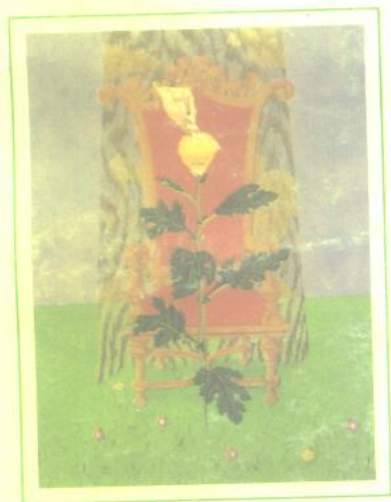


The Enchanted April

迷人的四月

E. von 阿尼姆 著

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M. 塔纳 改写

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INTERMEDIATE LEVEL

Series Editor: John Milne

The Heinemann Guided Readers provide a choice of enjoyable reading material for learners of English. The series is published at five levels – Starter, Beginner, Elementary, Intermediate and Upper. At **Intermediate Level**, the control of content and language has the following main features:

Information Control

Information which is vital to the understanding of the story is presented in an easily assimilated manner and is repeated when necessary. Difficult allusion and metaphor are avoided and cultural backgrounds are made explicit.

Structure Control

Most of the structures used in the Readers will be familiar to students who have completed an elementary course of English. Other grammatical features may occur, but their use is made clear through context and reinforcement. This ensures that the reading, as well as being enjoyable, provides a continual learning situation for the students. Sentences are limited in most cases to a maximum of three clauses and within sentences there is a balanced use of adverbial and adjectival phrases. Great care is taken with pronoun reference.

Vocabulary Control

There is a basic vocabulary of approximately 1,600 words. Help is given to the students in the form of illustrations, which are closely related to the text.

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A Note About This Story

This story takes place in England and Italy in 1921. At this time, when people travelled abroad, they went by ferry across the English Channel and then by train. It took about three days to travel from England to the Mediterranean coast.

Telephones were not used very much at this time. Messages were sent by letter or telegram.

The ladies in this story go to stay in a beautiful, medieval Italian castle by the sea. They rent the castle, San Salvatore, for the month of April. This means that they paid the owner of the castle some money to stay there. This money was for the servants and the rooms in the castle. The ladies had to buy their own food and pay for their ferry and train tickets.

The ladies find that the gardens of San Salvatore are very beautiful. In April, many beautiful flowers and trees bloom in Italy. Soon, Mrs Wilkins, Mrs Arbuthnot, Mrs Fisher and Lady Caroline believe that San Salvatore is a magic and enchanted place. Everyone will find love and happiness in this beautiful place.

The People in This Story



Lottie Wilkins
is a young woman. She is
married to Mellersh
Wilkins, but she is
unhappy.



Rose Arbuthnot
is a young woman.
She is married to
Frederick Arbuthnot.
She is not happy.



Mrs Fisher is an old
woman. Her husband is
dead and she has a lame
leg. She has to use a stick
to help her walk.



Lady Caroline Dester
is a rich and beautiful
young woman. She has left
London to get away from
the many young men who
want to marry her.



Mr Briggs is a young Englishman. He is the owner of San Salvatore.



Mellersh Wilkins is Lottie Wilkins' husband. He is a solicitor in London.



Frederick Arbuthnot is Rose Arbuthnot's husband. He is a writer. The Arbuthnots live in London.



These are the servants at San Salvatore. **Francesca** is the maid. **Beppo** looks after the house and the horses. **Constanza** is the cook. **Domenico** is the gardener.

The Advertisement

It was a cold afternoon in February. The streets of London were wet and dirty.

Mrs Wilkins was standing at the window of her club¹. Mrs Lottie Wilkins was tall and thin. Her clothes were dull and old-fashioned². Mrs Wilkins looked down at the crowded street. It was raining again. It was February in London!

Mrs Wilkins' club was not very comfortable, but it was cheap. So Mrs Wilkins sometimes ate lunch there. When she was in the club, she forgot her husband. She forgot her dull life with him in Hampstead³.

Mrs Wilkins did not want to go home this afternoon. She turned away from the window and sat down at a long table. The table was covered with newspapers. Mrs Wilkins picked up *The Times*.

Mrs Wilkins looked at the advertisements on the front page. Her eyes stopped at the words "To Let"⁴.

To Lovers of Sunshine and Flowers

TO LET

for the month of April,
a small Italian castle near the sea

Write to 'Z', Box 100, *The Times*

April in Italy! Sunshine and flowers! Lottie Wilkins sighed⁵. She had £90 in the bank. She had saved the money, penny by penny. But should she spend it on a holiday?

Mrs Wilkins put down the newspaper and went back to the window.

Mrs Wilkins had been married for two years. She had not spent a day away from her husband.

Her husband, Mellersh Wilkins, was a successful solicitor⁶. But it was not easy to live with him. Often, Lottie Wilkins made him angry. Sometimes she forgot things, then Mellersh Wilkins became very angry indeed.

Mrs Wilkins looked at her watch. She had to go and buy some fish for dinner. She turned to leave.

A sweet-faced young woman was reading *The Times* now. Her name was Mrs Rose Arbuthnot. Mrs Arbuthnot and her husband also lived in Hampstead. Mrs Wilkins had seen her there.

As Mrs Wilkins reached the table, Mrs Arbuthnot looked up. She smiled. Then, shy, pale Lottie Wilkins did a very surprising thing. She sat down opposite Rose Arbuthnot and spoke quickly.

'Did you see the advertisement?' Mrs Wilkins asked. 'The one about the castle? The castle in Italy? Did you read it? I'm sure you did!'

'Why, yes, I did,' Mrs Arbuthnot answered slowly.

'I would love to go to Italy, wouldn't you?' Mrs Wilkins said. Her big, grey eyes were very excited.

'Yes, of course I would,' Mrs Arbuthnot answered. 'But it's impossible, I'm afraid.'

'Oh, no!' Mrs Wilkins said. 'If you want something strongly enough you sometimes get it!'

Mrs Wilkins leant across the table.

'Why don't we try?' she whispered. 'Let's rent the castle together!'

'But we don't know each other . . . ' Mrs Arbuthnot began.

'It doesn't matter,' Mrs Wilkins said. 'We'll soon be friends. Everyone needs a holiday – even from a husband.

'Perhaps especially from a husband,' Mrs Wilkins added sadly.

Rose Arbuthnot thought of her own husband. She had married Frederick Arbuthnot when she was twenty. They loved each other then. But things had changed.

Frederick Arbuthnot was now a successful author. He wrote clever, amusing books. They were stories about bad, but beautiful women.

Mr Arbuthnot's books were very popular, but Mrs Arbuthnot did not read them.

Mrs Arbuthnot spent her time helping poor people. There were often days when Mr and Mrs Arbuthnot did not see each other. Mrs Arbuthnot's sweet, round face always looked sad.

'I couldn't possibly leave . . . ' Mrs Arbuthnot began.

'I'm sure you could!' said Mrs Wilkins. 'I can see us there. I can see us in that lovely garden. Think of it – April in Italy. We'll be so happy there. Why don't we write and find out more?'

'Yes, perhaps I will write,' Mrs Arbuthnot answered slowly. 'I could find out about the rent . . . '

Mrs Arbuthnot stood up. She walked slowly to the writing-desk and sat down. She wrote a short letter to 'Z', Box 100.

The two young women left the club in silence. Outside, they said goodbye. Mrs Arbuthnot promised to post the letter on her way home.



'Why don't we try? Let's rent the castle together!'

Mrs Wilkins went to buy the fish for dinner. And Mrs Arbuthnot went back to her lonely house.

2

Making Plans for a Holiday

The owner of the castle in Italy was a young Englishman. His name was Thomas Briggs. He answered Mrs Arbuthnot's letter at once.

The castle had beds for eight people. The rent was £60 for the month. Half of this rent must be paid in advance.

£60! £60 for one month! It was too much. Far too much. Mrs Arbuthnot and Mrs Wilkins could not believe it.

Mrs Wilkins had £90. Could she spend most of it on a holiday? No. Her husband, Mellersh Wilkins, would not allow⁷ it.

Mrs Arbuthnot did not tell her husband about the castle. She went to her bank. She took out £60. Then she went with the money to Mr Brigg's house.

Thomas Briggs liked pretty women. He liked Mrs Arbuthnot's dark hair and eyes.

'I am sure you'll be happy at the castle,' he said. 'It's called San Salvatore. It's a beautiful place. You will love it there.'

So Mrs Arbuthnot gave him the £60. Thomas Briggs gave her a receipt⁸.

'Now I'm richer,' he said, 'and you're happier. I've got the

money and you've got the castle. San Salvatore is beautiful in April. The gardens are full of flowers. You will be another flower in the garden.'

But Mrs Wilkins still had the problem of money. She had to pay half of the rent. Also she had to pay her fare to Italy and she had to pay for food. She could not ask her husband for money. He liked her to save money, not spend it.

So Mrs Arbuthnot and Mrs Wilkins put another advertisement in *The Times*. They wanted two other women to go with them to San Salvatore. They would all share the expenses⁹.

Two people answered the advertisement. One was a young woman. Her name was Lady Caroline Dester. Her family was one of the oldest and richest in England.

But Lady Caroline was unhappy and bored¹⁰. She wanted a holiday. She loved Italy, but she hated hotels. So she was very pleased when she read the advertisement about San Salvatore.

Mrs Arbuthnot and Mrs Wilkins liked Lady Caroline. They invited her to stay at the castle with them.

The second answer to the advertisement was from an old lady. Mrs Arbuthnot and Mrs Wilkins went to her house. Her name was Mrs Fisher. Mrs Fisher was a widow. She was lame and had to use a stick when walking. But she said that she would be no trouble. She just wanted to sit in the sun and remember the past. Mrs Fisher also said that she wanted references¹¹.

'Why do you want references?' Mrs Wilkins asked in surprise. 'Surely they are not necessary.'

Mrs Arbuthnot stood up. She spoke coldly and clearly.

'References are not necessary,' she said. 'I don't think you



'I don't think you will be happy with us.'

will be happy with us.'

Mrs Fisher thought quickly. She liked getting her own way¹². She wanted to go to San Salvatore. When she was there, she would give the orders.

'Very well,' Mrs Fisher replied. 'No references. I shall see you at San Salvatore in April.'

Mrs Arbuthnot and Mrs Wilkins left Mrs Fisher's dark house. They got on the bus to go back to their homes. They did not speak for a long time.

'I don't like Mrs Fisher,' said Mrs Wilkins. 'I wish she wasn't coming with us.'

'I think Mrs Fisher is a lonely old woman,' Mrs Arbuthnot replied. 'San Salvatore will be good for her.'

'You are right,' Mrs Wilkins said. 'Mrs Fisher needs San Salvatore too. Mrs Fisher will change at San Salvatore. I'm sure she will.'

Mrs Arbuthnot and Mrs Wilkins decided to travel to Italy together. They planned to reach San Salvatore on 30th March. Lady Caroline and Mrs Fisher were arriving on 2nd April. By then, everything would be ready for them at the castle.

The weather in March was cold and wet.

As the days went by, Mrs Arbuthnot became more and more worried. Mrs Arbuthnot was an unhappy woman. She was not used to enjoying herself. She was afraid of change. Now she was planning a month's holiday in Italy. A whole month of pleasure!