



Learn English Through Stories.

B Series

B31

**Adapted and modified by
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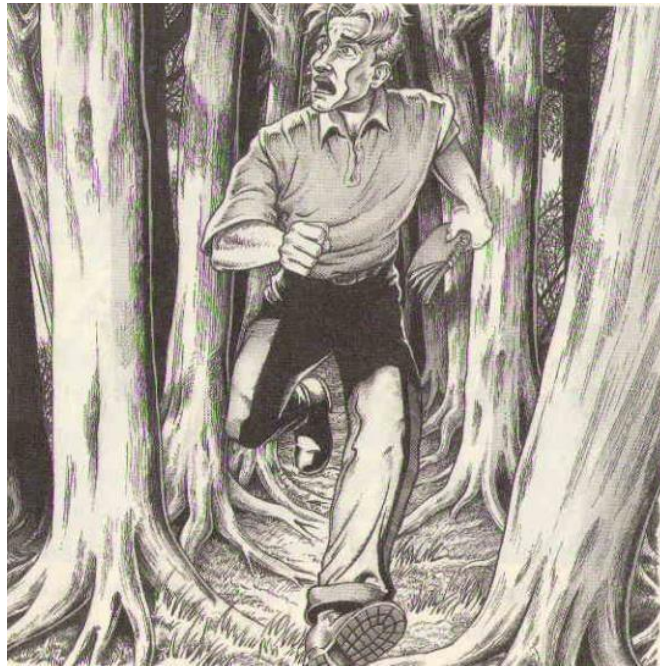
The next day was Thursday. Nick stayed in his hotel room and wrote about mountains all morning. Then he drove to Stanley Park in the afternoon. He sat and read a book for an hour, then he went for a walk under the tall trees.

There was nobody here. It was quiet, and he could walk and think. He thought about Meg Hutson, and about the man with white hair. Did he know Meg Hutson?

Did she know him? He remembered Meg Hutson's last words. *Drive carefully, Mr Hollywood.*

Why did she say that? Why did she call him Mr Hollywood? He didn't understand any of it.

Suddenly, he heard a noise.



Nick turned and ran

He stopped. 'That was a gun!' he thought. 'There's somebody in the trees with a gun! There it is again!'

Then something hit the tree over his head. 'Somebody's shooting at me!' Nick

thought. He turned and ran.

And somebody began to run after him.

Nick ran through the trees. There was no sun in here, and it was half-dark. And there were no people. Nobody to help him.

‘I must get to my car,’ Nick thought. ‘Find some people . . . the police . . .’ He ran on.

He could still hear the gunman behind him, so he ran faster. After three or four minutes, he stopped and listened.

Nothing. It was all quiet.

Nick was afraid. ‘What’s happening?’ he thought. ‘Why is somebody shooting at me? First a hand pushes me in front of a car, and now somebody’s shooting at me!’

He waited another second or two, then walked quickly back to his car. He was very careful. He looked and listened all the time. But nobody came out of the trees, and nobody shot at him. Then he saw people — women with young children, some boys with a football, two men with a dog. He began to feel better. ‘Nobody can shoot me now,’ he thought. ‘Not with all these people here.’

Ten minutes later, he was back at his car.

There was a letter on the window. Nick read it. It said: *I’m going to kill you, Mr Hollywood.*

Nick drove to the nearest police station. He waited for half an hour, then a tired young policeman took him into a small room. Nick told his story, and the policeman wrote it all down.

‘So what are you going to do?’ asked Nick.

‘Nothing,’ said the policeman.

‘Nothing!’ said Nick. ‘But somebody shot at me, and—’ ‘Mr Lortz,’ the policeman said tiredly. ‘How many people are there in this town with guns?’

‘I don’t know,’ said Nick. ‘But. . .’

‘You didn’t see the gunman. Was it a man, a boy, a woman? Colour of eyes? Long hair, short hair? You don’t know, because you didn’t see anybody. Maybe it was an old girlfriend. Maybe somebody doesn’t like your travel books, Mr

Lortz.'

'But what about the man with white hair in Whistler?' said Nick. 'The girl, Meg Hutson, called me Mr Hollywood in the cafe, and this man heard her. And now I get a letter to Mr Hollywood on *my* car. Who *is* this Mr Hollywood?'

'We all want answers to our questions, Mr Lortz,' the policeman said, 'but we don't always get them.'

Questions. But no answers.

Nick walked out of the police station and drove to his hotel. He was angry, and afraid.

'How did the man with white hair find me in Vancouver?' he thought. 'Did he follow me from Whistler? Is he following me now? Maybe he's staying at my hotel, too. In the next room. With his gun.'

Chapter Four: The man with white hair

Nick stopped his car in front of the hotel. He looked carefully before he got out, but there was nobody with white hair near the hotel.

He half-ran through the hotel doors and went to the desk inside.

'I'm looking for a man with very short white hair,' he said to the woman behind the desk. 'He's staying here, I think. He's about sixty years old, and he's tall and thin.'



'It's very important. Please help me!'

The woman did not look very interested. 'There are a lot of visitors in the hotel,' she said. 'Do you know his name?'

'No, I don't,' Nick said. 'He's, er, a friend of a friend, you see. He arrived in Vancouver yesterday, and I must find him. It's very important. Please help me!'

The woman looked at him. 'There are three hundred and fifty rooms in this hotel,' she said, 'and maybe thirty or forty men with white hair. How can I remember all their names?' She turned away to answer a telephone call.

Nick walked away from the desk.

'A drink,' he thought. 'I need a drink.' He went into the hotel bar, got a drink and sat down at a table.

'So what do I do now?' he thought.

And then he remembered something. A letter in the girl's half-open bag in the Whistler cafe.

. . . and we can meet at the Empress Hotel, Victoria, Vancouver Island, on Friday afternoon . . .

And tomorrow was Friday.

'I'm going to Victoria, on Vancouver Island!' he thought. 'To the Empress Hotel!'

Nick had dinner in the hotel that evening. He finished eating and got up from his table . . . *and saw the man with white hair.*

Nick moved quickly. The man was at the hotel desk. Nick could see the white head above the other heads near the desk.

'Excuse me!' said Nick. He pushed past the people in the hotel restaurant. A small boy ran in front of him and Nick ran into him. The boy and Nick fell down on the floor. The boy began to cry.

'Hey!' said a woman behind Nick.

'I'm very sorry!' said Nick. He got up and helped the boy to his feet. 'Are you OK?' he asked the boy.

'Be more careful next time,' said the woman.

Nick moved away quickly, but when he looked back at the hotel desk, he couldn't see the man with white hair. He pushed through the crowd of people.

'That man!' he shouted at the woman behind the desk. 'That man with short white hair. Where did he go?'

The woman looked at Nick. 'Mr Vickers?' she said.

'I don't know.' 'Vickers? Is that his name?' said Nick. 'What's his room number?'

'I'm sorry, I can't tell you that,' the woman said.

'But I need to—' began Nick.

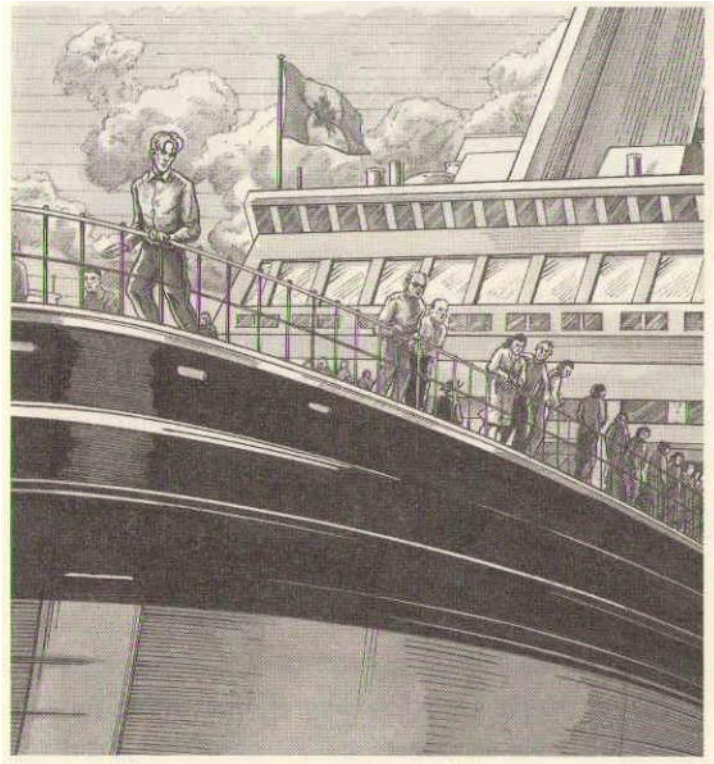
The woman turned away to answer the telephone.

After a second or two, Nick went upstairs to his room. 'Vickers,' he thought. 'Does Meg Hutson know Mr. Vickers? I need some answers, and I need them quickly!'

Chapter: Five Vancouver Island

Tsawwassen was about twenty-three miles south of Vancouver. Nick drove there in his car the next morning for the one o'clock ferry to Vancouver Island. Every five minutes, he looked behind him. The road was busy — black cars, white cars, red cars, green cars. Maybe Vickers was in one of them.

At Tsawwassen Nick drove his car on to the ferry. There were a lot of cars and crowds of people. Nick got out of his car and walked up and down the ship. He looked for a man with white hair but he didn't see one.



He looked for a man with white hair but he didn't see one.

Soon the ferry began to move and Nick felt better. He found the ferry restaurant and got something to eat. More people came in. Nick looked at the faces of all

the older men. Some had hats on, so he looked for somebody tall and thin, but there was nobody.

'Maybe he's not on the ferry,' Nick thought. 'Maybe he's back in Vancouver.'

Later, Nick walked around the ship again. Once, he thought he saw the man with white hair in the crowds, but he could not be sure.

Ninety minutes after leaving Tsawwassen, the ferry arrived at Swartz Bay on Vancouver Island, and Nick went back down to his car.

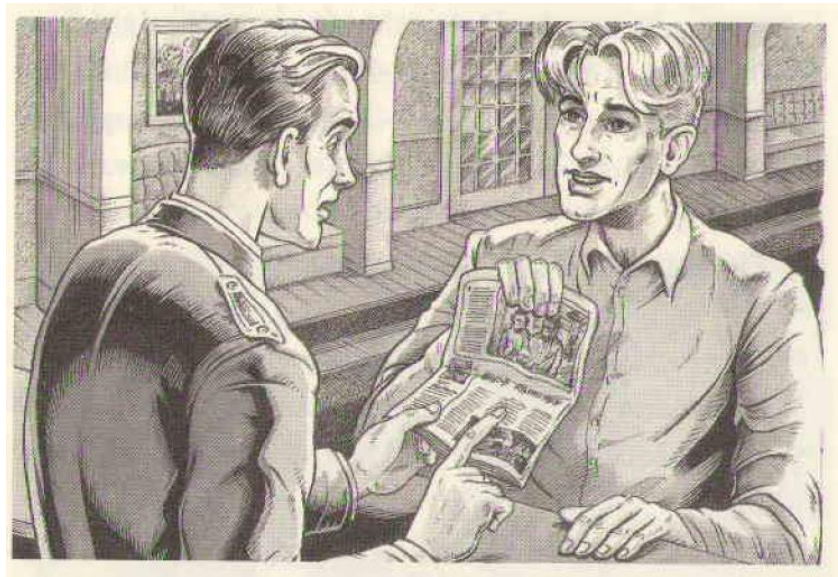
Swartz Bay was twenty miles north of Victoria. Nick drove quickly, and again, looked behind him every four or five minutes. Once, he saw a red car about two hundred yards behind him.

'Did I see that car on the road from Vancouver to Tsawwassen?' he thought.

He drove more slowly, but the red car still stayed two hundred yards behind him, and Nick couldn't see the driver's face or hair.

Soon he was in the busy streets of Victoria, and Nick didn't see the red car behind him again.

Victoria was a city of gardens and beautiful old buildings. Nick liked Victoria very much, but today he wasn't interested in gardens or buildings.



'This is her.'

He found the Empress Hotel, went inside and walked across to the desk. 'Can I help you?' a young man asked Nick.

'I'm meeting a friend here this afternoon,' said Nick. 'Miss Hutson.'

'Hutson?' said the young man. 'Wait a minute.' He went away and came back. 'Sorry, but there's no Miss Hutson staying here.'

Nick took something from his pocket. It was the photograph of Meg and her father, from the magazine.

'This is her,' he said.

The young man looked at the picture. 'Oh, right. You mean Howard Hutson's daughter,' he said. 'She's not staying here, but I saw her ten or fifteen minutes ago. She was with somebody — a man. He asked me about the tea room.'

'The tea room?' said Nick. 'Where's that?'

The man with short white hair was tired. He couldn't sleep and he couldn't eat.

He thought about only one thing, all the time. He drove and he watched, and he waited and he followed.

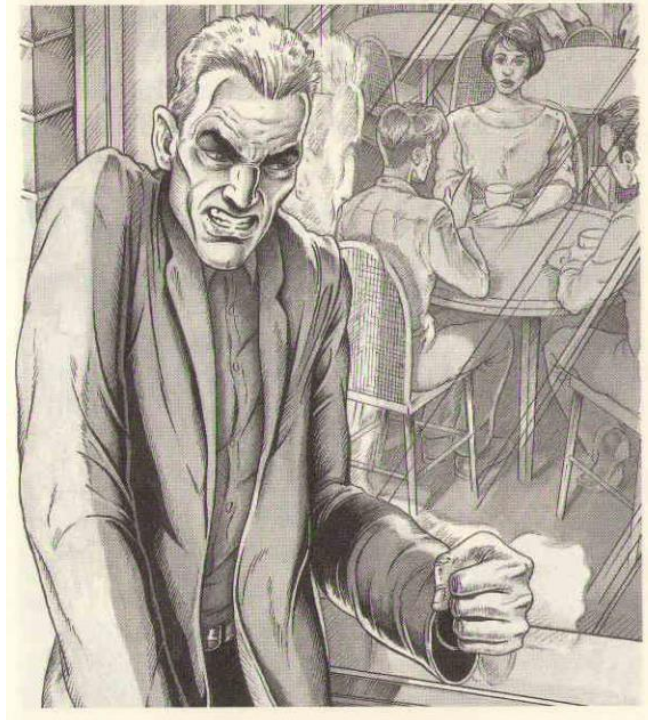
When he drove into Victoria, the streets were busy, and suddenly he lost the blue car in front of him. Angrily, he drove around the city, past all the big hotels. 'I must find him,' he said. 'I must do it. Today.'

Then he saw the Empress Hotel, and in the street outside it, a blue car.

He drove past the hotel, left his car, and ran back down the street. He went across the road and walked past the downstairs windows. There was a big room with tables and chairs, and a lot of people. He looked carefully at all the faces.

'There she is!' he said suddenly.

There were two men with the girl. He couldn't see their faces, only the backs of their heads, but one of the men was in a green shirt.



'Goodbye, Mr. Hollywood'

'Mr. Hollywood,' the man said, and smiled. 'Goodbye, Mr. Hollywood.'
People in the street turned to look at him, but the man did not see them.
He walked up to the doors of the hotel and put a hand into his pocket. Inside,
the gun was cold and hard.

2. Conjunctions 4

Other Words for **or**:

1. The movie wasn't funny. It wasn't interesting.

The movie was neither funny nor interesting.

2. You can do your homework now. You can do your homework after dinner.

You can do your homework either now or after dinner.

3. We could walk. We could take a taxi.

We could walk, or else take a taxi.

Exercise:

Complete the following sentences by adding **and**, **but** or **or**.

1. Mrs. Taylor is tall slim.

2. Learning geography is hard interesting.

3. I don't like football soccer.

4. Do you pull the handle push it?

5. These tools are old still useful.

6. We visited lots of castles palaces in England.

7. The classes are quite difficult I'm doing well.

8. I didn't know whether to turn left right.

Answers:

Complete the following sentences by adding **and**, **but** or **or**.

1. Mrs. Taylor is tall **and** slim.
2. Learning geography is hard **but** interesting.
3. I don't like football **or** soccer.
I like **neither** football **nor** soccer.
4. Do you pull the handle **or** push it?
5. These tools are old **but** still useful.
6. We visited lots of castles **and** palaces in England.
7. The classes are quite difficult **but** I'm doing well.
8. I didn't know whether to turn left **or** right.

3. Picture Dictionary Page

Music



singing

playing the violin

playing the saxophone

playing the guitar



microphone



recorder



flute



tambourine



trumpet

Mime and guess.

> Are you *playing* the *piano*?

> Yes, I am. / No, I'm not.



piano



drums