



Audiotraining Aufbau

ENGLISCH

3 landestypische Hörgeschichten

von

Dominic Butler

PONS GmbH
Stuttgart

PONS

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Sprecher: Guy Slocombe

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Viel Hörvergnügen wünscht Ihre PONS-Redaktion!



ABOUT THE AUTHOR & THE VOICE ARTIST



Dominic Butler is an author and English teacher currently living, writing and teaching in Hungary. It could be said that creativity runs in the family, as his elder brother Matthew is a film director and his younger brother Graham, an actor. Educated in a traditional grammar school in the north of England, Dominic went on to hone his interest for literature at Sheffield Hallam University. A fan of all forms of fiction, Dominic has previously specialised in the crime genre, having created four collections of murderous tales for PONS readers. Now, however, he has chosen to put aside his ghoulish plots in favour of a second volume of short humorous stories with a twist; though he occasionally finds that even his most light-hearted stories may hide a shadowy surprise.

Guy Slocombe is a voiceover artist, actor and presenter originally from London and now living in beautiful York. He works with clients all over the world such as Apple, National Geographic and recently voiced for the latest Assassins Creed video game.



WHERE THE STORIES HAPPEN

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THE WITCH'S HEAD

Outside the Witch's Head the storm **persisted**¹, **howling**² through the small Lancashire village of Barley. Inside, however, a **log fire**³ was nicely warming this typical English pub, and a football match on the old television in the corner was **drowning out**⁴ the sound of the wind.

Perched on their usual seats at the bar, **ageing regulars**⁵ Graham and Roy watched the match in comfortable silence, their pints of **chestnut brown bitter**⁶ emptying at a **steady speed**⁷.

"**Going to be a quiet one**⁸," said the landlord, a double-chinned man with a **balding head**⁹ and small **beady eyes**¹⁰.

"Good," said Roy, his eyes not moving from the television screen.

"Good for you, maybe; I need some customers," said the landlord as he **idly**¹¹ polished the bar.

"You've got us," said Graham, holding out his now empty pint glass.

"Aye, and we like it quiet," agreed Roy as he too offered his empty glass.

It was then that the door to the small pub **swung open**¹² and a tall young man in a **soaking wet**¹³ anorak stepped in from the rain.

"Evening," said the young man **brightly**¹⁴, putting his **backpack**¹⁵ down by the door and walking across to the bar.

"**Some weather**¹⁶, hey? Wow, this place is great! A real English pub, hey? It looks just like in the movies!" he said in a strong American accent. "Real English beer too? Is it any good? You guys drink it warm, right? Crazy! **Oh my gosh**¹⁷, is that a real log fire!? Listen, I've just been trekking across the hills here. I was **heading for**¹⁸ some place called Colne, where a friend of mine lives, but I thought I would get out of this rain and see if you guys had a room for the night. Do you?"

1 to persist - *anhalten*

2 to howl - *heulen*

3 log fire - *Holzfeuer*

4 to drown out sth. - *etw. übertönen*

5 ageing regular - *alternder Stammgast*

6 chestnut brown bitter - *kastanienbraunes Bitter (englische Biersorte)*

7 to empty at a steady speed - *sich in gleichmäßigem Tempo leeren*

8 "Going to be a quiet one" - (hier:) „Es wird wohl ein ruhiger Abend werden"

9 balding head - *kahl werdender Kopf*

10 beady eyes - *Knopfaugen*

11 idly (Adj.) - *träge*

12 to swing open - *aufgestoßen werden*

13 soaking wet (Adj.) - *klatschnass*

14 brightly (Adv.) - *fröhlich, heiter*

15 backpack - *Rucksack*

16 Some weather! - *Was für ein Wetter!*

17 oh my gosh - *ach du meine Güte*

18 to head for sth. - *auf dem Weg zu etw. sein*



The **landlord**¹⁹ was a little shocked at the speed and enthusiasm of the monologue. "Er, yes, we do actually. It's not very big, and I'll need to tidy it up a little bit, but..."

"No problem! I can sit and have a pint with these guys, right? What's that you're watching? Soccer?" The American took a seat at the bar and **shrugged off**²⁰ his coat. "Right, well it's not too expensive, only thirty..." the landlord hesitated. "Er, forty, forty pounds for the night."

"Great! I'll take a pint of your best warm beer too."

With a **greedy**²¹ smile the landlord pulled the pint then **excused himself**²², saying that he would prepare the room.

"**No rush!**²³" called the American as the landlord headed for the stairs. "I can chat to these guys!" and he turned his attention to Graham and Roy, who were **trying their hardest**²⁴ to ignore him. "So guys, why's this place called the Witch's Head? Funny name, hey?"

Roy turned to the American and looked at him with a serious expression. "You mean you don't know about the witches?"

The American grinned. "What witches?"

Graham shook his head. "The Pendle witches. That's **Pendle Hill**²⁵ out there in the storm. That's where the witches live. Did you not know? This area is famous for them. In the seventeenth century more than ten of them were caught and killed because of the dark magic they were practising on that hill."

The American's smile **faltered**²⁶ a little. "What? **You're kidding?**²⁷"

Roy shook his head. "He's not. In fact, a lot of people say that there are still witches up there, or at least the ghosts of them. Yep, people are always seeing strange things around here...especially in this pub."

The American's eyes were wide open, his expression suddenly as serious as theirs. "Here?"

"Well, why do you **reckon**²⁸ it's called the Witch's Head? This is where one of them was caught and killed," said Graham, **sipping**²⁹ at his pint. "Up in one of the bedrooms, wasn't it, Roy?"

The American looked from one man to another, his smile reappearing. "No, you guys are **pulling my leg**³⁰."

19 landlord - Wirt

20 to shrug off sth. - etw. loswerden

21 greedy (Adj.) - gierig

22 to excuse os. - sich entschuldigen, verabschieden

23 No rush! - Keine Eile!

24 to try o.'s hardest - sein Möglichstes tun

25 Pendle Hill - Pendle Hill ist ein 557 Meter hoher Hügel im Osten der Grafschaft Lancashire.

26 to falter - nachlassen

27 You're kidding? - Machst du / machen Sie Scherze?

28 to reckon - meinen

29 to sip - nippen

30 to pull sb.'s leg - jdn. auf den Arm nehmen

Roy shrugged. "Fine, don't believe us."

The American was about to speak when there was suddenly a horrible **whining**³¹ noise from upstairs.

"What? What's that?" he stammered.

Roy and Graham shook their heads and turned their eyes back to the television. "We just try to ignore it now. I mean, it's not like we sleep here...you know, in the dark, all alone."

The American blinked at them once more, then he stood up, his pint still untouched. "You know, **on second thoughts**³², I think I should probably..." then without finishing his sentence he dropped a five pound note on the bar, walked quickly to the door and stepped back out into the storm.

With a **relieved sigh**³³ Graham reached for the **spare**³⁴ pint and divided its contents between his and Roy's glasses. It was just then that the landlord appeared at the bottom of the stairs with an almost **ancient looking vacuum cleaner**³⁵ in his hands.

"Sorry about the noise..." he began saying. Then noticing the absence of the American he stopped and **glared**³⁶ at his regulars. "Not again!?"

Without saying a word, the two men each took a twenty pound note from their pockets and placed them on the bar.

"**Worth every penny**³⁷," said Graham.

"Absolutely," replied Roy.

31 whining - Heulen, Jaulen

32 on second thoughts - wenn ich es mir recht überlege

33 relieved sigh - erleichterter Seufzer

34 spare (Adj.) - übrig

35 ancient looking vacuum cleaner - altertümlich wirkender Staubsauger

36 to glare - anstarren

37 to be worth every penny - sein Geld wert sein

A SHAKESPEAREAN TALE

The old bookshop on the outskirts of the town was as charming and picturesque as Stratford-upon-Avon itself.

With its **quaint**¹ **thatched roof**² and **whitewashed**³ walls, the converted cottage made all who saw it think of that most famous of English writers. So it should come as little surprise to learn that the name of the bookshop was the **Bard**⁴ and **Quill**⁵.

What might be surprising to learn, however, is that although the bookshop had, for many years, **retained**⁶ a reputation as a dealer of fine antique books, at this precise moment the owner, Mr Nicholas Flint, was considering setting fire to the entire building.

"It would be easy," he thought to himself, holding a box of matches in his hand and looking around the elegant interior of the shop. The walls were covered in bookcases, all of which were laden with lovely dry old books. One match might do it, he thought. One match in the right place!

He took one of the long matches from the box and moved around the shop searching for the best corner. Then, with a sigh of **exasperation**⁷ he sat down at his large desk in the centre of the room and put his head into his hands.

He was a middle-aged man with greying hair, a thin face and nervous blue eyes. Most of the people in Stratford-upon-Avon considered him to be a respectable though slightly quiet and **reclusive**⁸, person. They would probably have been rather surprised, therefore, to discover that Nicholas Flint was **addicted to gambling**⁹.

Putting the matches to one side, he took a folder from his desk drawer and **miserably**¹⁰ **flicked through**¹¹ the many **overdue**¹² bills and invoices which it contained. For the past five years, his gambling had amassed such a sizable debt that he was now nearly entirely bankrupt. Indeed, the only money which he now possessed was the two crisp fifty-pound notes in his wallet. Yes, he could, like more and more people these days, **file for bankruptcy**¹³, but he would rather die since the risk of people finding out was too great.

1 quaint (Adj.) - reizend

2 thatched roof - Reetdach

3 whitewashed (Adj.) - weiß getüncht

4 bard - Barde

5 quill - Feder

6 to retain - beibehalten

7 exasperation - Verzweiflung

8 reclusive - zurückgezogen

9 addicted to gambling - spielsüchtig

10 miserably (Adv.) - niedergeschlagen, traurig

11 to flick through sth. - etw. durchblättern

12 overdue (Adj.) - überfällig

13 to file for bankruptcy - Insolvenz anmelden

His once **cherished**¹⁴ bookshop, however, was well insured.

"One match," he muttered out loud looking around at the old books. "One match and all your problems are over. You can move away, give up the wretched gambling and start again."

Yes, he was going to do it.

It was then, however, that the door of the old bookshop opened, and the fresh autumn breeze whispered into the shop.

"Oh, excuse me, I forgot to lock the door. The shop's not open at the moment," he said.

"**What's that?**"¹⁵ asked the elderly lady who entered. She was a fragile old thing walking slowly with a **cane**¹⁶ and lifting her hand to her ear as if she could not hear.

"I said we're not open."

"Oh? I have a few old books that I was hoping you might like to buy," she said, placing a bundle of books on his desk and offering him a polite smile. "Can't you have a look at them?"

Mr Flint had not bought a book for almost a year, yet he assumed that it would be easier and faster to get rid of the **old dear**¹⁷ if he at least pretended to look.

"Of course," he said, picking up the first book and scanning the title and author. "Ah, this is unfortunately a little too modern. Perhaps..." He looked at the next which was also only twenty or so years old. "Ah, no, this one too."

"Oh, really, what about this one?" asked the elderly lady. "**I'm positive that**"¹⁸ this is an antique. It was my great grandmother's."

Mr Flint took the book from her and examined it. "Yes, it does appear to be a little bit older."

Carefully, he began to flick through the pages, noticing that there were many old pieces of paper between them. He had almost reached the end of the book when he saw something which **caught his eye**¹⁹ and nearly stopped his heart.

"Well?" asked the elderly lady. "Is it of interest to you?"

"Er...perhaps," said Mr Flint, his mouth suddenly dry. "Could I take it to my study for a moment? There's something that I would like to check."

Quickly, he stood up and went to his private study at the back of the shop. Closing the door behind him, he gently removed the piece of paper which he had seen and held it up to the light.

"Impossible!" he said, examining the signature at the bottom of the **apparently**²⁰ ancient document. "It can't be!"

14 cherished (Adj.) - (hoch) geschätzt

15 What's that? - Wie bitte?

16 cane - Gehstock

17 old dear - Muttchen

18 to be positive that... - sicher sein, dass ...

19 to catch sb.'s eye - jdm. ins Auge fallen/springen

20 apparently (Adj.) - offensichtlich

And yet he had seen that signature before, and this seemed to be identical. The document was certainly very old, some boring invoice for a list of furniture, but signed by... "William Shakespeare!" he **gasp**²¹.

There were only six known signatures of the famous bard, each one of them found on **dull**²² legal documents. If this was real, and Mr Flint was increasingly sure that it was, he could become a millionaire!

Slowly, carefully, he replaced the document back into the book and opened the door. "Well," he said, trying to keep his expression neutral. "I could perhaps offer you something for this book, I think."

"Oh excellent," said the elderly lady.

"Shall we say...fifty pounds?" said Mr Flint.

"Fifty? Oh, I had thought a little more...it does look very old."

Mr Flint thought for a moment. Could he really **bet**²³ all of his money on the possibility that it really was a **genuine**²⁴ Shakespeare signature...?

As the elderly lady closed the door to the shop with two crisp fifty-pound notes in her hand, she heard Mr Flint begin singing. For a moment she listened, then slowly, using her cane for support, she began to walk away from the charming old bookshop with its quaint thatched roof.

Only when she had reached the corner of the road, and the Bard and Quill was no longer in sight did she carefully look around and stop. Then, suddenly, she **straightened her back**²⁵, **stretched**²⁶ and lifted up her cane **as though**²⁷ it was of no use to her anymore.

Taking a set of car keys from her pocket, she opened the door to a red sports car which was parked by the road and jumped in.

In a few seconds she was driving quickly away from the old bookshop and the singing Mr Flint.

And you may not be too surprised to learn that on the passenger seat next to her was a box of old books, each one containing some rather old-looking documents on which was scribbled a familiar signature.

21 to gasp - *hörbar die Luft einziehen*

22 dull (Adj.) - *langweilig*

23 to bet on sth. - *auf etw. setzen*

24 genuine (Adj.) - (*hier:*) *original*

25 to straighten o.'s back - *den Rücken gerade machen/strecken*

26 to stretch - *dehnen*

27 as though - *als ob*

EDINBURGH BELOW

Chris **stamped**¹ his feet and **rubbed**² his hands together: his black leather jacket and football scarf were doing little to keep out the cold of the winter evening. He was standing in the middle of a small crowd of people at the entrance of a rather ordinary doorway, **excited mutters**³ and the clicking sound of cameras filling the air around him. Looking at his watch, he shook his head as he realised that Susan was late as usual. Stepping out of the crowd, he looked up and down Edinburgh's busy **Royal Mile**⁴, searching the **quaint**⁵ **cobbled streets**⁶ and souvenir shops for a sign of his short, red-headed friend. There, **strolling**⁷ towards them with a big smile on her face, was Susan. He was about to raise a hand to wave at her when he saw her stop and touch another man on the shoulder.

Chris laughed at Susan's shocked expression as the man turned round. Then calling her name he continued to laugh as she walked over, her cheeks now the same colour as her hair.

"I thought he was you! He's got the same leather jacket and football scarf," she said in her thick Scottish accent.

"Late as usual! I was beginning to think you'd **chickened out**⁸."

"Yeah, right! I can't wait to see what's down there. People say it's really **spooky**⁹. If anyone's scared, it's you!"

Before Chris could respond, an elderly man at the front of the crowd raised his hands for silence. "Ladies and gentlemen, good evening and welcome to today's final tour of the City of the Dead! If you'd like to follow me, I will now take you down to the lost **vaults**¹⁰ which lie below **ancient**¹¹ Edinburgh."

There was an excited murmur, and Chris and Susan grinned at each other and followed the crowd through the entrance into a dark **passageway**¹².

"We are now entering a part of the city which was almost completely forgotten. A part of the city which was used by the poor and the criminal, while the more modern Edinburgh was built on top of it," said the guide, as he led them further into the

1 to stamp - stampfen

2 to rub - reiben

3 excited mutter - aufgeregtes Gemurmel

4 Royal Mile - Edinburghs Royal Mile bezeichnet mehrere Straßen, die durch das alte Zentrum der Stadt verlaufen.

5 quaint (Adj.) - malerisch

6 cobbled street - Straße mit Kopfsteinpflaster

7 to stroll - schlendern

8 to chicken out (ugs.) - kneifen

9 spooky (Adj.) - gruselig

10 vault - Gewölbe

11 ancient (Adj.) - alt, antik

12 passageway - Durchgang



dimly lit¹³ vaults and passageways. "Yes, it was the starving¹⁴ and the dying who lived down here. The plague¹⁵ took many a¹⁶ soul, as did the murderers and the body snatchers¹⁷."

"And are there any ghosts?" asked Susan excitedly.

"Well, all I can tell you is that I certainly wouldn't like to spend the night down here." As the crowd chuckled¹⁸, Chris saw Susan shiver with fear. "Wow, this is scary, hey?" she said.

It was then, as they pushed further below the city, that Chris had a rather horrible idea.

For another fifteen minutes they followed the guide through the labyrinth of passageways, listening to the scary stories about the city's past. Then, as it seemed that the tour was nearing its end¹⁹, Chris stopped and knelt down²⁰. "I'll catch you up²¹," he said to Susan. "I just need to tie my shoelaces²²."

Susan, who was happily chatting to the tour guide, nodded as the crowd moved out of sight²³.

With a large grin on his face, Chris quickly took off his football scarf and placed it on the cold stone floor. Then he stepped into the shadows of one of the vaults.

It was a simple plan. When Susan came back to look for him, she would see the scarf, and her head would fill with silly ideas about ghosts. Then, as she reached down to pick it up, he would jump out and give her the fright of her life²⁴!

Still grinning, Chris looked around at the dark and spooky shadows, a slight flutter²⁵ of fear touching him for the first time.

He just hoped that she did not take too long.

Meanwhile²⁶, at the exit of the tour, the guide was letting the happy tourists back onto the busy street. "Is that everyone?" he asked Susan as she passed him.

"No, my friend's still in there. He was tying his shoelaces," she said.

It was then, however, that Susan glimpsed²⁷ the back of the man in the black leather jacket and football scarf.

13 dimly lit - spärlich beleuchtet

14 to starve - verhungern

15 the plague - die Pest (wird im Englischen üblicherweise immer mit dem Artikel genannt)

16 many a/an... - manch ein/eine...

17 body-snatcher - Leichenräuber (eine Person, die Tote aus Leichenhäusern oder Friedhöfen entführt. Meistens werden die Leichen an Menschen verkauft, die diese für medizinische Zwecke nutzen)

18 to chuckle - kichern

19 to near its end - zu Ende kommen

20 to kneel down - sich hinknien

21 to catch sb. up - jdn. einholen; später nachkommen

22 to tie o.'s shoelaces - sich die Schuhe zubinden

23 to move out of sight - dem Blick entschwinden/außer Sichtweite geraten

24 to give sb. the fright of their life - jdn. zu Tode erschrecken

25 flutter - Flattern, Zucken

26 meanwhile (Adv.) - inzwischen, unterdessen

27 to glimpse sb./sth. - jdn./etw. flüchtig sehen

"Oh no, sorry, there he is," she said happily.
And with a nod the tour guide pushed the heavy door back into place, his keys locking up the vaults for the night.