done.”

Hercule Poirot didn't answer. He slowly went back to the house.

III

As they came into the hall, they met Admiral Chandler coming in. He said in a low voice:

“Mr. Poirot, I would like to talk to you. Come into my study.”

The Admiral showed Poirot to one of the big armchairs and himself sat down in the other.

With a deep sigh Chandler said: “I can't help being sorry Diana has brought you into this... Poor child, I know how hard it is for her. But — well — it is our own private tragedy. And I think you will understand, Mr. Poirot, that we don't want outsiders.”

“I can understand your feelings, certainly.”

“Diana, poor child, can't believe it... I couldn't believe it either at first. From Hugh's childhood there's never been a trace of abnormality about him until now.”

Poirot said softly: “You have not consulted a doctor?”

Chandler roared: “No, and I am not going to. They shan't shut him up between four walls like a wild beast...”

Poirot looked steadily into Admiral Chandler's sad dark eyes. He said:

“Colonel Frobisher is a very old friend of yours, is he not?”

“My best friend,” the Admiral said firmly.

“And he was a friend of — your wife's, too?”

Chandler smiled.

“Yes. George was in love with Caroline, I believe. When she was very young. He's never married. I believe that's the reason. Ah well, I was the lucky one — or so I thought. I married her — only to lose her...”

He sighed. Poirot said:

“Colonel Frobisher was with you when your wife was — drowned?”

Chandler nodded. “Yes, he was with us in Cornwall when it happened. She and I were out in the boat together — he stayed at home that day. I've never understood how that boat overturned. I held her up as long as I could...” His voice broke. “Thank the Lord* we hadn't taken little Hugh with us! At least, that's what I thought at that time. Now — well — better for Hugh, perhaps, if he had been with us. That's all I can say!”

IV

Hercule Poirot and Hugh Chandler sat on a bench in the rose garden. The young man turned a handsome tortured face towards his companion.

He said: "You see, Diana is a fighter. She won't give in. She — she will go on believing that I'm sane."

"While you yourself are quite certain that you are — pardon me — insane?"

"I'm not actually mad yet — but I'm getting worse. Diana doesn't know. She has only seen me when I am all right."

"And when you are all wrong — what happens?"

Hugh took a long breath. Then he said:

"For one thing — I dream. And when I dream I am mad. Last night, for instance, I wasn't a man any longer. I was a bull — a mad bull — racing about in sunlight — tasting dust and blood in my mouth — dust and blood. I had hydrophobia — men tried to shoot me — someone put a bowl of water for me and I couldn't drink. I couldn't drink..."

He paused. "I woke up. And I knew it was true. My mouth was quite dry. I was thirsty. But I couldn't drink, Mr. Poirot... I couldn't swallow. Oh, My God, I wasn't able to drink..."

Hercule Poirot was silent. Hugh turned to him.

"Oh, there isn't any doubt. It is in my blood. It's the heredity. I can't escape. Thank God I found it out before I'd married Diana. Suppose we had a child and handed on this frightful thing to him!"

He laid a hand on Poirot's arm.

"I don't mind so much — seeing dreams. It's the blood I'm frightened of. We had a parrot. One morning it was there in my room with its throat cut — and I was lying on the bed with the razor in my hand red with its blood."

He leaned closer to Poirot.

"Even just lately animals have been killed," he whispered. "Sheep, cats, a collie dog. Father locks me in at night, but sometimes — sometimes the door is open in the morning. I must have a key hidden somewhere but I don't know where. It's not I who do these things — it's someone else, who comes into me — who turns me from a man into a dangerous monster who wants blood and who can't drink water."

Suddenly he buried his face in his hands.

After a moment or two Poirot asked:

"Colonel Frobisher, I suppose, had spent much of his life in India?"

"Yes, he was in the Indian Army. He's very keen on India — talks about it a lot — native traditions and all that."

"Ah!" Poirot reflected on his words a moment or two. Then he remarked: "I see that you have cut your chin."

Hugh put his hands up.

“Yes, quite a deep cut. Father started me one day when I was shaving. I am a bit nervous these days, you know. And I’ve had a bit of a rash over my chin and neck. Makes shaving difficult.”

He laughed suddenly.

“We’re talking like in a woman’s beauty parlour. Why do you ask all this, Mr. Poirot?”

Poirot said quietly: “I’m trying to do my best for Diana Maberly.”

Hugh’s face got serious. He laid a hand on Poirot’s arm.

“Yes, do what you can for her. Tell her she’s got to forget me. Tell her — oh! tell her for God’s sake* to keep away from me! Keep away and try to forget!”

V

“Have you courage, Mademoiselle? Great courage? You will need it.”

Diana cried sharply:

“What’s in your mind? What are you thinking about? You just stand there — behind that great moustache of yours — and you don’t tell me anything. You’re making me afraid — horribly afraid. Why are you making me afraid?”

“Perhaps,” said Poirot, “because I am afraid myself.”

The deep grey eyes opened wide, stared up at him. She said in a whisper: “What are you afraid of?”

Hercule Poirot sighed. He said:

“It is much easier to catch a murderer that it is to prevent a murder.”

She cried out: “Murder? Don’t use that word.”

“Nevertheless,” said Hercule Poirot, “I do use it. Mademoiselle, it is necessary that both you and I should pass the night at Hugh’s house. You can do that?”

“I — yes — I suppose so. But why?”

“Because there is no time to lose. Shall we say that it is an experiment? Do what I ask you and make no questions about it.”

She nodded without a word and turned away.

Poirot followed her into the house after a moment or two. He heard her voice in the library and the voices of the three men. He passed up the broad staircase. There was no one on the upper floor. He found Hugh Chandler’s room easily enough. In the corner of the room was a washbasin with hot and cold water. Over it, on a glass shelf, were various tubes and pots and bottles. Hercule Poirot went quickly to work... What he had to do did not take him long. He was downstairs again in the hall when Diana came out of the library.

She called out: “We’ll get what we want for the night and be back in time for dinner.”

As they were driving back Poirot asked her if she would mind stopping at the chemist's in the village. He had, he said, to buy a tooth-brush.

The chemist's shop was in the middle of the peaceful village street. Diana waited outside in the car. It struck her that Hercule Poirot was away a long time choosing a tooth-brush...

* * *

In the big bedroom with the heavy oak furniture Hercule Poirot sat and waited. There was nothing to do but wait. All his arrangements were made.

It was towards early morning that he heard the sound of footsteps outside. Poirot drew back the bolt and opened the door. There were two men outside — the Admiral, stern-faced and grim, and Colonel Frobisher, pale and trembling.

Chandler said simply: "Will you come with me, Mr. Poirot?"

There was a huddled figure lying outside Diana Maberly's bedroom door. Hugh Chandler lay there breathing heavily. He was in his dressing-gown and slippers. In his right hand was a sharp shining knife. Here and there on it were bright red spots of blood.

Hercule Poirot exclaimed softly: "Mon Dieu!*"

There was a sound of bolts being drawn. The door opened and Diana stood there. Her face was dead white. She cried out:

"What's happened? There was someone — trying to get in — I heard them — scratching on the panels. Oh! it was awful..."

Frobisher said sharply:

"Thank God your door was locked."

Diana said: "Mr. Poirot told me to lock it."

Poirot said: "Lift him up and bring him inside."

The two men raised the unconscious man. Diana caught her breath as they passed her.

"Hugh? Is it Hugh? What's that — on his hands? Is that blood?"

The Admiral nodded. He said:

"Not human, thank God. A cat! I found it downstairs in the hall. Throat cut. Afterwards he must have come here — "

"Here?" Diana's voice was low with horror. "To me?"

At that moment Hugh Chandler regained consciousness. He sat up and saw the knife which he still held in his hand.

He said in a slow hoarse voice:

"What have I done?"

His father shook his head.

Hugh said:

"Tell me what has happened. I must know."

They told him — told him unwillingly — haltingly. Hugh's face was calm, his voice was steady.

He said: "I see."

Then he got up. His voice was quite natural as he said:

"Beautiful morning, isn't it? I think I'll go out in the woods and try to get a hare."

He went out of the room and left them staring after him.

VI

In the drawing-room Hugh Chandler had taken his gun off the wall and was going to load it when Hercule Poirot's hand fell on his shoulder.

He said: "No!"

Hugh stared at him. He said in an angry voice:

"Take your hands off me! Don't interfere. There's going to be an accident, I tell you. It's the only way out."

Again Hercule Poirot repeated that one word: "No."

"Don't you realize that if the door hadn't been locked I would have cut Diana's throat — Diana's! — with that knife!?"

"I realize nothing of the kind. You would not have killed Miss Maberly."

"I killed the cat, didn't I?"

"No, you didn't kill the cat. You didn't kill the parrot. You didn't kill the sheep."

Hugh stared at him. He demanded:

"Are you mad, or am I?"

Hercule Poirot replied:

"Neither of us."

It was at that moment that Admiral Chandler and Colonel Frobisher came in. Behind them came Diana.

Hugh said in a weak voice:

"This chap says I'm not mad..."

Hercule Poirot said:

"I am happy to tell you that you are entirely and completely sane."

Hugh laughed.

"That's damned funny! It's sane, is it, to cut the throats of sheep and other animals? I was sane, was I, when I killed that parrot? And the cat tonight?"

"I tell you you didn't kill the sheep — or the parrot — or the cat."

"Then who did it?"

"Someone who wanted to prove that you were insane. On each occasion you were given a strong sleeping-pill and a blood-stained knife was put into your hand. It was someone else whose bloody hands were washed in your basin."

“But why?”

“In order that you should do what you were just about to do when I stopped you.”

Hugh stared. Poirot turned to Colonel Frobisher.

“Colonel Frobisher, you lived for many years in India. Did you never come across cases where persons were deliberately driven mad by the administration of drugs?”

“I’ve heard of such cases often enough. Datura poisoning*. It ends by driving a person insane. “

“Exactly. Well, the active principle of the datura is very close to the alkaloid atropine. Atropine is prescribed freely for eye treatment and could be obtained without arousing suspicion. The alkaloid could be extracted from it and then introduced into, say — a shaving cream. Applied externally it causes a rash, this would soon lead to cuts in shaving and thus the drug would be continually entering the system. It would produce certain symptoms — dryness of the mouth and throat, difficulty in swallowing, hallucinations — all the symptoms, in fact, which Mr. Chandler has experienced.”

He turned to the young man.

“Your shaving cream was mixed with a big dosage of atropine. I took some shaving cream from the tube and had it tested at the chemist’s.”

White, shaking, Hugh asked:

“Who did it? Why?”

Hercule Poirot said:

“That is what I have been studying ever since I arrived here. I have been looking for a motive for murder. I thought of a possible motive, the eternal triangle: two men and a woman. Colonel Frobisher had been in love with your mother, Admiral Chandler married her.”

Admiral Chandler cried out:

“George? George! I won’t believe it!”

Frobisher jumped up to his feet:

“It’s a damned lie! Don’t believe him, Charles!”

Hercule Poirot turned round to him.

“Mon Dieu! You must have known, you must have suspected that Hugh was your son? Why did you never tell him so?”

Frobisher stammered, trembling with excitement.

“I didn’t know. I couldn’t be sure... Caroline never said anything that led me to think Hugh was my son. And then when this — this madness appeared, it settled things definitely, I thought.”

Poirot said:

“Yes, it settled things! You did not see the way the boy has of thrusting out his face and lifting his eyebrows — a trick he inherited from you. But Charles Chandler saw it. Saw it years ago — and learnt the truth from his wife. I think she was afraid of him — he had begun to show her the mad

jealousy — that was what drove her into your arms — you whom she had always loved. Charles Chandler planned the revenge. His wife died in a boating accident. He and she were out in the boat alone and he knows how that accident happened. Then he decided to turn his hatred against the boy who bore his name but who was not his son. Your Indian stories put the idea of datura poisoning into his head. Hugh should be slowly driven mad. The lust for blood was Admiral Chandler's, not Hugh's. But it was Hugh who was to pay the penalty!"

"Do you know when I suspected? When Admiral Chandler objected to his son seeing a doctor. It was strange. There could be treatment which would save his son — but no, a doctor must not be allowed to see Hugh Chandler — in case a doctor should discover that Hugh was sane!"

Hugh said in a low voice:

"Sane... I am sane?" He took a step towards Diana. Frobisher said in a hoarse voice:

"You're sane enough. There's no madness in our family."

Admiral Chandler picked up Hugh's gun. He said:

"All a lot of nonsense! I'll go and see if I can get a hare — "

Hugh and Diana had gone from the room.

The two men, the Englishman and the Belgian, watched the last of the Chandlers cross the park and go up into the woods.

Presently, they heard a shot...

COMMENTS КОММЕНТАРИИ

* "The Cretan Bull" — "Критский бык". Миф о том, как Геракл укротил прекрасного быка, на которого Посейдон наслал бешенство.

* Thank the Lord! — Слава Богу!

* for God's sake — ради Бога

* Mon Dieu! — Боже мой! (фр.)

* datura poisoning — отравление дурманом (беленой)

TASKS AND EXERCISES ЗАДАНИЯ И УПРАЖНЕНИЯ

1. Read the text, paying attention to the words and expressions below. Try to give a summary of the text with the help of them.

to break off the engagement разорвать помолвку

to go mad сходить с ума

to leave the Navy оставить военно-морскую службу

an unusual occurrence	необычный случай
insanity	ненормальность
to shut smb. up	запереть кого-либо
heredity	наследственность
to overturn	опрокинуться
hydrophobia	водобоязнь
a dangerous monster	опасное чудовище
to prevent a murder	предотвратить убийство
a huddled figure	скрюченная фигура
to regain consciousness	прийти в сознание
to get a hare	поймать зайца
a drug	наркотик

2. Choose only one correct variant from the ones given below.

- Hugh broke off the engagement because
 - he thought he was going mad.
 - he thought Diana thought he was mad.
 - he wanted to spend his life alone.
- Hugh went to the Navy because
 - it was his dream.
 - his father made him do it.
 - he wanted to be strong and brave.
- What impressed Poirot most of all when he first saw Hugh?
 - his face
 - his height
 - all his physique
- Hugh did not want to see a doctor because
 - his father forbade it.
 - he hated doctors and was afraid of them.
 - he wanted to die.
- Frobisher didn't marry Caroline because
 - she didn't love him.
 - while he was in India Chandler married her.
 - he didn't want to destroy the future of his friend Chandler.
- Hugh believed he had cut the throats of some
 - cows.
 - sheep.
 - hens.
- Hugh cut his chin when he was shaving because
 - his hands were shaking.
 - his father started him.
 - the blade was too sharp.

8. Poirot said, "It is much easier to catch a murderer than
 - A. to catch a thief."
 - B. to find out a liar."
 - C. to prevent a murder."
9. The drug was introduced into Hugh's
 - A. shaving cream.
 - B. tooth paste
 - C. soap.
10. Admiral Chandler hated Hugh because
 - A. Hugh's mother didn't love him.
 - B. Hugh was not his son.
 - C. he did not want to share his money with Hugh.

3. Give full and detailed answers to the following questions.

1. Why do you think Poirot thought that Diana Maberly was extremely intelligent?
2. What reasons did Admiral Chandler give for his son leaving the Navy?
3. Why did Hercule Poirot ask Diana about the unusual occurrences in the neighbourhood?
4. Did Admiral Chandler approve of his son's engagement? Why? What was his reaction when the engagement was broken off?
5. How can you explain the words of Admiral Chandler, speaking about his wife Caroline: "I married her only to lose her..."?
6. What can you say about the behaviour of Diana?
7. How can you describe the character of Hugh?
8. Where and how did Admiral Chandler get the drug? Was it very difficult?
9. What do you think happened to the heroes of the story after the truth had been found out?

4. Find the following words and expressions in the text.

Translate them. Be ready to reproduce the context they are used in.
to manage the estate

fine specimen

to see much of smb. (or smth.)

an outsider

to go on believing

7. Translate the following sentences into English, using the vocabulary of the text.

1. Вести счета самому — еще не самое страшное, а вот управлять поместьем...

2. Несмотря на мнение докторов, он продолжал верить в то, что она сходит с ума.

3. Он решил разорвать помолвку ради военно-морской службы.

4. Последнее время он старался видеть ее как можно больше — он никак не мог забыть ее лицо с выражением искрящегося жизнелюбия.

5. Она воспользовалась предлогом и ушла в соседнюю комнату, которую и попыталась обыскать — она понимала, что если она сможет найти наркотики, это может предотвратить убийство.

6. Джон был наказан — его заперли в темной комнате за то, что он опрокинул и разбил любимую мамину вазу.

7. Сильвия знала, что Дейл увлечен древней историей, но, когда, войдя в его комнату, она увидела целую коллекцию древних вещей, она была поражена.

8. Это, должно быть, произошло, когда он заряжал ружье, пытаясь поймать зайца.

9. Когда он, наконец, пришел в себя, он одновременно и хотел пить, и боялся воды.

8. Topics for discussion in class.

1. Do you think Hugh was a credulous person? Would you believe such things? Are you a credulous person? Is it in general difficult to make a man believe in smth? How could it be done?
2. Admiral Chandler committed the crime because of love and jealousy, didn't he? Prove your point of view. Do you think, such things could happen here (in this country) nowadays?
3. Talk a bit about the problem of drugs in this country and in other places, nowadays and some time ago.

LESSON 4

УРОК 4

LABOUR X THE FLOCK OF GERION*

ПОДВИГ 10 СТАДО ГЕРИОНА

I

“I really apologize for bothering you, Mr. Poirot.”

Miss Carnaby leaned forward, looking anxiously into Poirot's face. She said breathlessly:

“You do remember me, don't you?”

Hercule Poirot smiled. He said:

“I remember you as one of the most successful criminals that I have ever met.”

“Oh, dear me, Mr. Poirot, must you really say such things? You were so kind to me. Emily and I often talk about you, and if we see anything about you in the paper we cut it out at once. As for Augustus, we have taught him a new trick. We say, “Die for Mr. Hercule Poirot”, and he goes down and lies like a log — lies absolutely still without moving until we say the word.”

“I'm gratified,” said Poirot. “He is so clever, our cher* Augustus. But what has brought you here, Miss Carnaby?”

Miss Carnaby's nice round face grew worried and sad. She said:

“Oh, Mr. Poirot, I was going to consult you. I have been anxious lately about a friend of mine. Of course, you may say it is all an old maid's fancy — just imagination, and that I see design where there may be only coincidence.”

“I do not think you would imagine things, Miss Carnaby. Tell me what worries you.”

“Well, I have a friend, a very dear friend, though I have not seen very much of her lately. Her name is Emmeline Clegg. She married a man and he died a few years ago leaving her a big sum of money. She was unhappy and lonely after his death and I am afraid she is in some ways a rather foolish woman. Religion, Mr. Poirot, can be a great help and consolation — but by that I mean orthodox religion — not these odd sects there are so many around. They have a kind of emotional appeal but sometimes I have very grave doubts as to whether there are any true religious feelings behind them all.”

“You think your friend has become a victim of a sect of this kind?”

“I do. Oh! I certainly do. The Flock of the Shepherd*, they call themselves. Their headquarters is in Devonshire — a very lovely estate by the sea. The whole sect centres round the head of the movement, the Great Shepherd, he is called. A Dr. Andersen*. A very handsome man, I believe.”

“Who is attractive to the women, yes?”

“I am afraid so,” Miss Carnaby sighed.

“Are the members of the sect mostly women?”

“At least three quarters of them, I think. It is upon the women that the success of the movement depends and — and on the funds they supply.”

“Ah,” said Poirot. “Now I see. Frankly, you think the whole thing is a ramp.”

“Frankly, Mr. Poirot, I do. And another thing worries me. I know that my poor friend is so devoted to this religion that she has recently made a will leaving all her property to the movement. What really worries me is — “

“Yes — go on — “

“Several very rich women have been among the devotees. Last year three of them, no less, have died.”

“Leaving all their money to this sect?”

“Yes.”

“And their relatives have made no protest?”

“You see, Mr. Poirot, it is usually lonely women who belong to this sect. People who have no very near relatives or friends.”

Poirot nodded thoughtfully. Miss Carnaby hurried on:

“Of course, I have no right to suggest anything at all. From what I have been able to find out, there was nothing wrong about any of these deaths. One, I believe, was pneumonia following influenza and another was attributed to gastric ulcer. There were absolutely no suspicious circumstances and the deaths did not take place in Devonshire, but at their own homes. I’ve no doubt it is quite all right, but all the same — I — well — I shouldn’t like anything to happen to Emmie.”

Poirot was silent for some minutes. Then he said:

“Will you give me, or will you find out for me, the names and addresses of these members of the sect who have recently died?”

“Yes, indeed, Mr. Poirot.”

Poirot said slowly:

“Mademoiselle, I think you are a woman of great courage and determination. Will you be able to do a piece of work that may be associated with considerable danger?”

“I should like nothing better,” said the adventurous Miss Carnaby.

Poirot said warningly:

“If there is a risk at all, it will be a great one. You understand — either this is all a mare’s nest* or it is serious. To find out which it is, it will be necessary for you yourself to become a member of the Great Flock. You’ll pretend to be a rich woman with no definite aim in life. You’ll allow your friend Emmeline to persuade you to go down to Devonshire. And there you will fall a victim of the magnetic power of Dr. Andersen. I think I can leave that to you?”

Miss Carnaby smiled modestly. She murmured:

“I think I can manage that all right.”

II

“Well, my friend, what have you got for me? Have you learned anything about this Dr. Andersen?”

Chief Inspector Japp looked thoughtfully at Poirot. He said:

“I’ve looked up Dr. Andersen’s past history. He was a promising chemist but was expelled from some German University. He was always keen on the study of Oriental Myths and Religions and had written various articles on the subject — some of the articles sound pretty crazy to me.”

“So it is possible that he is a genuine fanatic?”

“It seems quite likely.”

“What about those names and addresses I gave to you?”

“Nothing suspicious there. Miss Everitte died of ulcerative colitis. Mrs. Lloyd died of pneumonia. Lady Western died of tuberculosis. Had suffered from it many years ago. Miss Lee died of typhoid somewhere in the north of England. There is nothing to connect these details with the Great Flock or with Andersen’s place down in Devonshire. Must be no more than coincidence.”

Hercule Poirot sighed. He said:

“And yet, mon cher, I have a feeling that this is the 10th Labour of Hercules, and that this Dr. Andersen is the Monster Geryon whom it is my mission to destroy.”

Hercule Poirot said:

“You must obey my instructions very carefully, Miss Carnaby. You understand?”

“Oh, yes, Mr. Poirot. You may rely on me.”

“You have spoken of your intention to benefit the sect?”

“Yes, Mr. Poirot, I spoke to the Master — excuse me, to Dr. Andersen, myself. I told him very emotionally what a wonderful revelation the whole thing had been — how I had come to mock and remained to believe. Really it seemed quite natural to say all these things. Dr. Andersen, you know, has a lot of magnetic charm.”

“So I think,” said Poirot dryly.

“His manner was most convincing. One really feels he doesn’t care about money at all. “Give what you can,” he said smiling. “It doesn’t matter. You are one of the flock just the same.” “Oh, Dr. Andersen,” I said, “I am not poor at all.” And then I explained that I had inherited a considerable amount of money from a distant relative and that I wanted to leave in my will all I had to the Brotherhood. I explained that I had no near relatives.”

“And he graciously accepted the gift?”

“He was very indifferent about it. Said it would be many long years before I died, that he could tell I had a long life of joy in front of me. He really speaks movingly.”

“So it seems.” Poirot’s tone was dry. He went on:

“You mentioned your health?”

“Yes, Mr. Poirot. I told him I had lung trouble, though why it is necessary for me to say that I am ill when my lungs are as sound as a bell* I really cannot see.”

“Be sure, it is necessary. You mentioned your friend?”

“Yes, I told him strictly confidentially that dear Emmeline, besides the fortune she had inherited from her husband, would inherit an even larger sum shortly from an aunt, who was deeply attached to her.”

“Good. That must keep Mrs. Clegg safe for some time.”

“Oh, Mr. Poirot, do you really think there is anything wrong?”

“That is what I am going to find out. Have you met a Mr. Cole at the Sanctuary?”

“There was a Mr. Cole there last time I went down to Devonshire. A most extraordinary man. He wears grass-green shorts and eats nothing but the cabbage. He is a very ardent believer.”

“Eh bien*, all progresses well — I make you my compliments on the work you have done — all is now set for the Autumn Festival.”

III

On the afternoon preceding the Festival Miss Carnaby met Hercule Poirot in a small restaurant in the sleepy little town of Newton Woodbury. Miss Carnaby was flushed and even more breathless than usual.

Poirot asked several questions to which she replied only “yes” or “no”.

Then he said:

“How many people will there be at the Autumn Festival?”

“I think a hundred and twenty. Emmeline will be there, of course, and Mr. Cole — really he has been very odd lately. He has visions. He described some of them to me — really most peculiar — I hope, I do hope, he is not insane. Then there will be quite a lot of new members — nearly twenty.”

“Good. You know what you have to do?”

There was a moment’s pause before Miss Carnaby said in a rather odd voice:

“I know what you told me, Mr. Poirot.”

“Very good.”

Then Amy Carnaby said clearly and distinctly:

“But I am not going to do it.”

Hercule Poirot stared at her. Miss Carnaby rose to her feet. Her voice was fast and hysterical.

“You sent me here to spy on Dr. Andersen. You suspected him of all sorts of things . But he is a wonderful man — a great Teacher. I believe in him heart and soul. And I am not going to do your spying work any more, Mr. Poirot. I am one of the Sheep of the Shepherd. And I’ll pay for my tea myself.”

With these words Miss Carnaby threw down one shilling and rushed out of the restaurant.

The waitress had to ask him twice before Poirot realized that she was giving him the bill. He met the curious stare of an unfriendly looking man at the next table, flushed, paid the bill and went out...

* * *

The Sheep were assembled for the traditional Festival.

The Festival took place in the white concrete building called by the Sheep the Sacred Fold. Here the devotees assembled just before the setting of the sun. They wore sheep-skin cloaks and sandals on their feet. Their arms were bare. In the centre of the Fold on a raised platform stood Dr. Andersen. The big man, golden-haired and blue-eyed, with his fair beard and handsome profile had never seemed more magnificent. He was dressed in a green robe and carried a shepherd’s crook of gold.

The ritual questions and answers had been chanted.

Then the Great Shepherd said:

“Are you prepared for the Sacrament?”

“We are.”

“Shut your eyes and hold out your right arm.”

The crowd obediently shut their eyes. Miss Carnaby like the rest held her arm out in front of her. The Great Shepherd, magnificent in his green robe, moved along the waiting lines... He stood by Miss Carnaby. His hands touched her arm...

“No, you won’t do it!”

Mr. Cole aided by another devotee grasped the hand of the Great Shepherd who was struggling to get himself free.

In rapid professional tones, the former Mr. Cole was saying:

“Dr. Andersen, I have here a warrant for your arrest.”

There were other figures now at the door of the Sheep Fold — blue uniformed figures.

Someone cried, “It’s the police. They’re taking the Master away. They’re taking the Master...”

Everyone was shocked — horrified... To them the Great Shepherd was a martyr, suffering as all great teachers, from the ignorance and persecution of the outside world.

Meanwhile Detective Inspector Cole was carefully packing up the syringe that had fallen from the Great Shepherd’s hand.

IV

“My brave colleague!”

Poirot shook Miss Carnaby warmly by the hand and introduced her to Chief Inspector Japp.

“First class work, Miss Carnaby,” said Chief Inspector Japp. “We couldn’t have done it without you.”

“Oh, dear!” Miss Carnaby was flattered. “It’s so kind of you to say so. And I’m afraid, that I’ve really enjoyed it all. The excitement, you know, and playing my part. I really felt I was one of those foolish women.”

“That’s where your success lay,” said Japp. “You were very genuine. Otherwise you wouldn’t have been hypnotized by that gentleman. He’s a pretty smart scoundrel.”

Miss Carnaby turned to Poirot.

“That was a terrible moment in the restaurant. I didn’t know what to do. It was such a shock. Just when we had been talking confidentially I saw in the glass that Lipscomb, who keeps the Lodge of the Sanctuary*, was sitting at the table behind me. I don’t know now if it was an accident or if he had actually followed me. I had to do the best I could in this situation and hope that you would understand.”

Poirot smiled.

“I did understand. There was only one person sitting near enough to overhear anything we said and as soon as he left the restaurant I followed him. He went straight back to the Sanctuary. So I understood that I could rely on you and that you would not let me down — but I was afraid because it increased the danger for you.”

“Was — was there really danger? What was there in the syringe?”

Japp said:

“Will you explain or shall I?”

Poirot said gravely:

“Mademoiselle, this Dr. Andersen devised a scheme of exploitation and murder — scientific murder. Most of his life has been spent in bacteriological research. Under a different name he has a chemical laboratory in Sheffield. There he makes cultures of various bacilli. It was his practice at the Festivals to inject into his followers a small but sufficient dose of Cannabis Indica — which is also known by the name of Hashish. It gives the sensation of great and pleasurable enjoyment. It bound his devotees to him. These were the Spiritual Joys that he promised them.”

“Most remarkable,” said Miss Carnaby. “Really a most remarkable sensation.”

Hercule Poirot nodded.

“That was the secret of his popularity — a dominating personality, the power of creating mass hysteria and the reactions produced by this drug. But he had a second aim in view.”

“Lonely women, in their gratitude and fervour, made wills leaving their money to the Cult. One by one, these women died. Without being too technical I will try to explain. It is possible to make intensified cultures of certain bacteria. The bacillus Coli Communis, for instance, is the cause of ulcerative colitis. Typhoid bacilli can be introduced into the system. So can Pneumococcus. You realize the cleverness of the man? These deaths would occur in different parts of the country, with different doctors attending them and without any risk of arousing suspicion. He had also, I think, cultivated a substance which had the power of delaying but intensifying the action of the chosen bacillus.”

“He’s a devil, if there ever was one,” said Chief Inspector Japp.

Poirot went on.

“By my orders, you told him that you suffered from tuberculosis. There was a tuberculin in the syringe when Cole arrested him. It is harmless to a healthy person, but stimulates any old tubercular lesion into activity. Since you were a healthy person it would not have harmed you, that is why I asked you to tell him you had a tubercular trouble. I was afraid that even now he might choose some other germ, but I respected your courage and I had to let you take the risk.”

“Oh, that’s all right,” said Miss Carnaby brightly. “I don’t mind taking risks. I’m only frightened of bulls in fields and things like that. But have you enough evidence to convict this dreadful person?”

Japp grinned.

“Plenty of evidence,” he said. “We’ve got his laboratory and his cultures and the whole equipment.”

Poirot said:

“It is possible, I think, that he has committed a long line of murders.”

Miss Carnaby sighed.

“I was thinking,” she said, “of a marvellous dream I had. I arranged the whole world so beautifully! No wars, no poverty, no diseases, no cruelty...”

“It must have been a fine dream,” said Japp enviously.

Miss Carnaby jumped up. She said:

“I must get home. Emily has been so anxious. And dear Augustus has been missing me terribly, I hear.”

Hercule Poirot said with a smile:

“He was afraid, perhaps, that like him, you were going to “die for Hercule Poirot”!

COMMENTS КОММЕНТАРИИ

* “The Flock of Geryon“ — “Стадо Гериона”. Миф о том, как Геракл победил великана Гериона и увел его стадо.

* cher — дорогой (фр.)

* The Flock of the Shepherd — Стадо Пастуха

* A Dr. Andersen — некий доктор Андерсен

* a mare’s nest — “бред сивой кобылы”, т.е. чепуха, выдумка
(досл. гнездо кобылы)

* as sound as a bell — в полном порядке

* Eh bien — Ну, что же (фр.)

* who keeps the Lodge of the Sanctuary — привратник Святилища

TASKS AND EXERCISES ЗАДАНИЯ И УПРАЖНЕНИЯ

1. Read the text, paying attention to the words and expressions below. Try to give a summary of the text with the help of them.

to be anxious about

беспокоиться о чем-либо

orthodox religion

православная религия

sects

секты (религиозные)

a ramp	мошенничество
suspicious circumstances	подозрительные обстоятельства
considerable danger	серьезная опасность
a promising chemist	подающий надежды химик
to obey the instructions	выполнять инструкции
to inherit a considerable amount of money	унаследовать большую сумму денег
the Autumn Festival	Осенний Фестиваль
to do the spying work	шпионить, следить
a Sacrament	причастие, таинство
a warrant for the arrest	ордер на арест
cultures of various bacilli	культуры различных бактерий
scientific murder	“научное” убийство

2. Choose only one correct variant from the ones given below.

- Amy Carnaby taught Augustus a new trick:
 - to bark for Hercule Poirot.
 - to sleep for Hercule Poirot.
 - to die for Hercule Poirot.
- Amy's friend Emmeline inherited a large sum of money from
 - her husband.
 - her aunt.
 - a distant relative of hers.
- The head of the “Flock” was called
 - the Great Geryon.
 - the Great Shepherd.
 - the Master of the Sheep.
- How did Amy become the member of the sect?
 - She told her friend Emmeline that she wanted to find Mr. Andersen out.
 - She pretended she had fallen a victim to Dr. Andersen's power.
 - She bribed the man who kept the Lodge of the Sanctuary.
- Mr. Andersen
 - had graduated from some German University.
 - had been expelled from some German University.
 - had never tried to get any higher education.
- Amy Carnaby told the Master she had
 - a problem with her stomach.
 - lung trouble.
 - heart disease.
- Mr. Cole wore grass green shorts and ate nothing but
 - cabbage.
 - lettuce.

- C. green peas.
8. What was in the hand of Dr. Andersen when they arrested him?
A. a shepherd's crook of gold.
B. a syringe.
C. a small knife.
9. To get ready for the sacrament the Sheep of the Flock had to
A. close the eyes and sit on the grass.
B. close the eyes and hold out the right arm.
C. close the eyes and pray.

3. Give full and detailed answers to the following questions.

1. Why did Amy Carnaby become anxious about her friend?
2. What can you say about her friend Emmeline?
3. What was Dr. Andersen keen at? How can you explain his choice?
4. What was the secret of Dr. Andersen's popularity?
5. Who was a Mr. Cole?
6. Why did Amy Carnaby decide to pay for the tea herself when she was meeting with Poirot?
7. How were the people dressed at the Autumn Festival?
8. Why did Poirot ask Amy to tell Dr. Andersen that she was ill?
9. What did Dr. Andersen inject into his followers?

4. Find the following words and expressions in the text.

Translate them. Be ready to reproduce the context they are used in.

to see design where there is only coincidence

to attribute to

a woman of great courage and determination

a genuine fanatic

to benefit

to come to mock and remain to believe

magnetic charm

to chant

in the gratitude and fervour

2. Ее все-таки исключили из Университета, и ей не помогло даже ее магнетическое очарование.

3. Поговаривали о том, что он составил это завещание в порыве благодарности и страсти, о чем впоследствии очень жалел.

4. Джейн скончалась при странных обстоятельствах, и у меня есть сильные сомнения в том, что это было не убийство.

5. Джека все считали лишь подающим надежды ученым, но он сам был о себе более высокого мнения.

6. Да, действительно, он был фанатик, но фанатик гениальный, поэтому даже когда он отказывался выполнять указания и поступал по-своему, все заканчивалось хорошо.

7. Кейт была одним из самых горячих сторонников и последователей этого движения, и поэтому особенно волновалась об успехе сегодняшнего мероприятия.

8. И только тогда, когда Тим обнаружил слезку, он понял, что Бекки не преувеличивала, и что ему действительно угрожает серьезная опасность.

9. И даже после того, когда ей сказали, что он замешан в мошенничестве, Тина не захотела его выдать — она обладала большим мужеством и самоотверженностью.

10. Она знала, что не может подвести его, и поэтому постаралась точно выполнить все инструкции.
-
-

8. Topics for discussion in class.

Discuss Miss Carnaby's words: "Religion can be a great help and consolation..."

9. Role playing.

Imagine that the case of Dr. Andersen is brought to the court and you all are the characters of this action. Some of you will be the accused, the other — the judge. There also will be, of course, a counsel for the prosecution, the counsel for the defence and the witnesses. Choose your part and think over your speech beforehand.

LESSON 5

УРОК 5

LABOUR XII THE CAPTURE OF CERBERUS*

ПОДВИГ 12 ПОХИЩЕНИЕ ЦЕРБЕРА

I

Hercule Poirot, swaying to and fro in the tube train, thought to himself that there were too many people in the world. Certainly there were too many people in the Underground world of London at this particular moment (6.30 p.m.) of the evening. Heat, noise, crowd, the pressure of hands, arms, bodies and shoulders! Humanity seen like this en masse* was not attractive. How seldom could one see a face sparkling with intelligence, how seldom a woman with elegance! All these young women who surrounded him — so alike, so devoid of charm, so lacking in genuine femininity! Ah! To see a femme du monde*, a woman with grace, a woman beautifully and extraordinarily dressed! Once there had been such women. But now — now...

The train stopped at a station. Like a great tidal wave the passengers flowed out on to the platform. Presently Poirot was again on an escalator being carried upwards towards the surface of the earth.

Suddenly a voice cried his name. Startled, he raised his eyes. On the opposite escalator, the one descending, his unbelieving eyes saw a vision from the past. A mysteriously looking woman, her wonderful red hair crowned with a small straw hat decorated with bright coloured little birds. Exotic furs covered her shoulders.

"It is he!" she screamed. "But it is! Mon cher Hercule Poirot! We must meet again! I insist!"

But Fate itself is not more inexorable than two escalators moving in opposite directions. Steadily, Hercule Poirot was borne upwards, and the Countess Vera Rossakoff was borne downwards.

Leaning over the balustrade, Poirot cried despairingly:

"Chère Madam, where can I find you?"

Her reply came to him faintly from the depths.

"In Hell..."

"In Hell ... ," repeated Hercule Poirot.

What did the Countess mean? No doubt that travelling in the bowels of the earth at the rush hour was Hell. If that had been the Countess's meaning, he fully agreed with her...

Resolutely Poirot crossed over, joined the descending crowd and was borne into the depths. At the foot of the escalator no sigh of the Countess. Poirot visited each platform in turn, but nowhere did he find that flamboyant Russian figure, the Countess Vera Rossakoff. He came home in a mood of pleasant excitement. Though it was about twenty years since he had seen her last the magic fascination of the Countess was still held. The little bourgeois was still thrilled by the aristocrat. The memory of the adroit way she stole jewellery and the magnificent aplomb with which she had admitted the fact roused the old admiration. A woman in a thousand — in a million! And he had met her again — and lost her!

"In Hell," she had said. What an intriguing, what an unpredictable woman! A lesser woman might have shouted "The Ritz" or "Claridge's". But Vera Rossakoff had cried poignantly and enigmatically : "Hell!"

Poirot sighed. But he was not defeated. He took the simplest and most straightforward course on the following morning, he asked his secretary, Miss Lemon.

Miss Lemon was unbelievably ugly and incredibly efficient. She always knew all the answers.

"Miss Lemon, may I ask you a question?"

"Of course, Mr. Poirot," Miss Lemon took her fingers off the typewriter keys and waited attentively.

"If a friend asked you to meet her — or him — in Hell, what would you do?"

Miss Lemon, as usual, did not pause.

"It would be advisable, I think, to ring up for a table," she said.

Hercule Poirot stared at her in amazement.

“You — would — ring — up — for — a — table?”

Miss Lemon nodded and drew the telephone towards her.

“14578? Is that Hell? Will you please reserve a table for two?”

Mr. Hercule Poirot. Eleven o'clock.”

She replaced the receiver and returned to her typewriter. But Hercule Poirot required explanations.

“What is it, then, this Hell?” he demanded.

Miss Lemon looked slightly surprised.

“Oh, didn't you know, Mr. Poirot? It's a night club — quite new and very popular at present — run by some Russian woman, I believe.” And she broke into efficient typing.

II

At eleven that evening Hercule Poirot passed through a doorway over which a Neon sign showed one letter at a time. A gentleman in red tails took his coat and by gesture directed him to the stairs leading downwards. On each step a phrase was written.

“The good intentions that pave the way to Hell,” murmured Poirot descending the stairs. On his left in a kind of marble grotto sat the largest, the ugliest and the blackest dog Poirot had ever seen. It sat up very straight and immovable. It was, he thought (and hoped), not real. But at that moment the dog turned its terrible head and growled. It was a horrifying sound.

And then Poirot noticed a decorative basket with small round dog biscuits. They were labelled “A sop for Cerberus!”

It was on them that the dog's eyes were fixed. Hercule Poirot picked up a biscuit and tossed it towards the great hound.

A cavernous red mouth opened, then the powerful jaws closed again. Cerberus had accepted his sop! Poirot moved on through an open doorway.

The room was not a big one. There were little tables in the corners and a space of dancing floor in the middle. It was lighted with small red lamps. There were frescoes on the wall, and at the far end was a vast grill at which cooked chefs wearing tails and horns. The jazz band, dressed as devils, played hot music.

At this moment Countess Vera Rossakoff in red evening dress came up to him with outstretched hands.

“Ah, you have come! My dear — my very dear friend! What a joy to see you again! After so many years! You have not changed — not at the least.”

“Nor you, chère amie*,” Poirot exclaimed, bowing over her hand.

She drew Poirot to a table at which two other people were sitting.

“My friend, my celebrated friend, Mr. Poirot,” she announced. “He who is the terror of evildoers. I was once afraid of him myself, but now I lead a life of the most virtuous dullness. Is it not so?”

The tall thin elderly man to whom she spoke said, “Never say dull, Countess.”

“The Professor Liskeard,” the Countess announced. “He who knows everything about the past and who gave me the valuable advice for the decorations here. And this is my little Alice.”

Poirot bowed to the second occupant of the table, a severe-looking girl in a check coat and skirt with large pockets.

“She is very, very clever,” said Countess Rossakoff. “She has a degree and she is a psychologist and she knows all the reasons why lunatics are lunatics.”

The girl called Alice smiled. She asked the Professor if he would like to dance. They got up and danced. They didn’t dance well.

The Countess sighed. Following out a thought of her own, she murmured, “And yet she is not really bad-looking.”

“She doesn’t make the most of herself,” said Poirot critically.

“Frankly,” cried the Countess, “I cannot understand the young people of nowadays. They do not try any more to please. Always, in my youth, I tried — the colours that suited me, the hair, perhaps, a more interesting shade... And look, I ask you, how dull these young people have made the world! It is all regulations and prohibitions! Not so when I was young.”

“Speaking of young people, how is your son, Madame?”

The Countess’s face lit up with pride.

“The beloved angel! So big now, such shoulders, so handsome! He is in America. He builds there — bridges, banks, hotels, department stores, railways, anything the Americans want. And we adore each other! And so for his sake I adore the little Alice. Yes, they are engaged. They meet on a plane or a train, and they fall in love, all in the middle of talking about the welfare of the workers. And when she comes to London she comes to see me and I take her to my heart... And what do you think, cher ami, of all this that I have imagined here?”

“It is very well imagined,” said Poirot, looking round him. “It is chic*!”

“We have all kinds of visitors here,” said the Countess. “It should be so, isn’t it? The gates of Hell are open to all.”

“Except, possibly, to the poor?” Poirot suggested.

The Countess laughed. “Are we not told that it is difficult for a rich man to enter the Kingdom of Heavens*? Naturally, then, he should have priority in Hell.”

The Professor and Alice were returning to the table. The Countess got up.

“I must speak to Aristide.”

She exchanged some words with the head waiter, dressed as Mephistopheles, then went round from table to table, speaking to the guests.

Poirot followed her. Suddenly he saw something that immediately attracted his attention. At a table on the opposite side of the hall sat a fair-haired young man. He wore evening dress, his whole behaviour was that of one who lives a life of ease and pleasure. Any one seeing him might have murmured: “The idle rich!” Nevertheless Poirot knew very well that the young man was neither rich nor idle. He was, in fact, Detective Inspector Charles Stevens, and it seemed probable to Poirot that Detective Inspector Stevens was here on business...

III

On the following morning Poirot paid a visit to Scotland Yard to his old friend Chief Inspector Japp.

“You want to know all about this place Hell? Well, on the surface it’s just another of these fashionable bars. They must be making a lot of money, though, of course, the expenses are pretty high. There’s a Russian woman running it, calls herself the Countess Something or other — ...”

“I am acquainted with Countess Rossakoff,” said Poirot coldly. “We are old friends.”

“But she’s just a dummy,” Japp went on. “She didn’t put up the money. It might be the head waiter, Aristide Papopolous — he’s got an interest in it — but we don’t believe it’s really his club either. In fact, we don’t know whose club it is.”

“And Inspector Stevens goes there to find out?”

“Oh, you saw Inspector Stevens, didn’t you? Lucky young boy getting a job like that at the taxpayers’ expense!”

“What do you suspect there is to find out?”

“Dope. Drug racket* on a large scale. And the dope’s being paid for not in money, but in precious stones.”

“You think the exchange — jewels for dope — takes place in Hell?”

“Yes. And we want to know who’s supplying the dope and where it’s coming from.”

“And so far you have no idea?”

“I think it’s the Russian woman — but we’ve no evidence. A few weeks ago we raided the club, searched everybody. Result — no stones, no dope!”

“A fiasco, in fact?”

Japp sighed. “You’re telling me! We could get in a real jam, but luckily while we searched the place we got Peverel — you know that murderer. One of our sergeants recognized him from his photos. So all’s well that ends well — terrific advertisement for the club — it’s been more packed than ever since!”

Poirot said:

“But it does not advance the dope inquiry. There is, perhaps, a hiding place somewhere.”

“Must be. But we couldn’t find it. Searched the place twice. And between you and me, there’s been unofficial search as well. But it was not a success. Our ‘unofficial’ man nearly got torn to pieces by that horrible dog!”

“Aha, Cerberus!”

“Yes, silly name for a dog, isn’t it?”

“Cerberus,” murmured Poirot thoughtfully.

“Suppose you try your hand at it, Poirot,” suggested Japp. “It is a pretty interesting problem and worth doing. I hate the drug racket, it destroys people’s body and soul. That really is Hell, if you like.”

Poirot murmured thoughtfully:

“Do you know what the 12th Labour of Hercules was? ”

“No idea.”

“The Capture of Cerberus. It is appropriate, is it not?”

IV

“I wish to speak to you with the utmost seriousness,” said Poirot.

The hour was early, the Club as yet nearly empty. The Countess and Poirot sat at a small table near the doorway.

“But I do not feel serious,” she protested. “My little Alice, she is always serious and, *entre nous**, I find it very boring.”

“I have for you much affection,” continued Poirot steadily. “And I do not want to see you in what is called the jam.”

“But it is absurd what you say there! I am on top of the world!”

“You own this place?”

“Certainly.”

“But you have a partner?”

“Who told you that?” asked the Countess sharply.

“Is your partner Paul Varesco?”

“Oh! Paul Varesco! What an idea!”

“He has a bad — a criminal past. Do you realize that this place is often visited by criminals?”

The Countess burst out laughing. “Naturally I realize! Do you not see that this is half the attraction of the place? Young people get tired of seeing their own kind round them in the West End. They come here, where they see the criminal, the thief, the blackmailer, perhaps, even, the murderer — the man who will be in the Sunday papers next week! That is so exciting — they think they are seeing life! So does the business man who all the week sells stockings and corsets. What a change from his respectable life and his

respectable friends! And then, another thrill — there at a table, stroking his moustache, is the Inspector from Scotland Yard.”

“So you knew that?” said Poirot softly.

Her eyes met his and she smiled.

“Mon cher ami, I am not so simple as you seem to suppose.”

“Do you also deal in drugs here?”

“Oh, no!” the Countess said sharply. “That would be abominable.”

Poirot looked at her for a moment or two, then he sighed.

“I believe you,” he said. “But in that case it is all the more necessary that you tell me who really owns this place.”

“Do you know, mon ami, I indeed find you too curious? Is he not too curious, Dou dou?”

Vera Rossakoff rose, crossed to the marble niche and flung her arms round the dog’s neck.

“It’s my little Dou dou. See how gentle he can be,” she exclaimed. “For me, for Alice, for his friends — they can do what they like! But I can just give him the word and then... I can assure you he would tear a — police inspector, for instance — into small pieces. Yes, into small pieces!”

She burst out laughing.

“I would have only to say the word —...”

Poirot interrupted quickly. He mistrusted the Countess’s sense of humour. Inspector Stevens might be in real danger.

V

“Thursday night, old man,” said Japp. “That’s when we’ll raid the place. We’ve solved the problem, I think. There’s another way out of that Club — and we’ve found it!”

“Where?”

“Behind the grill. Part of it swings round. We’ve been examining the house behind the Club — and that’s how we detected the trick.”

“And you propose to do — what?”

“Let it go according to plan — the police appear, the lights go out — and some of us are waiting on the other side of that secret door to see who comes through. This time we’ll get them!”

“You permit,” said Poirot, “that I too make one or two little arrangements?”

* * *

Sitting at his usual table at the entrance on Thursday night Poirot studied his surroundings. As usual Hell was going with a swing!*

The Countess was even more flamboyantly made up than usual, if that was possible. She was being very Russian tonight, clapping her hands and screaming with laughter. Paul Varesco had arrived. He looked vicious and attractive. After a short talk with a stout, middle-aged woman plastered with diamonds, he leaned over Alice Cunningham who was sitting at a table busily writing in a little notebook and asked her to dance.

Professor Liskeard came up and sat down by Poirot.

“Are you interested in criminals, Mr. Poirot? You should study the criminal code of Hammurabi, 1800 B. C. Most interesting. The man who is caught stealing during a fire shall be thrown into the fire.”

He stared ahead of him towards the electric grill.

“And there are older laws. If a wife hates her husband and says to him ‘You’re not my husband’, they shall throw her into the river. Cheaper and easier than divorce. But if a husband says that to his wife he only has to pay her a certain measure of silver. Nobody throws him in the river.”

“The same old story,” said Alice Cunningham. “One law for the man and one for the woman.”

Her words were drowned in a sudden chorus. The word “Police” was heard — women rose to their feet, there was a babel of sounds. The lights went out and so did the electric grill.

When the lights went on again Hercule Poirot was halfway up the wide steps. The police officers by the door saluted him, and he passed out into the street and went to the corner. Just round the corner, pressed against the wall was a small man with a red nose and a strong odour of wine. He spoke in an anxious, hoarse whisper.

“I’m ‘ere, guv’nor, time for me to do my stuff?”

“Yes, go on. You’re sure you can accomplish what you have to do? The animal in question is large and fierce.”

“ ‘e won’t be fierce to me,” said the little man confidently. “Not with what I’ve got ‘ere. Any dog’ll follow me to Hell for it!”

“In this case,” murmured Hercule Poirot, “he has to follow you out of Hell.”

VI

Early in the morning the telephone rang. Poirot picked up the receiver. Japp’s voice said:

“You’ve asked me to ring you.”

“Yes, indeed. What’s the news?”

“No dope — we got the emeralds.”

“Where?”

“In Professor Liskeard’s pocket.”

“Professor Liskeard?”

“Surprises you, too? Frankly I don’t know what to think! He looked as astonished as a baby, stared at them, said he hadn’t the fanciest idea how they got in his pocket, and I believe he was speaking the truth! Varesco could have put them into his pocket when the lights went out. I’m beginning to think we’re wrong about the whole thing — there never has been any dope in that Club.”

“Oh, yes, there has, my friend, it was there tonight. Tell me, did no one come out through your secret way?”

“Yes, Prince Henry of Scandenberg — he only arrived in England yesterday. Vitamian Evans, the Cabinet Minister (devil of a job being a Minister you have to be so careful), Lady Beatrice Viner was the last — she’s getting married the day after tomorrow to the young Duke of Leominster. I don’t believe any of them were mixed up in this.”

“You believe rightly. Nevertheless, the dope was in the Club, and someone took it out of the Club.”

“Who did?”

“I did, mon ami,” said Poirot softly.

He replaced the receiver, cutting off Japp’s exclamations as at this moment a bell rang. He went and opened the front door. The Countess Rossakoff sailed in.

“You see, I have come as you told me to do in your note. There is, I think, a policeman behind me, but he can stay in the street. And now, my friend, what is it?”

“Why did you put these emeralds in Professor Liskeard’s pocket?” asked Poirot.

The Countess’s eyes opened wide.

“Naturally, it was in your pocket I meant to put the emeralds.”

“Oh, in my pocket?”

“Certainly, I crossed hurriedly to the table where you usually sit — but the lights are out and I suppose by mistake I put them in the Professor’s pocket.”

“And why did you wish to put stolen emeralds in my pocket?”

“But, dear friend, consider! The police arrive, the lights go out and a hand takes my bag off the table. I snatch it back, but I feel through the velvet something hard inside. I know by touch it is jewels and I understand at once who has put them there!”

“Oh, you do?”

“Of course, I do! It is that lizard, that monster, that double-faced pig’s son, Paul Varesco.”

“The man who is your partner in Hell?”

“Yes, yes, it is he who owns the place, who puts up the money. Until now I didn’t want to betray him. But now that he tries to embroil me with the police — ah! now I will spit his name out — yes, spit it out!”

“Calm down,” said Poirot, “and come with me into the next room.”

He opened the door. It was a small room and seemed for a moment to be completely filled with Cerberus. There was also the small and odoriferous man.”

“Dou dou!” screamed the Countess. “My angel Dou dou!”

Cerberus beat the floor with his tail — but he didn’t move.

“Let me introduce you to Mr. William Higgs,” said Poirot. “A master in his profession. During the brouhaha tonight he induced Cerberus to follow him out of Hell.”

“You induced him?” the Countess said incredulously to the small rat-like figure. “But how? How?”

Mr. Higgs dropped his eyes. “‘Ardly like to say before a lady. But there are things no dog will resist, lady. ‘e will follow me anywhere if I want ‘im to. Of course, it won’t work the same way with bitches — no, that’s different, that is.”

The Countess turned up to Poirot.

“But why? Why?”

Poirot said slowly:

“A specially trained dog will carry an article in his mouth until he is commanded to spit it out. He will carry it if necessary for hours. Will you now tell your dog to drop what he holds?”

Vera Rossakoff stared, turned and uttered two words.

The great jaws of Cerberus opened. Poirot stepped forward. He picked up a small package wrapped in pink rubber. He unwrapped it. Inside it was a packet of white powder.

“What is it?” the Countess demanded sharply.

Poirot said softly:

“Cocaine. Such a small quantity but enough to be worth thousands of pounds to those who want to pay for it. Enough to bring ruin and misery to several hundred people...”

She caught her breath. She cried out:

“And you think that I — but it is not so! I swear to you it is not so! In the past I have amused myself with the jewels. But drugs — no! I had no idea — no faintest idea that my so charming, so delightful little Hell was being used for that purpose! Believe me, my friend,” implored the Countess.

“But, of course, I believe you! Have I not taken time and trouble to convict the real organizer of the dope racket. For I do not like to see my friends framed — for it was you who were intended to take the rap if things went wrong. It was in your handbag the emeralds would have been found and if any one had been clever enough (like me) to suspect a hiding place in the mouth of the dog — well, he is your dog, is he not? Even if he obeyed Alice’s orders, too. Yes, you may open your eyes! From the first I didn’t like that young lady with her scientific jargon and her coat and skirt with the big

pockets. Yes, pockets. Pockets in which she can carry drugs and take away jewels — a little exchange easily made while she is dancing with her accomplice. No one suspects the earnest, the scientific psychologist with a medical degree and spectacles. She thinks she can deceive Hercule Poirot, too. Eh bien, I am ready for her. The lights go off. Quickly I rise from my table and go to stand by Cerberus. In the darkness I hear her come. She opens his mouth and puts in the package, and I — carefully, unfelt by her, cut off a little piece from her skirt.”

With these words he produced a piece of material.

“You see — the identical checked tweed — and I will give it to Japp to fit it back where it belongs — and make the arrest — and say how clever once more has been Scotland Yard.”

The Countess Rossakoff stared at him in amazement.

“But my Niki — my Niki. This will be terrible for him — ...” She paused. “Or do you think not?”

“There are a lot of other girls in America,” said Hercule Poirot.

“Guv’nor,” said Mr. Higgs anxiously, “what do you want me to do — what about this Hell Hound?”

“If I remember rightly,” said Hercule Poirot, “Cerberus returned to Hell.”

He paused.

“From the Nemean Lion to the Capture of Cerberus,” he murmured. “It is complete.”

COMMENTS КОММЕНТАРИИ

- * “The Capture of Cerberus” — “Похищение Цербера”. Миф о том, как Геракл спустился в подземное царство Аида и привел к царю Эфрисфею стража подземного царства, страшного пса Цербера.
- * en masse — в массе (фр.)
- * femme du monde — светская дама (фр.)
- * Nor you, chère amie — Вы тоже, дорогой друг (фр.)
- * chic — шикарно, роскошно (фр.)
- * Kingdom of Heavens — царство небесное
- * drug racket — рэкет с целью получения наркотиков
- * entre nous — между нами (фр.)

TASKS AND EXERCISES

ЗАДАНИЯ И УПРАЖНЕНИЯ

1. Read the text, paying attention to the words and expressions below. Try to give a summary of the text with the help of them.

a tube train	поезд в метро
a vision from the past	видение из прошлого
flamboyant	яркий, бросающийся в глаза, вычурный
to ring up for a table	заказать столик
a sop	кусочек, подачка
Countess	графиня
to fall in love	влюбиться
an idle rich	богатый бездельник
a dummy	манекен, подставное лицо
to raid	устраивать облаву
to get torn to pieces	быть разорванным на куски
to deal in drugs	быть связанным с наркотиками
to detect the trick	обнаружить, разгадать трюк
to make one or two little arrangements	сделать одно-два небольших приготовления
“Time for me to do my stuff”	“Мне пора делать мое дело”
as astonished as a baby	удивлен как ребенок
by mistake	по ошибке
to embroil smb. with ...	поссорить кого-либо с ...
to carry an article in the mouth	держат предмет во рту

2. Choose only one correct variant from the ones given below.

1. When the Countess suggested to Poirot that they should meet in Hell, he thought
 - A. she meant a modern restaurant.
 - B. she meant the Underground.
 - C. she meant the real Hell.
2. What was on each step of the stairs to the “Hell”?
 - A. a phrase.
 - B. sops for Cerberus.
 - C. cigarettes and bottles with alcohol.
3. Alice was
 - A. a doctor.
 - B. a psychologist.
 - C. a teacher.
4. The actual owner of the club was

- A. Alice.
 - B. the head waiter Aristide.
 - C. Paul Varesco.
5. The police decided that they would at last find the drug because
 - A. Hercule Poirot helped them.
 - B. Inspector Stevens found the place where they hid the jewels.
 - C. they found another way out of the club.
 6. Professor Liskeard advised Poirot to read
 - A. some ancient criminal code.
 - B. some modern detective novel.
 - C. some psychological book.
 7. How did they take Cerberus out of the club?
 - A. Countess Rossakoff made him go.
 - B. The police took him.
 - C. A Mr. Higgs induced Cerberus to follow him out of the Hell.

3. Give full and detailed answers to the following questions.

1. Why did Hercule Poirot decide that there were too many people in the world?
2. Miss Lemon was an excellent secretary, wasn't she?
3. How did Poirot come to know Countess Rossakoff?
4. What do you know about the son of the Countess?
5. Why, according to the words of Vera Rossakoff, do the rich have a priority in Hell? Do you agree with her?
6. How was the club involved in the drug racket?
7. What do you think attracted people to the "Hell"?
8. How did it happen that the emeralds were found in the Professor Liskeard's pocket?
9. What evidence did Poirot have against Alice?

4. Find the following words and expressions in the text.

Translate them. Be ready to reproduce the context they are used in.
the terror of evildoers

regulations and prohibitions

search

on top of the world

to go with a swing

vicious and attractive

to have not the faintest idea

to bring ruin and misery

an accomplice

to take the rap

взад и вперед

спускаться

уметь себя подать

вкладывать деньги

за счет налогоплательщиков

попробовать свои силы

быть замешанным во что-либо

разноголосый шум

5. Make a literary translation

- a) of the extract, beginning with the words “Hercule Poirot, swaying to and fro...” and ending with the words “But now — now.”

6. Try to remember everything you have learned about Hercule Poirot. Give him full and detailed characteristics. Describe his way of life, his habits, his manner of investigating. Prove everything you say.

7. Translate the following sentences into English, using the vocabulary of the text.

1. С тех пор как она поняла, что влюбилась в Джека, она прилагала все усилия к тому, чтобы поссорить его с невестой.

2. За ее крикливой одеждой и вызывающей манерой поведения скрывалось не желание показать себя богатой бездельницей, а желание попробовать свои силы в новом мире взрослых.

3. Поговаривали о том, что он вложил деньги в это казино; также считалось, что он связан с наркотиками и замешан в торговлю оружием.

4. Она была просто подставным лицом и понятия не имела о том, что творилось за ее спиной, но именно на нее собирались возложить всю вину.

5. Тед знал о готовящейся облаве заранее и сделал все необходимые приготовления, и поэтому, когда поднялся шум и выключился свет, он очень тихо и легко исчез.

6. Джек был удивлен как ребенок, когда понял, что Кейт попала сюда по ошибке, и что она никак не связана ни с недавним обыском, ни с соучастниками Мэг.

7. Мэри знала, что Тим заказал столик в одном из самых дорогих и модных ночных клубов, и поэтому хотела выглядеть привлекательной, но вместе с тем и немного порочной.

8. Role playing.

Imagine that Hercule Poirot has at last decided to retire. And he is giving a big party on the occasion. A lot of guests have come. Among them there are people whom he helped, whose lives he had saved and people, whose lives changed because of him. Then there are some journalists and his secretary. Of course, everyone is talking about Hercule Poirot and his talent. And Hercule himself delivers a speech.

Choose your part and think it over beforehand.

ПРАКТИЧЕСКИЙ КУРС ОСНОВНОГО ИНОСТРАННОГО ЯЗЫКА АНГЛИЙСКИЙ ЯЗЫК. ДОМАШНЕЕ ЧТЕНИЕ ЮНИТА 3

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