



RICHMOND READERS

# The Man from Peru

It is 1870 – in Parkgate, a little village in the north of Ireland. The people from the village are very excited. They know that the Man from Peru wants cats. He is coming to visit Parkgate. All the people come with their cats. Their cats are very fat. But where is the Man from Peru?

.....

Arthur McKeown comes from Northern Ireland. He works at the Ulster Business School in the University of Ulster.

Arthur is married and has two children. He lives with his family in Belfast.

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**STARTER LEVEL**

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# RICHMOND READERS

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**STARTER LEVEL (300 headwords)**

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The Man from Peru  
Ricky Banks – Music Star!  
Supercomputerman Radio Boy

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**LEVEL 1 (500 headwords)**

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Oscar Jack's Game  
Maria's Dilemma Permission to Leave  
The Boy from Yesterday The Black Mountain

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**LEVEL 2 (800 headwords)**

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Saturday Storm  
Craigden Castle Mystery  
Jason Causes Chaos Where's Mauriac?  
The Road through the Hills

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**LEVEL 3 (1200 headwords)**

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Cold Feet A Christmas Carol  
The Canterville Ghost and Other Stories  
Dr Jekyll and Mr Hyde  
A Trip to the Stars  
Frankenstein

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**LEVEL 4 (1800 headwords)**

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Dracula Jane Eyre  
The Adventures of Tom Sawyer  
A Trip to London  
Sense and Sensibility

# The Man from Peru

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## In the Village



*He is going to work in the fields.*

It is early in the morning in Parkgate. Parkgate is a village in the north of Ireland.

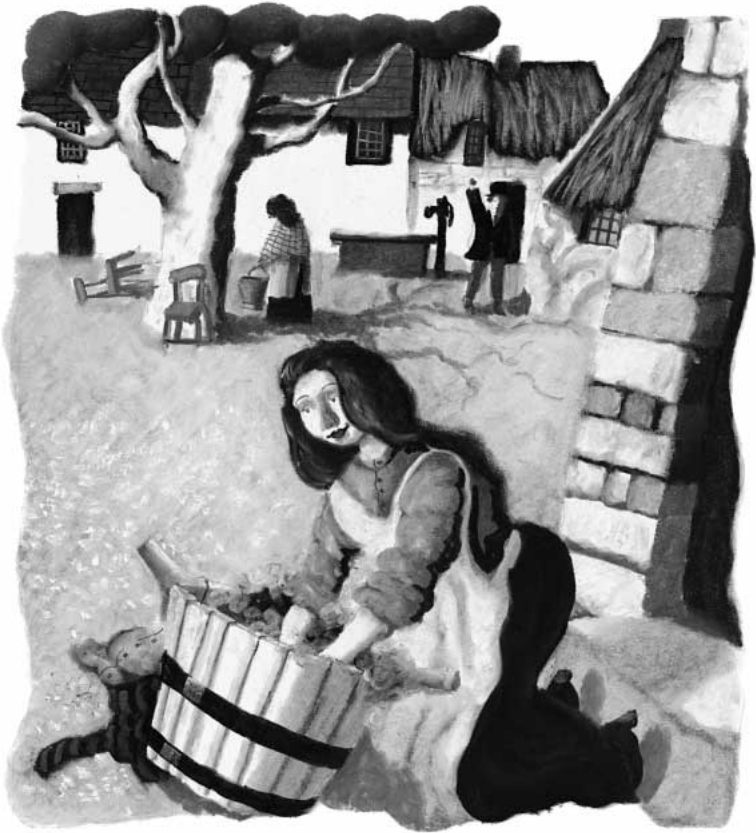
It is 1870 - a long time ago!

The sun is out. The sky is blue. Everything is very quiet.

Everyone in the village is sleeping.

Then the birds begin to sing.

An old man leaves his house. He closes the door. He is wearing grey trousers and a green coat. He is carrying a small bag. He walks slowly along the road. His little brown dog runs in front of him. He is going to work in the fields.



*She puts them in a bucket and begins to wash them.*

Then a young woman comes out\* of her house. She is carrying some clothes. She puts them in a bucket and begins to wash them.

Some minutes later more people come out of their houses. Some of them go to work in the fields.

It is another busy day in the village.



*She is carrying a walking stick in her left hand.*

In the middle of the morning an old woman comes slowly out of her house. She is wearing a blue coat, a black skirt and brown shoes. She has got grey hair. She is carrying a walking stick in her left hand.

A young girl is with her.

‘Oh, Grandmother\*,’ the girl says. ‘You must look where you walk. Can I help you?’



‘You are a good girl, Maria,’ the old woman says. ‘I am not strong. You always help your old grandmother.’

Maria says nothing.

‘Your brother, Tom, is a bad boy,’ Grandmother says. ‘He never helps me. He always plays with his friend, Paul. He is lazy\*. He never helps your father with the work in the fields. He never helps your mother with the work in the house.’

The young girl and the old woman go slowly to the centre of the village. They sit on some old chairs under a big green tree.





*'Look, there's a piece of paper on the tree. Tell me what it says.'*

Grandmother says nothing. She is tired. She closes her eyes. Soon she is sleeping.

Maria sits with her grandmother and looks at the people who are walking in the streets in the village.

Then Grandmother opens her eyes.

'Look, Maria,' Grandmother says. 'Look, there's a piece of paper on the tree. Tell me what it says.'



## 'Peru needs cats'



*She goes to the tree and looks at the paper.*

Maria stands up. She goes to the tree and looks at the paper. She reads it slowly.

'Maria, what does it say?' Grandmother asks. 'I am old. My eyes are bad. I haven't got my glasses here. You go to school. You can read. So you must read the paper for me.'

Maria takes the piece of paper. Then she comes back and sits down with her grandmother.

'Grandmother, it is about a man from Peru,' Maria says. 'He is going to visit our village next week.'

'What is he going to do here?' Grandmother asks.

‘He wants to buy cats,’ Maria says. ‘He wants our cats.’

‘Cats, Maria, cats?’ Grandmother asks. ‘Does he want to buy our cats?’

‘Yes, Grandmother, he wants to buy our cats,’ Maria answers. ‘He wants to give us a lot of money for them.’

Grandmother says nothing for a minute.

‘This is a big surprise. Why does he want our cats, Maria?’ Grandmother asks. ‘Look at the paper again. Tell me why he wants our cats.’

Maria looks at the piece of paper again. She reads it slowly.



*The mice eat the food and run everywhere.*

‘There is a big problem in Peru, Grandmother,’ Maria says. ‘There are a lot of mice. There are thousands of mice in every village. The mice eat the food and run everywhere. It is a big problem.’

‘Peru? Where is Peru?’ Grandmother asks.

‘Peru is in South America,’ Maria answers. ‘It is far away from Ireland.’

‘What can we do?’ Grandmother asks. ‘How can we help?’

‘We can give our cats to the man from Peru,’ Maria says. ‘He is visiting every village in the country. He wants big, fat cats.’

‘Maria, we must help the people in Peru,’ Grandmother says. ‘Mice don’t like cats. The people in Peru can have our cats.’

‘Yes, Grandmother,’ Maria says. ‘We can get a lot of cats for the man from Peru.’

Two boys are in a house in the village. They are standing near the window.

One boy is Tom. He is Maria’s brother. The other boy is Paul. He is Tom’s friend.

They are watching Maria and her grandmother.

‘Look, Paul!’ Tom says. ‘Maria is telling Grandmother about the piece of paper!’

Paul laughs. Tom laughs too. The two boys are laughing.





*The two boys are laughing.*

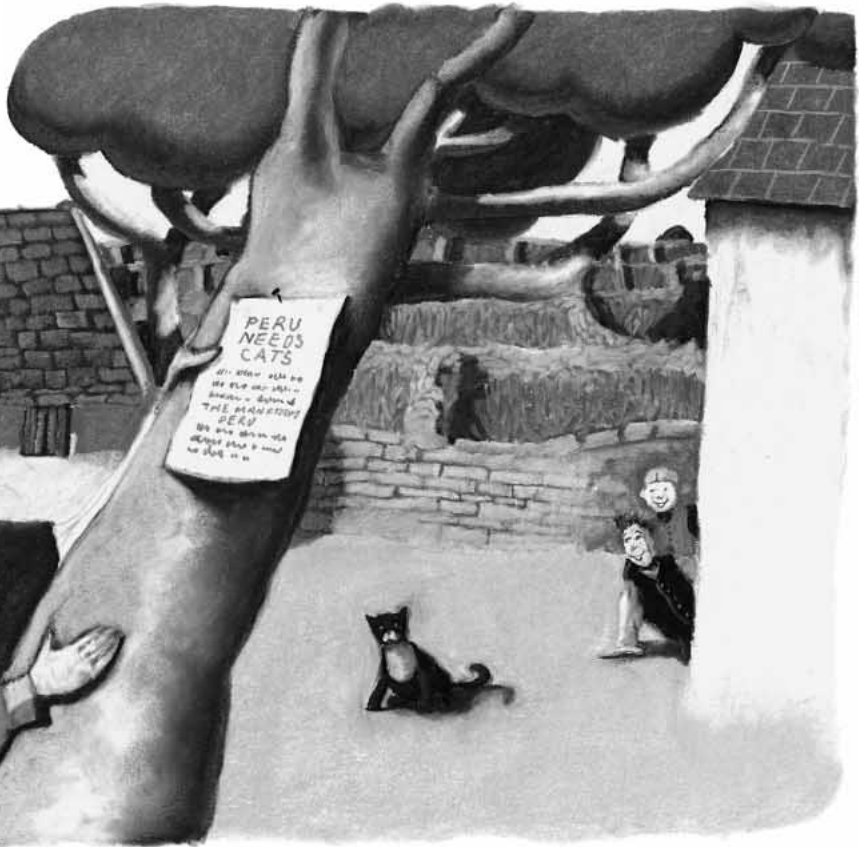
## Fat Cats



Grandmother is at home. It is six o'clock. Maria is sitting near her.

Maria's father, Jack, is with his mother.

'Listen, Jack,' Grandmother says. 'You must get all the cats in the village. Tell everyone to bring their cats here next week. The man from Peru is going to pay us a lot of money for them.'



*Jack is standing under the big green tree in the centre of the village.*

‘Yes, mother,’ Jack says. ‘Everyone in the village is talking about the news. It is very exciting.’

It is eight o’clock in the evening. Jack is standing under the big green tree in the centre of the village. He is talking to two of his friends. His friends are Pat and Harry.

‘It is very exciting,’ Jack says. ‘We are all going to be rich. There are a lot of cats in our village. The man from Peru is going to give us a lot of money.’

‘Yes, Jack,’ says one of the men. He is old and fat. His name is Pat. ‘You are right. I have got a big black cat. She is very good. She catches a mouse every day.’

‘My cat catches a lot of mice, too,’ says Harry. He is tall and thin. ‘My cat is white. He is small, but he can run very fast. He catches two mice every week.’

‘I have a very good cat, too,’ Jack says. ‘He is black and white and brown. He catches a mouse every day - and sometimes two!’

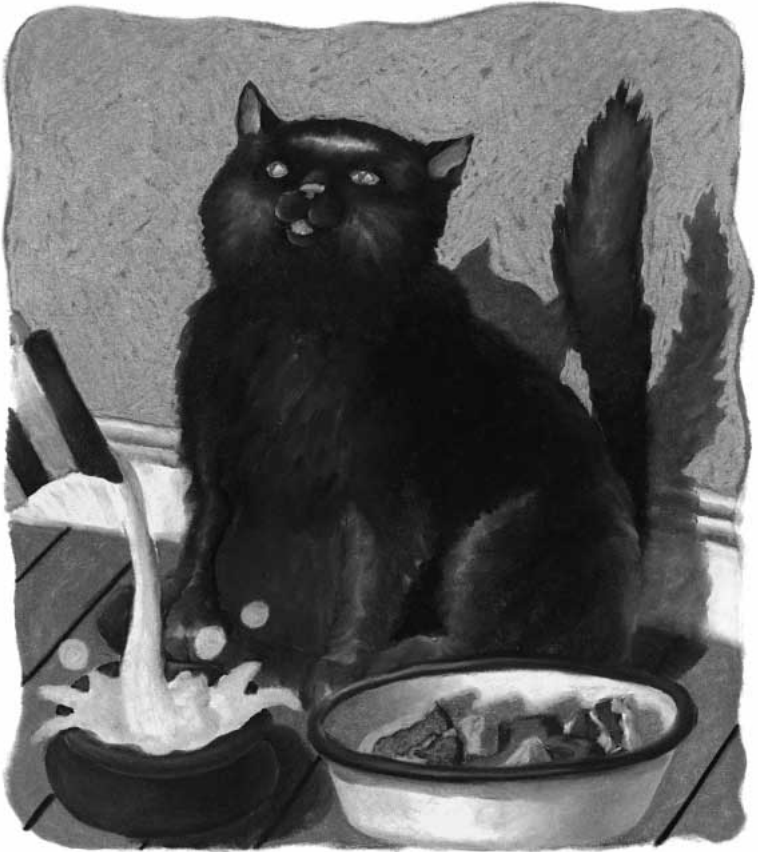
‘We must find all the cats in our village,’ Pat says. ‘We must get good cats for the man from Peru.’

‘I am going to give my cat good food to eat,’ Jack says. ‘I want him to be big and fat next week. I’m going to give him a lot of milk.’

‘I am going to give my cat a lot of meat,’ Harry says. ‘I want my cat to be big and fat, too.’

‘Well, my cat is big and fat,’ Pat says. ‘But I’m going to give her a lot of milk and a lot of meat to eat.’





*'I'm going to give her a lot of milk and a lot of meat to eat.'*

At nine o'clock in the evening they all go home.  
They are going to prepare for the man from Peru.



## Preparing for the Man from Peru



Pat gives his black cat a lot of milk.

Harry gives his white cat a lot of meat.

Jack gives his black and white and brown cat a lot of milk and a lot of meat.

All the cats are very happy. They purr and purr.

It is Saturday morning. The weather is hot. The sky is blue.

In every house in the village people are preparing their cats to go to Peru.

Pat puts his fat black cat into a little bag. He begins to walk from his house to the village.

Harry puts his tall white cat into an old box. He begins to walk along the road to the centre of the village.

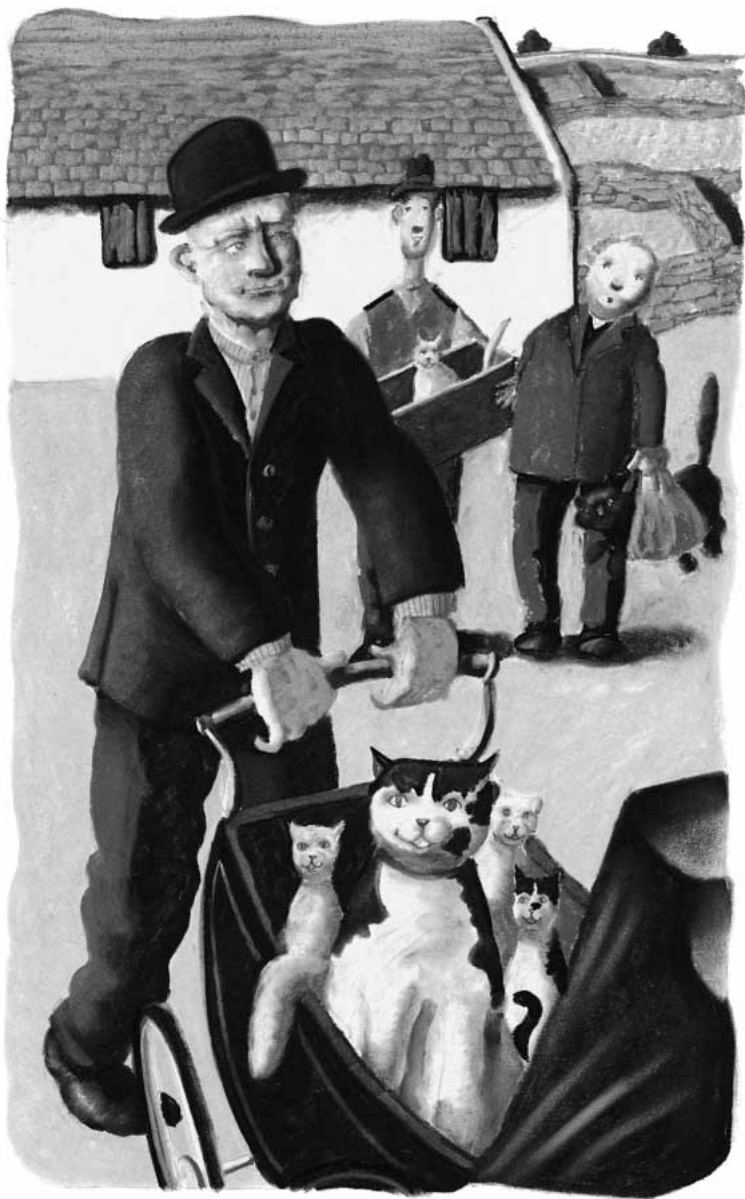
Jack comes out of his house in the village. He has his black and white and brown cat under his arm. The cat is heavy. Jack walks to the big green tree.

A lot of people are in the village. Everyone has a cat.

Some people come in a pony and cart.



*Some people come in a pony and cart.*



*One old man brings a cat and three kittens in a pram.*

Other people walk.

One old man brings a cat and three kittens in a pram. He walks slowly along the road through the village.

Everyone meets in the middle of the village. The men and women are talking. Grandmother is sitting on a chair. The children laugh and play under the big green tree.

The cats are hot inside the bags and boxes. They want to get out.

Soon the village is full of people. They have a lot of cats.

‘We are going to be rich,’ Pat says. ‘We have got very good cats for the man from Peru.’

‘You are right, Pat,’ Harry says. ‘We are going to get a lot of money for our cats. All the cats are big and fat.’





## The Man from Peru



‘Where is the man from Peru?’ Pat says. ‘I have a lot of work to do in the fields.’

‘I have work to do, too,’ Harry says. ‘I don’t have time to stand in the sun.’

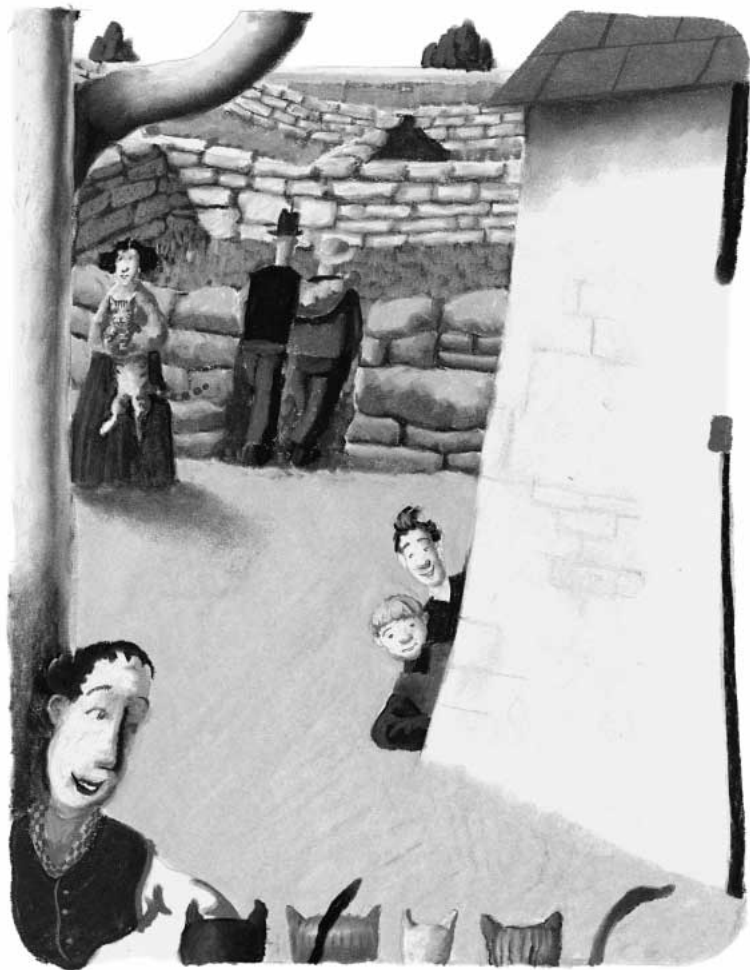
‘Can I buy your cats?’ Jack asks. ‘I know I can get a lot more money for them from the man from Peru.’



*Soon everyone in the village is busy buying and selling cats.*

Soon everyone in the village is busy buying and selling cats.

Ten minutes later, they stop buying and selling cats. Some people have a lot of money for their cats. Other people have no money - but they have a lot of cats.



*Harry and Pat go to work in the fields.*

‘Now I have got ten cats. I am going to be a rich man,’ Jack says. ‘The man from Peru is going to give me a lot of money.’

Harry and Pat go to work in the fields.



‘Look!’ one of the little girls calls. ‘There he is!’

Everyone looks down the road.

Two men are coming along the road. They are in a pony and cart. One man is tall and thin. The other man is fat.

‘That’s the man from Peru,’ a little boy says. ‘He is here to buy our cats.’

The two men come into the village.

‘No, it isn’t,’ a man says. ‘That’s not the man from Peru. It is Lord North. He is going home from town.’



*‘That’s not the man from Peru. It is Lord North.’*

The two men are in the middle of the village.  
They get out of the cart.

‘What is happening here?’ Lord North asks. ‘Why has everyone got cats?’

‘We are waiting for the man from Peru,’ Jack says. ‘He is coming to buy our cats. We give them a lot of food to eat every day. They are all big and fat now. The man from Peru is going to give us a lot of money. Then he is going to take them home to Peru to catch mice.’

But there is no man from Peru.

Some people are happy. They go home with a lot of money in their hands.

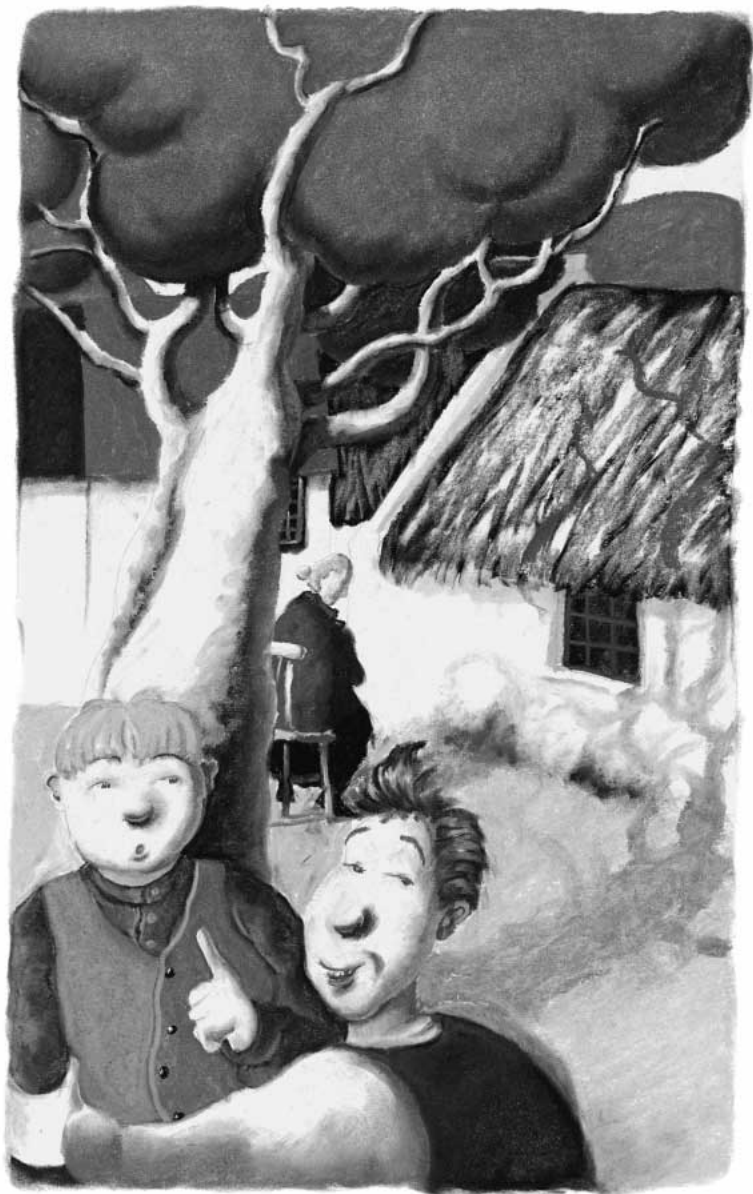
Other people are angry. They have not got any money. But they have a lot of cats which they do not want.

They open the bags and boxes. The cats get out. They are happy to be in the sun.

Two boys are standing quietly under the big green tree. They are next to Grandmother. They are watching and listening to the people with the cats.

‘Paul, can we tell them?’ Tom asks.

‘No, Tom, we must not say anything,’ Paul says.



*'No, Tom, we must not say anything.'*



*Next week the story is in all the newspapers.*

The two boys walk slowly away from the centre of the village.

Next week the story is in all the newspapers. The cats of Parkgate are famous. Soon people in every town and village in Ireland are reading about the cats and the man from Peru.



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# EXERCISES

## **A** Comprehension

**Complete the sentence with the correct word(s).**

- 1 Parkgate village is in ...
  - a England.
  - b Ireland.
  - c America.
  
- 2 Maria's brother is ...
  - a Tom.
  - b Jack.
  - c Paul.
  
- 3 The man from Peru wants to buy ...
  - a mice.
  - b dogs.
  - c cats.
  
- 4 Jack's cat is ...
  - a black.
  - b white.
  - c black and white and brown.
  
- 5 Harry gives his cat ...
  - a a lot of milk.
  - b a lot of meat.
  - c a lot of milk and a lot of meat.
  
- 6 ... buys the cat from his two friends.
  - a Jack
  - b Harry
  - c Pat

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7 Lord North comes to Parkgate ...

- a by car.
- b in a pony and cart.
- c by train.

8 People read about Parkgate ...

- a in the newspapers.
- b at school.
- c on the tree in the village.

## **B** Working with Language

1 Write the opposite of each of the words below.

fat poor happy slow tall old

2 Complete the sentences with the correct form of the verbs below.

work go eat laugh sell help

- 1 Tom is lazy because he does not like to ..... .
- 2 Paul ..... because he is happy.
- 3 Mary wants to ..... her grandmother.
- 4 Jack leaves the village and ..... to work in the fields.
- 5 The mice ..... the food.
- 6 Harry and Pat ..... their cats to Jack.

## **C** Activities

- 1 Grandmother does not understand why Tom and Paul are laughing. They do not want to explain. Write a dialogue between Grandmother and the two boys.
- 2 Jack arrives home with lots of cats. What is he going to do with them? Write a paragraph about this.

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# G L O S S A R Y

**come out** (*v*) leave

**grandmother** (*n*) the mother of your father or mother

**lazy** (*adj*) a person who does not like hard work