

## 1

**IT WAS A HOT**, early summer, afternoon and there was a carnival atmosphere in Castle Square. A balloon seller, with **garishly** coloured Disney characters **bobbing** on the breeze above his head, was surrounded by a **throng** of excited children. By Zygmunt's Column, a crowd had gathered to cheer on a troupe of break-dancers. Under the tree by the castle, the horses stood with their noses in their feedbags, while the carriage drivers **cooled their heels** in the shade.

The doors of the **Register Office** in the far corner of the square **swung open**. As the newly-married bride and groom came out, their waiting guests **showered** them with coins. After ritually picking them up, Inspector Robert Nowak and his wife, Marta Nowak-Jones, waved to their guests and walked over to the car that would take them to their wedding **reception**. The **best man**, Sergeant Pawluk, opened the door for the bride and helped her in, while the groom swung himself into the driver's seat.

"It's the first time I've been in your Saab as your wife," Marta said, giving her husband a **peck** on the cheek. "Perhaps you'll let me drive it now."

Nowak looked at her with a serious face, "I'm quite happy to share everything else with you, dear, but the Saab is mine."

"Okay, I accept. I can see I have no choice. But I expect you to be my **chauffeur** whenever I require your services. Now, Sir, drive me to my reception."

"Yes, Madam!" Nowak grinned, saluting his wife.

As the engine came to life, the guests all began to wave energetically. The car picked its way carefully through the crowds, in the direction of the Victoria Hotel. As it was **edging** past Zygmunt's Column, the break-dancer crowd turned suddenly and several people shouted out. Nowak drove slowly on.

"Are they cheering us?" he asked.

"I don't think so," said Marta, turning round to see what had drawn the people's attention.

"What's going on?" Nowak asked.

Marta **gasped**.

"What is it?" Nowak asked her.

**garishly**

– jaskrawie

**to bob**

– kiwać się, drgać

**throng**

– tłum, rój

**to cool****one's heels**

– wyczekwiwać

**heel**

– pięta

**Register Office**

– Urząd Stanu

Cywilnego

**to swing open**

– otworzyć się

na oścież

**to shower**

– zasypywać,

obrzucać

**reception**

– przyjęcie

**best man**

– drużba

**peck**

– całus

**chauffeur**

– kierowca,

szofer

**to edge**

(through)

– przeciskać się,

poruszać się

**to gasp**

– westchnąć

“It looks like one of the horses has **keeled over**,” said Marta. “I hope it’s not an omen.”

“Of course not, Marta. Anyway, let’s not allow it to **spoil** our perfect day,” said Nowak, as the car reached the street and sped up.

Their wedding guests were already **making their way** over to see what had happened. By the time they had crossed the short distance to where the carriages were, the horse was already dead, and the **weather-beaten** old carriage driver was **slumped** beside it crying, his hand gently **stroking** its lifeless neck. 🐾

**to keel over**

– przewracać się

**to spoil**

– zepsuć

**to make one’s way**

– zmierzać do, dojeżdżać

**weather-beaten**

– ogorzały, zniszczony

**to slump**

– osuwać się

**to stroke**

– głaskać

**refreshment**

– przekąska

**to go off**

– odejść

**wander**

– przechadzka

**to head off**

– oddalić się,

wyruszyć

**to meander**

– wić się

**gradually**

– stopniowo

**to thin out**

– przerzedzać

się

**tranquility**

– spokój

**immersed**

– zanurzony,

pochłonięty

**gaunt**

– wynędzniały

**disheveled**

– zaniedbany,

rozczochrany

**to menace**

– grozić

**to get****sb over**

– sprowadzić

kogoś

**to weigh up**

– rozważyć,

ocenić

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## 2

**OUTSIDE THE PALACE** on the Water<sup>1</sup>, the guide waved her white parasol in the air to attract the attention of the tourists in her group.

“Ladies and gentlemen, you have half an hour now for a **refreshment** break or to **go off** on your own for a **wander** through the park if you wish. Meet me back here at 2 o’ clock,” she said.

The majority of the group **headed off** to the nearby café, leaving a middle-aged couple, consulting their map.

“It looks like there’s a couple of monuments and a small lake in this corner,” said the man. “Shall we go and have a look?”

“Yes, let’s. It’ll be nice to go somewhere quiet for a few minutes.”

The couple walked off over the small bridge and followed the footpaths that **meandered** between the rhododendrons and magnolias towards the wilder parts of Lazienki. As they did so, the crowds that were around the Palace on the Water **gradually thinned out**.

“Peace and **tranquillity** at last,” said the woman as they reached the small lake. As she sat down, her husband walked over to a nearby monument and began taking photos. The woman was **immersed** in the guidebook, when she sensed someone sit down beside her. Expecting it to be her husband, she was surprised to find a **gaunt, dishevelled**, young man, looking at her with wild eyes. He was holding a knife.

“Do you speak English?” he asked in a low, **menacing** tone.

“Yes... we are English,” the woman replied.

“That your husband?”

“Yes.”

“**Get him over.**”

The woman called to her husband. He turned to see the young man sitting beside his wife, and walked over. When he was next to the bench, the young man showed him the knife.

“Don’t shout. I don’t want to hurt you. I just need some money.”

The tourist quickly **weighed up** their escape options, but the young man looked desperate and the knife was too close to his wife for **comfort** to do anything. The young man was becoming impatient and **stabbed** the knife into the bench, close to the woman’s leg.

“Money,” he demanded. 🗑️

<sup>1</sup>A palace in Lazienki Park, Warsaw

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**1. Choose the best answer a, b or c.**

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**1. Who was not in Castle Square?**

- a. street performers
- b. random kids
- c. cab drivers

**2. Upon getting into the car Marta was...**

- a. apologetic
- b. sarcastic
- c. hurt

**3. The man in the park looked like...**

- a. a thug
- b. a benign beggar
- c. a desperate homeless person

**4. The husband in the park seemed rather...**

- a. sensible
- b. narrow-minded
- c. opportunistic

**5. The man from the other room, upon seeing Nowak, was...**

- a. shocked
- b. overwhelmed
- c. surprised

**6. When the newlyweds kissed, the crowd...**

- a. hissed
- b. clapped their hands
- c. sobbed

**2. Choose the correct form to complete the sentence.**

1. The couple got married at the **Register / Registration** Office.
2. When he heard the tragic news he **slumped / struck** to the floor.
3. They went off for a **wander / wonder**.
4. He told me to get my wife **up / over**.
5. He slipped **off / out** when nobody was watching.
6. Don't **hurry / worry**, take your time.

**3. Complete the sentences by translating the phrases in brackets into English.**

1. The lecture was so dull that we opted for (**przeczekać go w kawiarni**) .....
2. Don't bother picking me up. (**Sam dojadę do kina**) .....
3. We carried on eastwards and eventually the thick dark wood (**zaczął się przerzedzać**) .....
4. (**Co za niespodzianka!**) ..... here! I thought you were away on a scholarship, when did you get back?

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**4. Complete the sentences with appropriate forms derived from the word in capitals.**

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1. The president ..... a series of threats. **RECEPTION**
2. The atmosphere in the countryside was .....  
**TRANQUILITY**
3. The course proved to be a complete ..... in the language. **IMMERSE**
4. The noise ..... all the guests. **DEAFENING**
5. I felt ..... from the game because no one paid attention to what I was saying. **EXCLUSIVE**
6. The view took us completely by surprise, it was as ..... as seeing a coral reef for the first time. **STRIKE**
7. She said she would call the police in a ..... tone of voice. **MENACE**
8. Strolling round the streets of London and not knowing where I was heading I felt a bit like a vagabond and a .....  
**WANDER**
9. A deep ..... is a sign of respect in the eyes of traditional Japanese housewives. **BOW**