

Danger in the Sun

Antoinette Moses



About this Book

For the Student



Listen to the story and do some activities on your Audio CD



End of the listening excerpt



Talk about the story

ban • When you see the grey dot you can check the word in the glossary

For the Teacher



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Level 5 Structures

Modal verb <i>would</i>	Non-defining relative clauses
<i>I'd love to ...</i>	Present perfect continuous
Future continuous	<i>Used to / would</i>
Present perfect future	<i>Used to / used to doing</i>
Reported speech / verbs / questions	Second conditional
Past perfect	Expressing wishes and regrets
Defining relative clauses	

Structures from other levels are also included.

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MEET THE AUTHOR

When did you first know you wanted to write?

I can't remember a time when I didn't want to write. I first wrote a play, which I performed with my family at Christmas, when I was eight years old. Even when I did other things I always knew I was a writer and I was just filling in time until I could sit down and write.

You mention plays. Do you still write plays or just stories?

I write lots of stories for English language learners and I also write plays as I like the challenge of describing people through what they say and do. It's very different from writing fiction, but very exciting when you see actors playing characters you have invented.

How do you begin a story?

Well I don't wait for inspiration. Often I begin with an issue, for example something that makes me angry or worried. Then I think about the characters. Who would be involved in this issue? What kind of people are affected or get involved in it?

Why did you write this story?

I often begin with a "what if" situation. What if you arrived at the airport and there was no one to meet you. That's how I started this story. Then I got to know Jake and started to think about who he was and what he wanted. The story is always about character rather than plot.

Have you been to Greece?

I lived in Athens for four years and often go to Crete, which is a wonderful island. I know many of the places in the story and they are very dramatic. You can imagine things happening there.

BEFORE READING



- 1 The story, *Danger in the Sun*, takes place in Athens and on the island of Crete. How much do you know about Athens and Crete? Do the quiz and find out.



- Who was the city of Athens named after?
a a king b a goddess c a queen
- When were the first modern Olympic Games held in Athens?
a 1796 b 1886 c 1996
- What is the Parthenon?
a a castle b a park c a temple
- When was it built?
a 447-438 BC b 1430-1440 AD c 1110-1000 BC
- What is the Acropolis?
a a castle in Athens b a hill in Athens c a bridge in Athens
- What is the capital city of Crete?
a Melissa b Athens c Heraklion
- Which is the largest Greek island?
a Rhodes b Crete c Corfu

- 2 Choose one of the following subjects. Find out more about it. Then give a presentation to the class.

- The Acropolis
- The origins of the Olympic Games
- Athena
- The Parthenon

BEFORE READING



1 Match each job to the definitions below.

- | | |
|---|-----------|
| a high rock face often over the sea | 1 vines |
| b small rivers | 2 rundown |
| c a part of the coast where the land curves inwards | 3 ravines |
| d in bad condition | 4 islands |
| e a small green and black fruit that produces oil | 5 bay |
| f plants that produce grapes | 6 olive |
| g deep narrow valleys with steep sides | 7 cliff |
| h pieces of land surrounded by water | 8 streams |

2 Now try to fit them into the description of Crete from the story.

Crete is not what I expected. It's not like other **1**
It's bigger, for one thing and it keeps changing. The house in Panormou is on a steep **2** above a tiny **3** where the sea is deep green, but in other places there are just long beaches and the sea is an incredibly deep blue. As we drive south, it changes. There are little villages and deep **4** with racing **5** that remind me of home, and then miles of rocky mountainside that looks like the surface of the moon.

We're driving through a valley of **6** grape and **7** trees and a scattering of **8** houses when I see a familiar face.

3 Now try and find a picture of this place in the book.



4 In pairs choose a picture from the book and write a description. Then describe the picture to another pair. See if they can guess which picture it is.

5 Look quickly at the pictures in the book. Then answer the questions.

a What kind of story is it? Tick (✓).

Thriller Science fiction Horror Romance

b What do you think happens in the story? Tick (✓) two items.

a murder smuggling an accident at sea
 a disappearance

6 The main character in the story is a 15-year-old boy called Jake. Where is he in these pictures?



Invent a story to connect the pictures. Tell a partner.



7 Write your story and swap with another pair. What happens next? Continue their story.

BEFORE READING



1 Match the words from the story to the photographs.

- | | | | |
|-------------------|----------|------------|------------|
| a compass | c cliffs | e pottery | g cave |
| b earth paintings | d rope | f padlocks | h tabloids |



2 The words are all important to the story. Use each of the words above to complete the sentences.

- That morning, Susie Parsons made a vase.
- It was dark inside the
- Alex Wyatt used the readings to locate the place.
- The kidnappers tied Nat and Jake's hands and feet with
- The doors were locked and there were large on them.
- There are pictures of Phil Dawson in the every day.
- When they switched on the torch, they saw on the walls.
- They had to climb down the steep to escape.

3 Choose one of the sentences. Continue the story from there.

- 4 Scan pages 13 to 15 of the story to answer the questions below. Ask and answer with a partner.



- a In his fantasy, where is Jake standing with his father?
 - b What does Jake's father have a passion for?
 - c What is Jake's father's name?
 - d When was the last time Jake saw his father?
 - e Where is Jake's father supposed to meet him?
 - f What is terrible in Athens?
 - g Where is the Parliament in Athens?
 - h What can you see from Jake's hotel?
- 5 Listen to the extracts from the book. Then make predictions. Guess the answers to the questions.
- a Why hasn't Jake's father come to meet him? What has happened?
 - b What does Jake find in the hotel room?
 - c What do you think Natalie will be like?
 - d Where are they and what do they find inside?
 - e What will happen next?
- 6 Compare answers with a partner.





This is the fantasy[•]. I am in Athens with my father. Where? Maybe the Parthenon. Yes, I am standing in the middle of the Acropolis with my father. OK, I know you're not allowed to stand there because they are repairing[•] it. This is my fantasy, OK? So I'm there and although I've seen it a thousand times on posters and postcards, it seems quite different. It is the same, but not exactly the same. I love the place and how old it is and suddenly I understand why my father is an archaeologist. Then he looks at me and he sees all of this in my expression and I know he is really happy. I know that this is what he has always wanted – to share[•] his passion for Greece with his son.

“I guess you've been up here hundreds of times,” I say.

“Maybe dozens[•],” he replies. “In the old days it was free entry on Sundays and evenings when there was a full moon. We often came up here with a bottle of wine and we drank and toasted[•] the glories[•] of Ancient Greece.”

“In the old days,” I joke.

“Yeah,” he says. “When dinosaurs walked the earth.” It is our joke. We have jokes. We do things together.

I have many fantasies about my father, Alexander Wyatt. This is one of them.

- **dozens:** (here) many times
- **fantasy:** dream
- **glories:** great successes
- **repairing:** fixing
- **share:** enjoy with another person
- **toasted:** raised their glasses and honoured someone or thing

I have not seen my father for five years. I was ten when he left home. But here I am at Athens airport and, finally, after all this time we are going to have a holiday together. We will visit the Acropolis and he'll show me amazing things and we will have jokes together. Except...

Except I am here at Athens airport and he isn't. He isn't here to meet me and I don't know why.

WAITING

Why do you think Mr Wyatt is not there to meet his son?

Have you ever waited for someone who arrived very late or didn't turn up*?

How did you feel?

What did you do?

I take out the last email he sent me. "I am so pleased you're coming here at last. I'll be at the airport to meet you at 14.20." But now it is 15.30 and I'm standing in a crowd of people with cards saying 'Mr Jones' and 'Olympic Hotel' and I decide that I don't want to spend my holiday hanging around* Athens airport with a lot of strangers. What I want is my dad and just like every other time in my life when I've wanted him, he's not here and I feel really angry and fed up*.

- **fed up:** annoyed
- **hanging around:** waiting in; staying somewhere without doing anything
- **turn up:** arrive for an appointment

When I was ten and I wanted him, I used to tell myself stories. But I'm not ten any more and I am not in the mood* for stories. I am going to find my father and I'm going to tell him that when his only son comes to visit after five years he needs a very good excuse when he doesn't turn up. A very, very good excuse.

Then I act. I go to the information desk where a pretty, dark-haired girl smiles at me and says that she is sorry that my father is not there. She then says quite sharply* over the loudspeaker*: "Alexander Wyatt must come immediately to Information where his son Jake is waiting." And when he does not come, she looks worried and asks if I am OK. I tell her that I'm fine and that I'll go to the hotel and wait for him there. So she smiles again and says that the traffic in Athens is terrible and he must be delayed*.

I change some money and I get the metro to Syntagma Square which is where the Parliament is and also (as the nice girl at the information desk showed me) two minutes' walk from my hotel. According to my father, the best thing about the hotel is the view of the Acropolis from the roof. When I get there, I find that my father does have a room for us and that he has talked to the receptionist about my arrival and that he is happy that I am finally coming to Greece.

"I do not understand why he was not at the airport," the receptionist says and looks worried. "He left here three hours ago because he did not want to be late."



- **delayed:** stopped from arriving in time
- **I'm not in the mood:** I don't feel like; I don't want
- **loudspeaker:** piece of equipment that makes your voice or sounds louder
- **sharply:** in a determined and angry way

The receptionist gives me the key to our room and I go upstairs. When I go in, I find a small case and some clothes that must belong to the man that I call my father. But I don't know, because I haven't seen him for five years.

I feel as if I am in the room of a stranger. What makes me really angry is that I can hear my mother's voice in my head and she is saying: "You see, Jake, I was right. Your father doesn't care about you. You can't rely on[•] him." But I don't want to believe her. I want to believe that my father does care, but something unexpected has happened. So I tell myself if I go for a swim in the pool on the roof, then he will arrive and we'll go and visit the Acropolis and joke together like a father and a son.

So I go for a swim and there is a great view of the Acropolis which does look like a postcard, and different at the same time. But my father does not arrive. I ring his mobile phone again (and again and again) but it is not switched on[•]. Why? It doesn't make sense. I know my father wants to see me. Or is this all some terrible way of getting back at[•] my mother? No. That can't be it. My mother would be really happy to prove that my father was unreliable.



The reason I am here now is because after four years and ten months I discovered that every time my mother said: "Your father isn't interested in you," she was lying. I discovered this on my birthday when I woke up early and was the first to get to the post.

- **getting back at:** hurting someone for what they did in the past; taking revenge on
- **rely on:** trust
- **switched on:** turned on; with the power on



Lying on the hall carpet was a letter from my father. That's the same letter that I am reading now as I sit in a hotel in the middle of Athens and look at the linen jacket in the wardrobe and think: "That's my father's jacket. He wears linen jackets."

The letter says – I can tell you without reading it because I've read it so many times:

Dear Jake,

Happy birthday. Fifteen. I imagine you must be almost as tall as I am now, yet I still see you in my mind as the small boy in corduroy trousers that I last saw so many years ago. And I suppose you still don't want to hear from me, as your mother says in her letters, but I'm going to write to you again, just as I always do on your birthday and at Christmas because you are my son and I love you very much and miss you. I hope that one day you will be able to forgive me and we will meet up again. And maybe I can show you a little bit of Greece and we can begin to discover each other. So I hope that this year you won't send this letter back to me unread...

- **corduroy:** heavy soft cotton material cut in lines
- **forgive:** pardon
- **linen:** light natural cloth
- **miss:** feel sad because a person is not with you
- **suppose:** imagine
- **unread:** without reading it



And it was at this point that I started to shout at my mother and ask her what she had done and how could she have done it? And we had a huge row[•] which went on[•] for days. And my mother cried and said I didn't understand, and I told her that she didn't understand. My father wrote to me every year and I didn't know. I still can't forgive her. It was not as if my father was a criminal. He was an archaeologist who had an affair[•] with another young archaeologist and my mother found out and threw him out of the house. And she told him that he was never going to see me again. As if I was just something to use in a row. As if I didn't have feelings or wants. As if growing up thinking your father didn't care was OK. Which it wasn't.

- **had an affair:** had a romantic relationship with someone who is not your husband or wife
- **row:** fight; argument
- **went on:** continued

SECRETS

Jake's mum keeps his father's letters a secret from him.

Why do you think she does this?

Have you ever kept a secret from someone?

Why did you decide to do this?

After the rows I phoned my father and we had an amazing long talk. Then we emailed each other and he invited me to come to Greece for the summer. My mother was so angry she could hardly speak to me. So she decided to spend the summer at some yoga place in Scotland where she could find herself. Or that was what she said.

And so here I am in Greece at last. But I'm still without my father. And I have no idea where my mother is. I don't think she gave me the name of the yoga place, though I do remember she said it was very peaceful and it didn't even have a phone. And it is now about eight in the evening and I still don't know what has happened to my father.



At nine o'clock the receptionist thinks that maybe my father had an accident and he rings the police and asks them to contact the hospitals. But he is not in any hospital, so the receptionist thinks that maybe he met a friend and went for a drink. Is my father a drunk[•]? Is that what he is saying? But the receptionist says no, that is not what he is saying. It was a suggestion.

- **drunk:** someone who drinks too much alcohol

“Why don’t you go for a walk round the Plaka and enjoy the city? Then tomorrow morning I am sure he will be here,” he says.

So I walk round the Plaka looking at bits of old stone and I eat a cheese pie from a street vendor[•]. There are tourists eating dinner in little restaurants under canopies[•] of vines[•] and they all look so happy. I hate them and I hate my father. Why is he doing this to me? Then I go to bed and, in the morning, of course, he is not here. So the receptionist suggests that I talk to the tourist police.



The police station is incredibly noisy. It is full of shouting or crying tourists and the general scenario[•] seems to be that either the tourists have lost their money, passports, tickets, or all of these, or they have gone for a walk and can’t remember the name of their hotel. The tourist police are incredibly patient.

“But all my holiday money was inside it.” The woman in the queue in front of me is telling the policeman who has clearly heard it all before. She is about the same age as my mother, but much fatter. She is wearing a long shapeless skirt and a baggy[•] T-shirt and her face is very red.

HOLIDAY DISASTERS

Has anything bad ever happened to you or your family on holiday? Imagine you are in Jake’s situation. What would you do?

- **baggy:** wide
- **canopies:** coverings; roofs
- **scenario:** number of events together; situation
- **street vendor:** someone who sells things on the street
- **vines:** plants where grapes grow

“I come to Greece every year,” she says, “but this has never happened to me before. I always feel safe here.”

The policeman shrugs[•]. “This is a safe country,” he says. “But now there are many foreigners here. If you sit in Syntagma Square you must watch your bag. You do not place it on the back of your chair.”

Then it is my turn and the policeman listens to me and it is clear that he thinks I am inventing a story.

“Your father is missing?” he asks me. And I explain.

“Perhaps he forgot.”

I tell him that my father came from Crete to meet me and that his clothes are in the hotel.

“And the name of the hotel?” he asks. “The Electra Palace,” I say. He looks slightly[•] surprised. I clearly don’t look smart[•] enough to be the kind of person who stays in such a good hotel. He telephones the hotel and then goes to talk to a colleague.

“We telephoned all the hospitals yesterday,” he says. “Your father is not in a hospital. I do not understand what you want us to do.”

I’m not sure either. Well, I want them to find my father, but they don’t look like the kind of police who race out in fast cars and behave like the FBI in one of those missing persons films.

- **shrugs:** moves his shoulders up and down to indicate that he doesn’t know the answer
- **slightly:** a little
- **smart:** elegant and fashionable



“Look,” I begin again. “My father is the archaeologist Alexander Wyatt. Yesterday afternoon he left the hotel to meet my flight. Now he is missing. Surely you can do something?” I want to add that I am lost, too. I don’t know how to contact my mother, I don’t know what to do, but I don’t want to sound like a small child. But it seems that I’ve said a magic word.

“Archaeologist?” says the policeman. “I understand. Come with me.”

I don’t understand anything and he’s not explaining. But at least he hasn’t sent me away. He takes me to a small room and tells me to sit down. Then he shuts the door and leaves. There is not much in the room, a low coffee table covered in rings from coffee cups, three old plastic chairs and two grey filing cabinets*. This is a great way to begin my holiday, I think.

“Come on, Jake,” I say to myself. “Be positive. Something important turned up at work. Maybe they made an amazing discovery and Alex had to be there. And he’s going to rush in, covered in earth and he will be so sorry and yet really excited and he’ll take me to see what he has found.”

Or perhaps he is just very absent-minded* and the police will find him in a dusty room in the museum... but I stop myself continuing this fantasy as my father didn’t seem at all forgetful on the phone or in his emails. I am going round in circles and getting nowhere.

• **absent-minded:** who forgets things easily

• **filing cabinets:** cupboards where you keep documents

I check my phone again for messages but there is only one from Pete, who is my best friend at school. I begin to reply but then the door opens and it isn't Dad, but another policeman who says his name is Nikos Filosomeing and he is with the archaeology branch of the police. He is younger than the first policeman, and looks more efficient. He clearly doesn't like me, but I'm not sure why.

“So, what is your father working on at the moment?” he asks.

I say I don't know and explain why. He looks surprised, but says nothing.

“Archaeology police?” I ask.

“Here in Greece we have the beginning of civilization and some of the greatest treasures in the world and many people want to steal them. Like our Venus from Milos[•] and the great Marbles[•] which your Lord Elgin took to London.”



- **Marbles:** a collection of marble (hard white stone) statues that Earl Elgin removed from the Acropolis and which were bought by the British Museum in London in 1816
- **Venus from Milos:** a famous statue of the goddess Venus

“Do you think my father found someone stealing something?”

“I do not know,” says Nikos. “But there is always this possibility. I will naturally contact the British Archaeology School in Crete...”

“I think he has an office here, too,” I say.

“The British School,” he replies. “I know them. You say his luggage[•] is in the hotel. Have you looked through his belongings[•]? Are there any papers or anything that says where he has gone?”

“No,” I say. I looked at his case all last night, but it felt wrong to look through his things. I hardly know him, after all. But this morning I was so fed up I finally opened it and looked inside. And there weren’t any papers, nothing, in fact, that told me anything about my father. I’m not sure what I hoped to find: a diary, his laptop? Did he have his laptop with him? I didn’t know. There was just the usual stuff[•], a wash bag, a sweater. And...

BELONGINGS

What can you tell about a person from his/her belongings?

What things have you got in your bag?

“Actually there was this,” I tell Nikos. I show him a small piece of rock. It’s the colour of clay[•] but it has some faint[•] markings on it which are a dark red.

- **belongings:** possessions; things he owns/has got
- **clay:** earth
- **faint:** light colour
- **luggage:** bags
- **stuff:** things



Nikos takes it and weighs[•] it in his hand. “It may be something and it may be nothing,” he says. “I’m not an expert like your father. But I will send it to the laboratories so they can analyse[•] the paint. It may be old. Perhaps your father has made an interesting new discovery.”

He sounds as if this is most unlikely.

“Do you think someone wants to smuggle[•] it out of Greece?”

“All things are possible. But there may be a very simple explanation. We shall see.” He smiles, or at least his mouth smiles. His eyes look cold. He looks irritated and rather bored. “In the meantime, I feel you should go home until we find him.”

- **analyse:** examine; test
- **smuggle:** take things in or out of a country illegally

- **weighs:** sees how heavy it is

I explain about my mother.

“That is a problem,” Nikos says. “You must return to England. I think we must telephone your embassy.” He picks up[•] the phone and talks to several people. I cannot understand anything he is saying except for the name of my father, which he repeats several times. Then he stands up and passes the phone to me.



“It is your ambassador,” he says. “It seems that Alexander Wyatt is a good friend of his.”

At last I can talk to someone who knows him, I think. I take the phone.

“Is that Jake?” says a kind, educated voice. “John Parsons here. Your father’s an old friend of the family. Inspector Filopapos has just told me what’s going on. This isn’t like Alexander at all. But don’t worry, we’ll get it all sorted out[•]. I’ll call your mother.”

I explain. Again.

“Right,” says the ambassador. “Well, what about other family?” he asks.

“I’ve got an aunt in Canada,” I say. “My father had a brother who died of measles[•] when he was seven.”

- **measles:** illness that gives you a high temperature and red spots
- **picks up:** lifts
- **sorted out:** solved; fixed

“Friends?” asks the ambassador.

I think of Pete. Then I remember that he and his family are in France, but I don’t know where exactly.

FRIENDS AND FAMILY

Who would you contact if you were in Jake’s situation?

“Well,” says the ambassador. “You’d better come and stay here, then. Susie, that’s my wife, will be delighted[•]. And you can be company for our daughter Natalie. How old are you? Sixteen?”

“Almost,” I say.

“Not so much difference then. Nat’s just eighteen. It will be nice for her to have some company of about the same age.”

I wonder if there is any universe where an eighteen-year-old girl finds it nice to be placed in the company of a boy who is not yet quite sixteen. At school the idea of any girl from year twelve[•] wanting to spend time with a year nine or ten is so unlikely it’s off the scale of unlikely[•] things. I imagine Natalie is smart and snobby[•] and will hate me instantly.

- **delighted:** very happy
- **snobby:** with a superior attitude
- **unlikely:** not probable
- **year twelve:** second-last year in the British school system (16-18 years)



I say goodbye to Inspector Nikos. I am sure that he will do nothing at all to find my father. He promises to tell me the moment he has any news and writes down my mobile number, but I don't expect to hear from him again. As we go through the main office, I see policeman number one with an elderly American.

"I just went out for a short walk," the American is saying. "I know there was some kind of sign near the hotel. And there was a café on the other side of the road." The policeman is trying to look patient. He waves[•] at me as we go past. "I hope you find your father," he says.

Another policeman takes me in to the hotel, where I collect my luggage and Dad's things and pay for the room. The receptionist says how sorry he is and sounds as if he really means it. Then we drive to the British Embassy, which is this massive[•] building inside a walled[•] garden. This is going to be awful[•], I think. I've only got some jeans and T-shirts with me and I'm sure it's the kind of place where everyone wears suits. This whole trip is a disaster, I think. But just as I walk towards the steps I see a tall slim woman with her hair in a ponytail, wearing a pair of very grubby[•] jeans and a huge white shirt covered in smears[•] of red mud[•].

"Hi," she says. "You must be Jake. I'm Susie. Come on in. You poor boy, what a nightmare[•]. And so unlike[•] Alex. I simply can't think what has happened to him. But we must be positive; it's probably some work thing. Anyhow, you're very welcome here until we get everything sorted out."

- **awful:** terrible
- **grubby:** dirty
- **massive:** very big
- **mud:** wet earth
- **nightmare:** terrible experience (literally a bad dream)
- **smears:** marks
- **unlike:** not what he usually does
- **walled:** with walls around it
- **waves:** moves his arm and hand to say hello or goodbye



She's so friendly I feel as if I've always known her.

“Natalie will show you around”. She's only been home from boarding school herself for a couple of weeks. Nat!” she shouts over her shoulder. “Natalie's our daughter,” she continues. “Now, come in don't just stand there.”

We go into a grand entrance hall which is all pillars and marble, like going into a palace. The ceiling has pieces of decorated plaster like a wedding cake and everything echoes.

“This is probably the only great formal house left in this part of Athens,” Susie continues as she walks, “apart from the Benaki Museum. Costs a fortune to heat in the winter, but at least it's cool in summer. Churchill came here you know in 1944. When he was trying to make sure that Greece didn't fall under the control of the Russians... Nat thinks it's haunted... don't you, darling?” This last remark is again shouted over her shoulder. “Ghosts and ghouls. Ghouls is what she calls the other ambassadors.” I follow her down a long corridor wondering if she ever stops to breathe.

“Are you hungry?” Susie asks me. “We tend to have lunch late.

I like to get most of my work done in the mornings. Did John tell you? I'm a potter. I've got a show coming up next month so I try and find as much time as possible. Here we are...” she finishes, as

- **boarding school:** school where the students live
- **Churchill:** Winston Churchill, Prime Minister of Britain during World War II
- **fortune:** lot of money
- **ghouls:** evil spirits
- **haunted:** with ghosts
- **plaster:** white substance used to cover and decorate walls
- **potter:** person who makes ceramic vases, etc.
- **show you around:** show you where everything is

we step inside what looks like an English farmhouse kitchen with a huge pine[•] table and a couple of ancient armchairs occupied by two fat and contented cats.

“This is where we live. I’d have all our meals here if it was up to me. But we have to fly the flag[•] and do the formal stuff a few times a week. But you don’t have to dress up and chat. Nat refuses and I tell her she’s right. No one pays her to be the embassy daughter. So she eats in here – when she’s in, that is. She’s often out in the evenings, clubs and cafés. You know what it’s like.”

EMBASSIES AND AMBASSADORS

What is an embassy?

Why is it important?

Who is an ambassador?

Imagine growing up in an embassy. What would it be like?

How would it be different from your life now?

No, I want to tell her. I have no idea what’s it’s like to grow up in an embassy and go out clubbing[•] with other embassy brats[•]. I live in Chesterfield, which is not exactly the club and café capital of the world. In fact it’s probably so far off[•] Nat’s social radar that she doesn’t even know where it is. I know I am going to really dislike Natalie.

- **brats:** rich spoiled young people
- **clubbing:** going to night clubs
- **far off:** distant from
- **fly the flag:** represent your country (they are ambassadors so they must have official dinners, etc)
- **pine:** type of wood



And then she walks in. Have you ever seen a race horse walk into a paddock*? It looks all shiny as if everyone has been polishing* it for days, and it's perfect and beautiful and it looks completely right. It belongs in its space. That's Natalie. And she smiles at me and her smile makes me feel that she's really happy I'm there. And I know that whatever else happens to me in my life, I want Natalie as a friend.

“Hi,” she says. “So you're Jake. I expect Mum's been telling you a hundred things all at once and you can't remember one of them.”

- **paddock:** place where you show racehorses before a race
- **polishing:** shining

I grin[•]. Actually I think I'm already grinning. Like the Cheshire Cat in Alice in Wonderland. I know I look a complete idiot.

“You look just like your father,” Natalie says.

“Do I?” I ask.

“Well, younger...” Natalie laughs. “Like some coffee? Or tea. We have to have tea for all the upset[•] Brits who wash up[•] here. A cup of real English tea is what we always give them to calm them down. It's remarkable how effective it is.”

“Coffee's fine,” I say. Natalie starts to pour water into one of those complicated Italian espresso things that you screw together[•] and I can't stop thinking how graceful she is when she moves.

“Um... Natalie...” I begin.

“Nat,” she says. “Only strangers call me Natalie.”

She doesn't think of me as a stranger!

“Do you know Alex, my father?”

“Of course,” says Nat. “We've got a holiday home on Crete and he often comes to stay. Ever since I can remember. I've always known him.”



- **grin:** smile widely
- **screw together:** turn two pieces together so they become attached
- **upset:** sad and anxious
- **wash up:** arrive; come

So why didn't he bring Mum and me to Crete? I'm wondering. Nat makes us both coffee and we push the cats off the chairs – much to their disgust – and slump down[•].

“So what are you going to do?” Nat asks me.

“What do you mean?” I say. “What can I do?”

“Well,” she demands. “Aren't you going to look for your Dad?”

“No,” I say. “How can I? It's up to[•] the police.”

“And do you think they're really going to set up[•] a major investigation?”

I don't. I have the feeling that now they are rid of me[•], they are going to do nothing at all. My own opinion is that they are quite certain that Alex Wyatt did not want to spend the summer with his son and has gone off to some island with a girlfriend. In fact they are probably laughing about it right now. But I don't say any of this to Nat, who I'm beginning to like a little less.

“Well,” Nat continues, curling[•] her impossibly long legs under her. “Do you?”

She may be beautiful, but she is beginning to annoy me.

“No.” I tell her. “Of course not. I don't think the police will do anything.”

- **curling:** bending
- **it's up to:** it's their job
- **set up:** start

- **slump down:** sit in a relaxed way
- **they are rid of me:** I am away from them

“So?”

“So what?” I say. “What can I do?”

“Investigate yourself,” says Nat.

She’s either bored or mad.

“Really,” I say in my deepest voice, trying not to squeak[•], though I am not very successful. “And how do you suggest I do that? I’ve been in Greece for less than a day. I don’t speak a word of Greek and I don’t even know what my father looks like.”

“You don’t know...”

“No. I haven’t seen him for five years. Satisfied?”

SURPRISING NEWS

Jake’s news surprises Nat.

How do you think he feels?

How do you think she feels?

Have you ever said or heard a piece of surprising news?

Describe what happened.

- **squeak:** talk in a high voice



She immediately changes her tone.

“Jake, I’m so sorry, I didn’t realise. It’s just that I like Alex myself so much, and this is just not like him. He’s really nice and thoughtful.”

“Then why wasn’t he at the airport?” I ask her. I am now squeaking.

“That’s what is bothering me,” she says. “That’s why I think we have to do something.” And she sounds as if she really cares.

“We?”

“Well if you don’t speak Greek and don’t know your way round Athens, you’re going to need me. Or are you just going to sit there drinking coffee like a pudding?”

“Of course not,” I say, trying to sound keen and un-pudding like. How can you drink coffee like a pudding?

“So where do we start?” I ask. I doubt if she has any ideas, but at least it will stop her accusing me of doing nothing. I’ve only been here a few minutes and she makes it sound as if I’ve been doing nothing for days.

“The last thing we know about Alex is that he took a taxi. So we start there. Most hotels use one taxi company, don’t they?”

I’m wrong. She does have ideas. And she’s right.

- **bothering:** (here) worrying; making me think
- **keen:** interested
- **pudding:** cake you eat for dessert
- **thoughtful:** who thinks of other people

“Of course,” I say. “The hotel called a taxi.”

“Do you have the number of the hotel?”

I pull out the hotel receipt from my pocket and give it to her.

“I’ll use my mobile,” she says. “I never know with the phone here how many people are listening.”

“Do you think that the embassy phones are bugged*?” I ask her.

“Yeah,” she says. “They often are. Mum says in the old days if you wanted to tell the government anything you just rang someone, and the information went straight to Syntagma.”

I feel as if I’ve walked into a very different world. Nat takes out a slim* and very pink mobile and rings the hotel number and chatters* away to someone in what sounds like really good Greek. I mean she doesn’t have any English accent when she speaks Greek.



• **bugged:** when there are listening devices and other people can hear your conversations without you knowing

• **chatters:** talks
• **slim:** thin

“Got a pen?” she asks.

I hand her a pen and a bit of paper and she writes down a number.

“Great,” she says. And rings it. This time she gets into an argument with whoever she’s talking to. “They won’t put me through to the driver,” she says, putting her hand over the phone.

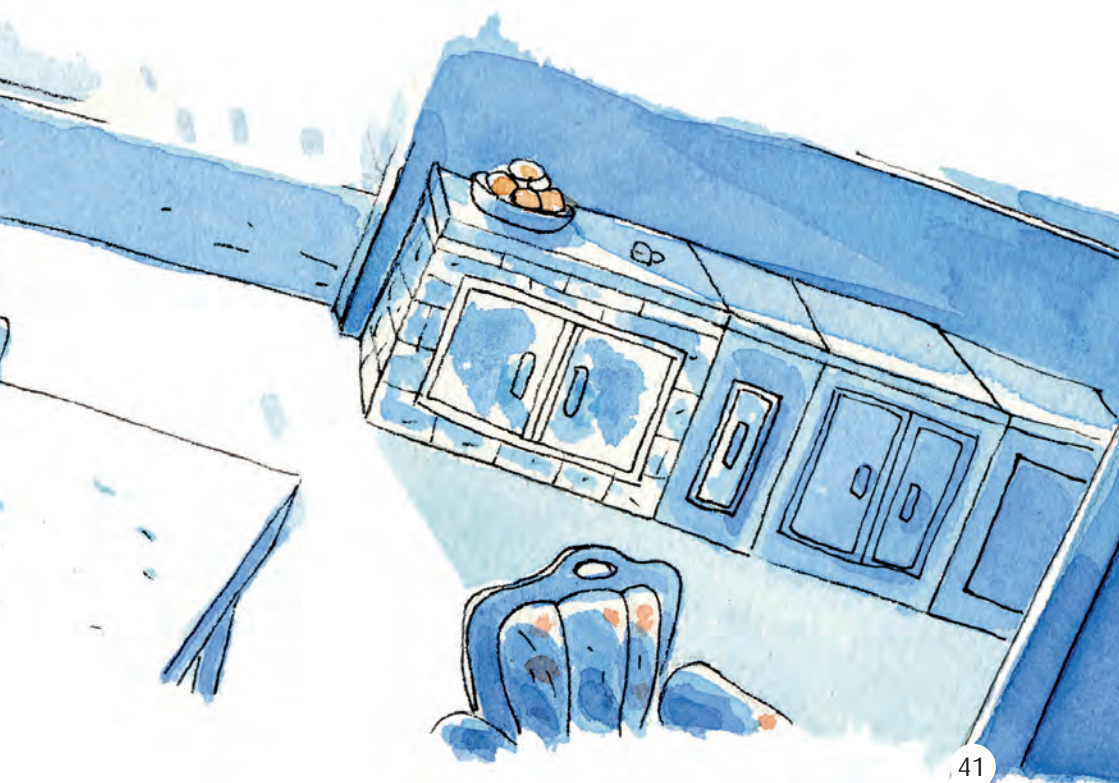
“How about if we asked for the same driver to take us somewhere?”

“Of course,” she says and speaks into the phone again.

“Brilliant,” she says as she folds her mobile and puts it into her pocket. “He’s coming here after lunch. We can get him to take us to the same place as he took Alex. Now,” she adds. “I’d better show you your room.”



Lunch is amazing. Not the food, though it's really good, bread and cheeses and a big Greek salad which Susie puts together in about five seconds. But the conversation. The family all talk non-stop and yet they all seem to hear each other. It couldn't have been less like home, where I'm lucky if Mum and I say ten words to each other. Except on the days when she's angry and shouts. And they're talking about so many different things. They talk about the pieces that Susie's making for her exhibition and Nat tells her about an exhibition she's seen in London of Aztec pottery, then John tells me I mustn't miss the black pots in the National Museum and Nat promises to take me. Later, as they chat about people they know and what they are doing, I sit back and think what it must be like to live in a family like this.



“So, Jake,” says Susie, bringing me back into the conversation.
“What do you want to do this afternoon?”

“Give the boy a chance*,” says John.

“We could ring Vassili and see if he could open the back gate of the Acropolis, so Jake could have a look round after all the tourists have gone,” suggests Susie. “Then let’s go up to the top of Lykavitos for a drink so he can see the view.”

“And see just how polluted* and crowded Athens is,” says Nat smiling at me. “Maybe he’d rather wait and go round the Acropolis with Alex,” she adds. And I am amazed at how she seems to understand what I’m thinking.



UNDERSTANDING

Jake feels that Nat understands what he is thinking.
Who do you think understands you best?
Who do you think that you understand best?

“Of course,” says Susie. “Why not just pop* across the road to the National Gallery or the Byzantine Museum? It’s only a few minutes away.”

- **give the boy a chance:** (here) give the boy time to relax, etc.
- **polluted:** dirty (from traffic, fumes, etc)
- **pop:** (here) go quickly

“Good idea,” says John. “There’s a rather[•] fine El Greco. You might enjoy seeing it.”

I’m about to say that I like El Greco. Mum teaches art, so at least I do know a bit about that, but I can’t say anything because Susie is already saying that she thinks it’s a workshop copy because it looks so rushed.

“That’s what I like about it,” argues John, “the energy. It’s much too good to be one of the copies. Anyhow, let Jake decide.”

I can’t believe that they are talking to me as if I was one of them, and that it was normal for me to drop into exhibitions before drinks. And while they talk I keep thinking that my life might be like this all the time if I lived with Dad. Then I laugh at myself for the thought. If I lived with Dad... as if he wanted that. He didn’t even turn up at the airport.

It’s finally decided that we’ll have a lazy day until we meet up this evening and go for a drink. Which fits in[•] well with Nat’s and my plans to find out where the taxi took Dad.

* * *



The taxi driver is called Spiro. Nat talks to him and in a few minutes he is smiling at her and chatting as if he’s known her all his life. Nat reports that my father wanted to go to the airport to meet me, but he was early. So he decided to go to his office first.

• **fits in:** suits; is good

• **rather:** (here) quite



“Did he say why?” I ask.

She translates my question.

“No,” Nat reports back. Then Spiro starts to say something and Nat listens and frowns[•].

“Spiro says that when he was outside the British School, he noticed a large black car parked opposite. Just as your dad got out of the car, a man started to get out of the black car. As soon as Alex saw him, he turned and gave Spiro twenty euros and said that he’d forgotten something and that he would get the metro from Evangelismos station. Then Alex ran into the building.”

“And Spiro drove off?” I ask.

“Yes,” says Nat. “Your dad didn’t even wait for his change.”

“So we need to go to the British School and find out where he went next!” I say.

“Yeah,” agrees Nat. “It’s only a few minutes’ walk.”

But Spiro, who seems genuinely concerned[•] that Dad is missing[•], insists on taking us there himself for free. He stops outside a large neo-classical building and points out where the black car was parked. He gives me his card before he drives off and asks me to phone and let him know when I find my father.

- **concerned:** worried
- **frowns:** makes an unhappy expression

- **missing:** gone; not present; absent

We go into the school where a pretty girl at reception called Vicki tells me that she saw my father come into the building but, now she thinks about it, she didn't see him leave it. She rings several people and reports back that no one else saw him. It seems he didn't visit anyone or go into the library. If he didn't come out this way, Nat asks, is there any other way out?

"Yes," says Vicki, "he could go out through the garden. But why would he do that?"

Nat and I look at each other and we are both thinking: the man in the black car.

"Can we go that way?" asks Nat. "We'll just go to the gate and come back again?"

"Of course," says Vicki. "Anything to help. This is very strange. I'll call Crete and see if anyone there has heard from him."

"Could you ask them what he was working on?" says Nat.

"Certainly," says Vicki, "though I can't see how that is relevant."

"Do you know what I'm thinking?" I say as we walk through the garden past a tennis court. "The police asked me if Dad had any papers with him and there weren't any at the hotel, but what if he had them with him?"

"Yes. Or his laptop. He never goes anywhere without that," Nat replies.

"He must have put it somewhere," I say. We start to look around us. There are trees and a few bushes, but nowhere to hide anything. We go down to the gate and then retrace[•] our steps.



“Weren’t there cupboards along the wall of the corridor?” I ask, remembering a line of wooden doors.

Quietly, very quietly, we start opening all the cupboards. They are mostly full of files and boxes and books, though one cupboard contains a bottle of tiny^o pieces of pottery.

“Shards,” says Nat. “That’s the proper^o name for small bits of old pottery. Alex says that even though they can’t piece them together, they aren’t allowed to throw them away.” She smiled. “It’s not surprising. They’re probably over two thousand years old.”

I’m tempted to take a tiny piece and put it in my pocket, but then remember why I’m here, so stop myself.

- **proper:** real; official
- **retrace:** go back using the same path
- **tiny:** very small

“They’re not like the bit Dad had with him,” I say.

“What bit?” asks Nat. So I tell her about the small bit of rough stone with the red paint and she frowns.

“It doesn’t sound like anything I’ve ever seen,” she says. “Pottery is usually very smooth*.”

Three worryingly* squeaky cupboards later we find it. His laptop is in a canvas* bag that Nat recognizes immediately. She knows so much more about him than I do.

We thank Vicki and say goodbye. She doesn’t notice that Nat has now got another bag, and says that she’ll phone the embassy if she has any news about my father. We walk back down the steep road to the embassy trying to look cool. All I can think about is the laptop. I can’t wait to look inside it. I’m sure it will give us a real clue*. I’m beginning to think that Nat is right and that something has happened to Dad. That it isn’t that he didn’t want to see me. But it’s not a very happy feeling, because if he was OK, he’d ring me. Wouldn’t he? It’s all very odd. Who was the man in the black car and why did Dad run away from him?



Susie and John are both working, so there is no one in the family kitchen. The family kitchen is a room that Susie has designed, where the family can come to pretend they don’t live in an embassy.

- **canvas:** heavy cotton
- **clue:** idea or information that helps you solve a mystery or problem
- **smooth:** regular, not rough
- **worryingly:** that make us worry

The laptop, of course has a password and we have no idea what it is. We try the names of a few archaeological sites on Crete: Knossos, Phaistos, Gortys, and Nat googles[•] a few more and comes up with[•] Armeni and Phylaki. But it's no good.

PASSWORDS

Can you guess the password to Jake's father's laptop?

Have you got any passwords?

How do you decide your passwords?

"This is hopeless," I say. "It could be anything." But before we can go on trying different names, we hear voices and phones ringing. Then both John and Susie come in. We close the laptop quickly, but they are too busy to notice what we are doing.

"Jake, Nat," cries Susie. "Thank goodness you're both here. There's a bit of a crisis."

"What's happened?" asks Nat. "Is it a bomb?"

"No, no, nothing like that," says her dad reassuringly. "It's just some stupid English footballer."

"Who?" asks Nat.

"Phil Dawson," says Susie, naming the current English captain, a man who is featured[•] in almost every tabloid[•] newspaper on a daily basis.

- **comes up with:** finds
- **featured:** present in
- **googles:** uses the Internet search engine Google
- **tabloid:** newspaper with smaller format usually with sensational stories etc.

“It seems that he was holidaying on a yacht near Kos and came ashore for dinner. There was the usual scrum of paparazzi and he got angry.”

“To cut a long story short,” interrupts Susie. “Dawson threw a wine bottle at one of the photographers, but it hit and injured a local policeman. And now he’s in jail.”

“The press are going to go crazy,” says Nat.

“Exactly,” agrees John. “So we’ve had to offer Mrs Dawson sanctuary here at the embassy. It seems to be the only place in Greece where we can guarantee she will be safe from the photographers.”

“So,” continues Susie. “John and I have been talking.” She turns to me. “We think that if she’s here, it’s better if you aren’t here, Jake.”



- **ashore:** onto land
- **injured:** hurt
- **jail:** prison

- **press:** newspapers
- **sanctuary:** safe place (here, away from the newspapers)
- **scrum:** disordered crowd

This is it. And here was me thinking they liked me. All those silly dreams about me and Dad being here together. They can't wait to get rid of me. I'm wondering where I'll go. Maybe one of my teachers will take me in until they contact Mum. And I feel really miserable... so I almost miss the end of Susie's sentence.

"So, you and Nat and I will take the boat to Heraklion this evening and stay there. You'll probably enjoy it more anyway. Our house is only a few steps from the beach..."

I blink. They're not sending me home. I'm going with them to... to where? "Heraklion?" I ask.

"Yes," says Susie. "Crete. Our house is in Panormou. It's only about twenty minutes along the coast from Heraklion. There is no way I can work here with the English press on our doorstep."

Nat smiles. "Mum has a kiln in Crete. She's always looking for excuses to get out of Athens, so she can work in her studio there," she tells me quietly.

Crete, I'm thinking. This is the island where Dad works. Maybe we can find out what he's been working on. Maybe he went back to Crete. Maybe we'll find him. And even though I'm really excited that I'm going to Crete, I also feel sad that Dad isn't here. It's just like being ten again and missing him when I play football for the school or have a part in the play. I ought to feel happy but I can't because I miss Dad so much. And it's so stupid, here I am at sixteen – well, almost sixteen – and I feel just the same.

- **blink:** open and close your eyes quickly (in surprise)
- **kiln:** hot oven for pottery
- **to get rid of me:** to send me away

Days go by and there is no news about Dad. I'm sure that he just changed his mind about wanting to see me. I think Susie thinks the same. Only Nat is still certain that something has happened to him. So to please Nat I go on trying to find a way into Dad's laptop. I think we've tried every place in Greece. We just can't find his password.

Vicki at the British School rings one morning and tells us that Dad was working near Matala. It seems that a colleague has been away and that's why it's taken so long to get back to us.

Nat looks it up on a map. "You'll love Matala," she tells me. "Mum used to go there in the Sixties. There are all these amazing caves where the hippies* lived. It was a centre of love and peace and all that. Joni Mitchell wrote a song about it."

I smile. Sometimes Nat sounds very much like her mother.

"That's where she met Alex," she continues.

"Who?" I ask. "Joni Mitchell?"

"No," says Nat. "Mum. Didn't you know? She used to go out with Alex."

"With Dad?" The news, while astonishing, makes many things understandable. Like why my mother hated Greece. Like why I never stayed on Crete with John and Susie. Mum always hated anyone who knew Dad before her. It was as if she had to be the only thing in Dad's life.

• **go out with:** have a romantic relationship with

• **hippies:** people who rejected conventional values and life in the 1960s



“Yeah,” says Nat. “It was years ago. Long before he met your mum. But they’ve stayed good friends. He stayed here after your mum threw him out.”

Dad and Susie.

“Do you want to go to Matala?” I ask.

“Yeah. Why not?” says Nat. “We can camp on the Red Beach. Mum won’t mind[•]. We might find out something.”

I open Dad’s laptop. One final try I think. Nat watches me.

“What about your name?” she suggests.

“What about it?” I say.

“Try it,” she says.

“It’s too short,” I tell her.

“Then add your birthday,” she says.

I type in ‘Jake1304’, which is my birthday – 13th April. And that’s it. I stare[•] at the screen in amazement as the icons begin to pop up[•]. All this time away from me and Dad still uses my name and birthday.



As if it really matters[•] to him. I don’t want Nat to see how I feel.

“Let’s go into Word and see what files pop up,” says Nat.

- **Mum won’t mind:** it won’t be a problem for Mum
- **matters:** is important
- **pop up:** (here) open quickly
- **stare:** look without moving your eyes

I click the W icon. There is just one file in the recent history; it's called Melissa. Nat leans over me. Her hair presses against my cheek; it smells of apples.

“Melissa?” says Nat. “That’s a girl’s name, isn’t it?”

Melissa. So my first thoughts had been right. Dad had a new girlfriend, someone more interesting than a teenage son. All that stuff about black cars that Nat and I had discovered was just a fantasy. We were like children who read detective stories and think that any stranger is an international jewel thief. The car was probably some embassy car and the man wanted some information. Dad changed his mind and went off to see his girlfriend at the school. I was an idiot. I feel my whole mood change as if a black dog has climbed on my back.

I open the file. There is a small map and some letters and numbers.

“Melissa,” says Nat, looking at the map. “It’s a place near Matala.”

A place. The black dog jumps off and disappears.

MOODS

What things put you into a good mood?

What things put you into a bad mood?

Jake says that his bad mood feels ‘as if a black dog climbed on his back’.

Think of a time you were in a bad mood. How would you describe it?

Think of a time you were in a good mood. How would you describe it?



Nat studies the map on the screen and compares it with her map of Crete. She points to a headland^o on the southern tip^o of the island.

“It’s as far south as you can get,” she says. “After that, there’s nothing between you and Africa.”

“What are all those letters and numbers?” she asks.

“I think they’re compass^o readings,” I say.

“Of course,” she says. “Dad uses them when he goes sailing. How do you know?”

- **compass:** instrument for finding directions
- **tip:** extreme point of land
- **headland:** point of land, usually with a drop over the sea

“I do lots of walking and climbing. We live beside the Dales[•] at home.” I tell her.

“Really?” she asks.

“Yes,” I say. I knew she had no idea where I lived. “It looks as if there are very steep cliffs,” I add, looking at the map.

“Yeah,” says Nat. “That’s why there are caves, muppet[•]!”

“Muppet!” I retort[•]. “And who didn’t recognize the compass readings?”

Nat punches my shoulder in a sisterly kind of way and I think: I’ve never had a sister, but I’ve often wanted one. And Nat would be the best kind of sister.

The house in Panormou is exactly the kind of house you want to stay in. In every room you find interesting things from a previous holiday. There are piles of faded[•] beach towels and books with ruffled[•] pages that look as if they’ve fallen into the sea. In one corner I find some climbing equipment that someone once left behind. Nat’s never climbed so we can’t do any clever stuff, but I always like to be prepared, so I lift some ropes, and a compass, as well as making sure we’ve got torches and spare[•] batteries.

Nat laughs and calls me a boy scout[•], but I’ve helped rescue people in the Dales[•] who forgot to take any proper equipment.

- **boy scout:** member of the scouts
- **Dales:** mountainous area in Northern England
- **faded:** the colours are not bright
- **muppet:** (slang) person who acts in a silly way
- **retort:** reply quickly
- **ruffled:** folded; not smooth
- **spare:** extra

The next day we leave early for Melissa. Crete is not what I expected. It's not like other islands. It's bigger, for one thing and it keeps changing. The house in Panormou is on a cliff^o above a tiny bay where the sea is deep green, but in other places there are just long beaches and the sea is an incredibly deep blue. As we drive south, it changes. There are little villages and deep ravines^o with racing streams^o that remind me of home and, then miles of rocky mountainside that looks like the surface of the moon.

We're driving through a valley of grapevines and olive trees and a scattering^o of old rundown^o houses when I see a familiar face. He is sitting outside a café talking to two men. I turn away, but I think I'm too late. He's seen me.



- **cliff:** high rock face often over the sea
- **racing streams:** fast small rivers
- **ravines:** narrow gorges
- **rundown:** in poor condition
- **scattering:** small number

“What?” asks Nat.

“That was Nikos. The police inspector I met in Athens,” I say.

“What’s he doing here?” she asks.

“I don’t know. Do you think he knows where Dad is?”

“I don’t know,” she says. “But it proves I’m right. Something is going on.”

We’ve decided to try and follow Dad’s compass readings. Using one of John’s sailing maps we think they correspond to somewhere east of Melissa, between Matala and a tiny place called Kali Limenes. The problem is that there isn’t a road and we don’t have a boat.

“We can leave the car at Kali Limenes,” says Nat. “Then we can walk.”



“There seems to be a path here,” I point to the map. “It goes up to a monastery and there’s another small path that leads back to the sea, towards Melissa.”

In fact we find a fairly[•] new track[•] which we follow for a bit and then we leave it and take the small path. It’s not easy walking. There are lots of small stones and fierce thorn bushes[•], but we follow what looks like a goat path along a ridge[•] and find ourselves in a clearing[•]. The path stops and the sea is below us.



“Someone’s been here,” says Nat.

“But why would someone come here?” I ask. “There’s nothing here!”

We take off our backpacks to drink some water and my water bottle rolls away towards a big thorn bush. I leap after it and there it is. It’s behind the bush. The entrance to a cave.

“So that’s why he came here,” says Nat.

“Dad?” I ask. “You think he was here?”

“Of course,” she says. “He was exploring the caves.”

We go back for our backpacks and take out our torches and begin to explore the cave. It’s quite small, though it does look as if someone has recently widened the opening. Inside it’s narrow with several rock ledges[•].

- **clearing:** open space between trees or bushes
- **fairly:** quite
- **ledges:** raised shelves of rock
- **ridge:** long narrow raised crest or path
- **thorn bushes:** plants with sharp spines
- **track:** path



“It’s not just one cave,” says Nat.

“No,” I agree. “There’s a whole cave system here with tunnels. We need to mark the walls so we can find our way back.”

“I don’t like it,” says Nat. “And it’s freezing.”

THE CAVE

Would you have gone into the cave?

Why/why not?

Which of these adjectives best describes Jake and Nat’s decision to go into the cave? Explain why.

brave foolish reckless • wise

“Look!” I say. “I can see light. We’ve found another way out.”

“Thank goodness,” says Nat, as we stumble • through the tunnel and out into the light.



We’ve come right through the mountain on to the other side. We’re back in the valley and bang in the middle • of a farm. It looks very rundown except for a couple of sheds made of corrugated iron which look new. They also have large padlocks • on them which look extremely new. Too new.

- **bang in the middle of:** exactly in the middle of
- **freezing:** very cold
- **padlocks:** big locks
- **reckless:** careless; indifferent to what could happen
- **stumble:** walk unsteadily, falling

Then everything happens very fast.

Nat calls: “Jake!” but I’m not listening to her. I am suddenly certain that I’ve found Dad. And I run. And I shout. I run up to one of the sheds and bang on the walls and shout: “Dad! Dad! It’s me! It’s Jake!”

This is probably the most stupid thing I have ever done. I mean, how do you let a kidnapper* know that you have discovered him? The answer is: shout and make a lot of noise.

It takes the men about one minute to run out of the house. It takes them another minute for them to grab* Nat and me at gunpoint* and push us indoors. They are not pleased to see us.



- **at gunpoint:** holding a gun up to them
- **grab:** take hold of
- **kidnapper:** someone who captures other people and asks for money to free them

They hit me in the face so hard that I fall over and then they hold a gun at Nat's head. Then they say they're going to kill her unless I tell them everything. So I tell them everything. Well, almost everything. I don't say she's the daughter of the British Ambassador. For some reason, I say she's my sister. And despite being terrified, I see Nat give a small smile.

The men seem to believe me and move away to talk. There are five of them, two of them, who seem to be in charge[•], are talking a language I don't understand. The other three I think are North African. Their only common language seems to be English, but it's hard to understand them. I hear phrases which include the words 'wait' and 'late' and the name 'Bamir'. I also hear 'archaeologist' and I'm certain they're talking about Dad. I'm beginning to think they've killed him. I feel sick.

Nat reaches across the floor towards me and squeezes[•] my hand. I try to smile, but my jaw[•] is really



- **in charge:** the bosses
- **jaw:** bone in your chin

- **squeezes:** presses, in affection

painful. I wonder if I can get to my phone, but one of the men has thought of that. He grabs our backpacks and our phones.

But it seems they don't have time to deal with^o us right now. They tie our hands and feet and push us into a back room. There's something really horrible going on and I'm so scared I can hardly think. Luckily Nat's brain is still working.

"We've got to get out of here," whispers Nat. "It's just too dangerous. Can you move at all?"

DANGER

What would you do if you were in this situation?

Have you ever been in a dangerous situation?

What happened?

What did you do?

I edge^o myself towards her and try to undo^o the ropes round her wrists with my teeth. In the movies it looks really easy, but it's actually really hard. Gradually, I manage to loosen the first knot^o and work it free^o. The next knot is easier and after what seems like ages, I manage to get the ropes off Nat's hands. She quickly undoes the ropes round her ankles and then undoes my ropes. There is a small window in the room which faces the mountain side of the farm. It squeaks as we open it and we stop, expecting one of the men to come rushing in.

- **deal with:** (here) think about what to do with
- **edge:** move slowly and with difficulty
- **knot:** where the rope is tied
- **undo:** (here) open
- **work it free:** open it

But as we open the window we hear a terrible noise. A woman is screaming. It's coming from the sheds.

“What have we walked into?” whispers Nat, echoing my thoughts. Who is the woman? And where's Dad?

We know we can't go back near the sheds or the front of the farm, so the only way is upwards. We ease[•] ourselves out of the window and I jump first. Nat follows me, but her ankle goes over and she falls.

I help her up, but she's very white and I'm worried sick that she's broken something.

“Can you move your foot?” I ask



She nods. “I think it's just a sprain[•],” she says. “It's my ankle.”

The men are all busy in the sheds so they don't see us as we crawl[•] away between the thorn bushes and up the hillside. We reach the edge at the top and realise why the men didn't need to fence the top of the farm. It's a sheer drop[•] down the other side, about thirty metres before some fairly flat rocks. Then there's another drop down to the sea. And the men have our ropes.

“We have to go back the other way,” says Nat. I begin to study the cliff. It's not as sheer as I first thought. It is climbable.

“We can't.” I say. “They'll kill us. We have to go down.”

- **crawl:** move on your hands and knees
- **ease:** move slowly
- **sheer drop:** perpendicular descent (like a cliff)
- **sprain:** when you hurt a joint or ligament

“But I don’t think I can stand,” Nat begins.

“I’ll carry you,” I say. “Don’t worry. It’s not a hard climb. I can do it.”

I feel really sick as I say this. I’ve never done a climb like this on my own or without a rope. But there isn’t any choice. I sit down so Nat can get onto my back.

“I’ve had packs heavier than you,” I say as I stand up. “I need you to flatten[•] yourself into my back as much as you can.”

“OK,” Nat whispers[•] into my neck.

“And don’t look down,” I add.

“I can’t,” she says.



I begin to edge down. One foothold[•], one handhold[•] at a time. I’ve never climbed down a rock face like this without proper equipment, but it’s not impossible. You just have to know how to grasp each hold. If you do it wrong, you fall. “Don’t think,” I say to myself. “Just concentrate on the holds. One by one.” The rock is dry and hard. It doesn’t crumble[•]; it isn’t slippery[•]. “Just do it,” I say to myself. “You can do it.”

Step by step, with every hold sending waves of pain through my arms, I climb down the cliff. It seems as if hours are passing, but finally I can feel the flat rock under my feet. I start breathing again. I’ve done it.

- **crumble:** break into small pieces
- **flatten:** make flat
- **foothold:** place where you can put your foot safely
- **handhold:** place where you can put your hand safely
- **slippery:** that makes you slide or fall
- **whispers:** says in a low voice

“We’re safe,” I say.

Nat begins to cry and I hug her so she doesn’t see that I’m crying, too.

After a bit we try to think what to do next. Below us the rock is much steeper and falls straight into the sea. It’s not a climb I can do without ropes and certainly not with Nat on my back.

“Perhaps a boat will come by and see us,” she says. “Mum will start looking for us when I don’t phone. They’ll send a helicopter.”

Then we hear it. It’s on the other side of the mountain, and faint. But we know what it is.

“Gunfire?” I ask. I think of the woman who was screaming and Dad and I go cold all over. After a bit the shooting stops and all we can hear is the sea and the wind.

“It looks as if there are some more caves here,” I say. “I’ll go and look in case we need somewhere to shelter[•] overnight.”

The entrance again looks as if someone has opened it. And just inside I discover a miraculous store[•]. Bottles of water, a torch, paper and some matches. I almost run back to Nat with the water. She insists on coming with me to look and I support her as she limps[•] over.

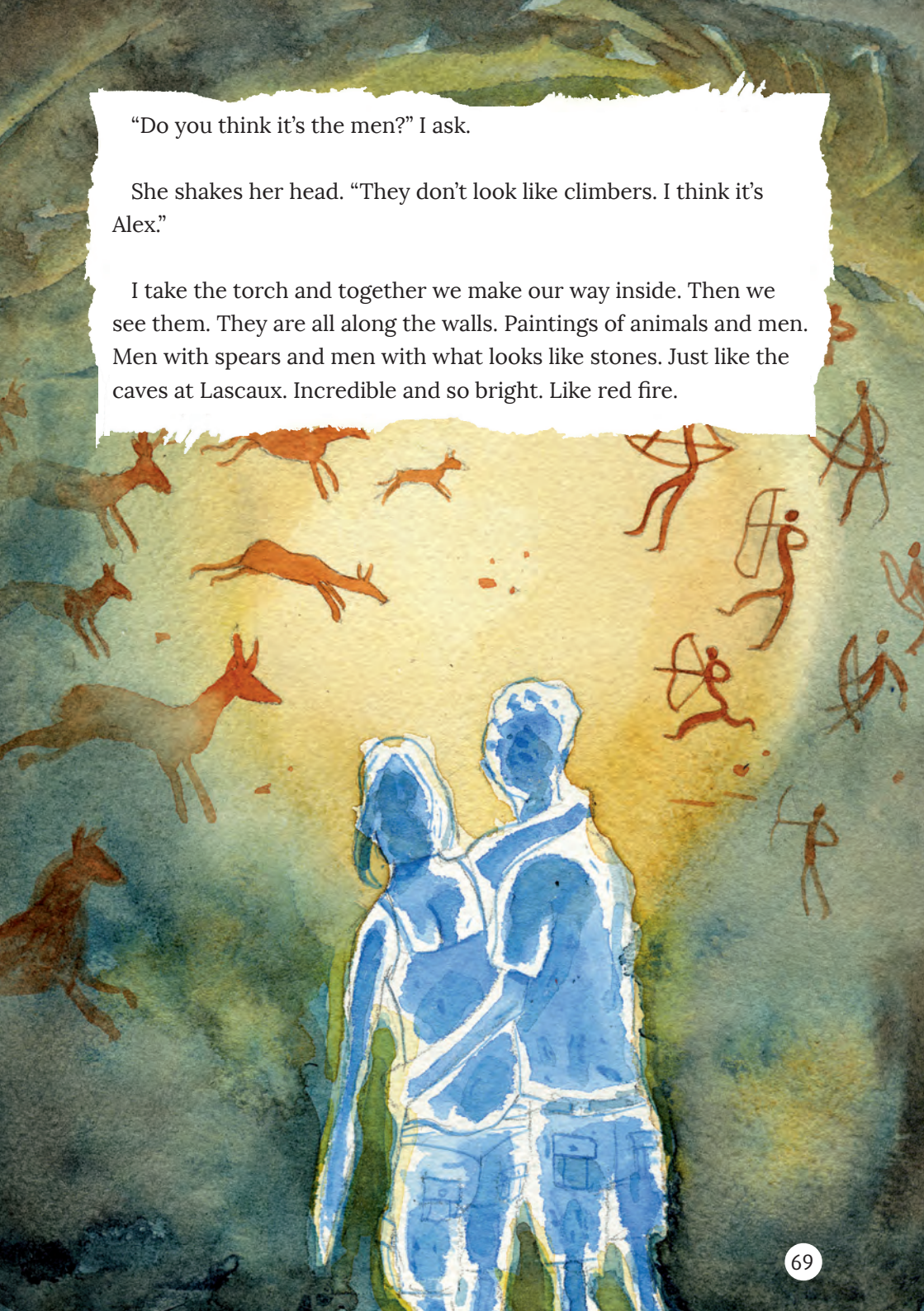
“Someone’s been working here,” she says.

- **limps:** walks with difficulty, using one leg for support
- **shelter:** stay in a safe and protected place
- **store:** number of things kept for future use; supply

“Do you think it’s the men?” I ask.

She shakes her head. “They don’t look like climbers. I think it’s Alex.”

I take the torch and together we make our way inside. Then we see them. They are all along the walls. Paintings of animals and men. Men with spears and men with what looks like stones. Just like the caves at Lascaux. Incredible and so bright. Like red fire.



“This is what Dad found,” I say.

“Which means he also found the farm,” says Nat. “Which means...”

She doesn’t finish the sentence. We’re both thinking about the gunfire and trying not to cry.

Then I hear something.

“There’s someone coming,” I say.

We look around. This is it. There’s nowhere left to hide. We can’t go up or down.

“Jake,” says Nat. She takes my hand. “I just want to say...”

LAST WORDS

What do you think Nat wants to say to Jake?

Write then share with a partner.

But I never find out what she wants to say because I suddenly hear someone calling her name. And mine.

“Alex?” whispers Nat.

“Dad?” I whisper.

Then we shout: “Alex! Dad! We’re here!”

And the man I’ve wanted to see for so many years is there in front of me and he’s hugging us and crying and we’re crying and hugging him back.



He carries Nat back outside so we can sit and talk.

“We need to wait a bit for the police to clear up before we go back through the cave,” he says.

“It leads to the farm, too?” I ask.

Dad nods. “I found this out a few weeks ago. I’ve been working here for several months, but I only found this cave a few weeks back. I couldn’t believe it. It changes everything. We didn’t know there were people living here so long ago.”

“And the farm...?” asks Nat.

“What is it?” I ask.

“It’s used for people smuggling,” says Dad. “They bring illegal immigrants in by boat and through the caves to the farm. There’s another cave at sea level they use.”

“But why haven’t the police arrested them?” asks Nat.

“They have now,” says Dad. “Didn’t you hear the gunfire?”

“That was the police?” I ask.

“Yes,” says Dad. “They’ve been waiting for the boss. They wanted to catch the top man.” He turns to me. “Jake, I’m so sorry. It’s been a terrible mess[•]. I thought I was doing the right thing and I can see now I did everything wrong.”

“But why?” I ask. “Why didn’t you tell me?”

“The police told me to keep away from the caves,” says Dad. “I thought the smugglers hadn’t noticed me but on my way to the airport I discovered that they were following me.”

- **mess:** confusion; chaos

“The man in the black car,” says Nat.

“I panicked,” says Dad. “I didn’t want them to know about you. They are incredibly violent,” he adds. “I wanted you to go back home.”

“But didn’t Inspector Nikos tell you I couldn’t go home?” I asked.

“No,” says Dad, grimly[•]. “He didn’t. Not until today. He saw you drive through Pompia and guessed you were coming here. So he called me and I came straight here. And just in time...”

* * *

After a bit, Dad’s phone goes and he says it’s safe. He carries Nat through the cave and back to the farm which is full of police cars. And Nat goes to the hospital and it is just a sprain and Alex comes home and we tell Susie and John the story again and again. And they’re amazing about it and tell me how brave I am and they aren’t angry.

We’re sitting on the terrace in Panormou drinking coffee and talking about future holidays and suddenly I realise they are including me. They want me and Dad to stay with them again in Crete.

And we’re all laughing and talking when we hear a shot. And Inspector Nikos appears.

“I am sorry,” he says. “There was one man we didn’t capture[•] yesterday. He was following you.”

“But you’ve got him now?” asks Susie, white as a sheet.

• **capture:** catch; get

• **grimly:** sadly

“Yes,” says Nikos. “Now you are safe. He is the last man. Now you can really enjoy your holidays.”

And we do. Dad takes us back to the caves to see the earth paintings one final time before they are photographed and closed behind glass to protect them from the public. And he gives me the small piece of red earth painted seventeen thousand years ago. But I don't need it. I've got Dad.





AFTER READING

PERSONAL RESPONSE

- 1 Did you enjoy the story? Why/why not?
- 2 Do you think that the title *Danger in the Sun*, is suitable? With a partner think of another two possible titles.
- 3 Would you have done the same things as Jake did? What would you have done differently?
- 4 Did the story remind you of any other stories you have read or films you have seen? Tell the rest of the class about them.
- 5 Imagine you are making a film of the story. Design a poster for the film. Choose a song for the start of the film.





AFTER READING

CHARACTERS

1 Answer the questions about Jake.

- a How old is Jake?
.....
- b Who does Jake live with?
.....
- c What is Jake's mother doing while he is in Greece?
.....
- d What is one of Jake's hobbies?
.....
- e How does Jake feel about his father?
.....
- f Why does Jake like being with Nat's family?
.....

2 Who is Jake talking about? Write their names below.



- a S/he is younger than the other policeman and looks more efficient.
- b S/he has got a kind educated voice.
- c S/he's so friendly, I feel as if I've always known him/her.
- d I know that whatever else happens in my life, I want ... as a friend.
- e It's just like being ten again and missing him/her when I play football for the school.
- f S/he always hated anyone who knew Dad before him/her.

- a c e
- b d f

3 Which adjectives describe Nat Parsons? Tick (✓) them.



- | | |
|--|--------------------------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> violent | <input type="checkbox"/> resourceful |
| <input type="checkbox"/> talkative | <input type="checkbox"/> friendly |
| <input type="checkbox"/> absent-minded | <input type="checkbox"/> snobby |
| <input type="checkbox"/> kind | <input type="checkbox"/> thoughtful |
| <input type="checkbox"/> creative | <input type="checkbox"/> slow |

4 Answer the following questions.

- a What did Jake think Nat was going to be like?
- b Why did he think this?
- c Why did he change his mind?

5 Read the sentences about Alexander Wyatt, Jake's father. Then tick (✓) true (T) or false (F).

- | | T | F |
|---|--------------------------|--------------------------|
| a Jake's father is an architect. | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| b He left home when Jake was ten years old. | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| c He had an affair with a young archaeologist. | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| d He has never written to Jake on his birthday or at Christmas. | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| e His brother died when he was seven. | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| f He is selfish and mean. He never thinks about other people. | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| g He used to be married to Nat's mum. | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| h Jake's name and age is the password on his laptop. | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| i He has got a girlfriend called Melissa. | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |



AFTER READING

PLOT

- 1 Jake's father doesn't come to the airport to meet him. Why not? Match the characters below to their comments on Jake's father.

Jake's mother the ambassador, John Parsons Nikos Filopapos
the girl at airport information the hotel receptionist
the tourist police Susie Parsons

- a The traffic's terrible. He must be delayed.
- b This isn't like Alex at all.
- c He left three hours ago because he didn't want to be late.
- d Perhaps he forgot.
- e You can't rely on him.
- f You should go home until we find him.
- g It's probably some work thing.

- 2 Work with a partner. A is a police officer with the tourist police and B is Jake. Ask and answer questions about Jake's father.

- 3 What is the main plot of the story. What are the sub plots? Choose from below. Describe how each of the plots develops.

- Jake's friendship with Nat
- Jake's search for his father
- The smugglers
- The discovery of the cave paintings

- 4 Answer the questions.

- a Why did Jake and his mother have a row?
- b What did Jake find in the hotel room?
- c What did Inspector Spiros want Jake to do?
- d Where did Nat and Jake find Alex's laptop?

- e Why did Jake have to leave the embassy and go to Crete?
- f What or who is Melissa?
- g What are the letters and numbers on the map on Alex's laptop?
- h Where did the cave lead to?
- i How did the kidnappers find Jake and Nat?
- j What did the kidnappers do with Jake and Nat?
- k Why couldn't Nat climb down the cliff?

5 This is Alex's account of events. Then match the underlined words to the definitions.

I found this **a** cave a few weeks ago. It leads to the farm. They use the farm for people **b** smuggling. They bring illegal **c** immigrants here by boat. The police didn't **d** arrest them before because they were waiting for the **e** top man. The police told me to keep away.

I didn't think the smugglers had noticed me. Then on the way to the airport I **f** noticed they were following me. I didn't come to meet you because I **g** panicked. The smugglers are very **h** violent so I wanted you to go back home.

- a boss
- b fierce and aggressive
- c a hole in the side of a cliff or hill
- d take someone and question them about a crime
- e people who go to live in another country
- f taking something or somebody illegally from one country to another
- g suddenly felt afraid or worried
- h saw



6 Every year, hundreds of people die trying to get to Europe. There are lots of articles about people smuggling on the Internet. Find one of these stories. Then tell the class about it.



AFTER READING LANGUAGE

1 Complete the dialogues with the expressions below.

- a **A:** Would you like to come to the cinema with us?
B:
- a **A:** What's the matter, Emma?
B:
- c **A:** Where are you going, Jake? It's nearly dinner time.
B:
I won't be long.
- d **A:** He said some horrible things.
B:
- e **A:** You don't look very happy.
B:
- f **A:** It says here that you have to be a good swimmer.
B:
I can't swim!

- 1 Yes, that's what's bothering me.
- 2 I won't feel happy until it's all sorted out.
- 3 He's just getting back at you. You said some terrible stuff, too.
- 4 No, thanks. I'm not in the mood.
- 5 I'm just going to pop across to Sam's.
- 6 I've just had a row with my mum.



2 Complete the sentences with *had to* or *didn't have to*.

- a Jake go to the hotel by himself.
- b Jake go back home to England.
- c Jake dress up whilst he stayed at the embassy.
- d Jake leave the embassy when the footballer's wife came to stay.
- e Nat and Jake find the password before they could look on Alex's laptop.
- f Nat climb down the cliff. Jake carried her.

3 What did the characters want or not want Jake to do? Complete the sentences.

look for his father go back home
spend the summer holidays with him see his father

- a Jake's father
- b Jake's mum
- c Inspector Nikos
- d Nat

4 Complete the sentences with the present or past passive form of the verbs in brackets.

- a Jake's father's letters (*send back*) to him unread.
- b Venus from Milos and the great Marbles (*take*) to London by Lord Elgin.
- c "You can stay at the embassy until everything (*sort out*)," says Susie.
- d Nat thinks that the embassy (*haunt*).
- e Nat and Jake (*tie up*) by the smugglers.



AFTER READING

EXIT TEST

1 Read the sentences below about the book Then tick (✓) true (T) or false (F).

- | | T | F |
|---|--------------------------|--------------------------|
| a Jake has visited the Parthenon a thousand times. | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| b Jake has not seen his father for five years. | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| c Jake discovered a letter from his father on his birthday. | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| d Jake's uncle lives in Canada. | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| e Nat's mother is an archaeologist too. | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| f Nat doesn't phone the hotel on the embassy phone because she thinks it's bugged. | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| g Jake's mum is an Art teacher. | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| h Nat's mum used to go out with Jake's dad. | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| i Jake thinks that Melissa is the name of a place but it is in fact the name of his dad's new girlfriend. | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| j Jake likes climbing but Nat has never climbed before. | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| k Jake sees Inspector Nikos sitting outside a café on the island of Crete. | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| l Nat drops her water bottle and finds the entrance to a cave. | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| m Nat and Jake walk through a tunnel in the mountainside and come out in the middle of a farm. | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| n Jake manages to untie the knots and free Nat's hands. | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| o Jake finally meets his father in the cave with the animal paintings on the walls. | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |

2 With a partner correct the false sentences.

3 Here are three things from the story. Say why they are important.

4 You have just read the story of Jake's summer holiday. Write an email to Jake and tell him about the best summer holiday you have ever had. These questions will help you.

- Where did you go?
- Who did you go with?
- What did you do there?
- Why was it special?



3 Listen to the conversation between Jake and Nikos. Then tick (✓) true (T) or false (F).

- | | T | F |
|---|--------------------------|--------------------------|
| a Jake's knows what his father is working on at the moment. | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| b They need archaeology police in Greece because there are a lot of treasures to steal. | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| c Nikos is sure that Jake's father has stolen something valuable. | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| d Jake's father has an office in Crete and one at the British School in Athens. | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| e Jake hasn't looked through his father's belongings at all. | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| f Jake found a small piece of rock amongst his father's belongings. | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| g Nikos wants to have the paint on the rock analysed. | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| h Jake's father may be trying to smuggle something out of Greece. Nikos is not sure. | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |



4 Talk about the pictures.

- a Look at the picture on page 17.
Partner A tell Partner B about the picture.
Who is in the picture?
Where is s/he? Describe the place.
What is s/he doing?
- b Then look at the picture on pages 69.
Partner B tell Partner A about the picture.
Who is in the picture?
How do they look?
Where are they?



A-LIST JOBS - ARCHITECT, ANTHROPOLOGIST OR ARCHAEOLOGIST?

Jake's father is an archaeologist so he studies historical sites and objects. Would this job suit you? Do our quiz to find out if you should be an architect, anthropologist or archaeologist.

- 1** Where would you like to travel?
 - A I'd love to see New York and visit its museums, skyscrapers and historical monuments.
 - B I'd like to discover faraway lands.
 - C I'd like to travel back in time.
- 2** Choose a style.
 - A modern, simple design
 - B colourful clothes from different cultures
 - C vintage clothes
- 3** What's your favourite subject?
 - A Physcs
 - B Literature
 - C History



4 Choose a work schedule.

- A I like working on my own late at night.
- B I love travelling and talking to people.
- C I can concentrate on the same task for a long time.

5 Pick a game.

- A I like playing with building blocks like Lego..
- B I often play board and card games with my friends.
- C I love solving puzzles.

ANSWERS

Mostly As: You could be an architect. Would you like to design new buildings, renovate old ones and create public spaces?

Mostly Bs: You could be an anthropologist. If you enjoy learning about different cultures, you can take advantage of your curiosity and travel to interesting places to do research.

Mostly Cs: You could be an archaeologist. If you like solving puzzles and the past interests you, you might enjoy studying ancient ruins and civilisations.

AFTER READING

PROJECTS



1 Skim the text and match the numbers to the questions.

- a What is the population of Agathonisi?
- b How many illegal immigrants have arrived in Greece this year?
- c How many immigrants have already arrived on the island of Agathonisi?

1 150

2 4,000

3 11,000



People Smuggling

This year, groups of men, women and children from as far away as Afghanistan and Iraq began arriving on the small Greek island of Agathonisi. The island has a population of 150 people. It can't cope with the large numbers of immigrants that are

arriving. More than 4,000 immigrants have already arrived on the island. They are ferried by smugglers to Agathonisi from nearby Turkey.

"We're a warm-hearted people and at first we welcomed them with open arms," said Evangelos Kottoros, the head of the tiny community. "We gave them food. And we gave them clothes but we haven't got the facilities to look after them. On some days nearly 200 people arrived. They are all desperate to flee poverty and conflict." After around 700 immigrants climbed out of little old boats onto Agathonisi's shores in the space of ten days, local authorities made an urgent appeal for help. Every day now immigrants illegally enter Greece. The government estimates that more than 11,000 have arrived this year. Most slip in along the country's craggy coastline.

- 2 Find some statistics about people smuggling to your country or another country in Europe on the Internet. Tell the class the results of your search.
- 3 Why do people leave their countries? In pairs, make a list of reasons. Then discuss as a class.