

LEARN ENGLISH THROUGH STORY

ENGLISH SHORT STORIES FOR ELEMENTARY LEVEL



THE LITTLE PRINCE LEVEL 2

I WAS BORN IN ENGLAND IN 1632. MY FATHER
WAS GERMAN AND MY MOTHER WAS ENGLISH.
I HAD TWO BROTHERS AND ONE SISTER. WE
WERE A GOOD FAMILY.

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The Little Prince for Level 2

CHAPTER 1 – HAT

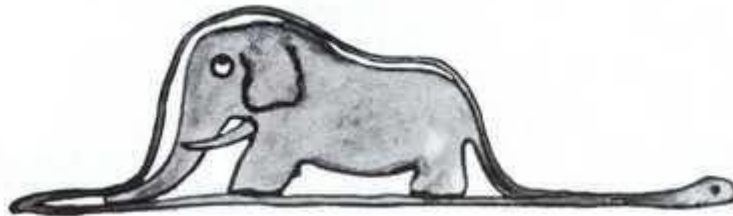
When I was six years old, I saw a picture in a book. It was a picture of a snake who was eating a big animal. Here is a copy of the picture.



In the book it said, “Snakes eat the whole animal. Then they are not able to move. And they sleep for six months.”
I thought about the life in the jungle. Then I made my first picture. This is my picture number one.



I showed my fantastic picture to the adults. And I asked them if my picture scared them.
But they answered, “How can I be scared of a hat?”
My picture was not a picture of a hat. It was a picture of a big snake who ate an elephant. I then drew the inside of the big snake, so that the adults could understand. They always need explanations. This is my picture number two.



The adults advised me to stop drawing snakes, from the inside or the outside.
They told me that it was better to study geography, history, maths and grammar.

That's why, at the age of six, I left a great career as a painter. I did it because my picture number one and picture number two were not successful when adults saw them. Adults never understand anything alone. And children are not happy when they have to always give them explanations. So I had to choose another profession. I learnt to fly planes. I flew all over the world. And it's true that geography was very useful to me. I could see the difference between China and Arizona at first look. It is very useful if you are lost in the night.

During my life, I had a lot of contact with many serious people. I lived a lot among the adults. I could see them from a close distance. This experience did not improve my opinion of them much.

When I met an adult who looked a little normal, I showed him or her my picture number one. I always had this picture with me. I wanted to know if this person really understood life. But the person always said, "It's a hat." Then I never spoke to this person about big snakes or forests or stars. I went to his or her level and we talked about bridges, golf and politics. And the adult was happy to meet such a reasonable man.

So I lived alone. I didn't know anybody who I could really talk to. But one day it all changed. I had an accident in the Sahara Desert. It was six years ago. Something was broken in my engine. I didn't have any mechanic or any passenger in the plane with me. To repair the plane alone was a difficult job. But I had to do it. It was a question of life or death for me. I had only enough drinking water for a week.

CHAPTER 2 – SHEEP

The first night I slept on the sand a thousand miles from any land with people. I was more isolated than a sailor on a raft in the middle of the ocean. So you can imagine my surprise, when a funny little voice woke me up in the morning. It said,

"Please, draw me a sheep!"

"What?"

"Draw me a sheep!"

I jumped to my feet as if I was hit by lightning. I looked around. And I saw a very unusual little man who was looking at me very seriously. This is the best picture of him which I later was able to make.



But my picture, of course, is much less fascinating than the original model. It's not my mistake. I was stopped in my career as a painter by the adults at the age of six. And I never learnt to draw anything, except snakes from the outside and snakes from the inside.

I looked at this little man with my eyes full of surprise. Don't forget that I was a thousand miles from any land with people. It was interesting to see that this little man didn't look tired, hungry, thirsty or scared. He didn't look like a child who was lost in the middle of the desert, a thousand miles from any land with people.

When I finally managed to speak, I said to him, "What are you doing here?"

He repeated, very slowly and very seriously, "Please draw me a sheep."

It was all strange to me. I was a thousand miles from any place with people. I was in danger of death, but I took a piece of paper and a pen out of my pocket. I wanted to draw him a picture. Then I remembered that I mostly studied geography, history, maths and grammar, and I told the little man that I did not know how to draw.

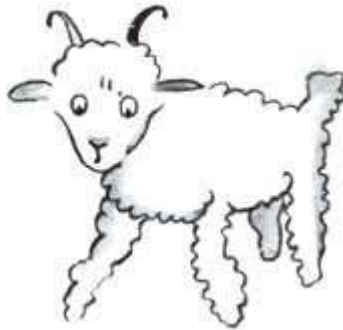
He said, "It doesn't matter. Draw me a sheep."

But I never drew a sheep. So I drew him one of only two pictures which I was able to draw. It was a big snake from the outside. And I was shocked to hear the little man say, "No, no, no! I don't want an elephant inside a big snake. A big snake is a very

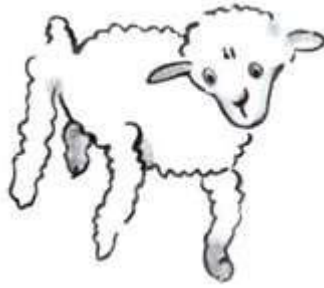
dangerous animal, and an elephant takes a lot of space. Where I live, everything is very small. I need a sheep. Draw me a sheep.”
So then I made a picture.



He looked at it carefully, then he said, “No. This sheep is already very ill. Make me another.”
So I made another picture.



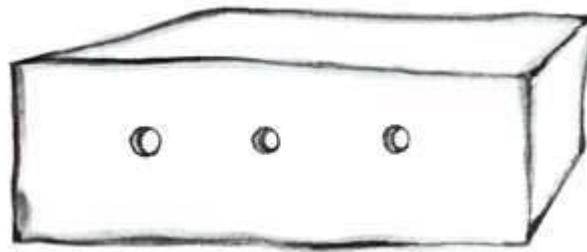
My friend smiled gently at me, “You have to see it too. This is not a sheep. It’s a ram. It has horns.”
So then I made another picture.



But it wasn't good either.

"This sheep is too old. I want a sheep which will live a long time."

At that moment, my patience was gone, because I was in a hurry to start repairing my engine, I quickly drew this picture.



And I said, "That's a box. The sheep which you want is inside."

I was very surprised when I saw the light in the face of the young man, "This is exactly how I wanted it! Do you think that the sheep will need a lot of grass?"

"Why?"

"Because where I live, everything is very small."

"I believe that there will be enough grass for it. I gave you a very small sheep."

He looked closely at the picture, "It is not very small. Look! It is sleeping now."

And this is how I met the little prince.

CHAPTER 3 – PLANET

It took me a long time to understand where he came from. The little prince asked me many questions. I also asked him questions, but he usually didn't answer them. But from his speaking, I slowly started to understand many things.

For example, when he first saw my plane, he asked, "What is this thing?"

I will not draw my plane here. It is too complicated for me.

I answered, "This isn't a thing. It flies. It's a plane. It's my plane."

And I was proud when I told him that I could fly. Then he said, "What! You fell from the sky?"

"Yes," I said.

"Oh! It's funny!"

And the little prince started to laugh very loudly. I was angry. My situation was serious. How could somebody think that it was funny?

Then he added, "So you also fell from the sky like me. What planet are you from?"

At that moment I started to understand more about him. And I asked him quickly, "Do you come from another planet?"

But he didn't answer me. He only moved his head gently. He was still looking at my plane.

"Of course, on that thing you couldn't come from very far."

And he started to think deeply. He was thinking for a long time. Then he took his sheep out of his pocket. And he started to look at the sheep carefully.



You can imagine that I wanted to know more when the little prince spoke about falling from the sky. I asked him, "Where do you come from? Where is your home? Where do you want to take your sheep?"

He was quiet for a long time. Then he answered, "The good thing about the box is that at night I can use it as a house for the sheep."

"Of course. And if you are good, I'll also give you a rope. Then you can tie the sheep during the day."

But the little prince was shocked by this offer, "Tie the sheep. It is a funny idea!"

"But if you don't tie the sheep, it will run away. It will be lost."

My friend started to laugh loudly again.

“But where do you think the sheep can go?”

“Anywhere. Straight, left, right.”

Then the little prince said seriously, “The sheep can go away. It is OK. Where I live, everything is so small.” He was a little sad. Then he added, “Where I live, nobody can go very far.”



So, this way, I learnt a second very important thing. The planet of the little prince was very small. It was only a little bigger than a house.

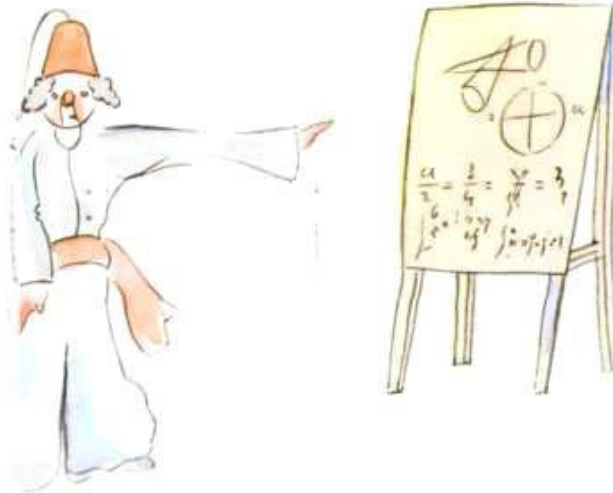
But it's true that it wasn't a big surprise. I knew very well that we don't only have planets like Earth, Jupiter, Mars, and Venus, which have names. There are also hundreds of other planets which are sometimes so small that it's difficult to see them through the telescope. When an astronomer discovers one of them, he doesn't give the planet a name, but only a number. He calls it, for example, Asteroid 3251.

CHAPTER 4 – ASTEROID

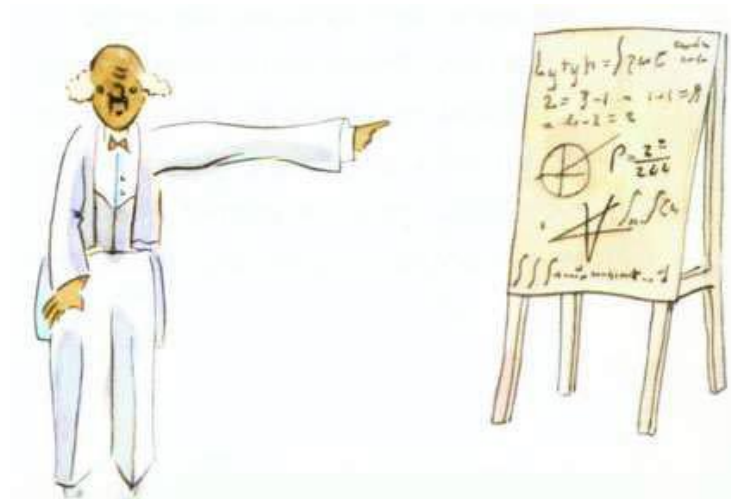
I believe that the planet from which the little prince came is Asteroid B-612. This asteroid was seen only once through the telescope. It was by a Turkish astronomer, in 1909.



He spoke about his discovery at the International Astronomical Congress. But nobody believed him because he was wearing Turkish clothes. Adults do such things.



Fortunately for the reputation of Asteroid B-612, a Turkish leader made a law that people had to wear clothes like Europeans. The astronomer spoke about his discovery again in 1920. He was wearing very elegant clothes. And this time everybody accepted his discovery.



I am telling you these details about Asteroid B-612 and I am telling you its number because adults like numbers. When you tell them that you have a new friend, they never ask you questions about important things. They never ask you, “What is the sound of his voice? What games does he like? Does he collect butterflies?” They ask, “How old is he? How many brothers does he have? How much does he weigh? How much money does his father make?” If they know these numbers, they think that they know this person.

If you say to the adults, “I saw a beautiful red house, with beautiful flowers in the windows and birds on the roof,” they can’t imagine the house. You have to say to them, “I saw a house that cost one hundred thousand dollars.” Then they can say, “It’s a pretty house.”

So if you say to the adults, “The little prince existed because he was nice, he laughed, and he wanted a sheep. If you want a sheep, it’s clear that you exist,” this information won’t help them. They will shake their heads, and they will think that you live in a dream. But if you tell them, “The planet he came from is Asteroid B-612,” then they will believe you. And they won’t ask you any questions.

Adults are like that. We mustn’t blame them. Children have to be very patient when they speak to adults.

But, of course, we who understand life, we don’t care about numbers. We like to tell a story like a fairy tale. We like to say, “Once upon a time there was a little prince who lived on a planet only a little bigger than himself, and who needed a friend.” For those who understand life, it would sound much better.

CHAPTER 5 – ELEPHANTS

This all happened six years ago. When I look at these memories, I feel sad. But I describe the little prince here, because I don't want to forget him. It's sad to forget a friend. Not everybody had a friend.

So that's why I bought a box of paints and some pencils. It's hard to start drawing, at my age, after so long time again.

I will try, of course, to make my pictures as true to life as possible. But I'm not quite sure what the result will be. One picture is alright, and another doesn't look like what I tried to draw. I make some mistakes on the size too. Here the little prince is too tall. Here he is too short. I'm not also sure about the colour of his clothes. But I will try to do my best.

In some other details I will make mistakes too. But here you have to forgive me. It's not my fault. My friend never explained anything to me. Maybe he thought that I was like him. But I, unfortunately, don't know how to see the sheep through the walls of a box. Maybe it's because I'm a little like the adults. Maybe, I'm already old.

Every day I learnt something about the little prince's planet. I learnt about his departure from it, about his journey. The information came very slowly, usually during moments when the little prince was thinking about his past.

On the third day, I learnt about the problem with the baobabs. Baobabs are big trees. I learnt about the problem thanks to a question about the sheep that the little prince asked me.

"Is it true that sheep eat little bushes?"

"Yes. That's true."

"Ah! That's good."

I didn't understand why it was so important that sheep ate little bushes. But the little prince added,

"So they also eat baobabs?"

I told the little prince that baobabs aren't little bushes. The baobabs are right the opposite. They are trees as large as churches. And that even if he took nine big elephants back to his planet, those elephants couldn't eat one single baobab. The idea of nine elephants made the little prince laugh, "They would have to stand on each other."



But he said something clever, “The baobabs, before they grow so big, they’re very small at the beginning.”

“That’s right,” I said. “But why is it important that your sheep eats the little baobabs?”

He said, “Oh, come on! You know,” as if we were talking about something clear and simple. And then I had to use my intelligence to solve the problem, without any assistance.

CHAPTER 6 – TREES

So I thought that on the planet where the little prince lived, there were, as on all planets, good plants and bad plants. And there were also good seeds of good plants and bad seeds of bad plants. But we can't see seeds. They sleep deep in the ground until one of them wants to wake up. Then it begins to grow slowly to the sun.

When it's very small, you don't know if it is a carrot seed or a rose seed. And you can let it grow as it wants. But if it is a bad plant, it is necessary to destroy the plant immediately, when you can see it.

And the truth was that there were some terrible seeds on the planet of the little prince. These were the seeds of baobabs. The ground of the planet was full of them. If you see a baobab too late, you will never be able to destroy it. It will go over the whole planet. Its roots will go right through it. And if the planet is too small, and if there are many baobabs, they will tear the planet to pieces.



"It's a question of discipline," the little prince later told me.

"When you finish washing and you put on your clothes each morning, then it's time to clean your planet very carefully. It's necessary to pull the baobabs, when you can see them. Sometimes it isn't easy because they are similar to roses when they are very young. It's a very boring job, but very easy."

And one day he said to me, "You should draw a beautiful picture which will show all this to the children. This information will be useful to them if they travel one day.

It's sometimes OK to postpone your work. But when it comes to baobabs, it's always a catastrophe. I knew a planet with a lazy man. He forgot to pull three little bushes."

And, when the little prince described it to me, I drew this planet.

I don't want to be a moralist. But the danger of baobabs is so little known. And there is a great possibility that if you are lost on an asteroid, you will meet such danger. So now I will tell you what you must do. I will say it in simple words.

"Children, be careful with baobabs!"

I worked so hard on this picture because I wanted to tell my friends about a danger which they didn't know for a long time. The lesson which I am teaching you now is very important.

Maybe, you ask yourself, "Why are there no other pictures in this book as big as the picture of the baobabs?"

The answer is very simple. When I drew the baobabs, it was so important for me to give you this information.



CHAPTER 7 – SUN

Step by step, I started to understand the secrets of the little prince's life. For a long time his only fun was watching beautiful sunsets.

I learnt this new detail on the fourth day in the morning, when he said to me, "I really like sunsets. Let's go look at a sunset now."

"But we have to wait," I said.

"Wait? Wait for what?"

"Wait until the sun goes down."

At first, he looked very surprised. Then he laughed. And he said to me, "I'm always thinking that I'm at home."

Everybody knows this. When it's noon in the United States, the sun is going down in France. If you could fly to France in one minute, you could watch the sunset.

But on the little prince's planet, you only needed to pull your chair a few steps. And you could watch the sun going down whenever you wished.

"One day I saw the sunset forty-three times," said the little prince and he added,

"When you are very sad, sunsets are wonderful."

"On the day of the forty-three sunsets, did you feel very sad?" I asked. But the little prince didn't answer.



On the fifth day, again thanks to the sheep, another secret of the little prince's life was shown to me. He asked me, "If a sheep eats little bushes, does it eat flowers, too?"

"A sheep eats whatever it finds," I answered.

“Even flowers that have thorns?”

“Yes. Even flowers that have thorns.”

“I don’t understand it. Why does the flower have thorns if a sheep can eat it?”

I didn’t know. At that moment I was very busy. I needed to repair my engine. I was quite worried because my situation began to be very serious. I had so little water that I had to fear the worst.

“Why does the flower have thorns?”

The little prince always wanted an answer to his question. But at that moment I was angry because I couldn’t repair my engine. I answered without thinking, “Thorns are good for nothing. Flowers have thorns because they want to upset others.”

“Oh!”

The little prince was thinking for a while. Then he said a little angrily, “I don’t believe you! Flowers are weak. They are naive. The thorns give them power. Flowers believe that their thorns are terrible weapons.”

I didn’t reply. I was very busy with my engine.

CHAPTER 8 – FLOWER

When I was thinking how to repair my engine, the little prince said, “Do you actually believe that flowers have thorns only to upset others?”

“No, I don’t believe it! I answered you with the first idea which came to my mind. I am busy with serious things!”

He looked at me shocked.

“Serious things!”

He saw me with my dirty hands. I was trying to do something with the engine, an object which looked extremely ugly to him.

“You talk like the adults!”

I knew that I made a mistake. I didn’t feel OK about it. But then, with the same tone in his voice, he continued, “You confuse everything. You mix everything together!”

He was really angry. He shook his head.

“I know a planet with a gentleman with a red face. He doesn’t have a flower. He doesn’t look at stars. He doesn’t love anyone. He only counts numbers. And all day he repeats again and again, like you, ‘I am a serious man! I am a serious man!’ And he’s very proud. But he’s not a man, he’s a mushroom!”

“He’s a what?”

“A mushroom!”

The little prince was now very angry. His face was white.

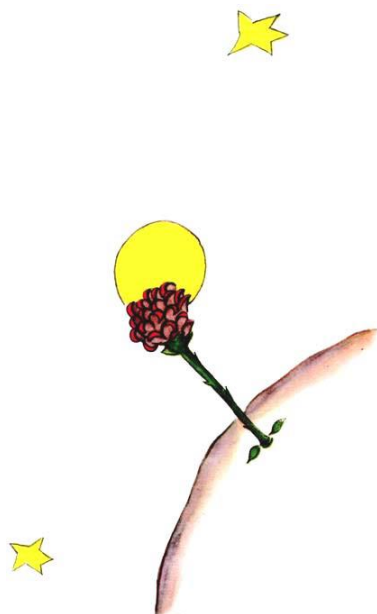
“Flowers have thorns. Sheep eat flowers. And you think that it’s not good to try to understand why flowers have thorns. There is a war between the sheep and the flowers. And you think that it’s not important? You think that it’s not more important than the counting of the gentleman with a red face? And if I know a flower which is the only flower in the world, which exists nowhere, only on my planet, a flower which a little sheep can eat easily, you think that this is not important?”

His face was now red and he continued.

“If somebody loves a flower which is the only flower among all the millions and millions of stars, that’s enough for this person to be happy when he looks at the stars and he says to himself, ‘My flower is somewhere up there.’ But if the sheep eats the flower, then for him it’s as if all the stars stopped shining. And you think that it’s not important?”

He couldn’t say another word. He started to cry. The night came. I left my tools on the ground. How important could my tools, my engine, my death be now? On one star, on one planet, on my planet, the Earth, there was a little prince who needed my attention. I took him in my arms. I held him gently. I said to him, “The flower which you love is not in danger. I will draw you something to protect your flower. I will draw you a fence. You can put the fence around your flower. I will...”

I didn't know what to say to him. I felt uncomfortable. I didn't know how to talk to him, how to be his friend again. It's so mysterious, the moment when somebody cries.



CHAPTER 9 – GLASS

I soon learnt more about the flower. On the little prince's planet the flowers were always very simple. They were small and they didn't disturb anyone. They grew in the grass in the morning, and they were gone in the evening.

But it all changed one day. There was a different seed. It came from some place which nobody knew. Soon a new flower started to grow. First she was very small. The little prince watched her very carefully. The flower wasn't like other flowers on his planet.

The flower could be a new kind of baobab. But she soon stopped growing, and she began to prepare for opening. The preparation for this moment took a long time. The flower didn't want to show her colours fast. Then one morning, exactly at sunrise, the flower showed her colours.

And after all her preparation for this moment, she said, "Ah! I am sorry. It will take same time before I am perfect."



But the little prince couldn't hide his admiration, "Oh! How beautiful you are!"

"Yes, I am. Look at me," the flower said. "And I was born at the same moment as the sun."

"I think that it's time for breakfast," she said, "Could you bring me some water?"

The little prince was surprised. The situation was new for him, but soon he brought water to the flower.



The flower started to play with the little prince, but her play wasn't always nice. One day, for example, when she was speaking about her four thorns, she said to the little prince, "I'm ready for tigers. They can come."



"There are no tigers on my planet," said the little prince, "And also tigers don't eat grass."

"I'm not a grass," the flower sweetly said, "I'm not scared of tigers, but I'm scared of wind. Do you have something to protect me from wind?"

"To be scared of wind isn't good for a plant," said the little prince, and he added to himself, "This flower is very complicated."

“At night I want to be under glass. It’s very cold here where you live. It’s quite uncomfortable. I come for a place where...”

But she stopped talking at this moment. She came here as a seed. She knew nothing about other worlds. She was embarrassed because the little prince could see that she was ready to lie to him. She quickly coughed two or three times. She wanted to show the little prince that she was cold and that he forgot about her.

“The glass? I wanted to look for it but you were speaking to me,” said the little prince. Then the flower started to cough a little more. She wanted to show him how bad he was.

So the little prince, even if he had a lot of love in his heart, soon stopped believing her. The way which somebody was speaking to him was very important to him.



CHAPTER 10 – VOLCANOES

“It wasn’t right to listen to her,” the little prince told me one day. “You must never listen to flowers. You must look at them and smell them. My flower made my planet beautiful. She smelled so good, but I didn’t know how to enjoy it. The story about the tigers made me so angry, but it wasn’t right to take it so seriously. What was right, was to love the flower for her beauty and smell. But I wasn’t able to do it.

He then continued, “At that time I didn’t understand anything. I listened to her words but I didn’t see her actions. She made my planet more beautiful. It wasn’t correct to leave her. I didn’t see the love that was behind her little tricks. Flowers are so complicated. But I was too young to know how to love her.”

I believe that for his departure from the planet, the little prince used the migration of wild birds.



On the morning of his departure he put his planet in perfect order. He carefully cleaned his active volcanoes. There were two active volcanoes on his planet. And they were very good for warming his breakfast in the morning.

He also had one volcano which wasn’t active. But, as he said, “You never know!” So he cleaned this volcano too. If they are correctly cleaned, there are no eruptions. Of course, on our Earth we are very small to clean our volcanoes. That’s why they’re causing us a lot of trouble.



The little prince also pulled, a little sadly, the last little baobabs. He thought that this was his last day on his planet. He didn't plan to come back.

He gave water to his flower one last time, then he put her under glass. At that moment, he felt that he was very close to tears.

"Goodbye," he said to the flower. But she didn't answer him.

"Goodbye," he repeated. The flower coughed. But it wasn't because she had a cold.

"I was stupid," she said at last. "I want to apologize. Try to be happy."

He was surprised that she didn't complain. He stood there quite confused. He was holding the glass in his hand. He didn't understand this calm kindness.

"Of course, I love you," the flower told him. "It was my mistake that you didn't feel it. It doesn't matter. But you were also as stupid as I was. Try to be happy. Put that glass down. I don't need it."

"But the wind..."

"The wind isn't that bad. The night air will do me good. I am a flower."

"But the animals..."

"I have to be able survive two or three caterpillars if I want to see the butterflies. I think that they are very beautiful. If there are no butterflies here, who will visit me? You will be far away. And I am not afraid of big animals. I have my thorns." And she showed all of her four thorns to the little prince.

Then she added, “Don’t stand here. It makes me angry. You decided to leave. So, now go!”

She said it because she didn’t want to show her tears. She was such a proud flower.

CHAPTER 11 – KING

The little prince was close to the asteroids 325, 326, 327, 328, 329 and 330. So he began to visit them. He wanted to be busy and learn something.

There was a king on the first planet. The king had expensive clothes. He was sitting on a simple but big throne.



“Ah! Here is a visitor,” the king said when he saw the little prince.

And the little prince asked himself, “How can he know who I am? He didn’t see me before.”

“Come closer to me. I want to see you better,” said the king. He was very proud that he was a king for somebody now.

The little prince looked around. He needed a place where he could sit down. But the king’s clothes were on the whole planet. So he was standing. And because he was tired, he yawned.

“It’s against etiquette to yawn in front of a king,” the king told him. “You can’t do it.”

“I can’t help it,” said the little prince. “My journey was very long, and I didn’t have any sleep.”

“Then you have to yawn,” said the king, “People usually don’t yawn in front of me. It’s very interesting. Come on! Yawn again!”

“I am sorry. I can’t yawn when you tell me to do it,” said the little prince. His face was red now.

“Oh, well!” said the king, “Then I tell you to yawn sometimes and then...” He was confused a little and he looked upset because the king’s orders have to be always respected. He couldn’t tolerate if somebody didn’t follow his orders. But, because he was a very good man, all his orders were reasonable.

“If I ordered a general,” he liked to give this example, “if I ordered a general to change into a sea bird, and if the general didn’t do it, it wouldn’t be the general’s mistake. It would be my mistake.”

“Can I sit down?” the little prince asked quietly.

“I order you to sit down,” the king said. And he pulled a piece of his clothes so that there was some space for the little prince to sit down.

The little prince was thinking about one thing. The planet was very small. The king didn’t control a big area.

“Can I ask you a question?” said the little prince.

“I order you to ask me a question,” the king said.

“What do you control?”

“I control everything,” said the king.

“Everything?”

The king looked at his planet, then at the other planets, and all the stars.

“Are you the king of all that?” asked the little prince.

“I am the king of all,” said the king. He didn’t control only his planet. He was the king of all the universe.

“And do the stars do what you want?”

“Of course,” said the king. “They do it fast. They do exactly what I want them to do.”

CHAPTER 12 – MOUSE

It was very interesting for the little prince. With such power, he could watch the sunset, not forty-four times, but seventy-two, or even a hundred, or even two hundred times on the same day. And he could still sit in one place.

At that moment he remembered his little planet which he left, and he felt a little sad. That's why he asked the king for something, "I would like to see a sunset. Please, can you order the sun to go down?"

"If I ordered a general to fly from one flower to another like a butterfly, or to write a book, or to change into a sea bird, and if the general didn't do it, whose mistake was it?" asked the king, "the general's or my mistake?"

"Your mistake," said the little prince.

"Exactly. We must ask from others what others can do," the king continued. "The control has to be reasonable. If you order your people to jump into the sea, they will start a revolution. I have the right to control because my orders are reasonable."

"And my sunset?" said the little prince, who never forgot a question when he asked it.

"You will have your sunset. I will order it. But I have my rules. I will wait until the conditions are right."

"When will it be?" asked the little prince.

"Well!" said the king, then he took a large calendar. "It will be this evening at about twenty minutes to eight. And you will see that everything happens as I order. The little prince yawned. He was sad that the conditions weren't right for his sunset. Then he started to be a little bored.

"I have nothing to do here," he said to the king. "I will continue on my journey."

"Don't go," said the king because he was happy that he was a king for somebody now. "Don't leave, I will make you my minister!"

"Minister of what?"

"Minister of justice."

"But there is nobody here who I can judge."

"You never know," said the king. "Maybe there is somebody in my kingdom who we didn't see."

"Oh, but I saw your kingdom," said the little prince. He looked once more around the whole planet. "There is nobody else on the planet."

"Then you will judge yourself," said the king, "It's very difficult. It's much more difficult to judge yourself than to judge other people. If you can judge yourself well, it's because you are really a clever man."

"But I can judge myself anywhere," said the little prince. "I don't need to live here."

"Well! Well!" said the king. "I believe that somewhere on my planet there is an old mouse. I hear the mouse at night. You can judge that old mouse. You can send him to prison. And his life will depend on your justice."

"I don't want to send anybody to prison. And now I think that I will leave."

“No,” said the king.

The little prince was ready for his departure, but he didn't want to make the old king sad. So he said, “If you want to control me, you can give me a reasonable order. For example, you can tell me to leave in one minute. I think that the conditions are right.” The king didn't say anything and the little prince waited for a while. Then he didn't want to wait longer and he started to leave.

“I make you my ambassador,” the king quickly shouted after the little prince.

“Adults are very strange,” the little prince said to himself when he continued on his journey.

CHAPTER 13 – PEOPLE

When the little prince came to the second planet, he saw another strange man. He liked when people admired him.

“Ah! Another person who admires me!” said the man when he saw the little prince.



He believed that all people admired him.

“Good morning,” said the little prince. “You have a funny hat.”

“I use this hat to say good morning to people who come to visit me and admire me. Unfortunately, there aren’t many people who visit me.”

“Really?” said the little prince.

“Really. Clap your hands,” said the man.

The little prince clapped his hands and the man moved his hat with a small touch.

“This is more fun than the visit to the king,” the little prince said to himself. And he clapped his hands again and again. The man touched his hat again and again.

After five minutes of this exercise the little prince started to be tired of this game. "Do you only touch your hat or do you also take it off?" he asked. But the man didn't hear him. This type of people never hear anything. They hear only when somebody admires them. "Do you really admire me very much?" he asked the little prince. "What does it mean – admire?" "To admire means to believe that I am the most handsome, the best dressed, the richest and the most intelligent man on the planet." "But you are the only man on your planet!" "Yes, I know that I'm the only man on this planet, but please admire me." "I admire you," said the little prince, "but I don't understand why this is so important to you." The little prince had nothing else to do on this planet. So he decided to continue on his journey. "Adults are very strange," he told himself, when he was leaving this planet. When the little prince visited the next planet, he saw a man who drank a lot. This was a very short visit, but it made the little prince very sad.



"What are you doing?" he asked the drunk man, who was sitting quietly before a collection of empty bottles and also a collection of full bottles. "I'm drinking," said the drunk man. His face was very unhappy. "Why are you drinking?" the little prince asked. "I want to forget," said the drunk man. "To forget what?" asked the little prince.

“To forget that I feel horrible,” said the drunk man and he put his head down.

“Why do you feel horrible?” asked the little prince. He wanted to help him.

“I feel horrible because I drink so much. I know that it’s bad to drink so much!” said the drunk man. Then he stopped talking and he didn’t say another word.

The little prince left the planet.

“The adults are very, very strange,” he told himself when he continued on his journey.

CHAPTER 14 – BUSINESSMAN

The little prince visited the fourth planet. There was a businessman on this planet. He was so busy that he didn't even look at the little prince when the little prince arrived.



“Good morning,” said the little prince. “Your cigarette is finished.”

“Three and two make five. Five and seven make twelve. Twelve and three make fifteen. Hello. Fifteen and seven make twenty-two. Twenty-two and six make twenty-eight. I have no time to light it again.

Twenty-six and five make thirty-one. Wow! It's five hundred and one million, six hundred and twenty-two thousand, seven hundred and thirty-one.”

“Five hundred million what?” asked the little prince.

“Eh? Are you still there? Five hundred and one million... I don't remember. I have so much work to do! I am a serious man. I don't want to lose my time with unimportant things. Two and five make seven...”

“Five hundred million what?” repeated the little prince who never in his life let go a question when he asked it.

The businessman looked at him, “For the fifty-four years I was disturbed only three times.

The first time it was twenty-two years ago, by a bird which fell on my desk. The bird made a terrible noise, and I made four mistakes in my calculation.

The second time, eleven years ago, I was disturbed by rheumatism. I don't have enough exercise. I have no time for such unproductive activity. I'm a serious man.

The third time is now! Where was I? Five hundred and one million..."

"Million what?"

The businessman understood that if he wanted to have peace, he had to answer this question.

"Millions of those little things which you sometimes see in the sky."

"Flies?"

"No, not flies."

"Bees?"

"Oh, no. The little golden things. Lazy people like them because they can dream when they look at them. But I am a serious man! I have no time to dream."

"Ah, stars?"

"Yes, the stars."

"And what do you do with five hundred million stars?"

"Five hundred and one million, six hundred and twenty-two thousand, seven hundred and thirty-one. I am a serious person. I need exact numbers."

"And what do you do with those stars?"

"What do I do with them?"

"Yes."

"Nothing. I own them."

"You own the stars?"

"Yes."

"But I already saw a king who..."

"Kings don't own. They control. It's very different."

"And why is it good to own stars?"

"When I own stars, I am rich."

"And why is it good to be rich?"

"When I'm rich, then I can buy more stars, if somebody discovers them."

"But how can you own the stars?"

"It's simple. Who owns them?" asked the businessman who was already quite angry.

"I don't know. Nobody."

"Then I own them because I was the first person to think of it."

"That's enough?"

"Of course. When you find a diamond, it's yours. When you discover an island, it's yours. When you have a new idea, you patent it and it's yours. Now I own the stars because I was the first who thought of it."

"That's true," said the little prince. "And what do you do with them?"

"I look at them. I count them and count them again," said the businessman. "It's difficult. But I'm a serious man!"

The little prince wanted to know more.

"If I own a scarf, I can put it around my neck and take it with me. If I own a flower, I can pick it and take it with me. But you can't pick the stars!"

“No, but I can keep them in the bank.”

“How can you do that?”

“It’s easy. I write the number of my stars on a little paper. And then I put the paper to the bank.”

“And that’s all?”

“That’s enough,” said the businessman.

“It’s funny,” thought the little prince. “But it’s not very serious.”

The little prince had very different ideas about serious things.

“I own a flower,” he continued. “I water her every day. I own three volcanoes. I clean them every week. I even clean the volcano which isn’t active. You never know.

It’s useful to my volcanoes, and it’s useful to my flower that I own them. But you’re not useful to the stars.

The businessman opened his mouth but couldn’t find anything to say.

And the little prince left.

“The adults are very interesting,” he said to himself when he continued on his journey.

CHAPTER 15 – LAMP

The fifth planet was very interesting. It was the smallest of all. There was only space for a street lamp and a lamplighter.

The little prince couldn't understand the reason for a street lamp and a lamplighter. There was enough light because the planet was under many stars. And there were no other people who would need a street lamp.



The little prince said to himself, "It's possible that this man is strange, but he's less strange than the king, the businessman or the drunk man. His work has some meaning."

When he turns on his lamp, it's like a new star in the sky, or new flower. When he turns off his lamp, he sends the flower, or the star to sleep. It's a beautiful job. And because it's beautiful, it's really useful."

When the little prince arrived on the planet, he said to the lamplighter, "Good morning. Why did you just turn off your lamp?"

"That's an order," said the lamplighter. "Good morning."

"What's the order?"

"The order is to turn off my street lamp. Good evening." And he turned on his lamp again.

"But why did you turn on your lamp again?"

"That's the order," said the lamplighter.

“I don’t understand,” said the little prince.

“There’s nothing to understand,” said the lamplighter. “The order is the order. Good morning.”

And he turned off his lamp. Then he said, “It’s a terrible job. It was good in the past. I turned off the lamp in the morning and in the evening I turned it on again. I had all the day for myself, and at night I could sleep.”

“And is the order different now?”

“The order is the same,” said the lamplighter. “That’s the problem! Year by year the planet is turning faster and faster, and the order is still the same! Now the planet turns around every minute and I have no time to sleep. I turn on and turn off my lamp every minute.”

“It’s funny! Your day is only one minute long.”

“It’s not funny,” said the lamplighter. “Our conversation is already one month long.”

“A month?”

“Yes. Thirty minutes. Thirty days. Good evening.” And he turned on his lamp again. The little prince watched him and he liked more and more this lamplighter who followed the order. He wanted to help his new friend.

“I can show you how you can stop your work when you want.”

“I always want to stop my work,” said the lamplighter.

The little prince continued, “Your planet is so small that you can walk around it in three long steps. You only have to walk more slowly and you will always be in the sun. When you want to stop your work, just walk and you never have to work again.”

“How can this help me?” said the lamplighter. “The one thing which I love in life is to sleep.”

“Then you’re unlucky,” said the little prince.

“I am,” said the lamplighter. “Good morning.” And he turned off his lamp.

The little prince continued on his journey. He said to himself, “The others, the king, the drunk man, the businessman would laugh at this man, but he is better than the others. It’s because he cares about something else, not only himself.

That man is the only one of them who could be my friend. But his planet is really too small. There is no place for two people.”

What the little prince didn’t want to say was that he didn’t want to leave that planet for one even more important reason. He didn’t want to leave because the planet had one thousand four hundred and forty sunsets every twenty-four hours!

CHAPTER 16 – GEOGRAPHER

The sixth planet was ten times bigger than the last planet. The little prince saw an old gentleman who wrote big books.



“Oh, here comes an explorer,” he said when he saw the little prince.

The little prince sat down on the table and he was breathing fast. He was tired from travelling so much and so far.

“Where do you come from?” the old gentleman asked him.

“What’s that big book?” said the little prince. “What are you doing here?”

“I am a geographer,” the old gentleman answered.

“What’s a geographer?”

“A geographer is a scientist who knows where the seas are, and rivers, cities, mountains and deserts.”

“That’s very interesting,” said the little prince. “Finally here is a man who has a real job,” he thought. And he looked around at the geographer’s planet. The planet was amazing.

“Your planet is very beautiful,” he said. “Does it have any oceans?”

“I can’t say,” said the geographer.

“Ah!” the little prince was disappointed. “And mountains?”

“I can’t say,” said the geographer.

“And cities and rivers and deserts?”

“I can’t tell you that,” said the geographer.

“But you are a geographer!”

“That’s true,” said the geographer, “but I’m not an explorer. There’s no explorer on my planet. The geographer doesn’t discover cities, rivers, mountains, seas, oceans and deserts. The geographer doesn’t have time for travelling. He doesn’t leave his office. But the explorers visit him there. He asks them questions and he writes what they remember. And if the information of the explorer is interesting to him, then the geographer has to find out if the explorer is an honest person.”

“Why?”

“Because an explorer who lies can give incorrect information. And also an explorer who drinks too much.”

“Why?” asked the little prince.

“Because drunk people see double. Then the geographer can write two mountains in a place where there is only one.”

“I know somebody,” said the little prince, “who could be a bad explorer.

“It’s possible. So when the explorer is an honest person, then I have to check if his discovery is correct.”

“Do you visit the place?”

“No. That’s too complicated. But the explorer has to give me proof. For example, if the discovery is a large mountain, the explorer has to bring large stones from it.”

The geographer suddenly smiled. “But you come from far away! You’re an explorer! You must describe your planet for me!”

And the geographer opened his big book and prepared his pencil. I write explorers’ words first in pencil. Ink is used only after there is a proof of their words.

“Well?” said the geographer.

“Oh, where I live,” said the little prince, “it’s not very interesting. It’s very small. I have three volcanoes. Two volcanoes are active, and one volcano isn’t active. But you never know.”

“You never know,” said the geographer.

“I also have a flower.”

“We don’t record flowers,” said the geographer.

“Why not? The flower is the most beautiful thing on my planet!”

“Because flowers don’t live very long. In geography we have very exact books. They are almost always true. A mountain usually doesn’t change its position. An ocean usually doesn’t lose its water. We write about things which are here for a long time.”

“But volcanoes which aren’t active can be active again,” said the little prince.

“If volcanoes are active or not, it is the same for us,” said the geographer.

“What matters to us is the mountain. That doesn’t change. Your flower is different. It can disappear soon.”

“My flower can disappear soon?”

“Of course.”

“My flower can disappear soon,” thought the little prince, “and she has only four thorns to defend herself against the world! And I left her alone!”

That was the first time when he regretted leaving his planet. But he took his courage again. “What is an interesting place to visit?” he asked.

“The planet Earth,” the geographer answered. “It has a good reputation.”

And the little prince continued on his way. He was still thinking about his flower.

CHAPTER 17 – EARTH

The seventh planet was the Earth. The Earth is not just another planet. There are a hundred and eleven kings, seven thousand geographers, nine hundred thousand businessmen, seven and a half million drunk men, three hundred and eleven million men who need to be admired, all together about two billion adults.

I want to give you an idea of the size of the Earth. Before the invention of electricity, it was necessary to keep an army of four hundred and sixty-two thousand, five hundred and eleven lamplighters. These lamplighters had to look after all the street lamps on six continents.

When you looked at the Earth from some distance, you could see a wonderful effect. This army moved like the dancers in the opera who come on stage and then leave one by one in perfect order.

The lamplighters of New Zealand and Australia came first. They turned on their lamps. Then the lamplighters of China and Siberia came, then the lamplighters of Russia and India, then those of Africa and Europe, then those of South America and of North America. And they never made a mistake. They always came in the right order. It was wonderful.

Only the lamplighter of the single lamp at the North Pole, and his colleague of the single lamp at the South Pole, had easy lives. They worked twice a year.

When I speak about the lamplighters, you can think that there are many people on the planet Earth. Now I want to tell you more about people on Earth. They occupy very little space.

If the two billion people on Earth stood close together, they could be easily put in one square. The square would be twenty miles long and twenty miles wide. You could put all people on a small Pacific island.

Of course, adults will not believe you. They think that they occupy a lot of space. They think that they are as important as the baobabs. You can tell them to make their own calculation. They love numbers and they will enjoy it.

But don't waste your time on this extra work. It's not necessary. Trust me.

When the little prince arrived on Earth, he was quite surprised when he didn't see any people.



He started to fear that he came to the wrong planet, but then he saw something move in the sand.

“Good evening,” said the little prince.

“Good evening,” said the snake.

“What planet am I on?” asked the little prince.

“On the planet Earth, in Africa,” the snake said.

“Ah, are there no people on Earth?”

“This is the desert. There are no people in the desert. The Earth is very big,” said the snake.

The little prince sat down on a rock, and he looked at the stars.

“I want to know,” he said, “if each person can find his own star one day. Look at my planet. It’s just above us. But how far it is.”

“It’s beautiful,” the snake said. “Why did you come here?”

“I had some problems with a flower,” said the little prince.

“Ah!” said the snake. And they were both silent.

CHAPTER 18 – GARDEN

“Where are the people?” the little prince finally continued in the conversation. “It’s a little lonely in the desert.”

“It’s also lonely with people,” said the snake.

The little prince looked at him for a long time. “You are a funny animal,” he said, “You’re very slim.”



“But I’m more powerful than a king,” said the snake.

The little prince smiled, “You’re not very powerful. You don’t even have feet. You can’t travel very far.”

“I can take you further than a ship,” the snake said.

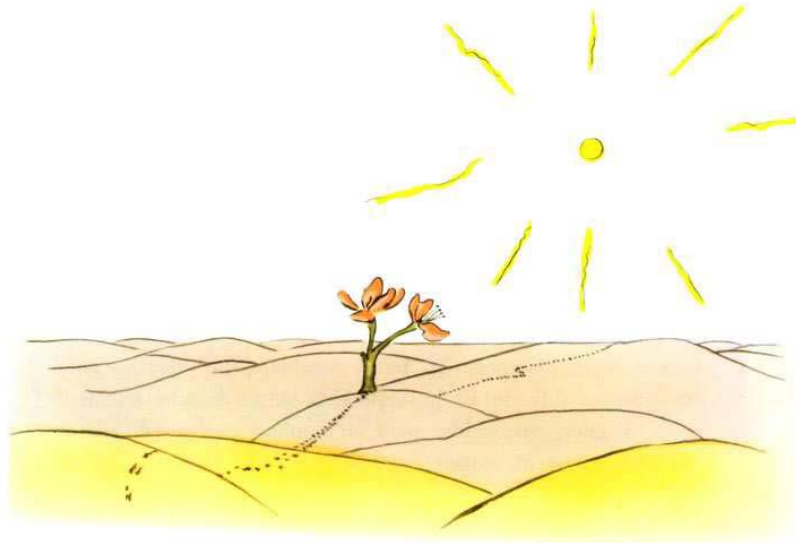
He turned around the little prince’s ankle. “When I touch somebody, I can send the person back to the land from which he came,” the snake continued. “But your soul is so clear, and you come from a star.”

The snake continued, “You’re so weak on this planet. I can help you one day if you want to go back to your planet.”

“Oh! I understand you very well,” said the little prince. “But why do you speak in mysteries?”

“I solve all mysteries,” said the snake. And they were both silent.

The little prince said goodbye to the snake. He started walking in the desert. Soon he met a flower.



“Good morning,” said the little prince.

“Good morning,” said the flower.

“Where are the people?” the little prince asked politely.

The flower saw a caravan a long time ago.

“People?” I believe that there are six or seven of them. I saw them years ago. But you never know where to find them. The wind takes them away. They have no roots, and that makes their life very difficult.

“Goodbye,” said the little prince.

“Goodbye,” said the flower.

The little prince climbed a high mountain. The only mountains he knew were the three volcanoes which were as high as his knees.

He said to himself, “From a mountain as high as this one, I will be able to see the whole planet and all the people.”

But he only saw other mountains around.



“Hello,” he said.

“Hello, hello, hello,” the echo answered.

“Who are you?” asked the little prince.

“Who are you? Who are you? Who are you?” the echo answered.

“Let’s be friends, I am lonely,” he said.

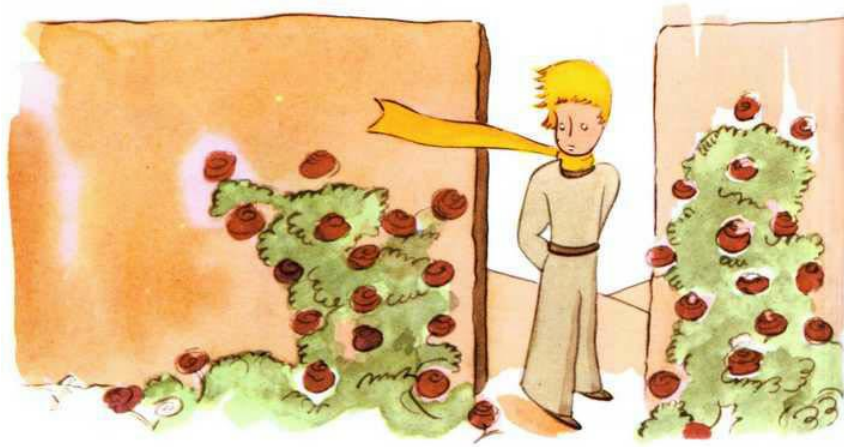
“I am lonely, I am lonely, I am lonely,” the echo answered.

“This is a strange planet!” he thought. “It’s dry and hard. And people here have no imagination. They repeat whatever you say to them. On my planet I had a flower. She always spoke first.”

The little prince was walking for a long time through sand and rocks, and then he finally discovered a road. And all roads lead to people.

“Good morning,” he said. He was standing before a garden full of roses.

“Good morning,” said the roses.



The little prince was looking at them carefully. They all looked like his flower. He was surprised.

“Who are you?” he asked. “We are roses,” the roses said.

“Ah!” said the little prince. And he felt very unhappy. His flower told him that she was the only flower of her kind in the whole universe. And here were five thousand of them, all the same, in only one garden!

“I thought I was rich because I had this one special flower. But actually I had only a normal rose. So I have a normal rose and three volcanoes which are as high as my knees. It isn’t much. I think that I’m not a very great prince,” he thought.

And, he was lying in the grass and he was very sad.



CHAPTER 19 – FOX

Then the fox came.



“Good morning,” said the fox.

“Good morning,” the little prince said politely. “Who are you? You’re very pretty.”

“I’m a fox,” said the fox.

“Play with me,” the little prince said, “I’m very sad.”

“I can’t play with you. I’m wild,” the fox said.

“Ah! I’m sorry,” said the little prince. But after some thought, he added, “What does wild mean?”

“You’re not from here,” said the fox. “What are you looking for?”

“I’m looking for people,” said the little prince. “What does wild mean?”

“People,” said the fox, “have guns and they hunt. It’s a problem for me. They also have chickens. That’s the only interesting thing about them. Are you looking for chickens?”

“No,” said the little prince. “I’m looking for friends. What does wild mean?”

“It means that I’m not connected to you and you’re not connected to me.”

“You’re not connected to me?”

“That’s correct,” the fox said. “For me you’re only a little boy, like a hundred thousand other little boys. And I don’t need you. And you don’t need me. For you I’m only a fox like a hundred thousand other foxes. But if I’m not wild for you, we will need each other. You will be the only boy in the world for me. I will be the only fox in the world for you.”

“I’m beginning to understand,” the little prince said. “There’s a flower. I think that she isn’t wild for me.”

“It’s possible,” said the fox. “On Earth we can see many different things.”

“Oh, my flower is not on Earth,” the little prince said.

The fox was very interested. "On another planet?"

"Yes."

"Are there hunters on that planet?"



"No."

"That's interesting. And chickens?"

"No."

"Nothing is perfect," said the fox. But he came back to his idea. "My life is always the same. I hunt chickens. Men hunt me. All the chickens are similar, and all the men are similar. So, I'm a little bored.

But if I'm not wild for you, my life will be happier. I will know the sound of your steps which will be different from all the other steps. The other steps will send me back underground. Your steps will be like music to me. And then, look! Do you see the corn fields over there? I don't eat bread. For me corn is not useful. The corn fields say nothing to me. And that's sad.

But you have golden hair. I think that it's wonderful. The corn which is also golden will help me not to forget you. And I will love the sound of the wind in the corn."

The fox became silent and looked at the little prince for a long time. "Please, stay with me for some days!" he said.

"I would like to stay with you," said the little prince. "But I don't have much time. I want to find friends and learn new things."

"We only learn about things which we are connected to," said the fox. "People don't have time to learn anything. They buy things from shops. But because there are no

shops where you can buy friends, people don't have friends. If you want a friend, be connected to me!"

"What do I have to do to be connected to you?" asked the little prince.

"You have to be very patient," said the fox. "First, you have to help me not to be wild to you. You will sit down at a little distance from me, over there in the grass. I will watch you with one eye and you won't say anything. Words can be a problem sometimes. But every day you will be able to sit a little closer."

CHAPTER 20 – SECRET

The next day the little prince returned.

“It is better if you return at the same hour,” said the fox. “If you come, for example, at four in the afternoon, then at three I will begin to be happy. I will feel happier and happier, the closer it is to four. At four I will be very excited. I will show you how happy I am.

But if you come at any time, I will never know at what time my heart should be ready for you. There have to be some rules.”



“Why?”

“The rules are important. They make one day different from other days, one hour from other hours. For example, hunters have their rules too. They dance with the village girls every Thursday. So Thursday is a wonderful day. I can walk into the village easily. If the hunters danced at any time, the days would all be the same for me, and I would have no holiday.

So the little prince spent some time with the fox every day. And when the hour of his departure was near, the fox said, “Ah! I’m sad. I will cry.”

“It’s your mistake,” said the little prince, “I never wanted to hurt you, but you wanted me to stay with you.”

“Yes, of course,” said the fox.

“But you will cry!” said the little prince.

“Yes, of course,” said the fox.

“Then you get nothing out of it!”

“I get something,” said the fox, “the colour of the corn helps me get something.”

Then he added, "Go and look again at the roses. You will understand now that your rose is special in all the world. Then come back to say goodbye to me, and I will give you a present. The present will be a secret.

The little prince went to look at the roses again.

"You're not like my rose. You're nothing to me at the moment," he told them.

"Nobody is connected to you and you're connected to nobody. You're like my fox when I first met him. He was only a fox like a hundred thousand others. But he's my friend now, and he's special in all the world."

Then he continued, "You're lovely, but you are empty. Nobody would die for you. Of course, to somebody who only walked around my rose, my rose would look exactly like you. But my rose is more important to me than all the hundreds of other roses because she's the rose who I gave water. She's the rose who I put under glass. For her I killed the caterpillars, except two or three which we saved to become butterflies. Because she's the rose who I listened to when she complained, or when she was proud, or when she said nothing. Because she is my rose."

And he returned to the fox.

"Goodbye," he said.

"Goodbye," said the fox. "Here is my secret. It's quite simple. You can see clearly only with the heart. What is important, eyes can't see."

"What is important, eyes can't see," repeated the little prince. He wanted to remember this secret.

"It's the time which you spent with your rose which makes your rose so important."

"It's the time which I spent with my rose..." said the little prince.

"People forgot this truth," said the fox. "But you mustn't forget it. You are responsible, forever, for something what you're connected to. You're responsible for your rose."

"I'm responsible for my rose," the little prince repeated.

CHAPTER 21 – TRAINS

“Good morning,” said the little prince.

“Good morning,” said the man who worked at the railway station.

“What do you do here?” the little prince asked.

“I change the direction of the trains,” said the man. “I send some trains to the right, some trains to the left.

And at that moment an express train shook the man cabin when it passed it at high speed.

“They are in a great hurry,” said the little prince. “What are they looking for?”

“Nobody knows that,” said the man.

And a second express train passed them, in the opposite direction.

“Are they coming back already?” asked the little prince.

“They’re not the same,” said the man. “These are different people. They’re coming back.”

“They weren’t satisfied where they were?”

“People are never satisfied where they are,” said the man.

And a third express train passed them.

“Do they want to catch the first travellers?” asked the little prince.

“They don’t want to catch anybody,” said the man. “They’re sleeping or they’re looking outside the windows. Only the children are pressing their noses against the windows.”

“Only the children know what they are looking for,” said the little prince. “They use their time to play with toys, and the toys become very important to them. And if anybody takes the toys away from them, they cry.”

“They’re lucky,” the man said.

The little prince continued on his journey.

“Good morning,” said the little prince when he met a businessman.

“Good morning,” said the businessman. He was a businessman who sold pills which helped you when you were thirsty. If you swallowed one pill a week, you wouldn’t feel any need to drink.

“Why are you selling these pills?” asked the little prince.

“Because they save a lot of time,” said the businessman. “Experts calculated that these pills can save fifty-three minutes a week.”

“And what do you do with those fifty-three minutes?”

“Whatever you like.”

“If I had extra fifty-three minutes,” the little prince said to himself, “I would walk very slowly to a fountain.”



CHAPTER 22 – DESERT

It was now the eighth day after my accident in the desert. I listened to the story about the businessman when I was drinking the last drop of my water.

“Ah, your memories are very nice,” I said to the little prince, “but my plane is still broken. I have nothing to drink. I would also be happy if I could walk very slowly to a fountain.”

“My friend, the fox, told me...”

“My dear little man, this has nothing to do with the fox.”

“Why not?”

“Because we will soon die.”

But the little prince said, “It’s good to have a friend, even if you can soon die. I am very glad that I have a fox as a friend.”

“He can’t see the danger,” I said to myself. “He’s never hungry or thirsty. He only needs a little sunshine.”

But he looked at me and he answered my thought, “I’m thirsty too. Let’s look for a well.”

It was crazy to look for a well in this big desert. But we started walking.

After we walked for several hours, in silence, night came, and the stars began to shine. I saw them as in a dream. I had a little fever because I was very thirsty. The last words of the little prince danced in my memory.

“So, you are thirsty, too?” I asked him.

But he didn’t answer my question. He only said to me, “Water can also be good for the heart.”

I didn’t understand his answer, but I said nothing. I already knew that it was useless to ask him questions. He was tired. He sat down. I sat down next to him. And after a silence, he spoke again, “The stars are beautiful because of a flower which we can’t see.”

“Sure,” I said. Then I looked at the hills of sand which were all around us in the moonlight.

“The desert is beautiful,” said little prince.

And it was true. I always loved the desert. You sit down on sand. You see nothing. You hear nothing. But something beats and shines in that silence.

CHAPTER 23 – WELL

“What makes the desert beautiful,” said the little prince, “is that it hides a well somewhere.”

I agreed with the little prince. When I was a little boy, we lived in an old house, and there was a story. The story said that the house had a treasure somewhere in the floor. Of course, nobody was able to find the treasure. Mayby, nobody was really looking for it. But that treasure made the house special. My home was hiding a secret.”

“Yes,” I said to the little prince, “it can be a house or the stars or the desert. What makes them beautiful, is invisible!”

“I’m glad,” he said, “that you agree with my fox.”

When the little prince fell asleep, I took him in my arms and I started walking again. I was full of emotions. It looked to me that I was carrying a great treasure. In the light of the moon, I looked at his white face, his closed eyes, his golden hair which moved in the wind. And I said to myself, “What I see here is only a shell. What is most important, we can’t see.”

And when his mouth opened a little with a smile, I said to myself again, “What is so amazing about this sleeping little prince is his loyalty to a flower. I could see a picture of a rose which shines from his heart, even when he sleeps.”

I felt that I had to protect this light. The wind could take it away.

We continued walking like that and, in the morning, we found the well.

The little prince woke up and he said, “People get on their express trains, but they don’t know what they are looking for. Then they are excited and they start to run around in circles. It’s not necessary.”

The well wasn’t like the wells of the Sahara. The wells of the Sahara are only holes in the sand. This one looked more like a village well. But there was no village here, and I thought that I was in a dream.

“It’s strange,” I said to the little prince, “everything is ready, the bucket, the rope.”

He laughed, he took the rope, and he let the bucket go down the well. As the bucket went down, we heard some interesting sound.

“Can you hear it?” said the little prince. “We woke up the well and the well is singing.”

CHAPTER 24 – WATER

When the bucket was full of water, I said, “Leave it to me. It’s too heavy for you.” Slowly I pulled the bucket up. I left it on top of the well. I was tired but happy. The song of the well was still in my ears. When I looked at the bucket, I could see the sunshine in the water.

“I’m thirsty for that water,” said the little prince. “Let me drink some.”

And I understood what he was looking for. I helped him hold the bucket. He drank with his eyes closed. It was as nice as some special celebration. That water wasn’t only a drink. It was born from our walk under the stars, from the song of the well, from the work of my arms. It was good for the heart, like a present.

When I was a little boy, the light of the Christmas tree, the Christmas music, the smiles of the people, all these things made the Christmas presents special.

“Where you live,” said the little prince, “the people have five thousand roses in one garden, but they don’t find what they are looking for.”

“They don’t find it,” I said.

“But what they are looking for can be found in one rose or in a little water.”

“Yes, that’s true,” I said.

And the little prince added, “But the eyes are blind. You have to look with the heart.”

I finished drinking water. I could breathe well now. The sand at sunrise is the colour of honey. And that colour was making me happy, too. So I didn’t understand why I felt so sad.

“Don’t forget about your promise,” said the little prince when he sat down next to me.

“What promise?”

“You know, a fence which can protect my flower from my sheep. I am responsible for this flower.”

I took my pictures out of my pocket. The little prince looked at them, and he laughed when he saw the baobabs.

“Your baobabs look like cabbages.”

“Oh!”

I was so proud of my baobabs.

“Your fox, his ears, they look like horns, and they are too long!”

And he laughed again.

“You aren’t fair, little prince,” I said, “I didn’t know how to draw anything, only snakes from the outside and snakes from the inside.”

“Oh, it’s alright,” he said, “children will understand.”

So then I drew a fence. And I gave it to him with a heavy heart.

“You have plans which I don’t know. Maybe something is ending here.”

But he didn’t answer me. He said to me, instead, “You must work now. You must go back to your plane. I will wait here. Come back tomorrow night.”

But I wasn't sure about it. Again, I felt sad in my heart.

I remembered the fox. When we are friends with somebody, we risk tears when we say goodbye.

CHAPTER 25 – WALL

Next to the well there was an old wall. When I came back from my work the next evening, I saw the little prince from some distance. He was sitting on top of the wall. He was talking to somebody.

He said. “This is not the right place.”

Another voice probably said something to him because the little prince said to it, “Yes, yes, this is the right day, but it’s not the right place.”

I continued my walk to the wall. I still couldn’t see or hear anybody. However, the little prince said again, “Sure. You will see where my steps begin in the sand. You only have to follow me to that place. I will be there tonight. I will wait for you.

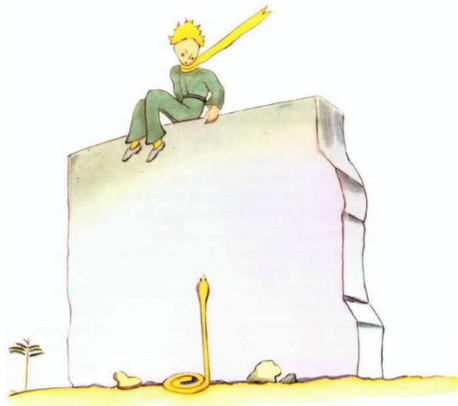
I was twenty meters from the wall and I still couldn’t see anything. The little prince spoke again, after a pause. “Do you have good poison? Are you sure that I will not feel pain for a long time?”

I stopped. My heart was beating strongly, but I still didn’t understand.

“Now go away,” said the little prince. “I want to go down from the wall”.

Then I looked down at the bottom of the wall, and I was shocked.

There was a yellow snake there. One of those snakes which can kill you in thirty seconds.



I wanted to take my revolver out, but when I was trying to reach it, I also made a step back. The snake heard it. He started to move and he quickly disappeared in the rocks. I still heard him but he was no longer visible.

I came to the wall and I caught the little prince in my arms. His face was as white as snow.

“What are you doing here?” I wanted to know. “Why are you talking with the snake?” He looked at me. His eyes were sad. He put his arms around my neck. I felt his heart beating like the heart of a dying bird which was shot with a gun.

He said to me, "I'm glad that you repaired your plane. Now you can go home."
"How do you know that?"

I came because I wanted to tell him that my work was successful.

He didn't answer my question, but he said, "I will go back home today, too. It's much further. It's much more difficult. I need somebody's help for my journey."

CHAPTER 26 – PRESENT

I knew that something strange was happening. I was holding him in my arms like a little child, but I felt that he was falling down into a big hole. And I couldn't do anything to help him.

His face was very serious now. He said, "I have the sheep. And I have the box for the sheep. And I have the fence." And he smiled sadly.

I waited a long time. I could see that he was feeling a little better. Then I said, "Dear little man, you are afraid."

Yes, he was afraid, but he laughed a little, "I will be much more afraid tonight."

It was difficult for me. I knew that it wasn't possible to change what the little prince wanted to do. I couldn't imagine my life without the sound of the little prince's laughing. For me, it was like a fountain in the desert.

"Little man," I said, "I want to hear you laugh again."

But he said to me, "Tonight it will be a year. My star will be exactly above the place where I fell last year."

"My little friend, is this only a bad dream, the meeting with the snake, the star, the plan for tonight?"

But he didn't answer my question. He said to me, "What's important, we can't see."

"Yes, I know."

"It's the same with the flower. If you love a flower which lives on a star, it's good to look at the sky at night. Then all the stars have flowers."

"Yes, I know."

"It's the same with the water. The water which you gave me was like music. It was because of the bucket and the rope and the pulling. Do you remember how good it was?"

"Of course, I remember."

"And at night, you will watch the stars. It's too small where I live and I can't show you where my star is. It's better if you don't know. My star will be one of the stars for you. So, you will like to look at all stars. They all will be your friends."

"I have a present for you," said the little prince and he laughed again.

"Ah, little prince, my little prince! I love to hear you laugh," I said.

"This is my present. My laugh," said the little prince.

CHAPTER 27 – BELLS

“I’m not sure if I understand,” I said. “Your laugh is a present?”

“People look at stars, but the stars mean different things to different people. For people who travel, the stars are guides. For other people they are nothing, only small lights in the sky. For scientists, they are problems. For my businessman, the stars are important because they make him rich. But all these stars are silent stars. For you, it will be different.

You will have stars like nobody else. When you look at the sky at night, there will be one star where I live. And because I will laugh on one of these stars, it will be for you as if all the stars are laughing. You will have stars which can laugh.” And he laughed again.

“When I leave, you will be sad. But you will be less and less sad every day. Believe me, time will help you be less sad. Then you will be glad that you met me. You will always be my friend. You will want to laugh with me.

And sometimes you will open your window only for fun. And your friends will be surprised when they see you laugh when you look at the sky. Then you will say to them, ‘Yes, the stars always make me laugh!’ And they will think that you’re crazy. It’s a little trick that I will play with you.”

And he laughed again.

“It will be as if I gave you, instead of stars, a lot of little bells which can laugh.” And he laughed again.

Then he became serious again, “Tonight, don’t stay with me.”

“I won’t leave you,” I said.

“Tonight, I will look as if I’m in pain. I will look as if I’m dying. It will look like that. Don’t come to see that. It’s not necessary.”

“I won’t leave you.”

But he was worried. He said, “I’m also asking you not to come because of the snake. He mustn’t bite you. Snakes are bad sometimes. They can bite you only for fun.”

“I won’t leave you.”

Then he said, “It’s also true that snakes have no poison for the second bite.”

That night I didn’t see the little prince leave. He went away from me without making a sound. When I was able to catch him, he was walking fast with determination.

He only said to me, “Ah! You are here.” And he took me by the hand. But he was still worrying.

“It’s wrong that you came. You will feel bad. I will look as if I’m dead, and it won’t be true.”



I was silent.

“You understand. It’s too far. I can’t take this body with me. It’s too heavy.”

I was silent.

“But it’ll be like an old empty shell. There is nothing sad about old shells.”

I was silent.

He tried to explain it one more time. He said, “It will be very nice, you know, I will look at the stars too. All the stars will be wells with a rope and a bucket. All the stars will pour fresh water for me to drink.”

I was silent.

“It will be so much fun! You will have five hundred million little bells, and I will have five hundred million fountains.”

And he was silent too because he was crying.

CHAPTER 28 – DEPARTURE

“Here is the place. Let me continue alone,” said the little prince and he sat down because he was afraid.



Then he said, “You know, my flower. I am responsible for her. And she’s so weak! She’s so naive. She has only four thorns which can’t protect her enough from the world.”

I sat down too because I couldn’t stand.

“That’s all,” he said.

He waited a little. Then he stood up. He took one step. I couldn’t move.

I saw something yellow which moved quickly near his leg. He didn’t move for a moment. He didn’t cry. Then he fell down gently as a tree falls. There wasn’t even any sound, because of the sand.



This all happened six years ago. This is the first time when I tell this story. When I returned, the people were happy when they saw me alive. I was sad because I lost the little prince but I said to them that I was only tired.

Now I'm not so sad. I know that he returned to his planet, because I didn't find his body at sunrise.

And at night, I love to listen to the stars. It's like five hundred million little bells.

But here's something interesting. The fence which I drew for the little prince wasn't very big.

So sometimes I ask myself, "What is happening on his planet? Maybe the sheep jumped over the fence and ate the flower."

But sometimes I think, "Of course not. The little prince puts his flower under glass every night and he watches his sheep well."

Then I am happy. And all the stars laugh gently.

Sometimes I say to myself, "Everybody can forget sometimes. Everybody can forget to put the glass over the flower on some evening. And the sheep can come to the flower in the night and..." Then the bells change to tears.

It's all a great mystery. For you who also love the little prince and for me, nothing in the universe can be the same if somewhere, we don't know where, a sheep ate or didn't eat a rose...

Look up at the sky. Ask yourself, "Did the sheep eat the flower or not?" And you will see how everything changes.

And no adult will ever understand that this is so important.

For me, this is the most beautiful and saddest land in the world. I want to make another picture of it. It's the same as the picture before, but I drew the land once more. I want to remember it better. It's here where the little prince appeared on Earth, and disappeared.

Look at this picture carefully because you can come to this place one day if you travel in Africa, in the desert. And, if you really come to this place, I am asking you, please don't hurry. Wait a little when you're under the star. Then if a little man appears who laughs, who has golden hair and who doesn't answer your questions, you will know who he is. If this happens, please, be so kind, don't let me be sad, write to me quickly that he is back.

