



Learn English Through Stories

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The Knockometre

Old Man Rashid was a kind man. He liked to win, but he never shouted or got angry. When his daughter Ayla got married to Kadir, Rashid wanted to make Kadir smile and feel part of the family.

One weekend, Rashid said, "Let's all go on a road trip to the beautiful Turkish mountains!" The family of four – Rashid, his wife Fatima, Ayla, and the new son-in-law Kadir – got into the car. Kadir drove. Old Man Rashid sat next to him in the front. The two women sat in the back seat and looked at each other with small, secret smiles.

They drove for two hours. Then they stopped at a small restroom beside the quiet country road. Everyone got out, used the restroom, and came back to the car. Soon they started driving again.

Suddenly, there was a loud rattling and clanging noise coming from behind the car. It sounded like metal hitting the road – bang, bang, bang! The women in the back tried not to laugh. They put their hands over their mouths.

Old Man Rashid listened carefully. "Hmm," he said. "That must be a problem with the engine. Kadir looked worried. "But Dad, the noise is coming from the back of the car, not the front. "Stop the car," said Rashid in a serious voice. "Pull over here." Kadir stopped the car on the side of the road. "Now open the bonnet," Rashid said. (The bonnet is the front part that covers the engine.) The two men got out and looked inside the engine. Everything looked normal. Old Man Rashid made a thinking sound – "harrumph" – and said, "Yes, I see the problem now. Wait here. I will get my knockometre."

Kadir was confused. "What is the problem, Dad? And... what is a knockometre?"

Rashid smiled a little. "You are good with computers, Kadir. I am good with cars. This is my area. Please be quiet and watch." Old Man Rashid walked to the back of the car. He opened the boot (the trunk) and looked inside his big tool box. After a minute, he came back holding something. Kadir looked and said, "Dad, that is just a hammer."

"Yes," said Rashid. "A hammer for knocking. We call it a knockometre. Now watch carefully." Old Man Rashid hit the side of the engine gently a few times with the hammer – tap, tap, tap. Then he said, "Okay. Problem fixed. Let's go."

They all got back into the car and drove away. After one kilometre, the road was quiet. There was no more rattling noise. Old Man Rashid looked straight ahead and said, “You see? No noise now. What do you say, Kadir?” Kadir smiled with respect. “Dad, you know so much about cars. Please teach me one day.”

“Yes,” said Rashid. “I will teach you about cars.” In the wing mirror, Rashid saw his wife Fatima. She was trying not to laugh. Ayla was doing the same.

What really happened? When they stopped at the restroom earlier, Old Man Rashid had quietly tied some old tin cans to the back of the car with string. This is an old joke for newly married couples – the cans make a loud noise when the car moves. When he went to the boot for his “knockometre”, he quickly cut the strings and removed all the cans. Nobody saw him do it. The hammer taps on the engine were only for fun – they did nothing! Old Man Rashid won the joke. Everyone laughed later when they understood, and Kadir felt happy to be part of this funny family

Comprehension

Question 1: Who is Old Man Rashid?

Question 2: Why did the family go on a road trip?

Question 3: Who drove the car?

Question 4: Where did the family stop after two hours?

Question 5: What noise did they hear after they started driving again?

Question 6: What did Old Man Rashid say was wrong with the car?

Question 7: What tool did Old Man Rashid use to “fix” the car?

Question 8: What was the real cause of the noise?

Question 9: When did Old Man Rashid remove the tin cans?

Question 10: How did Kadir feel about Old Man Rashid at the end?

Answers

Answer 1: He is the father of Ayla and the father-in-law of Kadir.

Answer 2: To go to the beautiful Turkish mountains (and for Old Man Rashid to play a joke).

Answer 3: Kadir drove the car.

Answer 4: They stopped at a small restroom beside the country road.

Answer 5: They heard a loud rattling and clanging noise.

Answer 6: He said it was a problem with the engine.

Answer 7: He used a hammer (he called it a knockometre).

Answer 8: Tin cans tied to the back of the car with a string.

Answer 9: When he went to the boot to get his "knockometre".

Answer 10: He respected him and wanted to learn about cars from him (he felt happy to be part of the family).