



# Learn English Through Stories

## D Series

### D32

Adapted and modified by

Kulwant Singh Sandhu

<https://learn-by-reading.co.uk>

## **Contents**

- 1. My Cousin Rachel.  
Chapters 5 and 6.**
- 2. Grammar Page.**

# 1. My Cousin Rachel

by Margaret Turner

## Chapter five: An Argument and an Arrival

I arrived home in the first week of September. I had sent letters and the servants were already dressed in black. My journey to Italy seemed like a dream.

I was glad to be home. I was responsible now for the house and estate. I had to look after them as Ambrose had done. I wanted to do my work well.

My godfather, Nick Kendall, visited me as soon as I got back.

He brought his daughter, Louise, with him. Nick Kendall had come to explain Ambrose's will to me.

'The house and the estate will be yours when you are twenty-five, Philip,' he told me. 'But for the next seven months, I am your guardian. If you want money, you must come to me. Of course, I hope, one day, you will marry. This place needs a woman, Philip.'

'I want no woman,' I said. 'Ambrose married, and it killed him.'

'My cousin Rachel left Florence the day after the funeral,' I went on. 'Signor Rainaldi told me. She took all Ambrose's things with her, like a thief.'

'You must not call your cousin's wife a thief,' Nick Kendall said. 'If Ambrose had changed his will when he married, everything would now belong to her. I am surprised that your cousin Rachel has not made a claim.'

'A claim!' I cried. 'But she was the cause of Ambrose's death!'

'Nonsense, Philip,' said Nick Kendall. 'Ambrose died of a brain tumour. That is why he wrote those terrible letters.'

'I don't believe it,' I said.

'You don't want to believe it,' my godfather replied angrily. 'Keep those ideas to yourself, Philip. If you don't, there will be trouble.'

I said nothing.

I did not see the Kendalls again for nearly two weeks. Then Nick Kendall asked me to go and see him. I found him in his study, a letter in his hand.

‘Well,’ he said slowly, ‘I have news for you, Philip. This is a letter from your cousin Rachel. She has come to England with Ambrose’s things. She asks for nothing. She only wants to see the house that Ambrose lived in. She is in a strange country, without a friend. You ought to see her, Philip.’

I smiled.

‘Of course I’ll see my cousin Rachel,’ I said in a hard, cold voice. ‘I want to see her very much. Tell her that when you write to her. Tell her that Philip Ashley invites his cousin Rachel to his home.’

Nick Kendall understood my feelings. ‘You have become very hard, Philip,’ he said. ‘I hope you will not say anything stupid when Mrs. Ashley is here. She was your cousin’s wife. You must remember that.’

I went out into the garden and saw Louise walking there. When I told her about my cousin Rachel’s visit, she was very surprised. ‘No woman has stayed in that house for twenty years,’ Louise said. ‘Think how dusty and untidy it is!’

‘It was good enough for Ambrose,’ I said. ‘She won’t think about the house when I begin to question her! She’ll cry - and I’ll be pleased!’

But when I got home, I changed my mind. I wanted to show my cousin Rachel that I was a gentleman. I wanted her to know that I was a man who looked after his property. I spoke to the head servant, Seecombe. He agreed that the whole house must be cleaned before Mrs. Ashley arrived.

‘We must make Mrs. Ashley welcome,’ Seecombe said. ‘Shall I prepare Mr. Ambrose’s room for her?’

‘Certainly not,’ I said. ‘I am moving into Mr. Ashley’s room. Get the blue room ready for Mrs. Ashley.’

On the day my cousin Rachel arrived, the house looked completely different. Everything was clean and tidy. Seecombe had got out all the silver and cleaned it. Tamlyn, the head gardener, had filled every room with flowers.

I looked around the house and then walked up slowly to the blue room. The dogs followed me. The rooms for my cousin Rachel were clean. The windows were wide open.

There was a portrait of Ambrose on one wall. It had been painted when he was a young man. He had looked very much like me. I smiled at the portrait and felt a little happier.



My cousin Rachel was going to arrive sometime in the afternoon. I decided that I did not want to be in the house when she arrived. Although the day was cold and windy, I went out alone after lunch. I walked until I was tired. I did not return until after six o'clock.

There was a fire in the library, but the room was empty. I pulled the bell and rang for Seecombe.

'Madam has come,' Seecombe said. 'She is tired and is having some food in her room. She will be pleased to see you after dinner.'

'Where is her luggage?' I asked Seecombe.

'Madam has very little luggage of her own,' answered Seecombe. 'It has been taken upstairs to her room. All of Mr. Ambrose's boxes have arrived with her. We have put them in your room, as she asked.'

So I had my dinner alone and drank a glass of brandy. Then I went upstairs and knocked at the door of my cousin Rachel's sitting-room.

A quiet voice answered my knock.

## Chapter six: Tea with My Cousin

I went into the room. Everything was neat and tidy. The candles had been lit, but the curtains were still open. The dogs were in front of the fire. A woman was sitting with her back to the door. 'Good evening,' I said.

She turned at once, got up and walked towards me. Now at last, I was face to face with my cousin Rachel. She was a small woman, dressed completely in black. Her dark hair was very neat. As she looked at me, her large, dark eyes opened wide in surprise. 'I hope you are rested,' I said awkwardly.

'Thank you, Philip, yes.' She sat down by the fire and the old dog, Don, laid his head on her knee.

'Don is your dog, isn't he?' she said. 'Is it true that he is almost fifteen?'

'Yes,' I said. 'Ambrose gave him to me on my tenth birthday.'

'I know,' she answered softly. Then my cousin Rachel stood up and moved towards the window.

'I want to thank you, Philip, for letting me come,' she said. 'It can't have been easy for you.'

It had started to rain. She closed the curtains and we both sat down again.

'I felt so strange, driving up to the house,' my cousin Rachel said. 'Ambrose told me so much about it. I was longing to be h . . . here.'

She hesitated on the last word. I knew she had nearly said 'home'.

'I hope you will be comfortable here,' I said. 'There are no women servants in the house to look after you.'

'That doesn't matter. I don't need anyone to look after me. I have only two dresses, and some strong shoes for walking.'

She smiled and I smiled back. Then I suddenly felt angry. Why was I smiling at this woman who had caused my dear Ambrose's death?

At that moment, Seecombe came into the room.

'Tea is served, madam,' Seecombe said, putting down the large silver tray. On the tray was a large silver teapot that I had never seen before.

‘What about breakfast, madam?’ Seecombe went on. ‘Mr Philip has his at eight o’clock.’

‘I would like mine in my room,’ my cousin Rachel answered. ‘Would that be too much trouble?’

‘Certainly not, madam. Come dogs — downstairs. Goodnight madam, goodnight, sir.’

My cousin Rachel poured me some tea. Seecombe had never served tea after dinner before, but I said nothing.

‘If you want to smoke your pipe, you can, Philip,’ my cousin Rachel said.

I stared at her. I did not expect to smoke in a lady’s room. I had wanted to say a few hard words and then leave. Now here I was, drinking tea and smoking my pipe. But how could I be angry with this small, neat woman - or hate her?

The next thing I heard was a quiet voice saying, ‘You’re nearly asleep, Philip.

Hadn’t you better go to bed? You walked a long way today, didn’t you?’

I opened my eyes and moved my long legs. Was my cousin Rachel laughing at me? Did she know why I had stayed away from the house all afternoon?

I got up slowly and looked down at her.

‘Wait a minute, Philip,’ my cousin Rachel said. ‘I have a present for you.’

She went into her bedroom and came out with a stick — Ambrose’s walking stick. It was the one he had always used. I took it awkwardly.

‘Now go!’ she said. ‘Please go quickly. You remind me so much of Ambrose...’



*"Now at last, I was face to face with my cousin Rachel."*

I stood outside the door for a moment, holding the stick in my hands. Had this woman really killed Ambrose? I had seen the look of deep unhappiness on her face. Already, my ideas about her were changing.



## 2. Grammar page

### Possessive Determiners:

The words **my, your, his, her, its, our, their** are called possessive determiners or possessive adjectives. Use these words before nouns to say who something belongs to.

1. Is this your house? **No, it's my uncle's.**
2. Lekhu, your handwriting is difficult to read. It's almost illegible. **I can't help it; nobody taught me how to write.**
3. Mussa is showing his mouse to his friends. The mouse is very cute.
4. My sister lost her way in the city. She came home very late. She made everybody worried.
5. The lion is changed its mind. Instead of hunting, it went sleep.

### Exercise

Choose the correct possessive adjectives from the box to fill in the blanks.

my his your her its our their

1. Is this Seeta's dog? Yes, this is \_\_\_\_\_ dog.
2. The dog is chasing \_\_\_\_\_ own tail.
3. Peter, is \_\_\_\_\_ father at home?
4. Banta is showing \_\_\_\_\_ stamps to Ali.
5. I am going to \_\_\_\_\_ aunt's house this evening.
6. We always keep \_\_\_\_\_ classroom clean.
7. Children, have you all finished \_\_\_\_\_ homework?
8. The children are proud of \_\_\_\_\_ school.

## Answers

Choose the correct possessive adjectives from the box to fill in the blanks.

my his your her its our their

1. Is this Seeta's dog? Yes, this is **her** dog.
2. The dog is chasing **its** own tail.
3. Peter, is **your** father at home?
4. Banta is showing **his** stamps to Ali.
5. I am going to **my** aunt's house this evening.
6. We always keep **our** classroom clean.
7. Children, have you all finished **your** homework?
8. The children are proud of **their** school.