



Ring of Thieves

Richard Prescott



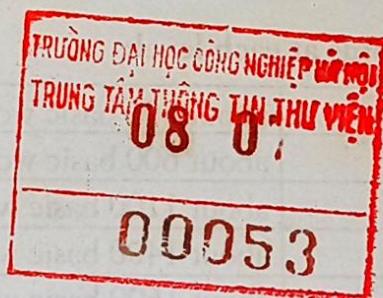
MACMILLAN READERS

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INTERMEDIATE LEVEL

RICHARD PRESCOTT

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The Macmillan Readers provide a choice of enjoyable reading materials for learners of English. The series is published at six levels – Starter, Beginner, Elementary, Pre-Intermediate, Intermediate and Upper.

Level control

Information, structure and vocabulary are controlled to suit the students' ability at each level.

The number of words at each level:

Starter	about 300 basic words
Beginner	about 600 basic words
Elementary	about 1100 basic words
Pre-Intermediate	about 1400 basic words
Intermediate	about 1600 basic words
Upper	about 2200 basic words

Vocabulary

Some difficult words and phrases in this book are important for understanding the story. Some of these words are explained in the story and some are shown in the pictures. From Pre-Intermediate level upwards, words are marked with a number like this: ...³. These words are explained in the Glossary at the end of the book.

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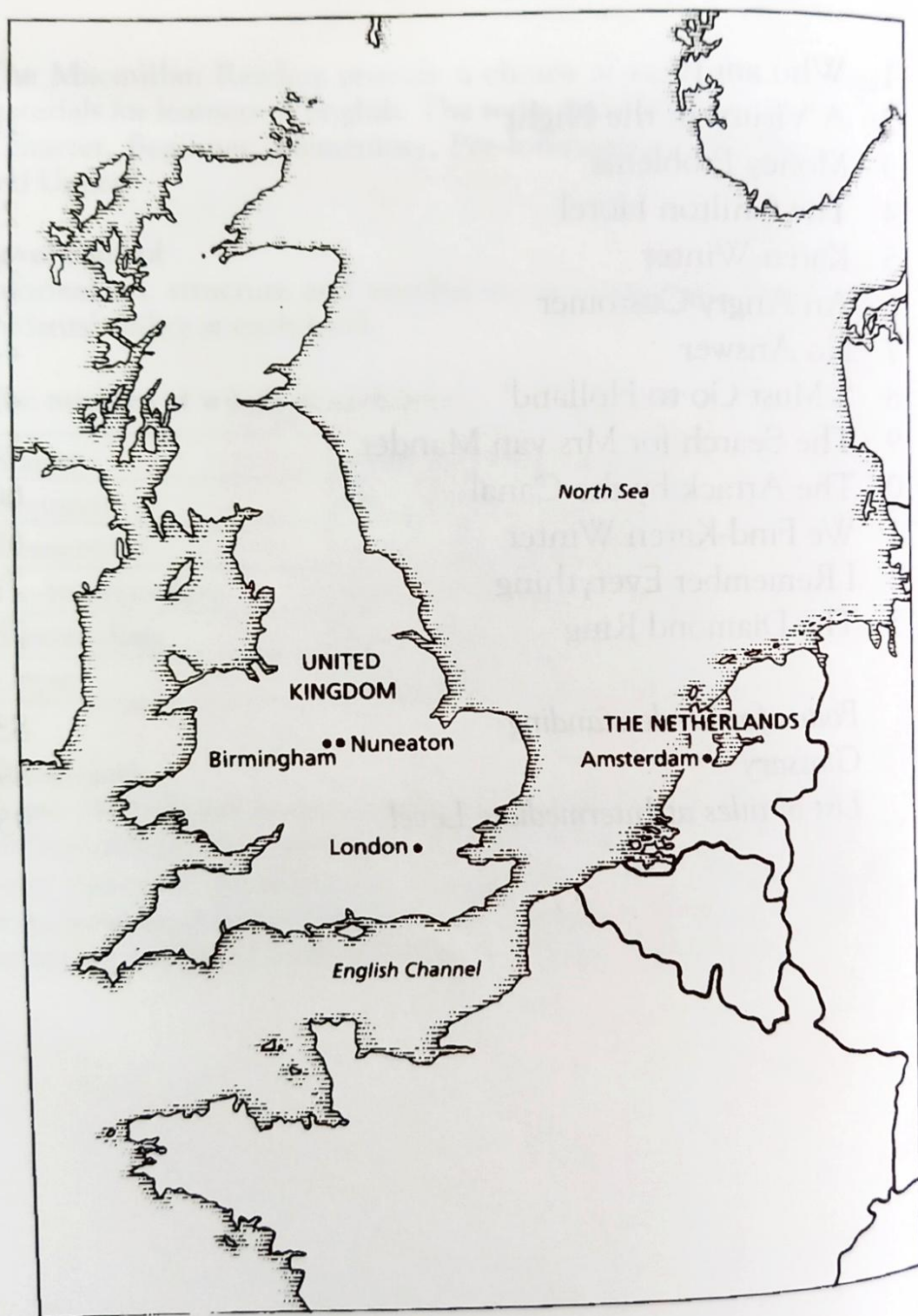
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The Places in This Story



Who am I?

Something very strange was happening to me. My head hurt. I didn't know where I was. I couldn't remember my name. I couldn't remember anything.

My eyes were closed. I tried to think. Where was I? Who was I? Someone spoke to me.

'Are you all right?' a voice asked.

I opened my eyes. It was evening and almost dark. I was sitting on a long, wooden bench in a park. A teenage boy was standing in front of me. The boy had a dog with him. I couldn't see any other people. Everywhere was quiet.

'Are you all right?' the boy repeated. 'You look strange.'

I felt strange. I sat up straight. My whole body hurt. 'What happened to me?' I asked. 'Did I have an accident?'

'I don't know,' the boy said. 'I saw you walk here and sit down.'

'I walked here!' I said, surprised.

'Yes, can't you remember? It was about five minutes ago.'

I couldn't remember anything. The boy pointed behind me. 'You came from over there,' he said.

I turned and looked where the boy was pointing. I could see some trees. Beyond the trees, a train passed by slowly.

'What's over there?' I asked.



The boy pointed behind me.
'You came from over there,' he said.

'There's only the railway line,' the boy replied. 'But that's where you came from.'

'What place is this?' I asked.

The boy laughed. 'What do you mean?' he said. 'Don't you know?'

I didn't know.

'This is Nuneaton,' the boy said. He laughed again.

I repeated the name of the town to myself. The boy stood looking at me. My clothes were dirty. My jacket was torn¹.

'He thinks I'm mad,' I thought.

The boy moved away a little. 'Did someone attack² you?' he said. 'Have you been robbed?'

I put my hands in my pockets and checked quickly. In one pocket, I found my wallet. Some money was inside it and there were a few papers. In another pocket, I found a house key and a gold earring.

'Perhaps I've been robbed,' I said. 'But there's money in my wallet.'

'Shall I call the police?'

I didn't want to talk to the police. I wanted to go home. I needed a hot bath, an aspirin³ and a long sleep.

'There's no need to call them,' I said. 'I'll report⁴ the attack to the police tomorrow.'

'OK,' the boy said.

I thanked the boy for his help. Then I watched him and his dog walk away. I sat quietly for a few minutes. Slowly, I began to feel better. I tried hard to remember. But I could remember nothing. I had lost my memory.

I had to find out my name and address. I checked my pockets again. The house key was important, of course. But where was the house? Luckily, I had my wallet. Perhaps the papers inside it could help me. I opened my wallet and took out the papers. On one of the pieces of paper was a note. It said: *Phone Harvey Chapman about appointment.* But there was no phone number.

I also found a train ticket. It was a return ticket⁵ from Birmingham to London. The date on the ticket was 6th June. I checked the date on my watch. The dates were the same. I had been to London today. And I had left Birmingham this morning. But I wasn't in Birmingham now. I was in Nuneaton, a town near Birmingham.

There was a little pocket inside the wallet. In here, I found something very important – business cards. All the business cards were the same. They showed a name – my name – and a business and a home address:

JAMES KEATING	
HOME:	WORK:
12 SUTTON STREET	301 BELLOWS LANE
BIRMINGHAM	BIRMINGHAM
PHONE:	PHONE
0121 2339509	0121 2364351

Part of the mystery was solved. I began to feel a little better. Now I could go home and rest. I walked across the

park and into the town. I soon found the railway station. Birmingham wasn't far away. A train was leaving for Birmingham in fifteen minutes. I phoned the home phone number on my business card. Nobody answered. An answering machine⁶ was connected to the phone. I left a message.

'This is James,' I said. 'I'm coming home.'

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