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Macmillan Literature Collections

Welcome to the *Macmillan Literature Collections* – a series of advanced-level readers containing original, unsimplified short stories written by famous classic and modern writers. We hope that these stories will help to ease the transition from graded readers to reading authentic novels.

Each collection in the series includes:

Introduction

- an introduction to the short story
- tips for reading authentic texts in English
- an introduction to the genre
- a carefully-chosen selection of classic and modern short stories.

The stories

Each story is presented in three parts: the introduction and pre-reading support material; the story; and post-reading activities. Each part includes the following sections:

- *About the author* – in-depth information about the author and their work
- *About the story* – information about the story, including background information about setting and cultural references
- *Summary* – a brief summary of the story that does not give away the ending.

Pre-reading activities

- *Key vocabulary* – a chance to look at some of the more difficult vocabulary related to the main themes and style of the story before reading the story
- *Main themes* – a brief discussion of the main themes, with questions to keep in mind as you read.

The story

You will find numbered footnotes in the stories. These explain cultural and historical references, and key words that you will need to understand the text. Many of these footnotes give definitions of words which are very formal, old-fashioned or rarely used in modern English. You will find more common, useful words and phrases from the stories in the *Glossary* at the end of the book. Words included in the *Glossary* will appear in **bold**.

Post-reading activities

- *Understanding the story* – comprehension questions that will help you make sure you've understood the story
- *Language study* – a section that presents and practises key linguistic and structural features of authentic literary texts (you will find an index of the areas covered at the end of the book)
- *Literary analysis* – discussion questions that guide you to an in-depth appreciation of the story, its structure, its characters and its style.

In addition, at the end of each book there are:

- suggested *Essay questions*
- a comprehensive *Glossary* highlighting useful vocabulary from each story
- an index for the *Language study* section.

How to use these books

You can use these books in whatever way you want. You may want to start from the beginning and work your way through. You may want to pick and choose. The *Contents* page gives a very brief, one-line introduction to each story to help you decide where to start. You may want to learn about the author and the story before you read each one, or you may prefer to read the story first and then find out more about it afterwards. Remember that the stories and exercises can be challenging, so you may want to spend quite a long time studying each one. The most important thing is to enjoy the collection – to enjoy reading, to enjoy the stories and to enjoy the language that has been used to create them.

Answer keys

In many cases you can check your answers in the story by using the page references given. However, an Answer key for all the exercises is available at www.macmillanenglish.com/readers.

The genre of Travel

What is Travel?

Travel writing usually describes the experiences of a person in a region or country which is not their own. Sometimes, the writing focuses on a journey rather than a place. For example, in this book, the chapters from *The Amateur Emigrant* by Robert Louis Stevenson describe a journey by boat from Scotland to North America. The focus is on the conditions on the boat and the people that Stevenson meets. The other extracts in this collection are a mixture of the authors' travel experiences, using a variety of transport, and their observations on the country, or countries, they visit.

All the extracts in this collection are non-fiction and are written in the first person. This means that we often learn as much about the authors as we do about the places they visit.

The purposes of the journeys in this book are varied. Stevenson travelled to America to be with his future wife and, at the same time, he wanted to experience and write about sea-travel from an ordinary man's perspective. Graham Greene travelled because he had been commissioned to write about Mexico. Eric Newby loved travelling and enjoyed revisiting interesting places and writing about them. Bill Bryson is a travel writer but also writes entertainingly in other genres. Michael Palin is a talented writer but he is probably better known as an actor and television presenter; he was commissioned to make a travel programme for television. Charley Boorman and Ewan McGregor are long-time friends and established actors who were commissioned to make a TV programme about their travels and who later wrote about their experiences.

Why do we like travel extracts?

People enjoy travel extracts because they can 'visit' new places from the safety and comfort of their own home. They can share in the author's experiences, enjoying the advantages, and avoiding the disadvantages of travel. All of the extracts included here describe the discomforts, as well as the pleasures, of travel: Stevenson shows us seasickness and crowded sleeping areas; Greene describes the pain of riding on a mule for hours in terrible heat; Newby portrays the frustrations of trying

to repair a car in India; Palin, Bryson, Boorman and McGregor all describe the difficulties of coping with extreme cold.

However, the writers also describe beautiful landscapes and interesting encounters with local people. As readers, we can share in the authors' discoveries and adventures. We can also learn something about the history of the places visited. In other words, travel writing is a complex genre which can teach us about many different topics – geography, history, politics and human behaviour.

Travel writing in English

Early travel writing in English was often the result of exploration: people went to find new lands or explore known lands further. Sometimes, these explorers recorded their adventures in the form of a diary or journal. Later, they would turn their notes into an article or a book. A well-known example of this is the diary kept by Captain Scott who died in 1912 while trying to reach the South Pole. His diary provided a record of his trip and an inspiration to future explorers.

In the 18th century, British writers such as Samuel Johnson, Laurence Sterne and Mary Wollstonecraft found inspiration in travel for both their fiction and non-fictional works.

In the 19th century, Charles Dickens combined writing fiction with essays about his travels in Europe and North America. American writers such as James Fenimore Cooper, Mark Twain and Henry James also wrote about their travel experiences in the USA and elsewhere.

By the 20th century, travel writing was an accepted and popular genre. D.H. Lawrence, Evelyn Waugh, Laurens van der Post, Wilfred Thesiger, Lawrence Durrell, Paul Theroux, Colin Thubron, and Bruce Chatwin are only some of the many authors who have written about their experiences in other countries.

The extracts in this collection range in time from the mid 19th century to the first decade of the 21st century. Robert Louis Stevenson wrote interesting travel literature but he is better known for his works of fiction, especially *Treasure Island* and *Dr Jekyll and Mr Hyde*. Graham Greene is another 'literary' writer, known for works such as *The Third Man* and *The Power and the Glory*, but his travel work is among the best in the genre.

Eric Newby is the only writer in this collection who wrote only about travel. His book, *A Short Walk in the Hindu Kush* (1958), became a model for many younger travel writers. The American Bill Bryson writes in many different genres – biography, science, history, language and literature – and his travel writing reflects his many and varied interests. Finally, the extracts by Michael Palin and Ewan McGregor show the increasing interest of the public in film and television: both men were commissioned to film their experiences before they wrote about them.

The Lawless Roads

by Graham Greene

About the author

Graham Greene was born in 1904 in Hertfordshire in England, the fourth of six children in an influential wealthy family. As a boy, Graham attended Berkhamsted School where his father was headmaster. Bullied at school, the young writer was so unhappy that he 'self-harmed' – cutting himself – and even tried to kill himself several times. Aged 15, he was sent to a psychoanalyst in London for six months, to help him overcome his difficulties.

When he left school, Greene went to Oxford University to study modern history. In his autobiography, *A Sort of Life*, Greene remembers his days at university as a time of debt, drink and political debate – at one point, he joined the Communist party. Whilst at university he published various poems and stories and wrote his first novel, *Antony Sant*. He was also editor of the *Oxford Outlook*. When he left university, Greene became a journalist, working first for a local paper in Nottingham, and then as sub-editor for *The Times*. While Greene was in Nottingham, he met and fell in love with a Catholic woman, Vivien Dayrell-Browning, who had written to him about some errors in his writing about Catholicism. In 1926, Greene became a Catholic himself. The following year, he and Vivien were married. The couple had two children – Lucy Caroline and Francis.

Graham Greene travelled widely throughout his life and his books, both fiction and non-fiction, are set in a wide range of countries. He admitted that he actively looked for adventure in areas of conflict. In 1935 he made a journey across Liberia in Africa which he describes in *Journey without Maps*. In 1938 he was commissioned to visit Mexico in order to report on the religious persecution there. As a result, he wrote *The Lawless Roads* and later, his novel *The Power and the Glory*, which is about a persecuted priest in Mexico. Greene also reported on other conflicts and difficult political situations – his work took him to Vietnam during the Indochina War, Kenya during the Mau Mau outbreak and Poland during Stalin's rule.



The Lawless Roads

by Graham Greene

The Long Ride

I left my suitcase behind, and because it seemed **absurd** to think of rain I foolishly **abandoned** my cape and took only the net, a **hammock**, and a **rucksack**.

At a quarter past four I got up and dressed by the light of my electric torch, folded up the huge tentlike mosquito net². Everybody in Salto³ was asleep but my guide – a dark, dapper young man of some education who had come from Las Casas by way of Yajalon – and his father, who had prepared us coffee and biscuits in his home. It was the cool and quiet beginning of one of the worst days I have ever spent. Only the first few hours of that ride were to provide any pleasure – riding out of Salto in the dark with one sleepy **mongrel** raising its muzzle at the clip clop of the mules, the **ferry** across the river in the earliest light, the two mules swimming beside the canoe, with just their muzzles and their eyes above the water like a pair of **alligator** heads, and then the long banana plantations on the other bank, the fruit plucked⁴ as we rode tasting tart and delicious in the open air at dawn.

The trouble was, the way to Palenque lay across a bare **exposed** plateau, broken only occasionally by patches of forest and shade, and by nine in the morning the sun was blindingly up. By ten my cheap **helmet** bought in Veracruz for a few pesos⁵ was just the damp hot cardboard it had pretended not to be. I had not ridden a horse for ten years; I had never ridden a mule before. Its trot, I imagine, is something like a camel's: its whole back heaves and strains. There is no **rhythm** you can catch by

2 a piece of material that hangs over the bed and protects you from mosquito bites

3 a small town in the Mexican state of Chiapas

4 *mainly literary*: to pull a piece of fruit from a tree

5 Mexican money

rising in the stirrups; you must just surrender yourself to the merciless **uneven** bump⁶. The strain on the **spine** to the **novice** is **appalling**: the neck stiffens with it, the head aches as if it had been struck by sun. And all the time the **nerves** are worn by the **stubbornness** of the brute⁷; the trot degenerates into a walk, the walk into an amble, unless you **beat** the mule continually. "Mula. Mula. Mula. Echa, mula⁸," the **dreary** lament goes on.

And all the time Palenque shifted like a mirage; my guide had never been there himself: all he could do on the wide plain was to keep a rough⁹ direction. Ten hours away the storekeeper had said, and after four hours I thought I could manage that quite easily, but when we stopped at an Indian's hut about eleven in the morning (six hours from Salto) and heard them talk as if it were now not quite halfway, my heart sank. A couple of wattle¹⁰ huts like those of West African natives, chickens and **turkeys tumbling** across the dusty floor, a pack of mongrels and a few cows listless in the heat under some thorny trees – it was better than nothing on that baked plateau, and I wished later we had stayed the night. They swung a string hammock up and I dismounted with **immense** difficulty. Six hours had stiffened me. They gave us tortillas – the flat, dry pancake with which you eat all food in the Mexican country – and an egg each in a tin mug, and coffee, delicious coffee. We rested half an hour and then went on. Six hours more, I said, with what I hoped was cheerfulness to my guide, but he scouted¹¹ the notion. Six hours – oh, no, perhaps eight. Those people didn't know a thing.

I can remember **practically** nothing of that ride now until its close; I remember being afraid of sunstroke my head ached so – I would raise my hat for coolness, and then lower it from fear; I remember talking to my guide of the cantinas¹² there would be in Palenque and how much beer and tequila¹³ we would drink. I

6 refers to the painful and very irregular movement of the mule

7 a big strong animal

8 'Move it, mule.'

9 not detailed or exact

10 a material for making fences or walls made of stakes and branches

11 *very unusual*: dismissed

12 Spanish: a place that sells food and drink

13 Spanish: a Mexican drink, very high in alcohol

Glossary

The definitions in the glossary refer to the meanings of the words and phrases as they are used in the extracts in this collection. Some words and phrases may also have other meanings which are not given here. The definitions are arranged in the extract in which they appear, and in alphabetical order.

The Lawless Roads

abandon (v) to leave something in a place, especially because you are in a hurry or are trying to escape

absurd (adj) completely stupid, unreasonable or impossible to believe

adaptable (adj) able to change your behaviour or ideas easily in order to deal with new situations

alert (adj) able to think in a clear and intelligent way

alligator (n) a large reptile with a long tail, four short legs, a long pointed mouth and sharp teeth. It is related to the crocodile

ant (n) a small insect that lives under the ground in large organized groups called colonies

appalling (adj) very unpleasant and shocking

automaton (n) someone who behaves like a machine and shows no feelings

barn (n) a large building on a farm where animals, crops or machines are kept

beam (n) a long thick piece of wood, metal or concrete that supports a roof

beat (v) to hit something again and again

bizarre (adj) strange and difficult to explain

blessing (n) something good that you feel very grateful or lucky to have

bolt (n) a metal bar that you slide across a door or window in order to lock it

bump (n) a hit or knock against something solid

bundle (n) a group of things that have been tied together, especially so that you can carry them easily

cling (v) to hold on to something or someone tightly with your arms or hands, eg because you are afraid

complacent (adj) too confident and relaxed because you think you can deal with something easily, though this may not be true

compulsion (n) a very strong feeling of wanting to do something, especially a feeling that you cannot control

creak (v) if something creaks, especially something wooden, it makes a high noise when it moves or when you put weight on

desolation (n) the state of a place that is completely empty, or a place where everything has been destroyed

dim (adj) faint, not very well remembered

dislodge (v) to force something out of its position or out of the position where it is fixed

drift (v) to be pushed along very slowly by the movement of air or water

earthquake (n) a sudden shaking movement of the ground

emerge (v) to come out of something or from behind something

envy (n) the unhappy feeling that you have when you want very much to do something that someone else does or have something that they have

exposed (adj) not covered or hidden and therefore able to be seen; not protected from the weather

fade (v) to gradually disappear

fate (n) the things that happen to someone, especially unpleasant things

ferry (n) a boat that makes short regular journeys between two or more places

fist (n) your hand when your fingers are closed tightly

flesh (n) the soft part of people's or animals' bodies that consists mostly of muscle and fat

flutter (v) to move through the air with short, quick, light movements

gassy (adj) containing or creating a lot of gas

gaze (v) to look at someone or something for a long time, eg because they are attractive or interesting, or because you are thinking of something else

gnarled (adj) old and twisted and covered in lines

hammock (n) a bed consisting of a long piece of cloth or net tied at each end to posts or trees

helmet (n) a hat that you wear to protect your head

immense (adj) extremely large

inquisitive (adj) asking a lot of questions about things, especially things that people do not want to talk about

leopard (n) a large wild animal from Africa and Southern Asia that has golden fur with black spots

limb (n) an arm or a leg

lodging (n) a place that you pay to live in temporarily, eg when you are visiting an area

miracle (n) an event that cannot be explained according to the laws of nature and is considered to be an act of God

mongrel (n) a dog that is a mixture of different breeds

nerves (n) the groups of fibres in your body that carry messages to your brain

novice (n) someone who is just beginning to learn a skill or a subject

obscurity (n) a state in which a person or thing is not well known or is not remembered

overtake (v) to go past another vehicle that is travelling in the same direction

partition (n) a wall, screen or piece of glass used to separate one area from another in a room or vehicle

patronising (adj) behaving or speaking in a way that shows that you think you are more intelligent or important than someone

pebble (n) a small stone, especially one that has been made smooth by water

peer (v) to look very carefully, especially because something is difficult to see

plump (adj) slightly fat or overweight

pore (n) one of the very small holes in your skin that sweat can pass through

practically (adv) almost, nearly

precaution (n) something done to protect people or things against possible harm or trouble

prestige (n) the high reputation and respect that someone or something has earned, based on their impressive achievements, quality etc

relic (n) an object from the past that has been kept

rhythm (n) a regular pattern of sounds or movements

ridge (n) the long narrow top of a mountain or group of mountains

rot (v) to decay by a gradual natural process

rucksack (n) a bag that you carry on your back, used when you are walking long distances or travelling to several different places

scrub (n) small bushes and trees especially those that grow in areas without much rain