

THE STRANGE MAN



Mrs. Hall eyed the stranger as he walked into the hotel. She had never seen such a strange man.

Preview:

1. Read the name of the story.
2. Look at the picture.
3. Read the sentences under the picture.
4. Read the first two paragraphs of the story.
5. Then answer the following question.

You learned from your preview that

- a. Mrs. Hall wore big blue glasses.
- b. the stranger was blind.
- c. Mrs. Hall was happy to give the stranger a room.
- d. Mrs. Hall never saw such a strange-looking man.

Turn to the Comprehension Check on page 10 for the right answer.

Now read the story.

Read to find out what Mrs. Hall finds in the stranger's room.

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Mrs. Hall looked up as the strange man walked in. "I would like to stay in your hotel for a while," he said. Mrs. Hall couldn't answer. She was too surprised. This was the weirdest man she had ever seen.

His face was covered with bandages. He wore gloves and a long coat that went down to his knees. The hat on his head was pulled down low, and he wore big, blue glasses. Mrs. Hall couldn't see his eyes. She thought that he was blind.

"I will pay you well," he said, "but there is one thing. No one must bother me. Everybody must stay away. I have very hard work to do, and if I am bothered, I will not be able to get my experiments done."

"Very well," Mrs. Hall said. The stranger scared her, but she needed the money to help with her bills. He paid her and went to his room.

Soon, everybody in town was talking about the man staying at Mrs. Hall's hotel. They had heard about his fierce temper, and they were all scared of him.

They also tried to guess what was wrong with him.

Why did he wear bandages on his face? Some people thought he had burned his skin in a fire. Mrs. Hall told everybody that she had thought he was blind, but she had been wrong. Now she thought he was a doctor, and that was why he couldn't be bothered during his experiments.

One day, a lot of big boxes came for the stranger, and Mrs. Hall had her husband help him carry them. They were filled with many bottles. There were green bottles, blue bottles, red bottles, almost every color you could think of.

"I was right," Mrs. Hall said to herself. "He is a doctor." She wondered if the experiments were safe. Maybe that was how the stranger had gotten hurt. Maybe that's why he had to wear bandages. She wasn't too happy about having him in her hotel.

Mrs. Hall heard barking. She looked and saw the neighbor's dog running at the strange man. "How funny," she thought. "That dog likes everybody, and I have never seen him bark at anyone before."

The strange man yelled

at the dog. "Stay away!" he shouted. "Someone get this dog!"

The dog jumped up and bit the strange man on the leg. The stranger shouted fiercely and kicked the dog, and the dog ran away howling.

"I'm sorry he bit you," Mrs. Hall said. "He's never bit anyone before. Are you okay?"

"Yes, I'm fine," the strange man said angrily. "I just want to get these bottles to my room so I can work!"

"What a weird person!" Mrs. Hall thought. She hoped he wasn't hurt. She looked to see where the dog had bitten him to make sure that he was all right.

Mrs. Hall saw the hole in the strange man's pants. Something was wrong, for she couldn't see any skin. She couldn't see anything because the stranger's pant leg was *empty*!

She looked again to make sure, but the strange man had gone back inside the hotel.

"Did I really see that?" she asked herself. Maybe she had been wrong. She would have to keep an eye on her new guest. There was something weird going on indeed!

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COMPREHENSION CHECK

Choose the best answer.

1. Why did Mrs. Hall think that the stranger was blind?
 - a. He carried a walking stick.
 - b. He owned a seeing-eye dog.
 - c. He was always bumping into things.
 - d. He wore big, dark glasses and she couldn't see his eyes.
 2. What *first* gave Mrs. Hall the idea that the stranger was a doctor?
 - a. He carried a doctor's bag.
 - b. He made strange house calls in the middle of the night.
 - c. He was experimenting in secret.
 - d. Only a doctor would wear so many bandages.
 3. What was it that *convinced* Mrs. Hall that the strange man was a doctor?
 - a. The many different colored bottles that came for him.
 - b. He was good at wrapping bandages.
 - c. He was always at the hospital.
 - d. He always seemed to work so hard.
 4. First, Mrs. Hall heard barking. Then, she saw her neighbor's dog running. Next,
 - a. the dog took a bite out of Mrs. Hall's arm.
 - b. the dog jumped up and bit the stranger.
 - c. Mrs. Hall told the dog to stay away.
 - d. the stranger kicked the dog.
 5. Where did the dog bite the strange man?
 - a. On his foot
 - b. On his leg
 - c. On his arm
 - d. On his lip
- Preview Answer:**

d. Mrs. Hall never saw such a strange-looking man.
6. Why do you think the dog bit the strange man?
 - a. He wasn't a friendly dog.
 - b. He always bit strangers.
 - c. His owner told him to.
 - d. He knew there was something evil about the stranger.
 7. When Mrs. Hall looked at the hole in the stranger's pants, she saw
 - a. nothing inside.
 - b. a bruise.
 - c. a large, ugly cut.
 - d. blood.
 8. When Mrs. Hall saw the stranger's empty pant leg, she thought
 - a. he had only one leg.
 - b. he was playing a trick.
 - c. she should go home.
 - d. she was seeing things.
 9. Another name for this story could be
 - a. "A New Man in Town."
 - b. "The Man with One Leg."
 - c. "The Strange Doctor."
 - d. "Mrs. Hall's Hotel."
 10. This story is mainly about
 - a. a strange man in a new town.
 - b. a man and his experiments.
 - c. a stranger who likes to wear bandages.
 - d. a man who likes living in a hotel.

Check your answers with the key on page 67.

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