

The Thief Lord - Cornelia Funke

Lesson 2

Read the extract below:

Victor was late. He'd been sick for two whole days and had only just managed to drag himself out of bed, reluctantly, for his dreaded meeting with the Hartliebs. It was already three o'clock when he finally stepped into the noble lobby of the Hotel Gabrielli Sandwirth. He'd last been there just a month before. He had been following someone, wearing a full black beard and a rather horrendous pair of glasses. He had hardly recognized himself in the mirror. Today he wore his own face, which always gave him the strange sensation of being smaller.

"Buonasera," he said as he approached the reception. A head appeared from behind a massive flower arrangement. "Buonasera," the receptionist said, "what can I do for you?"

"My name is Victor Getz. I have an appointment with the Hartliebs," Victor gave an apologetic smile, "for which I am rather late. Could you please check if they are still in their room?"

"Of course." The lady tucked a strand of black hair behind her ear. "What do you think of the snow?" she asked. She let the word snow melt on her tongue like a delicious, creamy chocolate. Victor smiled as he noticed how her eyes kept straying toward the large windows and the snowflakes, which drifted past slowly.

"Hello, Signora Hartlieb," she said into the telephone, "there's a Signor Getz here to see you."

The Hartliebs had no time for the snow. Outside their window, San Giorgio Maggiore seemed to be floating on the lagoon as if it had just surfaced there. The view was so beautiful that Victor felt his heart ache. Esther and her husband, however, stood side by side with their backs to the window and only had eyes for him. Uneasily, Victor folded his hands behind his back.

Why hadn't he at least put on a mustache? That would have made lying so much easier. But the children had stolen all his wonderful beards.

"I'm glad you received my message. After trying to reach you for so many days, I had my doubts as to your being in Venice at all."

"I hardly ever leave the city," Victor answered. "I miss it too much as soon as I try to leave."

"Really!" Esther's eyebrows moved up and down as rapidly as a bouncing ball.

Amazing, Victor thought -- I could never do that.

"So, please, Signor Getz," Mr. Hartlieb was still as big as a house and nearly as white as the snowflakes drifting past outside, "could you tell us about your investigations?"

"My investigations, yes." Victor nervously bobbed up and down. "My findings are sadly quite clear. The little boy is no longer in the city, nor is his brother."

The Hartliebs exchanged a quick glance.

"Your rather unpleasant secretary already hinted at something like that," Max Hartlieb said, "but --"

Comprehension

Use the extract above to help you to answer the following questions:

1. How long had Victor been sick for?

2. When was Victor last at *Hotel Gabrielli Sandwirth*?

3. What do you think '*Buonasera*' means?

4. What was the weather like?

5. Why was Victor so uneasy?

6. How do we know that Victor is uneasy?

7. How would you feel if you were in Victor's situation?

8. If you had to disguise yourself, how would you do it?

9. How do you feel towards Victor in this extract?

10. How could Victor calm himself down?

Vocabulary

1. Uneasy
2. Refrain
3. Lens
4. Adjust
5. Protective
6. Coy
7. Brotherly
8. Barrel
9. Satisfy
10. Urge
11. Wonder
12. Overhear
13. Bystander
14. Instinctive
15. Confession
16. Cautiously
17. Expectations
18. Emerge
19. Removal
20. Immediate

HOMEWORK

Using the **work we did today as inspiration**, write a **diary entry** imagining you are **Victor** and you are **beginning an investigation**.

OR

Write a **short story** using **at least 5 new words** (above) that we learned from these chapters.