

Mzia Letordiani

Book 2

Present Day English

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Unit One

Reading-Text One

Do you remember the Brown family, whom we met in Book One? There are four of them: John Brown, who is a bank manager, his wife Mary, and their two children, Susan, aged twenty, who works in an office, and David, aged eighteen, who is still at school. Then there is Susan's boyfriend, Tom Smith, who works in a factory.

As soon as the spring season comes round Mrs Brown decides that she needs new wallpaper in one of her rooms. This happens every year, and by now her family are used to it. This year it was the sitting-room. She saw that the paint on the doors and windows was dirty and that the curtains were old. When she told Mr Brown, at first he did not want to spend the money, but in the end he agreed. Mrs Brown usually gets her way.

On the day before the painter arrived, Mrs Brown moved out all the smaller furniture into another room and covered the rest of the furniture with large sheets as carefully as possible to keep off the dirt and dust. She took the pictures from the walls, washed the glass, and put them away in a cupboard. Then she took down the old curtains and rolled up the carpet. When everything was ready she sent for the painter.

The painter could not come the next day, so the Brown family could not use the room that day. The next morning the painter arrived just as they were having breakfast. His name was Stanley Nokes. First he cleaned off the old paper from the walls. Then he burned off the old paint from the doors and windows. Next he put two coats of paint on the doors and windows, and last of all he put the paper on the walls.

While he was working, Mrs Brown brought him a cup of tea once or twice, which he was glad to accept, but he went to a restaurant in the town for his dinner in the middle of the day. Mr Nokes is a quick, clean worker, and by the end of the second day the room looked very clean and bright.

The next day Mrs Brown hung the new curtains at the windows. They were of dark blue silk and they came down to the floor. When Mr Brown came home that evening she proudly showed him the finished room, and he agreed that he was as pleased as she was.