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Before you read the story

1 Getting information

- a) When you want to find out more about a topic, where do you get your information from?

library/books/maps • magazines/brochures/
newspapers • organisations/authorities • people/
experts on the topic • ...

-  b) Why? How can you try and make sure your info is correct? Discuss with a partner.
-  c) Which sources do you use most? Discuss in class.

2 British or American English?

- a) Match the British English (BE) words here with the right American English (AE) words from the second box below.

BE:

lift • front garden • sofa • torch • flat • photo •
rubbish bin • people • shout • man/person • autumn

AE:

dumpster • flashlight • fall • guy • snapshot • elevator
• holler • folks • front yard • apartment • couch

- b) Think of more AE words. Make a list and write down their BE equivalents.
- c) Compare your lists with a partner and add any of his or her words you didn't have on your list.
- 

authorities [ɔ:'θɒrətɪz] Behörden • **autumn** ['ɔ:təm] Herbst • **dumpster** ['dʌmpstə] Müllcontainer • **flashlight** ['flæʃlaɪt] Taschenlampe • **snapshot** ['snæpʃɒt] Foto • **to holler** ['hɒlə] schreien • **equivalent** [i'kwɪvlənt] Entsprechung

1 Missing

- 1 Jake Marshall wasn't really good at anything special. There was nothing he could feel proud of: He wasn't a star soccer player, he never managed more than a couple of chords on his electric guitar, and with girls ... well, he never even knew what to say—beyond a
- 5 feeble “hi” and an equally feeble smile.

But riding home on the school bus that day, he felt somehow ... different. He had won a prize! The school's creative writing prize. He couldn't wait to tell his brother and his mom and dad ... Hey, get a grip, commanded Jake. You know that won't happen.

- 1 Both eminent scientists, they had lost their lives in a car crash about a year ago. Luckily for Jake, Joe was twenty at the time, so he was allowed to live at home with his brother and the family dog, Chip. Outside of school, the young Jack Russell terrier was always
- 5 by his side, the perfect companion. And if there was the perfect brother, it was Joe, he thought as he got off the bus and walked to his house. Joe was a programmer who worked from home. He was always there for Jake, had a devilish sense of humor ... and man, could he cook: chili con carne, mac and cheese ... whatever!
- 10 Jake turned into his front yard and stopped in his tracks. Something was up.



soccer ['sɒkə] Fußball, Soccer • **chord** [kɔ:d] Akkord • **beyond** [bi'bɒnd] darüber hinaus • **feeble** ['fi:bl] schwach, lahm • **somehow** ['sʌmhaʊ] irgendwie • **to get a grip** [ˌget ə 'ɡrɪp] sich zusammenreißen • **to command** [kə'mɑ:nd] befehlen

crash [kræʃ] Unfall • **companion** [kəm'pænjən] Kamerad, Kameradin • **programmer** ['prɒɡræmə] Programmierer, Programmiererin • **devilish** ['devlɪʃ] urkomisch, teuflisch • **sense of humor** [sens əv 'hju:mə] Sinn für Humor • **mac and cheese** [ˌmæk_ənd 'tʃi:z] Makkaroni mit Käse überbacken • **front yard** [frʌnt 'jɑ:d] Vorgarten

1 The front door was partly open and Chip was on the porch. He started barking.

“Hey, boy,” he said to Chip. “Where’s Joe?”

Then he slowly pushed open the door completely and called
5 out to his brother.

Nothing.

He went into the living room, then into the kitchen and then upstairs to the bedrooms, but Joe wasn’t there. He went out into the back yard, but he wasn’t there either. Finally, he called his
10 brother’s cell phone, but there was no answer.

Jake desperately checked his social media—no posts or updates from his brother all day. He broke out in a cold sweat, his memory of the moment he was told his parents were dead surfacing like an underwater explosion.

15 No. Not Joe, too!

He called Chip inside, locked all the doors of the house, and sat on the couch. Chip lay down near his feet. Jake looked at his hands, and they were perfectly still. Yet it felt as if they and his body were shivering all over. He took deep, slow breaths to calm
20 himself down.

“Focus!” he commanded himself in a loud voice that made his dog look up at him with a start.

Patting Chip’s head mechanically, Jake slowly began to gather his thoughts and work out what he should do next.

porch [pɔ:tʃ] Veranda • **sweat** [swet] Schweiß • **surfacing** [ˈsɜ:fɪsɪŋ] auftauchend • **were shivering** [wɜ: ˈʃɪvərɪŋ] zitterten • **breath** [breθ] Atemzug • **to pat** [pæt] tätscheln

2 A strange photo

1 The next morning, Jake followed his usual routine. He got dressed and had a quick breakfast, said goodbye to Chip, and rushed out to catch the school bus.

Jake had decided he didn’t want anyone to find out about Joe.

5 He knew what would happen. The authorities would take him away and put him in a children’s home. And what about Chip? What would they do with him?

He tried to concentrate in class, but couldn’t stop thinking about Joe and what he should do.

10 On the bus home, Jake thought about when he last saw his parents that fatal morning before school. A normal morning. There was nothing that stood out in his memory. What would Mom and Dad do in this situation? Inform the police, of course ... but there was no way he could do that. No, no one could help him
15 find Joe. It was all up to him.

At home, he gave Chip some food and went online. He scanned through all the usual stuff from his friends—comic videos and comments that didn’t seem so funny that day—and then he saw a weird photo. It’d been posted by his brother that very morning!

20 But the shot was fuzzy and he couldn’t make out the details. Could’ve been taken from inside a car, he thought. He zoomed in and looked again—could that be the top of a large building?

There were 27 comments on the photo. As Jake went through them, he stopped at one that seemed odd. It was from someone
25 called Vee, and it just read: Oh, no! Not you as well!

What did *that* mean? It unsettled Jake more than he wanted to admit to himself, but maybe it was a lead. He thought about it and then sent a message to Vee.

weird [wɪəd] seltsam, komisch • **fuzzy** [ˈfʌzi] unscharf • **to unsettle** [ʌnˈsetl] beunruhigen • **to admit to** [ədˈmɪt] zugeben • **lead** [li:d] Spur, Hinweis

Jake: Hey, my brother's been gone since yesterday. Vanished. Not answering calls or messages. Just this photo he posted yesterday. Know where he might be?

Vee: Yeah, maybe. I'm a programmer like him. And last month, they took me there. Luckily, I got out.

Jake: Who are they? Got out of where?!

Vee: I can't tell you here, man. Not safe.

Jake: But I have to find my brother. Please.

Vee: Sure, but not here. I'll get a message to you.

Jake: When? And how?

Vee: Soon, buddy. Very soon. If you know what's good for you: keep your mouth zipped.

- 1 And then Vee was gone.
Jake sat there, dazed. Suddenly, the landline rang.
"Hi. Who's ...?" Jake began.
"This is Detective Fielding. Am I speaking to Joe Marshall?"
- 5 "No, sorry. He isn't here at the moment."
"Maybe you know something about a recent post of his on social media."
"Do you know ...?" Jake stopped. He remembered Vee's warning.
"I'm sorry, sir, but I can't help you," he said.
- 10 He quickly put the phone down. He turned it off, locked every door and window in the house, and sat down with Chip.

to vanish [ˈvænɪʃ] verschwinden • **keep your mouth zipped** [zipt] deinen Mund halten • **dazed** [deɪzd] wie betäubt • **landline** [ˈlændlaɪn] Festnetz • **sir** [sɜː] Sir

- 1 That night, Jake went to bed with a baseball bat on one side of his bed and Chip on the other. He didn't get much sleep and was relieved when morning arrived.

At school, Jake found an envelope in his locker. Vee?

- 5 He rushed to the restroom, locked himself in one of the stalls, and took a piece of paper out of the envelope.

It read: *I'll meet you at 9:30 on Saturday morning at the Edison Public Library. Go to the European languages section. Vee.*

At the end of classes that day, Jake met his friend Matt.

- 10 "Hey, Jake! What's up?" Matt asked.

"Really busy at the moment, Matt."

"You missed soccer yesterday," said Matt. "It's Saturday tomorrow. There's the game, Jake, remember?"

- 15 "Sorry, I've gotta help my brother all weekend. It's pretty important. But see you Monday," said Jake.

relieved [rɪˈliːvd] erleichtert • **stall** [stɔːl] Toilettenkabine • **gotta** [ˈɡɒtə] müssen