



Harry Black is a thief. He takes a famous painting and puts it in an old newspaper. But then the recycling truck arrives—and where is Harry's newspaper?

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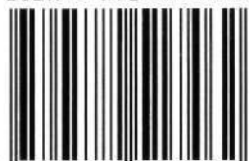
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Newspaper Chase

John Escott



PENGUIN READERS



The time is one o'clock in the morning.
The place is the Ritesville town art gallery.
A window opens and a man comes in. His name is Harry Black, and he is a thief.
It is dark in the art gallery, but Harry has a light. He looks across the room at a painting.
"There it is!" he says.



Harry moves quickly across the room. He stands and looks at the painting.

"A million dollars for this?" he thinks. "I don't understand it."

But he takes a knife from his coat.

Then he takes the painting very, very slowly from its frame.



Harry goes back across the room to the window, but he walks into a table. There is a beautiful blue glass vase on the table. It falls on the floor and breaks into a hundred pieces.

Harry smiles. "Is that a million-dollar vase?" he thinks. "It isn't now!"

He runs across the pieces of glass to the window.



Harry has a room in Mrs. Allen's rooming house. He goes quietly up to his room and closes the door. Mrs. Allen and her daughter, Janey, are sleeping. They don't hear him. In his room, Harry takes the painting from his bag. He puts it in a newspaper, then he puts the newspaper under his bed.



In the morning, Janey Allen is in the kitchen. She is putting old bottles into a box. "Recycling is important," Janey thinks. On the TV, a reporter is at the Ritesville art gallery. He is talking about the painting. "It's a million-dollar painting," he is saying. "Here's a photo of it."



Now the reporter is talking about the blue glass vase.
 "It's in a hundred pieces now," he says.
 Janey looks at the photo of the vase, then she asks her mother, "Do you have any old bottles?"
 "No," Mrs. Allen says. "That's all, Janey. But the newspaper recycling truck is coming today."
 "Of course!" Janey says. "It's Friday!"



Harry isn't in his room. He is talking on his telephone to a man in Seattle. The man wants the painting, but Harry isn't happy.
 "Five thousand dollars?" Harry says. "No! It's a million-dollar painting! ... What? ... No, I want *fifty* thousand, not five! ... What? ... The painting? Yes, I have it, and it's OK."



Janey is looking for old newspapers. Early on Friday mornings, she takes them from every room in the house. Then later, the newspaper recycling truck arrives. Janey opens Harry's door and looks into his room. She always takes his old newspapers or bottles for recycling. "Ah!" she thinks. "There's a newspaper under Harry's bed."



Janey puts the old newspapers into a black recycling box. She runs from the house and sees the truck. "Wait!" she says. And she quickly gives the box to one of the men. Harry is coming back to the house. He sees the recycling truck, and he sees Janey. "It's Friday!" he says. "The newspaper—! Oh, no!"



Harry chases after the truck.

"Wait! Wait!" he says.

Janey watches him. "What *is* he doing?" she thinks.

Harry jumps into the back of the truck.

"I want my newspaper!" he says. "Where's my newspaper?"

But there are thousands of newspapers in the truck.



Janey walks quickly from the house to the truck.

"Why is your newspaper important, Harry?" she asks.

"It's two days old."

But Harry doesn't hear her. He is thinking, "My million-dollar painting! Where is it?"

The men from the recycling truck are watching Harry, too. But now Janey is looking at Harry's shoe.



"There's some blue glass in Harry's shoe," Janey thinks.

"Where—? Oh!"

Suddenly, she remembers the photo of the blue glass vase on the TV. She looks again at the piece of glass in Harry's shoe.

"Is it from the vase in the art gallery?" she thinks. "Is Harry Black the thief?"



The men from the recycling truck are angry.

"We're going now," they are saying. "We're late."

"But I want my newspaper!" Harry says.

In the house, Janey is talking to the police on the telephone. "Maybe I'm wrong," she is saying. "But there's blue glass in his shoe ... What? ... Yes, he's looking for the newspaper now."



Two policemen arrive quickly.

"Let's look at your shoe," they say to Harry.

Harry doesn't understand. "What's wrong?" he asks.

One of the policemen takes the glass from Harry's shoe.

"This is a very expensive piece of glass," he says. "From a very expensive vase. Remember?"

Suddenly, Harry understands. "Oh, no!" he says.



Police cars and policemen arrive. The men look in the truck for the million-dollar painting. Later, they find the right newspaper—and they find the painting.

"Good work, Janey," one of the policemen says. "And there's a reward."

"Maybe I can buy a painting with the reward!" Janey says. "I like pictures!"

ACTIVITIES

Before you read

- 1 Find the words in your dictionary. What are they in your language?
art gallery box break chase dollar frame glass jump
rooming house million painting piece recycling remember
reporter reward thief thousand truck vase
- 2 People sometimes buy paintings for a million dollars. Why? Are they right or wrong?

After you read

- 3 Finish the sentences.
 - a Harry Black is a
 - b Harry takes a million-dollar. . . . from its
 - c Harry breaks a
 - d In his room, Harry puts the in a
 - e Janey always takes Harry's old and for recycling.
- 4 Answer the questions.
 - a When does the newspaper recycling truck come?
 - b Why does Harry jump into the recycling truck?
 - c What does Janey see in Harry's shoe?
- 5 Is recycling important? Why (not)? What do you think?

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