

Passages

Reading Level 5



Title: The Shadowmaker

Author: Ron Hansen

Sample From The Book

Once upon a time, in a place you've never been, there was a town where nearly everyone was completely happy. Then along came a little man whom no one knew, riding on a big red coach that was like nothing anyone had ever seen before. The coach was pulled by a giant white horse that was so drowsy, the little man clanged together two garbage can lids in order to keep it awake.

The little man was so short he could stand upright beneath a kitchen sink. His voice was high and squawky, like a duck's might be if you stepped on its foot. He wore a gray bowler hat, large rubber boots, and a blue greatcoat that dragged on the ground when he walked. His hair and mustache and vast beard were white, and his eyebrows were black briars that shaded his cheeks like awnings. As the little man scuttled from store to store, poking about and handling things and asking all sorts of questions, he constantly tinkered with a crooked pipe that burned out inside of a minute.

"I'm a shopkeeper," the little man said. "Or at least I hope to be one. Could you give me the scoop on this place?"

"The scoop?" asked a plumber.

"You know, are the people rich? Are they pleased with themselves? Is there anything you need here?"



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