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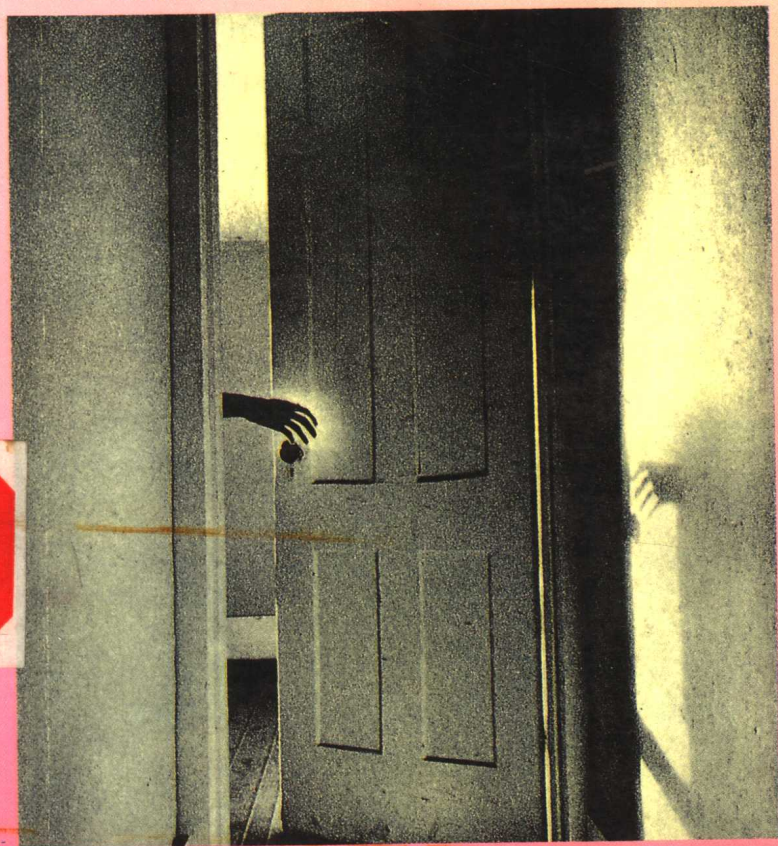
英语简易读物

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# 悬念

Simply Suspense

弗兰克·斯托克顿 等著 FRANK STOCKTON and Others



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悬念

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# 悬念

## Simply Suspense

这是三个充满刺激的小故事。三个人呆在一个非常神秘的地方，那里随时都可能发生危险。这三个人应该怎样应付惊心动魄的场面？又有谁能给他们提供帮助？等待他们的将会是福，还是祸？真令人悬念不绝

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## ABOUT THE AUTHORS

Frank Stockton was born in Philadelphia in 1834. He wrote many stories, some of them about the sea. He wrote *The Lady or the Tiger?* in 1884. Later, somebody made it into a film. Stockton lived in West Virginia and died in 1902.

Stacey Aumonier was born in England in 1887 and lived mostly in London. He wrote many short stories but he was a painter and an actor too. He died quite young in 1928.

Alfred Burrage was born in 1889 and also lived in London. He wrote many books of short stories. Readers in America liked *The Waxwork* very much, so he made it into a play for television in 1951. He died in 1956.

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FRANK STOCKTON

***Miss Bracegirdle's Night Of Fear*** 16

STACEY AUMONIER

***The Waxwork*** 30

ALFRED BURRAGE

Retold by J. Y. K. Kerr  
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published in 1884, 'Miss Bracegirdle's Night of Fear'

was first published as *Miss Bracegirdle Does Her Duty and Other Stories* in 1923

and 'The Waxwork' was first published as *Someone in the Room* in 1931

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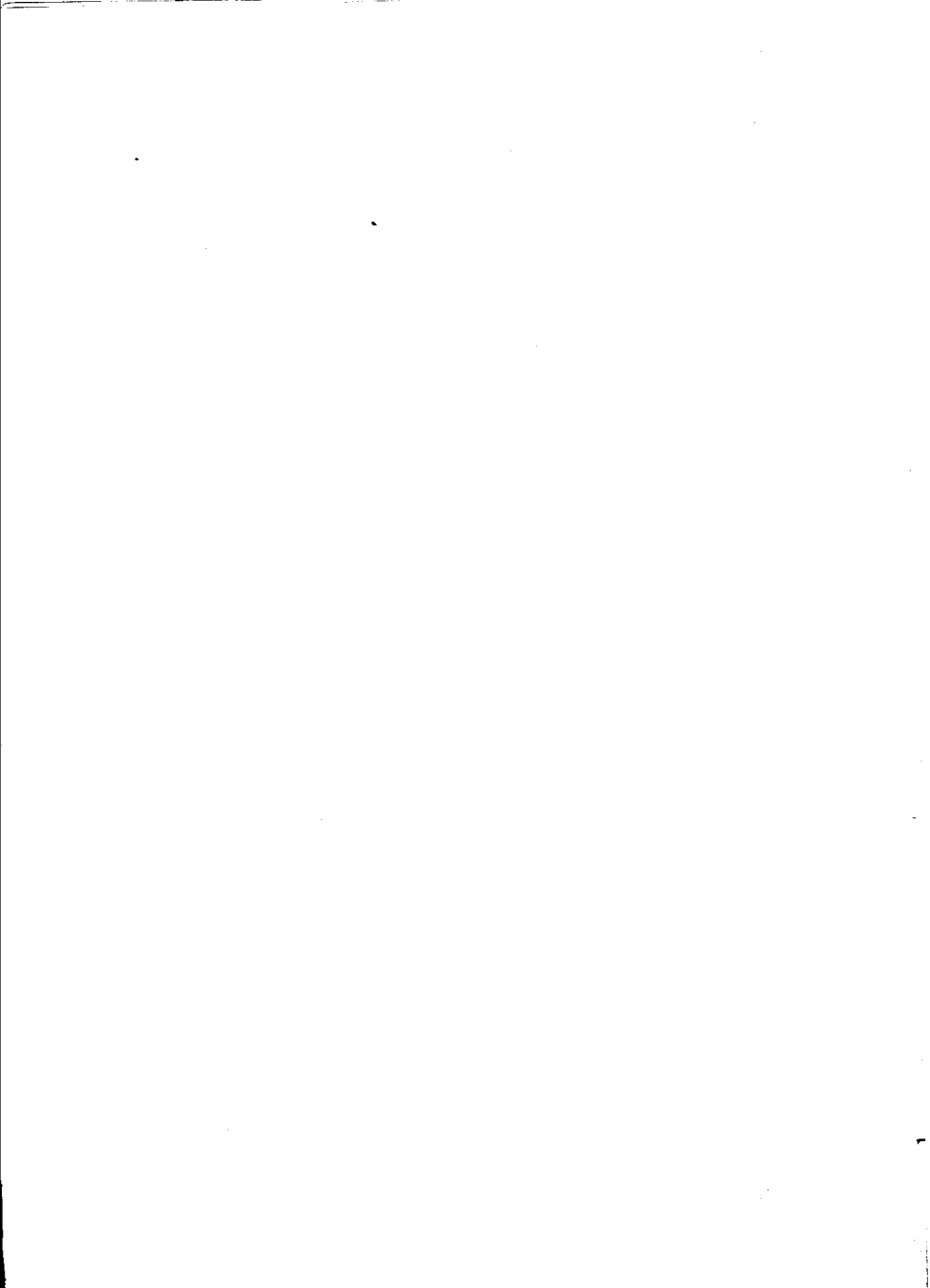
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## *Simply Suspense*





## The Lady or the Tiger?

Many, many years ago there was a **king** in a far country. He was famous, he was strong and he was very clever. But in his country he had many wrongdoers. The King was unhappy about this but how can you stop people from doing wrong? It is not easy. He thought about this difficult question for a long time but he could not find the answer.

Suddenly, one day, he had a good **idea**. He spoke to his people and told them to build a big stadium in the centre of the city.

'It must be very big and very beautiful,' he told them.

So the people worked hard for many months.

One day, the building was finished. The stadium was ready. Inside it, there were places for five thousand people. Everyone was very excited about this beautiful new building. Some wanted to watch games in the stadium. Others wanted to have dancing and singing. But what did the King want? No one knew.

The day of the opening came. Everyone ran to the stadium to get a place inside. The people got more excited when the King arrived. They were all quiet, waiting. First, he took his place. Then, he stood up and spoke.

'My people, my friends,' he said. 'Firstly I want to thank all the workers for their good work. We now have a beautiful stadium and it is very well built. Secondly, I know that many of you want to see games and dancing here. But this stadium is going to be different. It is not going to be a place for having a good time. It is going to be a place for wrongdoers. If one of you does something wrong, we are going to bring him to this place. There he must stand in the middle of this stadium in front of us all.'

'Now, do you all see those two doors, coloured blue, at the

far end of the stadium? They look the same, perhaps. But they are not. Behind one door, I am going to put a dangerous animal, a **tiger**. Behind the other door, there is going to be a beautiful **lady**. The wrongdoer must **choose** one of these doors. If he opens the wrong door, he finds the tiger. It jumps out and kills him. If he opens the other door, he finds the beautiful young woman. She is to be his wife. They must **marry immediately**, right here in the stadium before our eyes. After that, they can live happily with us as husband and wife. So each wrongdoer must choose very carefully. Before he chooses, he – and we – cannot know if he is going to live or die. As soon as he opens one of those two doors, we all know immediately. That is my idea. So tell me, my friends, is it a good idea or is it not?’

‘It is good, O King, it is very good,’ the people answered. But they were quiet. They were afraid.

‘Thank you,’ said the King. ‘Now go home. Come to the stadium again at the same time next week. Then you can watch the first wrongdoer make his choice. Every week from now on, a different man is going to choose: to live, if he is lucky, or to die, if he is not.’

From that day, the people came every week to the stadium to watch a different wrongdoer. Sometimes, he opened the right blue door and the beautiful lady came out. Then there was singing and dancing. Everyone threw flowers down to the lucky people and went home happily. But at other times, the wrongdoer opened the wrong door. Immediately, a big tiger ran out into the stadium and jumped on the unlucky man. In a few minutes, the tiger killed him in front of all the watching people. When he lay dead in the centre of the stadium, the people went home sadly. They took their flowers with them. It is interesting that in a short time the number of wrongdoers in the country got much smaller. No one wanted



*If the wrongdoer opens the wrong door, he finds the tiger. It jumps out and kills him.*

to stand in the middle of the stadium and make that difficult choice.

Now, there is another important **person** in this story. The King had only one child, a daughter. She was very beautiful. She had green eyes and long red hair and she moved as quickly as a cat. She too was strong and clever – as strong and clever as her father. She did not smile often. But when she smiled, people were happy. When she was angry, everyone was afraid. They knew that at those times she was a very dangerous young woman. Her picture was in every home. Men, women and children followed her when she went walking in the streets of the city. They waited to see her famous smile and sometimes they were lucky.

One day, she was out walking in a city park when she saw a young man. He was a gardener and the park was where he worked. He was very good-looking. He was tall and strong. He had dark blue-black hair and a dark moustache. When he laughed, you could see his beautiful white teeth. The King's daughter stopped and looked at him closely. She thought that he was the most beautiful man in the world. She began to talk with him and liked him more and more. The young man could not understand. Why did the King's daughter want to talk to him? He was not important. He was only the King's gardener. But he could not take his eyes off her. As soon as he looked into her big green eyes and saw her smile, he was in love. But he knew that this love was very dangerous. He was not a rich man, not from a rich family. He could never marry the daughter of the King.

But the two young lovers knew that they must meet again. They started to meet every day, at times when no one could see them. Every day, their love was stronger and stronger. They were very happy. Then one day the King found them together, there in the city gardens. His daughter was in the



*The princess thought that the gardener was the most beautiful man in the world.*



*Then one day the King found them together, there in the city gardens. His daughter was in the young man's arms.*

young man's arms. The King was very, very angry. He called his men. Immediately, they took the young man away and shut him in a dark, dirty room. They gave him only bread and water to eat. Now the King's daughter could not see her lover any more. The young man lay in the dark. He knew that he was a wrongdoer and in much danger from the King.

Now, we know that the King's daughter was a strong young woman and that she was very clever. When her father's men took her lover away, she too saw the danger immediately. She knew very well what was going to happen

next. So, early in the morning, she went to the stadium. No one saw her go. She spoke to the workers there and gave them some money.

'Which room is the tiger in?' she asked.

They told her.

'And which girl is going to be behind the other door?'

The workers did not want to answer. They were afraid.

'I must know,' said the King's daughter. 'Who is she?'

'She is the daughter of your father's driver', the workers answered.

The King's daughter knew her well: a young and beautiful girl with rich brown hair. But the King's daughter did not like her. She began to think hard. 'If my lover chooses the wrong door, he dies. But if he chooses the right door, he marries this cheap little thing, this driver's child. And I lose him - to her! So I too must choose . . .'

That afternoon, the King called all his people back to the stadium again. His men brought the young man from the dark room. There he stood, in the middle of the stadium, tired, hungry and afraid. The King sat in his place above the people and his daughter sat next to him. She did not move. Her face showed nothing.

Then the King stood and spoke to his people. 'You all know this gardener, my friends. And you know why he is here. He was the lover of my daughter. For many weeks, I did not know that; but I know it now. What happens to a wrongdoer in our country? That too we know. He must choose: the lady or the tiger. If he opens the wrong door, he must fight the tiger. If he opens the right door, he must marry the lady. So now choose, young man. Choose very carefully if you want to live and not die.'

The young man stood quietly and listened to the King's words. But his eyes were not on the King. They were on the



*Her eyes told him something. She looked quickly at her hand. Her finger moved a little to the left.*



face of the King's daughter. She had no smile for him today. But he looked at her eyes. Her eyes told him something. She looked down quickly at her hand. Then she looked up again. He saw her smallest finger move a little to the left. And immediately he knew: the door to open was the door on the left! He turned and walked very slowly to the left-hand door. All the people watched him, without a sound. He put out his hand and opened the door . . .

But here the story ends. Remember that the King's daughter was a clever young woman. She was in love but she was angry too. Did she want her lover to meet the tiger – a fight that he must lose? Did she want him to die? Or did she want him to live and have another beautiful woman for his wife? To give him this other woman, in place of her? We do not know what ideas were at work inside her beautiful head.

Tell me, what do you think? Which did she choose? What was behind that door: the lady or the tiger?