

“Lamb to the Slaughter” extracts from the short story by Roald DAHL

PART I

As usual, Mrs. Mary Maloney was waiting for her husband Patrick to come home from work. As soon as⁰ he came in, looking rather tired, she took his coat, served him a drink, and proposed to get him something to eat. But he had "something to tell" her.

“This is going to be a shock to you, I'm afraid,” he said. “But I've thought about it for a long time and I've decided the only thing to do is to tell you right away. I hope you won't blame¹ me too much.”

And he told her. It didn't take long, four or five minutes at most, and she sat motionless², watching him with a kind of shocked horror.

“So there it is,” he added. “And I know it's kind of a bad time to be telling you, but there simply wasn't any other way. Of course I'll give you money and see you're looked after. But there shouldn't be any problem. I hope not anyway. It wouldn't be very good for my job.”

Her first instinct was not to believe any of it, to reject it all. It occurred to her that maybe he hadn't even spoken, that she herself had imagined the whole thing.

“I'll get the supper,” she managed³ to whisper⁴, and this time he didn't stop her.

When she walked across the room she couldn't⁵ feel her feet touching the floor. She couldn't feel anything at all - except a slight nausea and a desire to vomit. Everything was automatic now - down the stairs to the cellar, the light switch, the freezer, the hand inside taking hold of the first object it met. She lifted it out, and looked at it. It was wrapped⁶ in paper, so she took off⁷ the paper and looked at it again.

A leg of lamb.

All right then, they would have lamb for supper. She carried it upstairs, holding the thin-bone end⁸ of it with both her hands, and as she went through the living room, she saw him standing over by the window with his back to her, and she stopped.

“For God's sake,” he said, hearing her, but not turning round. “Don't make supper for me. I'm going out.”

At this point, Mary Maloney simply walked up behind him and without any pause she swung⁹ the big frozen leg of lamb high in the air and brought it down¹⁰ as hard as she could on the back of his head.

0. dès que 1. en vouloir 2. immobile 3. réussir 4. murmurer 5. can't au prétérit 6. emballé 7. retirer 8. tête de l'os 9. fit
tournoyer 10. fit retomber

COMPREHENSION PART I

VOCABULAIRE

A. Matching culinaire :

lamb	o	o porc
veal	o	o veau
pork	o	o agneau
beef	o	o poulet
chicken	o	o bœuf

Tu traduiras donc 'a leg of lamb' (ligne 18) par : O côtelette d'agneau O gigot d'agneau

B. 'freezer' (ligne 17) et 'frozen' (ligne 23) viennent du verbe 'freeze' signifiant '.....'.

Peux-tu maintenant traduire ces deux mots ? 'a freezer' = 'frozen' =

C. Retrouve dans le texte les verbes irréguliers au prétérit signifiant :

venir : prendre : dire : penser : raconter :

s'asseoir : aller : se réveiller : rencontrer : voir :

COMPREHENSION

1. *Qui sont les personnages ?*

2. *Où sont-ils ?* *Justifie :* '.....'

3. *Retrouve ce que fait Mary Maloney avant que son mari rentre du travail:*

Justifie : '.....'

4. *Retrouve 3 choses que Mary Maloney fait une fois que son mari est rentré :*

.....

5. *Quelle expression anglaise signale la monotonie de leur vie de couple : '.....'*

6. *Qu'est-ce qui va briser cette monotonie ?*

7. *Le mari annonce-t-il une bonne ou une mauvaise nouvelle ? (lignes 4/5)*

Justifie : '.....'

8. *Quelle est la réaction de sa femme après qu'il lui ait parlé ? (lignes 6/7)*

Justifie : '.....'

9. *Comment réagit-elle ensuite ? (lignes 11 à 12)*

10. *Et que finit-elle par faire ? (ligne 13)*

11. *Explique sa réaction :*

12. *Relève 4 éléments du texte qui prouvent que Mary ne va pas bien (lignes 14/15) :*

a. b. c. d.

13. *Où va t'elle ?* O dans le grenier O la cave O le jardin

14. *Que ramène t-elle de ce lieu pour le souper ?*

15. *Est-ce que Patrick veut manger ?* O oui O non

Justifie : '.....'

16. *A-t-il la politesse de lui dire cela en la regardant droit dans les yeux ?* O oui O non

17. *Justifie :* '.....'

18. *Que fait alors Mary ? (lignes 23/24)*

- a. elle lui demande d'être moins dur avec elle.
- b. elle le frappe d'un coup de gigot derrière la tête.
- c. elle l'invite à aller marcher dehors malgré le froid.

19. *Quel passage te le prouve ?*

20. *Agit-elle sereinement ?* O oui O non 21. *Quel mot le prouve ?*

22. *Quelle nouvelle a t-il pu lui annoncer ?*