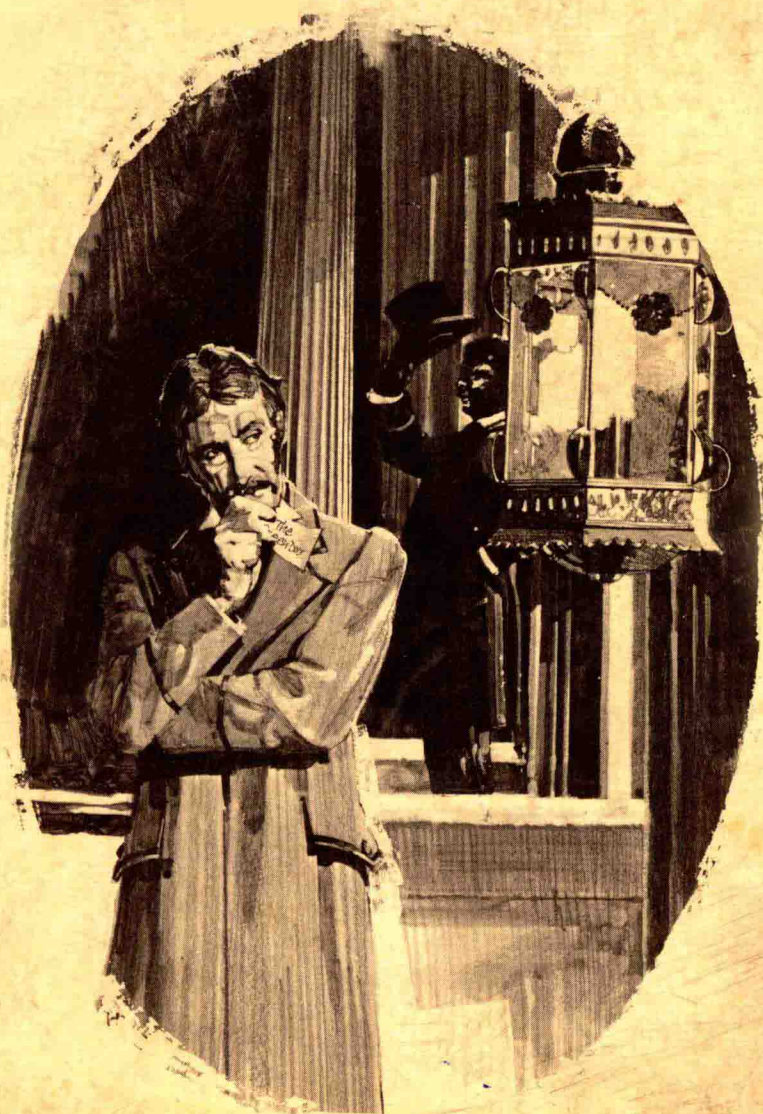


North American Short Stories 1

Robert and Jane Stevenson



North American Short Stories *Book 1*

Robert M. Stevenson
Jane L. Stevenson

NELSON

Thomas Nelson and Sons Ltd.
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Sunbury-on-Thames Middlesex
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29 Jalan Bangau Singapore 28

Thomas Nelson (Australia) Ltd.
19-39 Jeffcott Street West Melbourne Victoria 3003

Thomas Nelson and Sons (Canada) Ltd.
81 Curlew Drive Don Mills Ontario

Thomas Nelson (Nigeria) Ltd.
8 Ilupeju By-pass PMB 21303 Ikeja Lagos

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First published 1976
Reprinted 1978, 1979

ISBN 0 17 555090 5

Designed by J. Smith

Printed in Hong Kong

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Acknowledgments

The adaptations of the following stories included in this book are published by special arrangement with the United States Information Agency, Washington, D.C.

"The Luck of Roaring Camp" and "Mliss" by Bret Harte. Adapted by Cryssie A. Hotchkiss. From *Golden Trails*, a Ladder Classic Edition published by Popular Library, Inc. Copyright 1965.

"The Green Door" by O. Henry. Adapted by Elinor Chamberlain. From O. Henry's *American Scenes*, a Ladder Edition published by Ballantine Books, Inc. Copyright 1965.

"Rip Van Winkle" by Washington Irving, a Ladder Edition published by Ballantine Books. Copyright 1961.

All of the exercises are the original work of the authors.

Introduction

The exercises in this book were prepared for intensive reading practice. This means that the student must read and prepare each assignment thoroughly and carefully at home, paying particular attention to vocabulary and the structures in which this vocabulary is contained.

The format of the exercises is, for the most part, the same for all lessons. The first exercise presents multiple-choice questions which the student can answer correctly only if he has read the selection with care.

These should be checked one by one in class, with the class correcting any wrong answers. In the event of a general disagreement over the correct answer, the teacher may ask one student to check the reading text again for the exact answer, while the rest of the class goes on to the next question. When the student has found the sentence or sentences that contain the correct answer, the class may return to that question while the student reads out the pertinent portion of the text to his classmates.

The second exercise provides the student with the opportunity to deal with the main ideas of the reading selections in his own words, by answering questions that require free responses. The teacher may also find these questions useful to assign for composition, with a class that has already had some directed practice in writing English sentences and short paragraphs.

The third exercise requires the student to recognize synonyms for an italic word or italic words in sentences taken from the reading text, or slightly adapted. The correct synonym has to be chosen from among four possible choices for each sentence. This exercise may be done in class or assigned as written homework. The teacher may also ask that, for homework, the student re-writes the sentences using the synonyms.

The fourth exercise presents the student with a word study frame based on vocabulary items taken from the reading assignment, and setting out variations of the same items under the headings of adjective, noun, verb and adverb. Following the frame are illustrative sentences using each of the forms found in the chart. This is an extremely valuable exercise for the student, not only because it expands his useable vocabulary, but because it gives him a feeling for the way the

different forms fit and "work" in English sentences. The teacher should read the words and illustrative sentences in class, and have individual students point out the form of the word in each sentence and what function it serves.

At the end of the fourth exercise, the student is checked on his ability to use the correct form of the words studied in the word chart and illustrative sentences. This may be done in class, or assigned as written homework, once the teacher has worked through the word chart and illustrative sentences with the students in class.

The authors of this collection have used these short stories and the exercises in their own classes at the University of Isfahan for several years with gratifying success. The stories are always popular with students as well as with teachers.

Isfahan
September 1975

Robert M. Stevenson
Jane L. Stevenson

O. Henry

O. HENRY was born in Greensboro, North Carolina, on September 11, 1862. His real name was William Sidney Porter. He worked from 1877 to 1882 in his uncle's drugstore and then went back to Texas to herd sheep on a ranch. While serving as teller in an Austin bank, he began contributing humorous items and stories to newspapers and magazines. Accused of embezzling funds, he fled to South America. Upon his return, to be at the bedside of his dying wife, he was arrested and sentenced to the federal penitentiary, Columbus, Ohio, where he remained three years and three months. During his long evenings as prison drug clerk, he experimented with writing. His first story under his famous pseudonym was published in 1899.

In 1902, he moved to New York, where he lived obscurely despite his sensational success. His first book was *Cabbages and Kings* (1904); his most famous collection was *The Four Million* (1906), stories about life in New York City, which then had a population of four million.

Later books utilized themes and material drawn from the West and from South America. Porter boasted that he "had never written a filthy line".

He died on June 5, 1910.

In this collection he is represented by his story "The Green Door".

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The Green Door

by O. Henry

Let us think about adventure. You are walking along Broadway. You are looking into the shop windows and you are deciding which theater to go to. You are asking yourself, Do I want something to make me laugh, or something to make me feel sad?

Suddenly a hand is placed on your arm. You turn to look deep into the eyes of a beautiful woman, wonderful in jewels and richly dressed. Quickly she puts into your hand a piece of hot — very hot — bread and butter. She cuts a small piece of cloth from your coat. She speaks one word and it means nothing to you. Then quickly she runs down a side street, looking back fearfully over her shoulder.

That would be pure adventure. Would you accept it?

No. Your face would turn red. You would drop the bread and butter. You would walk straight along with one hand over the hole in your coat. This you would do, if you are not one of the very few in whom the pure spirit of adventure is not dead.

There have never been many adventurers. You can read stories about men called adventurers. But they were really businessmen. There was something they wanted — a lady, or money, or a country, or honor. And so they got it. But a true adventurer is different. He starts without any special purpose. He is ready for anything he may meet.

There have been many half-adventurers. And they were great men. History is rich with their stories. But each of them had a special purpose. They were not followers of true adventure.

In the big city of New York, Romance and Adventure are always waiting. As we walk along the street, they are watching

us. We look up suddenly and see a face in a window. The face seems to interest us strangely. Or in a quiet street, we hear a cry of fear and pain coming from a house where no one lives. A cab takes us to a strange door, instead of to our own. The door opens and we are asked to enter. At every corner, eyes look toward us, or hands are raised, or fingers point. Adventure is offered.

But few of us are ready to accept. We are ready to do only the things we do every day. We wish to do only the things that everyone else does. We move on; and some day we come to the end of a long quiet life. Then we begin to think. Then, when it is too late, we are sorry that we have never known true Romance and Adventure.

Rudolf Steiner was a true adventurer. There were few evenings when he did not go out seeking something different. He was always interested in what might be waiting around the next corner. Sometimes adventure led him into strange places. Two times the cops arrested him. Again and again he discovered that he had lost all his money. One night his watch was taken from him. But he continued happily to accept every offer of adventure.

One evening Rudolf was walking slowly along a street in the older part of the city. Many people were walking along the street that night. Some were hurrying home. Others were going to have their dinner at some restaurant.

The adventurer was a pleasant and good-looking young man. By day, he worked in a music shop. *bad - ?*

He walked quietly and watchfully. *ordinary - ?*

He passed a busy restaurant and saw beside it an open door. Above the door a sign was hanging, a sign for a doctor's office. A very large black man stood at the door. He was strangely and brightly dressed in red and yellow. Quietly, he was offering small pieces of paper to those who passed by.

Rudolf had often seen such a thing before. The black man's small pieces of paper would have the name of the doctor in the office on the third floor. Usually Rudolf walked past without taking the paper that was offered. But tonight the paper was put into his hand very quickly. He kept it, smiling.

When he had walked on further, he looked down at the paper. Surprised, he turned it over, and looked again with interest. On one side there was nothing. On the other side were

three words: "The Green Door".

And then, three steps beyond, another man threw down the paper the black man had given him. Rudolf picked it up. There was a doctor's name, with the street and the number. This was what Rudolf had expected to find on his own piece of paper.

The young adventurer stopped at the corner to think. Then he went across the street, walked further, and returned across the street to the first side.

Now he again walked past the black man. Again he received a piece of paper. Ten steps away, he looked at it. There were the same words that had appeared on the first paper: "The Green Door". Three or four other pieces of paper were lying in the street where they had been dropped. He looked at them. Every one had the doctor's name on it.

Two times, now, Adventure had asked Rudolf to follow. He was ready.

He walked slowly back to where the big black man stood. This time as he passed, he received no paper. The papers were offered to some, but not to all who passed. It seemed to Rudolf that the large black face looked coldly at him.

The look was painful to Rudolf. It seemed to say that he had failed. It seemed to say that he was not a true adventurer.

Standing away from the crowd of people, the young man looked up at the building. He believed that his adventure must be somewhere inside. The building was five floors high. A small restaurant was on the ground floor.

On the floor above that was a hat shop. Above the hat shop was the doctor's office. Above this were several signs, of dressmakers, music teachers, and other doctors. On the top floor, people seemed to have furnished rooms.

Rudolf entered the door and walked quickly up.

On the second floor he stopped. The hall was not very well lighted. There were two gas lights, one far to his right, the other nearer, to his left.

He looked toward the nearer light and saw a green door.

For one moment he waited. Then he remembered the cold face of the black man at the door below. He walked straight to the green door, striking it loudly with his hand. Then he waited to see who would open the door.

In the moments that passed then, he could feel the quick

breath of true adventure. What might not be behind the wood of that green door! Bad men planning bad acts, or beauty in trouble, or death, or love — anything might be there.

A soft sound was heard, and the door slowly opened. A girl not yet twenty stood there. Her face was very white, and she was very weak. She put out one hand, and started to fall. Rudolf caught her and carried her inside and put her down on a bed.

He closed the door and looked around. It was very clean, but she was very poor. That was what he saw.

The girl lay with her eyes closed. But now she opened them, and the young man looked at her face. He had never seen it before, but he knew that it was a face he had always hoped to see someday. Her eyes were gray, her nose was small, her hair was brown. It was a face to make this a wonderful adventure. But her face was very thin and it had no color.

The girl looked at him and then smiled. "I fell, didn't I?" she asked. "That's what happens when you don't eat for three days."

"What!" cried Rudolf. "Wait till I come back."

He rushed out of the green door and down to the street. In twenty minutes he returned. Both arms were full of things from a food shop and from the restaurant. He put them on the table — bread and butter, cold meats, cakes, fish, milk and more.

"Only little fools," said Rudolf, "stop eating. You must not do things like that. Dinner is ready." He helped her to move to a chair at the table, and asked, "Is there a cup for the milk?"

"There, by the window," she answered.

He filled the cup. "Drink that first," he ordered. "And then you shall have something else. And may I be your guest?"

He moved another chair to the table and sat down.

A little color began to come into the girl's face. She started to eat like some small wild animal that has been without food for a long time. She seemed to think it was not strange that this young man was helping her. Her need had been so great that she was ready to accept any help.

But slowly, as her strength returned, she began to tell him her little story. There are a thousand stories like hers in the city every day. It was the shop girl's story — not enough pay,

illness, a lost job, lost hope. And then the adventurer at the green door.

But to Rudolf it was not a little story. It was a big story.

"And you suffered all that!" he said.

"It was really bad," said the girl.

"And you have no family or friends in the city?"

"None."

"I am all alone in the world, too," said Rudolf.

"I am glad of that," said the girl. And it pleased the young man to hear that she was glad he was alone.

Very suddenly her eyes closed. It was not easy for her to open them again. "I'm falling asleep," she said, "and I feel so good."

Rudolf rose and took his hat.

"Then I'll say good night. A long night's sleep will be fine for you."

He held out his hand and she took it and said, "Good night." But her eyes asked a question.

He answered with words. "I'm coming tomorrow to see how you are."

Then, when he was at the door, she asked, "How did you happen to come to my door?"

He looked at her for a moment and felt a sudden pain. What if those pieces of paper had been placed in some other man's hand? Quickly he decided that she must never know the truth. He must never let her know that he knew that she had taken such a strange way to call for help.

"I was looking for someone else," he said.

The last thing he saw was her smile.

Outside the door he stopped and looked around the hall. And then he went along the hall to the other end. He came back and went to the floor above, and walked to the far end of that hall. Every door in the house was painted green.

He went down to the street. The black man was there. Rudolf showed him the two pieces of paper with the words, "The Green Door".

"Why did you give these to me?" he asked.

"I give some of those and some with the doctor's name," the black man said. "I'm paid a dollar to give those."

"But what do they mean?" Rudolf asked.

The black man smiled. "There it is," he said. He pointed

his finger down the street. "But you are a little late."

Rudolf looked down the street. There he saw a theater, and over the theater there was a big sign in electric lights. It said, "The Green Door".

In a shop on the corner near his home, Rudolf stopped to buy a newspaper. As he stepped outside again he said to himself, "I know that it was planned that I should meet her. I know it."

For Rudolf Steiner was a true follower of Romance and Adventure.

COMPREHENSION QUESTIONS

EXERCISE 1 For each question, write down the letter that corresponds to the correct answer. Choose only one.

- 1 How does the author think most people would accept an offer of adventure?
 - (a) They would grow angry but curious.
 - (b) They would walk straight after the beautiful woman.
 - (c) They would be frightened and run away.
 - ~~(d) They would grow embarrassed and reject the offer.~~
- 2 In what way does the author say a true adventurer is different from a businessman?
 - ~~(a) He is ready for anything he may meet.~~
 - (b) He is not interested in money.
 - (c) He enjoys excitement whereas a businessman does not.
 - (d) A true adventurer is romantic, whereas a businessman is dull.
- 3 When do most people wish that they had known romance and adventure?
 - (a) When they are young.
 - (b) When it involves a beautiful lady or handsome man.
 - (c) When something interests them strangely.
 - ~~(d) When they reach the end of a long quiet life.~~
- 4 Which of the following had not happened to Rudolf Steiner?
 - ~~(a) He had met a beautiful woman waiting on a corner.~~
 - (b) His watch had been stolen.

- (c) He had lost all his money.
 - (d) He had twice been arrested.
- 5 What was the black man who stood at the open door beside the restaurant doing?
- (a) He was standing beside a sign for a doctor's office.
 - (b) He was encouraging people to eat at the restaurant.
 - ~~(c) He was handing small pieces of paper to passers-by.~~
 - (d) He was walking quietly and watchfully back and forth in front of an open door.
- 6 Why was Rudolf surprised to find the words "The Green Door" on the paper which was handed to him?
- (a) Because the door which he had passed was not green.
 - (b) Because he had expected to find the name of the doctor on it.
 - (c) Because the busy restaurant did not have a green door.
 - ~~(d) Because these words were written only on one side.~~
- 7 What was on the paper that another man threw down on the sidewalk?
- ~~(a) The doctor's name and address.~~
 - (b) The address of "The Green Door".
 - (c) "The Green Door" on one side and the doctor's name on the other.
 - (d) The same thing that was on Rudolf's paper.
- 8 Why did Rudolf think that adventure had asked him to follow?
- ~~(a) Because of the mysterious way that the black man handed out the pieces of paper.~~
 - (b) Because he could find no green door.
 - (c) Because it seemed as though only his pieces of paper had "The Green Door" on them.
 - (d) Because he had been invited to pass through an unknown green door.
- 9 When Rudolf passed the black man for a third time, why did the latter seem to look coldly at him?
- (a) Because the black man had grown suspicious of Rudolf.
 - ~~(b) Because the black man seemed to think that Rudolf was making fun of him.~~

- (c) Because the black man thought that Rudolf was taking all his pieces of paper away from him.
 - (d) Because Rudolf was refusing an offer of adventure.
- 10 Which of the following words does not describe the girl who opened the door?
- (a) Weak and pale.
 - (b) Young.
 - ~~(c) Frightened.~~
 - (d) Poor.
- 11 Why did the girl start to fall when she opened the door?
- (a) She was startled to see Rudolf.
 - ~~(b) She was weak from not eating.~~
 - (c) She wanted him to fall in love with her.
 - (d) The door was very heavy.
- 12 How did the girl eat?
- (a) Quickly but politely.
 - (b) Slowly but steadily.
 - ~~(c) Hungrily like a starved animal.~~
 - (d) Greedily and selfishly.
- 13 Why was the girl so poor?
- (a) Because she had never been able to find work.
 - (b) Because all of her money was spent on medicine.
 - (c) Because her family never sent her any money.
 - ~~(d) Because she had been ill and lost her job.~~
- 14 What explanation did Rudolf give for coming to her door?
- ~~(a) He said that he had been looking for someone else.~~
 - (b) He said that fate had sent him to her door.
 - (c) He told her about the black man and the piece of paper.
 - (d) He said that he had wanted to meet her.
- 15 What did Rudolf discover when he looked around the halls of the second and third floors?
- (a) That the walls of the halls were painted green.
 - ~~(b) That all of the doors were green.~~
 - (c) That one door on each floor was painted green.
 - (d) That the piece of paper referred to all the doors in the building.

- 16 Why did the black man hand out pieces of paper?
- (a) Because he enjoyed causing people to have adventures.
 - (b) He didn't know why.
 - ~~(c) Because he was paid to do so.~~
 - (d) Because he liked to have men meet the young girl.

QUESTIONS FOR DISCUSSION AND WRITING PRACTICE

EXERCISE 2 The following questions may be used for classroom discussion, for written homework, or for both.

- 1 What does the author mean by a "true adventurer?"
- 2 Why does he say that a businessman does not fit this description?
- 3 Why does the author say that few people are ready to accept adventure?
- 4 What did Rudolf think the black man's cold look meant?
- 5 Describe the building which Rudolf wished to enter.
- 6 Give the reasons for the weakness of the girl behind the green door.
- 7 Why did Rudolf decide that the girl must never know how he had come to her door?
- 8 Do you consider yourself to be a "true adventurer" or not? Explain.
- 9 Do you think that events such as those in "The Green Door" happen by plan or chance?

SYNONYMS

EXERCISE 3 For each question, write down the letter that corresponds to the correct synonym for the word(s) in *italics*.

- 1 Then quickly she runs down a side street, looking back *fearfully* over her shoulder.
 (a) bravely (b) frightenedly (c) frighteningly (d) awfully

- 2 A true adventurer starts without any special *purpose*.
(a) goal (b) promise (c) intend (~~d~~) reasoning
- 3 He is ready for anything he may *meet*.
(a) encounter (b) introduce (~~c~~) found (d) see
- 4 They were not *followers* of true adventure.
(a) behind (~~b~~) fellows (c) pursuers (d) chasers
- 5 Then, when it is too late, we *are sorry* that we have never known true Romance and Adventure.
(a) are painful (b) remorse (~~c~~) regret (d) ashamed
- 6 There were few evenings when he did not go out *seeking* something different.
(a) peeking (b) search (~~c~~) looking for (d) in request for
- 7 Again and again he *discovered* that he had lost all of his money.
(a) searched (b) invented (~~c~~) realize (d) found
- 8 He was *strangely* and brightly dressed in red and yellow.
(a) usually (b) oddly (~~c~~) different (d) foreign
- 9 The look was *painful* to Rudolf.
(a) annoyed (b) hurt (c) cut (~~d~~) distressing
- 10 Then he *remembered* the cold face of the black man at the door below.
(a) considered (b) referred (~~c~~) thought (d) recalled
- 11 He walked straight to the green door, *striking* it loudly with his hand.
(a) straightening (b) marking (~~c~~) hitting (d) blowing
- 12 Bad men *planning* bad acts, or beauty in trouble, or death, or love — anything might be there.
(a) plotting (b) mapping (~~c~~) suggesting (d) imagine
- 13 "I fell, didn't I?" she said. "That's what *happens* when you don't eat for three days."
(a) suddenly (~~b~~) takes on (c) occurs (d) chances
- 14 A long night's sleep will be *fine* for you.
(a) rich (b) thin (~~c~~) good (d) small
- 15 Outside the door he stopped and looked around the *hall*.
(a) hill (b) entrance (~~c~~) large room (d) passageway.