



A Fright in the Night

Everyone knew everything about everyone in Llanprid, a charming old village in the middle of Wales. Many of the **residents** were related, most were friendly towards each other, and those who were neither friends nor relatives loved **gossiping** about each other. The same families had lived in the same houses for at least three generations, and young lovers often strengthened the **close-knit community** by getting married. Few people decided to move away forever. Those who did were usually the black sheep of the family. One example was Peter Wallis, the adopted son of Catherine Wallis. Everyone knew he was not really a Wallis, but nobody knew his real surname. Even the other children in Llanprid had not accepted the strange, tall boy who had arrived in their village when he was nine years old. He had always been an outsider, and he was happy to leave the place almost ten years later when he began studying law at university. Since then, he had never looked back.

Peter did not stay in close contact with anyone in the village apart from Catherine. After all, she was the nearest thing he had to family. And Catherine, who was very proud of her son, never **tired of** telling her neighbours about his **achievements**. This made it difficult for the other residents of Llanprid to forget about Peter Wallis, that



residents

Einwohner

to gossip

tratschen

close-knit community

enge
Gemeinschaft

to tire of doing sth.

müde werden,
etw. zu tun

achievements

Leistungen

unusually quiet person who always dressed in black.

Now in his mid-thirties, Peter was a successful lawyer in Cardiff. Although he did not have the time to visit Catherine very often, he **kept in touch** on the telephone, and he

sent a postcard whenever he went on holiday.

At the start of their conversation one early Sunday evening, Peter noticed that his mother sounded very upset.

"Oh, Peter!" she began, "I'm so glad I could reach you."

Catherine did not usually call on Sundays because that was the day Peter rang her: his mother's turn was on Wednesdays. They always spoke after her favourite television programme ended at 9 p.m. This was something that had simply become a tradition.

"You know I always have my mobile with me," he answered. "I was going to call you later. Is everything all right, Mum?"

"No, not really," she replied in a **shaky** voice. "It's not all right at all. There were some horrible noises coming from upstairs earlier, and they started again a few moments ago. I can't **get hold of** any of the neighbours. I don't know what to do!"

"Try to relax, Mum," said Peter calmly. "**Put the kettle on** and tell me what you mean."

Peter could remember growing up in that old cottage. He had been an **only child**, but there had been lots of spiders and mice to play with. Some of the neighbours' cats often came round as well, either to eat the food he put out in the back garden for them or to hunt fresh mice for themselves. It meant that there were always funny noises coming from somewhere. But his mother was certain that she could hear a human voice this time, and that someone was laughing and calling her name.

"It sounded like Cyril!" she told him.



to keep in touch

in Verbindung bleiben

shaky

zitterig

to get hold of sb.

jmd. erreichen

to put the kettle on

Wasser aufsetzen

only child

Einzelkind

"I'm sure there's nobody else in the house," he replied. "How could there be? You always lock the doors, don't you?"

Catherine agreed, and before the kettle had even started whistling she was beginning to sound a little more relaxed. Talking to Peter helped her to **think straight**, and he was right about one thing: living alone since the **divorce** had made her very nervous.

"I only have to hear the doorbell ring and I almost **jump out of my skin**," she joked. "My poor heart will be the death of me."

A long time ago, the Wallises had been one of the largest families in Llanprid. Nature was not on their side, though: many of Catherine's relatives had died of **heart failure** before they reached the age of forty.

"That's how I lost both my mother and your uncle," she remembered aloud and **sighed**.

Übung 1: Fill in the blanks. Lesen Sie weiter und ergänzen Sie den Text mit dem passenden Wort!

front doorbell neighbours surprise

Suddenly the 1. _____ rang and Catherine jumped up in 2. _____

"Oh! Just a minute, dear," she said. "There's someone at the 3. _____ door."

"Do you really think you should answer it?" asked Peter. "Yes, it'll be one of the 4. _____. I left a message with Mary asking her to come round. I'll call you later."

Peter paused again and finally agreed, "Okay, Mum."

"Goodbye, dear!" she said and hung up.

Catherine picked up her **cane** and began walking towards the front

door. On her way, she was **startled**

by a loud knocking from the other

side of the house. It sounded as if

there was somebody at the back

door. Was it possible? She'd just

been sitting there in the kitchen.

"Who's there?" she called.

There was no answer from ei-

ther side of the house, but again

a knocking came from the back

door. Three loud bangs filled the

small cottage. The knocking was

so strong that Catherine could

hear the **china** plates next to the

sink dancing from side to side. Her

heart began to race.

Maybe Peter was right, she thought. She shouldn't open the door

to anyone, just in case.

"Who is it?" she shouted again nervously.

"Hello, Cathy! Is everything all right?" asked a familiar voice from

the other side of the back door.

Finally! There was only one person who called her "Cathy" She

turned around and **shuffled** along the corridor and back into

the kitchen. A **shape** moved behind the glass. Catherine felt much

safer knowing that someone had come to keep her company.

The kettle was whistling loudly now she would make them both a

nice cup of tea.

After turning the key in the lock with a shaky hand, she opened

the door.



to think straight	klar denken
divorce	Scheidung
↳ to jump out of one's skin	erschreckt hochfahren
heart failure	Herzversagen
to sigh	seufzen
cane	Spazierstock
to startle sb.	jmd. erschrecken
china	Porzellan
to shuffle	schlurfen
shape	Gestalt, Form