

## READING PART 1 (4)

For questions 31-36, read the text below and choose the best answer (A, B, C or D).

8 May.—I began to fear as I wrote in this book that I was getting too diffuse; but now I am glad that I went into detail from the first, for there is something so strange about this place that I cannot but feel uneasy. I wish I were safe out of it, or that I had never come. It may be that this strange night-existence is telling on me; but would that that were all! If there were any one to talk to I could bear it, but there is no one. I have only the Count to speak with, and I fear I am myself the only living soul within the place.

I only slept a few hours when I went to bed, and feeling that I could not sleep any more, got up. I had hung my shaving glass by the window, and was just beginning to shave. Suddenly I felt a hand on my shoulder, and heard the Count's voice saying to me, "Good morning." I was taken aback, for it amazed me that I had not seen him, since the reflection of the glass covered the whole room behind me. In starting I had cut myself slightly, but did not notice it at the moment. Having answered the Count's salutation, I turned to the glass again to see how I had been mistaken. This time there could be no error, for the man was close to me, and I could see him over my shoulder. But there was no reflection of him in the mirror! The whole room behind me was displayed; but there was no sign of a man in it, except myself.

This was startling, and, coming on the top of so many strange things, was beginning to increase that vague feeling of uneasiness which I always have when the Count is near; but at the instant I saw that the cut had bled a little, and the blood was trickling over my chin. I laid down the razor, turning as I did so half round to look for some sticking plaster. When the Count saw my face, his eyes blazed with a sort of demoniac fury, and he suddenly made a grab at my throat. I drew away, and his hand touched the string of beads which held the crucifix. It made an instant change in him, for the fury passed so quickly that I could hardly believe that it was ever there.

"Take care," he said, "take care how you cut yourself. It is more dangerous than you think in this country." Then seizing the shaving glass, he went on: "Away with it!" and opening the heavy window with one wrench of his terrible hand, he flung out the glass, which was shattered into a thousand pieces on the stones of the courtyard far below. Then he withdrew without a word. It is very annoying, for I do not see how I am to shave.

When I went into the dining-room, breakfast was prepared; but I could not find the Count anywhere. So I breakfasted alone. It is strange that as yet I have not seen the Count eat or drink. He must be a very peculiar man! After breakfast I did a little exploring in the castle. I went out on the stairs, and found a room looking towards the South. The view was magnificent, and from where I stood there was every opportunity of seeing it. The castle is on the very edge of a terrible precipice where there is a chasm. But I am not in heart to describe beauty, for when I had seen the view I explored further; doors, doors, doors everywhere, and all locked and bolted. In no place save from the windows in the castle walls is there an available exit. The castle is a veritable prison, and I am a prisoner!

## QUESTIONS

**31** What do we learn about the narrator in paragraph 1?

- A** He felt uncomfortable.
- B** He enjoyed talking to the Count.
- C** He was enjoying his stay.
- D** He felt safe.

**32** In the second paragraph we discover that the narrator was

- A** trying to kill himself.
- B** planning to escape.
- C** shaving as quickly as possible.
- D** wrong about what he had thought before.

**33** What does the word *startling* mean in paragraph 3?

- A** beginning
- B** exciting
- C** interesting
- D** really surprising

**34** In paragraph 3, the Count

- A** tried to cut the man's throat.
- B** wanted to attack the man who was shaving.
- C** had problems with his eyesight.
- D** showed that he was very religious.

**35** In paragraph 4, the Count

- A** was worried about the man's safety.
- B** broke the mirror.
- C** wanted to annoy the man.
- D** didn't say anything.

**36** In the final paragraph, we are told that....

- A** the castle is spectacular.
- B** the narrator enjoyed visiting the castle.
- C** it was a good place for tourists to visit.
- D** the man was unable to open the windows.

## ANSWERS AND ANALYSIS

**31 (a)** *I cannot but feel uneasy.*

**32 (d)** *I had been mistaken.*

**33 (d)** *Startling* means shocked.

**34 (b)** *he suddenly made a grab at my throat.*

**35 (b)** *he flung out the glass, which was shattered into a thousand pieces.*

**36 (a)** *The view was magnificent, and from where I stood there was every opportunity of seeing it.*