

ЛЕГКО ЧИТАЕМ ПО-АНГЛИЙСКИ

Жюль Верн

**ТАИНСТВЕННЫЙ
ОСТРОВ**

Jules Verne

**MYSTERIOUS
ISLAND**

Адаптация текста и словарь
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«Таинственный остров» Жюль Верна рассказывает историю группы людей, сбежавших из плена на воздушном шаре и потерпевших крушение на необитаемом острове. Отважным героям предстоит преодолеть немало трудностей, чтобы подчинить себе дикую природу острова и разгадать его главную тайну.

Для удобства читателя текст сопровождается комментариями и кратким словарем.

Предназначается для продолжающих изучать английский язык (уровень 4 – Upper-Intermediate).

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MYSTERIOUS ISLAND

by Jules Verne

CHAPTER I

“Are we going up again?”

“No. On the contrary; we are going down!”

“Worse than that, **Mr. Smith**¹, we are falling!”

“Throw over all the ballast!”

“The last sack is empty!”

“And the balloon rises again?”

“No!”

“I hear the splashing waves!”

“The sea is under us!”

“It is not five hundred feet off!”

“God help us!”

Such were the words which rang through the air above the vast wilderness of **the Pacific**², at 4 o'clock in the afternoon of the 23d of March, 1865.

It was a hurricane lasting without intermission from the 18th to the 26th of March. Covering a space of 1,800 miles, it occasioned immense

¹ **Mr. Smith** — мистер Смит

² **the Pacific** — Тихий океан

destruction in America, Europe and Asia. Cities in ruins, forests uprooted, hundreds of shipwrecks, thousands of persons crushed to the earth or engulfed in the sea; such were the witnesses to its fury.

And while these catastrophes were taking place upon the land and the sea, something was enacting in the heavens.

A balloon, caught in the whirl of a column of air, spinning around as in some aerial whirlpool, rushed through space with a velocity of ninety miles an hour. Below the balloon swung a basket containing five persons.

The storm had been raging five days. The balloon had come from a great distance, the passengers, indeed, had been unable to determine the course, they could not calculate their position. Their vision could not penetrate anything, as the thick fog was under the balloon. Around them everything was obscure. The clouds were so dense that they could not **tell the day from the night**¹. No reflection of light, no sound, no roaring of the ocean had penetrated that profound obscurity.

Meanwhile the balloon had risen to a height of 4,500 feet, and the passengers discovered that the sea was beneath them, and realizing that the dangers above were less formidable than those below.

¹ **tell the day from the night** — отличить день от ночи

The night passed in the midst of dangers. At dawn, the clouds rose high into the heavens; and, in a few hours more, **the whirlwind had spent its force**¹. Now, however, it became evident that the balloon was again sinking, slowly but surely. The voyagers threw overboard the remaining articles which weighed down the balloon, the few provisions they had kept, and everything they had in their pockets. But it was evident that the gas was escaping, and that the voyagers could no longer keep the balloon afloat.

They were lost!

There was no land, not even an island, beneath them. It was a vast sea on which the waves were surging with incomparable violence. It was the limitless ocean. Not a ship was in sight.

In order to save themselves it was necessary for them to stop the downward movement. But in spite of all they could do the balloon continued to descend.

It was a terrible situation, this, of these unfortunate men. The gas continued to escape. Faster and faster they fell, until at 1 o'clock they were not more than 600 feet above the sea. The gas poured out of a rent in the silk. Unless some land was to appear before nightfall, voyagers, balloon, and basket would disappear beneath the waves.

It was evident that these men were strong and able to face death. Not a murmur escaped their lips.

¹ **the whirlwind had spent its force** — ураган стих

They were determined to struggle to the last second. The basket, constructed of willow osiers, could not float, and they had no means of supporting it on the surface of the water. It was 2 o'clock, and the balloon was only 400 feet above the waves.

Then a voice was heard, the voice of a man whose heart knew no fear.

“Is everything thrown out?”

“No, we yet have 10,000 francs in gold.”

A heavy bag fell into the sea.

“Is the balloon rising?”

“A little, but it will soon fall again.”

“Is there nothing else we can get rid of?”

“Not a thing.”

“Yes there is; there is the basket! **Catch hold of the net**¹, and let it go.”

This was, indeed, the last means of lightening the apparatus. The five passengers had clambered into the net around the hoop, and looked into the abyss below.

The balloon went up. But soon it began to descend again. It was impossible to repair the rent, through which the gas was rushing out.

At 4 o'clock, when the balloon was only 500 feet above the sea, the loud barking of a dog was heard.

“**Top**² has seen something! Land! Land!”

¹ **catch hold of the net** — цепляйтесь за сетку

² **Top** — Топ (*кличка собаки*)

They saw a high land. But it was still far, and it would take an hour to reach it. An hour! They did not know whether it was an island or a continent, as they were uninformed as to what part of the world the tempest had hurried them. But they knew that this land must be reached.

At 4 o'clock it was plain that the balloon could not sustain itself much longer. It grazed the surface of the sea.

A half hour later the land was scarcely a mile distant. The balloon made a bound into the air. It rose 1,500 feet, then began to descend and soon fell upon the sand. The passengers, assisting each other, hastened to the ground.

The basket had contained five passengers and a dog, but only four had been thrown upon the shore. The fifth one, then, had been washed off by the great wave. His friends cried:

“Perhaps he is trying to swim ashore. Save him! Let us save him!”

CHAPTER II

They were neither professional aeronauts nor **amateurs in aerial navigation**¹ whom the storm had thrown upon this coast. They were prison-

¹ **amateurs in aerial navigation** — любители воздушных путешествий

ers of war and succeeded to escape. Their aerial voyage had lasted five days. How did it happen?

This same year, in the month of February, 1865, many officers were captured by the enemy and confined within the city. One of the most famous of them was a Federal staff officer named **Cyrus Smith**¹.

Cyrus Smith was a native of **Massachusetts**², an engineer by profession, and a scientist, to whom the Government had given, during the war, the direction of the railways.

He was thin, bony, lean, about forty-five years old, with **heavy moustache**³. His muscles showed remarkable firmness. He was as much a man of action as of study. He was highly educated, practical, clear-headed, and his temperament was superb. Cyrus Smith was also the personification of courage. He had been in every battle of the war.

At the same time with Cyrus Smith another important personage fell into the power of **the Southerners**⁴. This was no other than the honorable **Gideon Spilett**⁵, reporter to the *New York Herald*⁶. He obtained exact information and trans-

¹ **Cyrus Smith** – Сайрес Смит

² **Massachusetts** – Массачусетс

³ **heavy moustache** – густые усы

⁴ **the Southerners** – южане

⁵ **Gideon Spilett** – Гидеон Спилет

⁶ *New York Herald* – «Нью-Йорк Геральд»
(название газеты)

mitted it to the journal in the quickest manner, and belonged in the first rank of the reporters.

A man of great merit; energetic, prompt, and ready; full of ideas; soldier and artist; vehement in council; resolute in action; thinking nothing of pain, fatigue, or danger when seeking information; a master of recondite information of the unpublished, the unknown, the impossible. He was one of those to whom all perils are welcome.

He also had been in all the battles, in the front rank, revolver in one hand and notebook in the other, his pencil never trembling in the midst of a cannonade. Gideon Spilett was tall, forty years old or more. Sandy-colored whiskers encircled his face. His eye was clear, lively, and quick moving.

Cyrus Smith and Gideon Spilett knew each other only **by reputation**¹, but the two soon learned to appreciate each other.

Cyrus Smith had a devoted servant. This man was black, born of slave parents, whom Smith had freed. But the servant had no desire to leave his master, for whom he would have given his life. He was a man of thirty years, vigorous, agile, adroit, intelligent, quick, and self-possessed, sometimes ingenuous, always smiling, ready and honest. He was named **Nebuchadnezzar**², but he answered to the nickname of Neb.

¹ **by reputation** — понаслышке

² **Nebuchadnezzar** — Навуходносор

All these people were in **Richmond**¹, and it was very difficult to get out. Nothing indicated an early release to the prisoners. The reporter had but one idea; to get out of Richmond at any risk. Many times, indeed, he tried the experiment, and was stopped by obstacles.

Meanwhile, the siege continued, and the prisoners were anxious to escape in order to join the **army of Grant**²; and among these was a certain **Jonathan Forster**³, who was a violent Southerner. This Jonathan Forster had conceived the idea of passing over the lines of the besiegers in a balloon.

So a balloon was made and placed at the disposal of Forster and five of his companions. They were provided with arms and food. The departure of the balloon had been fixed for the 18th of March. However, on the morning of the 18th the tempest broke forth.

The balloon, inflated in the great square of Richmond, was all ready, but the weather was terrible. The night of the 19th and 20th passed, but the storm only developed in intensity, and departure was impossible.

On that day Cyrus Smith in one of the streets of Richmond met a man whom he did

¹ **Richmond** — Ричмонд

² **army of Grant** — армия Гранта

³ **Jonathan Forster** — Джонатан Форстер

not know. It was a sailor named **Pencroff**¹, aged from thirty-five to forty years, strongly built, much sun-burnt, his eyes bright and glittering. This Pencroff had sailed every sea, and had experienced every kind of extraordinary adventure that a man could encounter. It is needless to say that he was of an adventurous nature. Pencroff, in the early part of this year, had come to Richmond on business, having with him **Herbert Brown**², of **New Jersey**³, a lad fifteen years old, the son of Pencroff's captain, and an orphan whom he loved as his own child. He also had but one idea: to get out. He did not hesitate to address Mr. Smith without ceremony:

“Mr. Smith, **have you had enough of**⁴ Richmond?”

The engineer looked fixedly at the man who spoke thus, and who added in a low voice:

“Mr. Smith, do you want to escape?”

“How?” answered the engineer, quickly. “Who are you?” he demanded, in a cold voice.

Pencroff **made himself known**⁵.

“Well,” replied Smith. “And by what means do you propose to escape?”

“By this idle balloon which is doing nothing, and is ready to take us!”

¹ **Pencroff** — Пенкроф

² **Herbert Brown** — Герберт Браун

³ **New Jersey** — Нью-Джерси

⁴ **have you had enough of** — вам не надоел

⁵ **made himself known** — рассказал о себе

The engineer seized Pencroff by the arm and hurried him to his house. There the sailor explained his project, which, in truth, was simple enough. They risked only their lives in carrying it out. The storm was terrible, it is true; but a skilful and daring engineer like Smith would know well how to manage a balloon. He had seen many storms and he thought nothing of them.

Cyrus Smith listened to the sailor without saying a word, with glistening eyes. This was the opportunity! The project was very dangerous, but it could be accomplished. During the night, in spite of the guards, they might reach the balloon, creep into the basket, and then cut the lines which held it!

“I am not alone,” said Smith.

“How many would you want to take?” demanded the sailor.

“Two; my friend Spilett, and my man Neb.”

“That would be three,” replied Pencroff; “and, with Herbert and myself, five. Well, the balloon can carry six.”

“Very well. We will go!” said the engineer.

“Tonight, then,” said Pencroff.

“Tonight, at ten o’clock,” replied Smith.

Pencroff returned to his lodging, where he found young Herbert Brown. This brave boy knew the plans of the sailor, and he was ready to go with him.

The storm did not abate, the journey would be terrible. The engineer feared but one thing; that the balloon, held to the ground and beaten down under the wind, would be torn into a thousand pieces.

Evening arrived. Thick masses of fog passed like clouds low down over the earth. Rain mingled with snow fell. The weather was cold. A sort of mist enveloped Richmond. The streets of the city were deserted; it had not even seemed necessary, in such weather, to guard the square in which swung the balloon. Everything favored the departure of the prisoners!

“Bad weather,” said Pencroff, holding his hat, which the wind was trying to take off, firmly to his head.

At half past 9, Cyrus Smith and his companions came together at the basket. They had not been discovered. Without saying a word, four of them took their places in it, while Pencroff, under the direction of the engineer, unfastened the bundles of ballast. It took but a few moments, and then the sailor joined his companions. Then, a dog leaped with a bound into the basket. It was Top, the dog of the engineer, who had followed his master.

The storm burst upon them with frightful violence. The engineer did not dare to descend during the night. It was not until five days later