

## CHAPTER 1

The girl's laughter is still ringing in the big car, as if she were still in it.

It is dark, not a single star is out. A thick layer<sup>1</sup> of clouds covers the sleeping town like a feather quilt. It is long after midnight. All youngsters should be in bed, safe and sound<sup>2</sup>. Even after a wild party to celebrate the beginning of the summer holidays.

Two shadows in long coats with a dog that looks like a black and white beer barrel<sup>3</sup> on a leash<sup>4</sup> can hardly manage to jump from the street onto the walkway in an effort to escape the rushing car. They save their lives, and the fat dog's. He growls<sup>5</sup> accusingly<sup>6</sup>. The dog owners look at each other in the milky light of a street lamp. They shake their heads in anger.

"Irresponsible<sup>7</sup>! Absolutely irresponsible! The driver must be insane<sup>8</sup>! He could have killed Hamlet!", shrieks the old man and crumbles his rain hat between his hands.

The white haired lady bends down to the barrel-like dog and pats his head.

"Are you okay, my little sweetheart?"

"Bastards! Did you hear the volume of the music? One should report that car to the police!"

The man shakes his fist behind the car, but it has long vanished<sup>9</sup>, around the corner of the village hall, in the direction of the river.

"Let's do that, Honey! Call the police right away. Have you got the plate number<sup>10</sup>, Richard?"

1 layer – Schicht 2 safe and sound – gesund und munter 3 beer barrel – Bierfass 4 leash – Leine 5 to growl – knurren 6 accusing – anklagend, vorwurfsvoll 7 irresponsible – unverantwortlich 8 insane – verrückt, wahnsinnig 9 to vanish – verschwinden 10 plate number – Nummernschild

The woman looks at her husband with a visible doubt in her face. He puts up his hat again and frowns<sup>11</sup>.

### EXERCISE 1

Wessen? Setze die folgenden Begriffe in den Genitiv.

1. *the car + number plate* \_\_\_\_\_
2. *The man + hat* \_\_\_\_\_
3. *the woman + dog* \_\_\_\_\_

“It was too quick, Heather. Really, when I looked up from Hamlet it was too far away.”

The old lady shakes her head, but she smiles.

“As always, Richard, too slow! Not only don’t we sleep well, we are getting slow...”

“Come on, Heather, we are not getting old. That car was quick as a rocket! And I would not wonder if we read about a speeding accident<sup>12</sup> in tomorrow’s paper.”

The car crosses the bridge, without any respect for the lovely old buildings at its side and the beauty of the place. It races towards the next village south of Bath. The music is cranked up<sup>13</sup> to full volume. The hard rhythm of an old Metallica song hammers out of the speakers and makes even the high-quality doors of the new SUV tremble<sup>14</sup>. The vibrations mix with the still fresh memory of the laughter and the dance floor music from the party.

11 to frown – die Stirn runzeln 12 speeding accident – Unfall wegen überhöhter Geschwindigkeit 13 to crank up – aufdrehen 14 to tremble – zittern

## EXERCISE 2

Zeitreise: Setze die folgenden Verben ins Präsens.

1. *The dog (barked)* \_\_\_\_\_
2. *The man (frowned)* \_\_\_\_\_
3. *The lady (shook)* \_\_\_\_\_ *her head.*

The red streetlights mean nothing. The car almost flies towards its destination.

As the car hits the high kerbstone<sup>15</sup>, where the broad city street meets the narrow country road, it starts to skid<sup>16</sup>. Two wheels are in the air. A screeching<sup>17</sup> of metal on stone cuts through the night, a symphony of energy, freedom and destruction. Somehow the car does not turn over<sup>18</sup>, it drops down to the road again, finds some grip on the old cobble stone pavement and rushes on.

At a sharp left turn in the countryside, where some post boxes and three green and blue dustbins indicate that a house is hidden behind the huge hedges, the car knocks down the dustbins, but it evades the post-boxes.

This time the car starts skidding severely<sup>19</sup>. It turns around in a circle in the middle of the road and glides down a dip<sup>20</sup> which is wet from last day's rain. The car hits the green hedge on the right with its rear<sup>21</sup>. There must be a wall hidden under the green plants. The ugly<sup>22</sup> noise outside is even louder than the hammering music inside the car. But it does not come to a stop, it turns

15 kerbstone – Bordstein 16 to skid – schleudern 17 to screech – kreischen 18 to turn over – umkippen 19 severe – ernsthaft 20 dip – Abhang 21 rear – Heck 22 ugly – hässlich

again, scratches along the wall with its side and finally bumps<sup>23</sup> into an old beech tree<sup>24</sup> on the right hand side of the road.

### EXERCISE 3

Parallelwelten: Finde die Gegenteilpaare und verbinde sie mit Strichen.

*loud*            *bright*

*dark*            *cold*

*fat*              *silent*

*day*             *slim*

*hot*              *night*