
BBC LEARNING ENGLISH

Jamaica Inn

8: A shocking discovery



NB: This is not a word-for-word transcript

Language focus: Adjectives and adverbs

Mary narrating

My uncle is planning our escape from Jamaica Inn tonight. He's afraid that someone is coming to kill him – someone who has been giving him the orders to **wreck** ships. He thinks I'm resting in my room and he has locked my door. But I climbed out of the window and am **hurrying** to the vicar's house before my uncle discovers I've gone. The vicar will help me, I'm sure...

Ah there's the church and the **vicarage**. I can't see any lights, though.

Mary

Mr Davey... Mr Davey... It's Mary... Mary Yellan. No one's here...
Excuse me, is the vicar in the church? I've been knocking at the house but there's no answer.

Woman

No, he left this morning and won't be back until tomorrow.

Mary

Are you sure? Oh... what shall I do? ... I've got to find someone to help me...

Woman

Why don't you go to Mr Bassat, the **magistrate**? He lives at North Hill, but it's four miles away.

Mary

I'll have to go there... But first... I must... write... a note for Mr Davey. Here... can you give this to him...?

Woman

But you can't walk! – it's getting dark...

Mary narrating

In my note, I explained about the wreck and my uncle's plan to escape... I'll have to walk quickly to North Hill. If my uncle discovers I've gone, he'll know I've **betrayed** him and he'll kill me.

Mary

I need to see Mr Bassat – **it's urgent!**

Mrs Bassat

I'm afraid he's not here.

Mary

Oh no! ... If I don't see him, something **terrible** will happen!

Mrs Bassat

It's not about the horses is it? ... I know one was **quite ill** this morning...

Mary

No... When will Mr Bassat be back?

Mrs Bassat

I really don't know. **Actually**, I'm very **worried**. He knows a man called Joss Merlyn who's **very dangerous**, so he might be in **serious** danger.

Mary

What do you mean?

Mrs Bassat

My husband has **suspected** for a long time that's he committed **serious** crimes and this morning, he **suddenly** got **proof**. He's gone to Launceston to get men and will surround the Inn this evening... there may be fighting... but do you know this man Merlyn? Wait a moment... you are the girl my husband told me about, aren't you? Don't move...!

Mary

Don't... I won't hurt you... I came to tell Mr Bassat that my uncle is planning to escape tonight. But I've **ruined** your husband's plan. When my uncle sees I'm not in my room, he'll leave before your husband gets there...

Mrs Bassat

I can see you're telling the truth. How can I help you...?

Mary

I must go back and help my aunt. I'm **really** worried about her... [puzzled and trying to work out] But how did Mr Bassat find out the truth so soon?

Mrs Bassat

I've no idea. **He left very suddenly**... But you can't possibly walk back **alone** now – it's **dark**. Our servant, James, will **see you home safely**.

Mary

Really... there's no need. I'm used to the roads at night...

Mary narrating

But she insisted... so I am once again on the road to Jamaica Inn. The moor is **cold** and still tonight... James has two guns and if I have to... I'll use one... There is the inn...

Mary

It looks like Mr Bassat hasn't got **here yet**. I must find my aunt... Perhaps they've **already** gone. I'll go in **alone**. Give me a gun James. If you hear a shot, then come.

Strange... the house is dark... but the horses are still here. So they haven't gone yet! Unless they went **on foot**, but no... my aunt wouldn't have done that. How odd!

Mary narrating

The kitchen is **empty**. The fire is **dead**. Nothing but **a deathly silence**. I **creep** to the hall, terrified of meeting my uncle with a gun. [gasps!]

A terrible sight is there before me... I turn and run **as fast as I can**...

Let's meet again in the next episode – after the shocking events of today I go to the **safety** of the vicar's house – he has **something important** to tell me, but what can it be?

Vocabulary

wreck

to make a ship sink

vicarage

house where a vicar lives

magistrate

an officer of law

betrayed (to betray)

given information that has put someone in danger

suspected (to suspect)

believe that someone has committed a crime

proof

information that shows that something is true

ruined (to ruin)

spoilt

odd

strange

creep

to move quietly and carefully so no one will see or hear you