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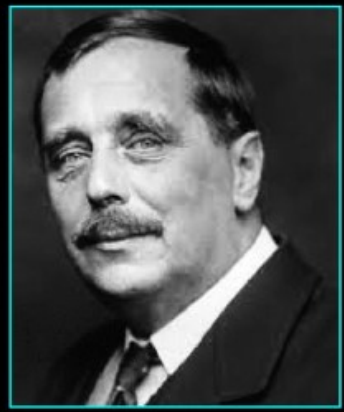
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Class-X

English

Footprints without Feet

Chapter-5



H.G. Wells

Footprints without Feet

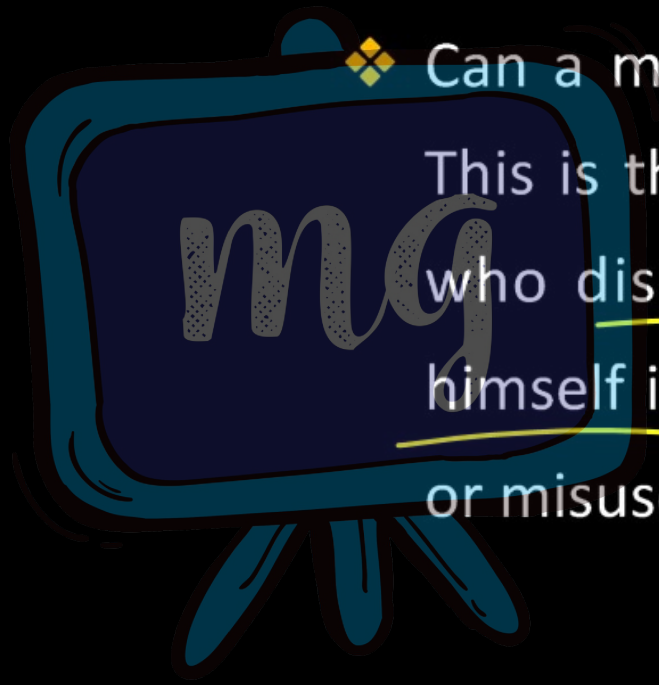
Part - 1

Neha Rajvanshi

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BEFORE YOU READ



- Can a man become invisible? This is the story of a scientist who discovers how to make himself invisible. Does he use, or misuse, his discovery?

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Imprints : निशान
Bare feet : नंगे पाँव



THE two boys started in surprise at the fresh muddy imprints of a pair of bare feet. What was a barefooted man doing on the steps of a house, in the middle of London? And where was the man?

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Remarkable : उल्लेखनीय
Progressing : आगे बढ़ना

As they gazed, a remarkable sight met their eyes. A fresh footmark appeared from nowhere!

Further footprints followed, one after another, descending the steps and progressing down the street.

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Fascinated : आकर्षित

Fainter : हल्का

Explanation : व्याख्या

Mystery : रहस्य

The boys followed, fascinated, until the muddy impressions became fainter and fainter, and at last disappeared altogether. The explanation of the mystery was really simple enough.

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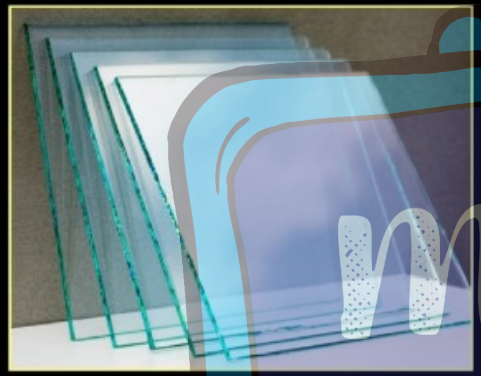
Bewildered : विस्मित

The bewildered boys had been following a scientist who had just discovered how to make the human body transparent.

Griffin, the scientist, had carried out experiment after experiment to prove that the human body could become invisible.

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Finally he swallowed certain rare drugs and his body became as transparent as a sheet of glass — though it also remained as solid as glass.

Brilliant scientist though he was, Griffin was rather a lawless person.

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Eject : बाहर निकालना

His landlord disliked him and tried to eject him. In revenge Griffin set fire to the house. To get away without being seen he had to remove his clothes. Thus it was that he became a homeless wanderer, without clothes,

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without money, and quite invisible — until he happened to step in some mud, and left footprints as he walked!

He escaped easily enough from the boys who followed his footprints in London. But his adventures were by no means over.

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Bitterly : अत्यधिक

He had chosen a bad time of the year to wander about London without clothes. It was mid-winter. The air was bitterly cold and he could not do without clothes.

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Expense : खर्चा

Instead of walking about the streets he decided to slip into a big London store for warmth. Closing time arrived, and as soon as the doors were shut Griffin was able to give himself the pleasure of clothing and feeding himself without regard to expense.

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He broke open boxes and wrappers and fitted himself out with warm clothes. Soon, with shoes, an overcoat and a wide-brimmed hat, he became a fully dressed and visible person.

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In the kitchen of the restaurant he found cold meat and coffee, and he followed up the meal with sweets and wine taken from the grocery store. Finally he settled down to sleep on a pile of quilts If only Griffin had managed to wake up in good time all might have been well.

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Assistants : सहयोगी
Apporching : पास आना
Panicked : घबराना
Chase : पीछा करना

As it was, he did not wake up until the assistants were already arriving next morning. When he saw a couple of them approaching, he panicked and began to run. They naturally gave chase.

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In the end he was able to escape only by quickly taking off his newlyfound clothes. So once more he found himself invisible but naked in the chill January air.

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Stock : सामान

This time he decided to try the stock of a theatrical company in the hope of finding not only clothes but also something that would hide the empty space above his shoulders. Shivering with cold he hurried to Drury Lane, the centre of the theatre world.

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He soon found a suitable shop. He made his way, invisible, upstairs and came out a little later wearing bandages round his forehead, dark glasses, false nose, big bushy side-whiskers, and a large hat. To escape without being seen,

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Callously : बेरहमी से

Inn : धर्मशाला

he callously attacked the shopkeeper from behind, after which he robbed him of all the money he could find.

Eager to get away from crowded London he took a train to the village of Iping, where he booked two rooms at the local inn.

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Wagging : हिलाना

The arrival of a stranger at an inn in winter was in any case an unusual event. A stranger of such uncommon appearance set all tongues wagging. Mrs Hall, the landlord's wife, made every effort to be friendly.

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Solitude : एकान्त

But Griffin had no desire to talk, and told her, "My reason for coming to Iping is a desire for solitude. I do not wish to be disturbed in my work. Besides, an accident has affected my face."

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Eccentric : अजीब / सनकी

Temper : स्वभाव

Satisfied that her guest was an eccentric scientist, and in view of the fact that he had paid her in advance, Mrs Hall was prepared to excuse his strange habits and irritable temper.

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Pretended : नाटक करना

But the stolen money did not last long, and presently Griffin had to admit that he had no more ready cash. He pretended, however, that he was expecting a cheque to arrive at any moment.

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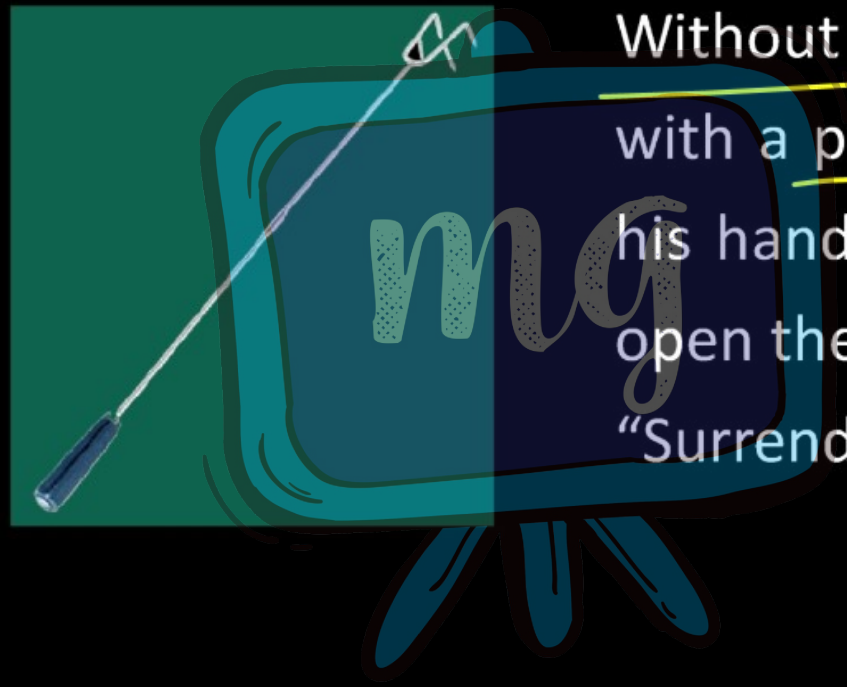
Occurred : होना
Clergyman : पादरी

Shortly afterwards a curious episode occurred. Very early in the morning a clergyman and his wife were awakened by noises in the study.

Creeping downstairs, they heard the chink of money being taken from the clergyman's desk.

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Without making any noise and with a poker grasped firmly in his hand, the clergyman flung open the door.

"Surrender!"

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Amazement : आश्चर्य

Then to his amazement he realised that the room appeared to be empty. He and his wife looked under the desk, and behind the curtains, and even up the chimney. There wasn't a sign of anybody. Yet the desk had been opened and the housekeeping money was missing.

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"Extraordinary affair!" the clergyman kept saying for the rest of the day.

But it was not as extraordinary as the behaviour of Mrs Hall's furniture a little later that morning.