



In this story a man is afraid of a doll. How is that possible, do you think?

Listen and complete.

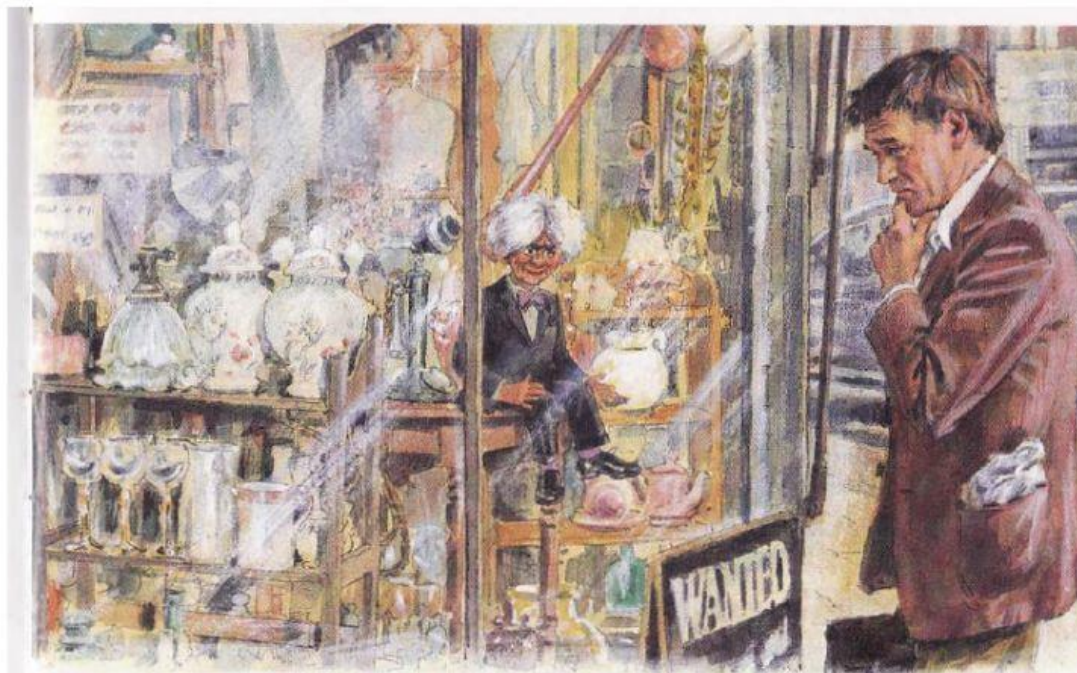
The Doll

Mr Brown lived near the centre of town, but his small house had a garden. Mr Brown liked his garden very much. It had a lot of flowers and they were pretty in summer – red, blue and yellow. Mr Brown liked sitting there in the evenings and at weekends.

But he had to work, too. Mr Brown worked in an office. It wasn't near his house, so he often went to work on the bus. He came home on the bus, too.

Mr Brown was a lonely man. He didn't have many friends, and he didn't talk to many people. And so he was sad and often bored.

One very hot day, Mr Brown walked home. He didn't want to go on the bus that day. He wanted a walk in the warm sun. In one street there was a small shop. Mr Brown looked in the window.



There were very old things in the window, and Mr Brown liked old things. He went into the shop.

'Good afternoon,' said the man in the shop.

'Good afternoon,' said Mr Brown. 'Can I look round the shop?'

'Please do.'

Mr Brown looked at the things in the shop. He saw an old doll with a sad face. It wasn't a pretty face, but Mr Brown liked it. The doll was a little old man with white hair and black clothes.

Mr Brown thought, 'Perhaps the doll is lonely, too.'

He asked, 'How much do you want for this old doll?'

The man thought, 'Oh, that. Three pounds,' he said.

Mr Brown wanted the doll. Why? He didn't know. But he wanted it. Three pounds was a lot of money for an old doll, but Mr Brown paid it. He went out with the doll in his hand.

He looked at its face. 'Is it smiling?' he wondered. 'No,' he thought. 'It's only a doll.' He said to it, 'I'm going to take you home.'

The doll didn't answer – it was only a doll. So why did Mr Brown speak to it? Because he was lonely. He put it in his case with his papers from the office.

Mr Brown was tired now, so he got on the bus. The man came for Mr Brown's money and Mr Brown bought a ticket.

Suddenly, somebody on the bus spoke. 'Go away!' said the person. 'You stupid man. Go away!'

Everybody on the bus looked at Mr Brown. 'Did he say that?' they wondered.

The ticket man was angry with Mr Brown. 'Why did he say that?' he wondered. He gave Mr Brown a ticket and went away. He didn't like Mr Brown.

When Mr Brown got home, he was very tired. 'Who spoke on the bus?' he wondered. He didn't know. He took the doll out of his case and looked at it.

It was only a doll. It wasn't very pretty. It was quite ugly but it had a smile on its face. 'That's strange,' thought Mr Brown. He put the doll on the table and had his dinner.

Mr Brown wasn't very hungry, so he only ate some bread and butter. Then he went to bed and slept. He forgot the doll. It was on the table.

Morning came, and the sun shone into the room. Mr Brown opened his eyes. There was something on his bed. 'What is it?' he wondered.

He looked, and he saw the doll. 'But I left it on the table. It can't walk – it's only a doll.' Mr Brown didn't understand it. It was very strange.

Mr Brown went to the front door. 'Are there any letters for me?' he wondered.

Yes, there were three with his name and address. But what was this? The letters were open! Who opened them? Mr Brown didn't know.

Mr Brown ate his breakfast. Then he went to the bus stop and waited. His bus came and stopped for him. Mr Brown got on with his case and sat down.

There were a lot of people on the bus, and one old woman couldn't sit down. Her face was tired, and Mr Brown was a kind man. He stood up for her, and she sat down.

Then suddenly, somebody spoke. 'You stupid old thing!'

The woman turned and looked at Mr Brown. She was very angry. Mr Brown's face went red. Then he remembered the doll.

He got off the bus. He couldn't understand it. 'That doll's at home,' he thought. 'Or is it?'

Mr Brown opened his case and looked inside. The doll was there, with a big smile on its ugly face!

He put the doll down on the street and left it there. Then he went to work. 'That's the end of that doll,' he thought. 'Good!'

Mr Brown worked well all day. After work, he walked to the

bus stop. But what was that? The doll was at the bus stop! Mr Brown saw the white hair and the black clothes, and he saw the smile, too. 'What's happening?' he wondered. 'It's waiting for me! It isn't only a doll. But what is it?'

He turned and ran away from the bus stop. Then he walked home. He had to walk three kilometres to his house. He was very tired.

Mr Brown sat down in a chair and went to sleep. He slept for an hour.

Suddenly, there was a big noise in another room – CRASH! SMASH! Mr Brown opened his eyes. 'What's wrong?' he wondered. He went into the other room.

The doll was there again. It sat on the table and looked at him. Mr Brown's cups and plates were all on the floor.

'It isn't only a doll,' Mr Brown thought. 'And it isn't a friend. This is difficult. What can I do?'

He took the doll into the garden and buried it in the ground.

'That really is the end of you,' said Mr Brown. 'You're under the ground now. You won't get out of there.'

Next day, Mr Brown went to work on the bus. He didn't have the doll now and nobody spoke. He worked hard, and he was happy.

Mr Brown came home again that night. He watched television. 'This is good,' he thought.

At eleven o'clock he went to bed. The house was dark and quiet.

But an hour later, there was a sudden noise in the night. Mr Brown sat up in bed. He was cold and afraid. 'What was that noise?' he wondered.

The noise was at the back door. Mr Brown was afraid, but he opened the door. It was the doll again!

It was dirty from the ground, but it looked at Mr Brown and smiled. It was a cold smile, and Mr Brown was very afraid.

He looked at the doll and said, 'Go away! Please! Go away!'

The doll didn't speak – it only smiled again. Mr Brown was very angry now. He took the doll into the garden again. He found some wood, and he made a big fire. He lit the fire. Then he put the doll on the top.

'Now die!' said Mr Brown. 'It's different this time. This *will* be the end of you.' And Mr Brown smiled. The fire was hot and red.

The fire got bigger – and bigger. Suddenly there was a loud cry, and people ran out of their houses. 'What's wrong?' they shouted.

'There's a big fire in Mr Brown's garden,' somebody said. 'Look!'

And there was a big fire.

The people looked round the house and garden. They couldn't find Mr Brown. But on the ground near the fire, there was a doll with white hair and black clothes. It wasn't a pretty doll. And there was a smile on its face.

After you read

What will the doll do next? Think of an idea. Then tell other students and listen to them. Who has the best idea?



Good job!