



Learn English Through Stories

M Series

M4

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The House on the Hill — Part 1

By Elizabeth Laird

It was a beautiful summer evening. Paul was happy. No more exams. College was finished. Now he needed a job. He wanted to be a writer and work for a newspaper. But first he needed a rest.

It was hot in the house. There was no wind.

‘I’ll go for a walk,’ said Paul to himself. ‘I’ll go down to the river.’

Paul lived in a small town and he was soon outside in the country. He walked near the river and watched the water birds.

Suddenly he saw the girl. She was standing alone, looking into the water. She was young, and very beautiful. She had long dark hair, and she was wearing a pretty white dress.

Paul went up to her.



‘Hello,’ he said. ‘What’s your name?’

‘I’m Maria,” she said, and she smiled at him.

Paul and Maria talked for a long time. The sun went down. It was nearly dark.

‘I must go home,’ said Maria. ‘Where do you live?’ asked Paul.

‘In the big white house on the hill,’ said Maria. ‘Where do you live?’

‘In the little brown house near the market,’ said Paul.

They laughed. But Paul was sad. The house on the hill was big and important. Maria was rich, and he was poor. And Paul was in love.

After that, Paul and Maria often met near the river. Maria always wore beautiful clothes. She always looked lovely. Paul thought about Maria all day and every day.

One evening, Paul said, 'Listen, Maria, I've written a poem about you.'

He took a piece of paper from his pocket and read the poem.

I met her in the evening,

By the riverside.

Her dress was creamy white

And her hair with ribbon tied.

She turned and smiled at me,

And I asked her for her name.

Though I am young and poor.

My love will stay the same.



'You are wonderful, Paul,' said Maria. 'I love your poem.'

Paul took Maria's hand. He looked into her eyes. 'I love you, Maria,' he said, 'Do you love me?'

She smiled. 'Yes, of course I love you,' she said. She stood up. 'I must go home now.'

Paul was very happy.

She loves me! Maria loves me, he thought.

Paul went home. The little brown house was small and poor. But it was always clean and tidy. Paul lived alone with his mother. His father was dead.

That evening, his mother watched him.

'What's happened, Paul?' she asked. 'Why are you so happy?'

'It's nothing, Mother,' said Paul.

His mother smiled. He's in love, she thought.



The next day, Paul and Maria met again by the river. Maria looked sad, but Paul did not notice. He took her hand.

'Maria,' he said, 'I am poor now, but one day I am going to be a famous writer.'
Maria said nothing.

'Will you marry me, Maria? Say yes. We will be so happy, and...' he stopped.

Maria looked at him for a moment. There were tears in her eyes. Slowly, she shook her head. Then she turned and ran away.



'Maria!' shouted Paul. But Maria had gone. Paul went home slowly. He did not understand Maria.

What is wrong? he thought. She loves me, doesn't she?

His mother was waiting for him. She saw his face. Poor boy, she thought, 'The girl doesn't love him.'

Paul and his mother ate their supper in silence. Suddenly somebody knocked on the door. Paul opened it, A man in a servant's uniform stood outside.

'I'm from the house on the hill,' he said, 'My mistress wants to see Paul.'

'That's me,' said Paul.

'Can you come with me now?' said the servant. 'Yes,' said Paul. He was excited.

Perhaps Maria has changed her mind, he thought Perhaps she does want to marry me.



Paul's mother stood at the door of the house. She watched Paul and the servant.

The house on the hill, she said to herself. I know those people. A rich old woman, and her beautiful daughter. My poor son!

It was not far to the house on the hill. The servant took Paul up the wide steps and into the house. Paul was excited and his heart was beating fast.

Everything was rich and grand. There were beautiful carpets, pictures and mirrors.

Paul saw himself in a mirror. He looked terrible. This place was so rich, and he looked so poor.

The servant opened a door. Paul went inside. An old lady was sitting in a big chair. Maria stood behind her. The old woman was ugly. Her eyes were small and cold, and her mouth was thin and hard. Her old hands were covered with big rings. She looked proud and angry.

Paul looked at the old woman, then at Maria. 'What an ugly old woman,' he thought. 'Is she Maria's mother?'

'So you want to marry' my daughter?' the old woman said. Her voice was hard.

Paul looked at her bravely. 'Yes,' he said. 'I love Maria and I want to marry her.'

The old woman laughed.

'You! A poor student! No money, no father, nothing! My daughter will never marry you.'

Paul said nothing. He looked at Maria. She did not look at him.

'I am poor now,' he said. 'But one day I'll be a famous writer.'

The old woman laughed again. 'No,' she said. 'My daughter is not for you. She is going to be married soon. You will never see her again.'



The old woman got up and left the room.

Maria and Paul were alone. Paul looked at Maria, but she did not look at him. She stood still and did not say anything.

Paul went up to her and put his arm round her. Maria moved away from him.

'I'm sorry, Paul,' said Maria. 'My mother is right. I can't marry you. I don't want to be poor. I want money, and clothes, and a big car.'

'But you love me, Maria,' said Paul. 'And I love you.' He did not understand her. He was angry.

'Yes, I love you, Paul,' said Maria. 'But love isn't enough.' She looked at him. Her face was sad.

'I'm getting married in two weeks,' she said. 'Goodbye, Paul. I'm sorry.'



Paul left the her house and ran down the hill to the river. He sat there for a long time.

'Maria loves me. I know she loves me,' he thought. 'But she is marrying another man. She is marrying him for money. It's her mother! Maria is afraid of that ugly old woman! Oh Maria, Maria, what shall I do?'

After a long time, Paul went home. There was a light in the window of the little house. The door was open. His mother was waiting for him. She looked at his face, then she put her arms round him.

'They are bad people, my son,' she said. 'You must forget her.'



2. Grammar Page

Verb Patterns: Part 3

Pattern 7: Subject + **verb** + **preposition** + prepositional object

1. We **are waiting for** -- Suresh.
2. He **agreed to** -- our proposal.
3. You **can't count on** -- his help.
4. These books **belong to** -- me.
5. His uncle **met with** -- an accident.
6. She **complained of** -- his rudeness.
7. He **failed in** his attempt.

Pattern 8: Subject + **verb** + **to-infinitive** (as object of the verb)

1. She **wants to go**.
2. I **forgot to post** the letter.
3. He **fears to speak** in public.
4. They **intend to postpone** the trip.
5. Ramesh **proposes to go** into business.
6. We **would like to visit** the museum.
7. I **hoped to get** a first class.
8. He **decided not to go** there.

The commonest verbs used in this pattern are: like, love, prefer, begin, start, agree, try, attempt, choose, continue, intend, propose, desire, wish, want, hate, dislike, hope, expect, promise, refuse, fear, remember, forget, offer, learn.