

LESSON TWO (THE SECOND LESSON)

Text: Mistaken Identity (by Mark Twain)
Грамматика: Времена группы Continuous страдательного залога
(Continuous Tense-forms, Passive Voice) (§ 3, p. 465)
Revision. Indefinite and Perfect Tense-forms, Passive Voice
(Table 7, p. 500)

MISTAKEN IDENTITY

(by Mark Twain)

Mark Twain is the pen-name of Samuel Clemens, America's greatest humorist.

He was born in the family of a small town lawyer in 1835. When Sam was twelve years old, his father died, and the boy had to earn a living for himself. So he began to work at a printshop in his home town. Later on he became a pilot on the Mississippi. Mark Twain always thought that his days on the Mississippi were the happiest in his life.

As a writer he was successful from the very start.

Mark Twain's story of Jim Smiley and his Jumping Frog* made him famous all over America. This story was followed by a number of short stories and novels.

Most of Mark Twain's early writings sparkle with gay humour. As he advanced in years, however, all the evils of capitalist America became obvious to him. This brought a pessimistic note into his later works.

Mark Twain died in 1910.

Years ago I arrived one day at Salamanca, New York, where I was to change trains and take the sleeper. There were crowds of people on the platform, and they were all trying to get into the long sleeper train which was already packed. I asked the young man in the booking-office if I could have a sleeping-berth and he answered: "No." I went off and asked another local official if I could have some poor little corner somewhere in a sleeping-car, but he interrupted me angrily saying, "No, you can't, every corner is full. Now, don't bother me any more," and he turned his back and walked off. I felt so hurt that I said to my companion, "If these people knew who I was, they..."¹ But my companion stopped

* В русском переводе «Прыгающая лягушка»

me there,— "Don't talk such nonsense, we'll have to put up with this," he said, "If they knew who you were, do you think it would help you to get a vacant seat¹ in a train which has no vacant seats in it?"

This did not improve my condition at all, but just then I noticed that the porter of a sleeping-car had his eye on me. I saw the expression of his face suddenly change. He whispered to the uniformed conductor, pointing to me, and I realized I was being talked about. Then the conductor came forward, his face all politeness.

"Can I be of any service to you?"² he asked. "Do you want a place in a sleeping-car?"

"Yes," I said, "I'll be grateful to you if you can give me a place, anything will do."

"We have nothing left except the big family compartment," he continued, "with two berths and a couple of armchairs in it, but it is entirely at your disposal. Here, Tom, take these suitcases aboard!"

Then he touched his hat, and we moved along.³ I was eager to say a few words to my companion, but I changed my mind. The porter made us comfortable in the compartment, and then said, with many bows and smiles:

"Now, is there anything you want, sir? Because you can have just anything you want."

"Can I have some hot water?" I asked.

"Yes, sir, I'll get it myself."

"Good! Now, that lamp is hung too high above the berth. Can I have a better lamp fixed⁴ just at the head of my bed below the luggage rack, so that I can read comfortably?"

"Yes, sir. The lamp you want is just being fixed in the next compartment. I'll get it from there and fix it here. It'll burn all night. Yes, sir, you can ask for anything you want, the whole railroad will be turned inside out to please you." And he disappeared.

I smiled at my companion, and said:

"Well, what do you say now? Didn't their attitude change the moment they understood I was Mark Twain? You see the result, don't you?" My companion did not answer. So I added, "Don't you like the way you are being served? And all for the same fare."

As I was saying this, the porter's smiling face appeared in the doorway and this speech followed:

"Oh, sir, I recognized you the minute I set my eyes on you. I told the conductor so."

"Is that so, my boy?" I said handing him a good tip. "Who am I?"

"Mr McClellan, Mayor of New York", he said and disappeared again.

NOTES

1. **If these people knew who I was, they...** *Если бы эти люди знали, кто я такой, они бы...*

If they knew who you were, do you think it would help you to get a vacant seat...? *Если бы они знали, кто вы, неужели вы думаете, что это помогло бы вам достать свободное место...?* Сказуемые в этих предложениях (**knew, would help**) стоят в сослагательном наклонении (см. § 12, стр. 478).

2. **Can I be of any service to you?** *Могу ли я оказать вам какую-либо услугу?* Это предложение звучит подчеркнуто вежливо. В современном английском языке обычными формами обращения с предложением оказать какую-либо услугу являются: **Can I do anything for you? Can I help you?**, а также **What can I do for you?**

3. **Then he touched his hat, and we moved along.** *Затем он приложил руку к фуражке, и мы пошли по платформе.* Наречные частицы **in, on, out, off, up, down, about, forward, along, around** и другие имеют самостоятельное значение и в сочетании с глаголами передают различные оттенки направления движения. В русском языке эти оттенки передаются с помощью глагольных префиксов, наречий или описательным путем, например:

It's starting to rain, let's go in. *Начинается дождь, давайте зайдем в дом.*

We must go up, the shoe department is on the second floor. *Нам нужно пройти наверх, отдел обуви находится на третьем этаже.*

Stop running about, you'll get tired. *Перестань бегать, устанешь.*

Наречные частицы употребляются также в сочетании с глаголом **to be**. Такие сочетания обозначают состояние предмета, наличие или отсутствие его в каком-либо месте, например:

Ring him up again, he is out at the moment. *Позвоните ему еще раз, его сейчас нет.*

I can't do any work when my little boy is around. *Я совершенно не могу работать, когда мой маленький сын находится рядом.*