

## Match the extracts and the titles. Which stories would you like to read?

“29 June. This morning the Count said: ‘Tomorrow, my friend, we must part. You return to England, and I am leaving to complete some work, so we may never meet again. The gypsies still have work to do, and the carts will come back. My carriage will take you to the Borgo Pass to meet the coach to Bistritz.’ I was suspicious, so I asked: ‘Why may I not go tonight?’ ‘Because my coachman and horses are away on business.’ ‘But I could walk.’ ‘Do not stay an hour extra against your will, my friend,’ he said with a soft smile. I followed him downstairs, but when he opened the main door, the howling of the wolves outside was loud and angry. I knew I could not go against the Count’s wishes.”



“That night, Mahir told Tom a story – a story that Tom will never forget. It was the story of the secret to Mahir’s strength. ‘When I was four, my father, the King, took me to a Buddhist monastery high up in the Himalayan Mountains. There were no roads to the monastery. There were only small paths up the mountains. It was snowing very heavily and the ground was icy. The journey was very difficult. My father left me at the monastery with an old monk. When we first walked into the monastery, I was very frightened.”



“Of course, we spent the whole of the following weekend watching the ospreys as they flew around gracefully and fished spectacularly in the pools, and we were very glad a week later when the Easter holidays started. We spent every day there, cycling out while it was still dark, making notes, doing drawings, taking photographs, recording the birds’ activities, and soon we realized that they were starting to make a nest. We decided that it would be better to keep the whole thing a secret because we knew there were lots of egg collectors who would like to have an osprey’s egg in their collection, even though it was illegal.”



“In the room at the top of the theatre, Nathan was with his group, performing his audition for Dame Helen. For the audition scene, he was acting with a girl. They had to improvise a scene in which they were a mother and father, arguing about their teenage daughter. It was eleven o’clock in the evening and the mother and father were waiting for their daughter to come home. Nathan wasn’t sure how to start but the girl knew exactly what to say. ‘I’m the one who always has to clean up the mess,’ she said angrily to Nathan. ‘What do you mean?’ Nathan asked. He was surprised. The girl sounded and acted like a real mother. The girl continued.”



“Then there was an old gentleman who, in the Battle of White Plains, managed to stop a bullet with a small sword. He felt it whizz around the sword, and then bounce off the handle. To prove it he could show them the sword and how it was bent a little at the handle. Several more of these storytellers were equally great on the battlefield. They all thought they played an important role in bringing the war to a happy conclusion. All these tales were nothing in comparison with the ghost stories that followed. Ghost stories and superstitions live best in sheltered, long-settled places like Sleepy Hollow, but they are lost when people move to big villages.”

