

# MY NEW HOME IN VENICE

Read this excerpt from "The Cemetery of Secrets" by David Hewson. Then do the multiple choice.

Uncle Leo gives me a suspicious look when I call this place the "Scacchi Palace." It is really a house, called Ca Scacchi in Venetian. Anywhere else in the world, this would surely be regarded as a palace, although it is one in need of a little care and attention.

Our house is by the side of the little San Cassian canal and a small square of the same name. We have a door which leads onto the street and two entrances from the water. One runs under a grand, rounded arch into the ground floor of the house, which, as is customary in the city, is used instead of a cellar for storing things. The second is used for our commercial activities and **it** is situated in another building, which is three storeys high, attached to the north side, towards the Grand Canal.

Finally, there is yet another exit: a wooden bridge, with handrails, runs from the first floor of the house between the two river entrances straight over the canal and into the square itself. Consequently I can wander over it in the morning and find fresh water from the well in the center of the square while still rubbing the sleep from my eyes. Or I may call a gondola from my bedroom window, find it waiting for me by the time I get downstairs and, just one minute later, be in the middle of the greatest waterway on Earth: the Grand Canal of Venice.

The house is almost 200 years old, I am told, and built of bricks of a rich dark brown color. It has elegant arched windows and green-painted shutters to keep out the cruel summer heat. I live on the third floor in the third room on the right with a view over the canal and the square. When I lie in bed at night, I can hear the chatter and songs of the passing gondoliers and the conversations in the square nearby. I understand why Uncle runs his business here. The prices are not too steep. The location of the house is near the city center and easy for our clients to find. Furthermore, the printing trade has many roots in this area of Venice, even if some of the old publishers from the area no longer exists.

Oh sister! I long for the day when I can show you these things instead of struggling to describe them in a letter which may take a long time to reach you in Spain! Venice is like a vast imitation of our old library at home, full of dark corners and unexpected surprises, some very close to me.

Last night, while searching in the jumbled corners of the warehouse cellar, I found a single copy of *Aristotle's Poetics*, published in the city in 1502. I raced to Uncle Leo with my discovery and - now here's a victory - a smile almost appeared on his face. "A find, boy! This'll fetch good money when I sell it down in the market."

"May I read a little first, sir?" I asked, and felt some anxiety when I made the request. Leo has a frightening manner at times.

"Books are for selling, not reading," he replied immediately. But at least I had it for the night, since the dealers were by that time closed.





For questions 1-8 choose the answer - A, B, C or D.

**1. In what way is the house typical of Venice, according to the writer?**

- A. There are several ways of entering it.
- B. People live and work in the same building.
- C. The storage area is not below ground.
- D. It consists of two separate buildings.

**2. What does "it" in the 2<sup>nd</sup> paragraph (in bold and underlined) refer to?**

- A. the family business
- B. an entrance
- C. a floor
- D. a building

**3. What does the writer say about his uncle's printing business in the fourth paragraph?**

- A. His printing business is less expensive than others.
- B. The business has plenty of customers.
- C. There are other similar businesses in the district.
- D. It's the only printing business left in the district.

**4. What do we understand about the writer and his sister in the fifth paragraph?**

- A. They both enjoy reading.
- B. They both used to live in Venice.
- C. They write to each other often.
- D. They don't expect to see each other soon.

**5. What does the incident with the book show about Uncle Leo?**

- A. He dislikes having the writer in his house.
- B. He has a good sense of humor.
- C. He has no problems with money.
- D. His main interest is making money.

**6. In the text as a whole, the writer regards Venice as**

- A. a strange and special place to live in
- B. somewhere that could never be home.
- C. city it's easy to get lost in
- D. a place dominated by money.

