

Under the Bridge

Lynda Edwards



1.1 What's the book about?

Look at Picture A in Activity 1.2. Talk about the picture. What do you think? Then write your answers.

1 Why is the woman sitting there?

.....

2 What is in the bags?

.....

3 Who is the man?

.....

4 Why is he there?

.....

1.2 What happens first?

What do you think? Number the pictures, 1–4.



'Go away!'

'Can I ask you some questions?' he said.

Bea didn't want to listen. Questions were always bad.

Bea lived under a **bridge**. She had two bags. In the bags there was a coat, some brown shoes and an old, brown hat. It was very cold in winter. There was a book of photographs too, and a yellow **baby's** dress. These were important to Bea. Why? She didn't remember.

Every day Bea watched the river. She liked watching the people too. A lot of people came under the bridge, but they didn't look at Bea. They usually walked very quickly. They were happy because their **lives** were **different** from hers. They didn't want to see her or talk to her.

Bea didn't like talking, but she liked **singing**. Her songs were from a different life. Sometimes she remembered a house, children and a garden, but she didn't remember very much. Her head was an **empty** room. The bridge was her home now.



bridge /brɪdʒ/ (n) There is a *bridge* across the river.

baby /'beɪbi/ (n) The *baby* is six months old.

life /laɪf/ (n) His *life* is difficult. He hasn't got much money.

different /'dɪfərənt/ (adj) My sister and I like *different* things. She meets her friends every evening, but I watch TV.

sing /sɪŋ/ (v, past *sang* /sæŋ/) The Beatles *sang* very well. Their songs are famous.

empty /'empti/ (adj) The classroom is *empty*. Where are the students?



'Hello! My name's Martin.' A young man **sat** under the bridge near Bea.

Bea closed her eyes. 'I'm sleeping,' she said. 'Go away!'

The man smiled. 'Can I ask you some questions?' he said.

Bea didn't want to listen. Questions were always bad. She started to sing. 'La - la - la!' she sang **loudly**.

The man waited. Bea opened one eye. The young man had a **nice** smile. She remembered a young man with a nice smile.

'I'm Bea,' she said. 'Why are you sitting under my bridge?'

'You see that house?' He looked at a tall house across the river. It was old with dark windows. Then he looked at Bea. His eyes were very blue and very clever. 'I'm a policeman,' he said. 'I'm watching that house.'



sat /sæt/ (v, past of sit) We **sat** in the garden and talked.

loud /laud/ (adj) I like **loud** music. My mother is often angry because I play music very **loudly**.

nice /nais/ (adj) Your new house is very **nice** - I like it!

‘Where is Emily?’

There were policemen in the garden of the tall house.

They moved quietly and looked in the dark windows.

Bea looked at Martin with big eyes. A policeman? She didn’t like policemen. They usually had angry faces. ‘You can’t stay here. Move!’ they said to Bea. She always moved, but then she always came back again. This was her bridge.

But this policeman was different. He looked into her eyes. He talked to her. She was a person to him – a person with **feelings**.

‘Why?’ she asked. ‘You’ve got a job. You can’t watch houses. You haven’t got time.’

Martin smiled again. ‘It is my job!’ Bea was a **strange** person, but sometimes there was a clever light in her eyes. ‘We don’t know, but perhaps there are bad people in that house,’ he said quietly.

‘Yesterday some men **took** a little girl from her home in town. Her father has a lot of money. Perhaps the men want money from him. This is Em – Emily, the little girl.’

Martin had a picture. The girl had dark hair and a yellow dress and shoes.



feeling /'fi:liŋ/ (n) I'm not ill now, and that's a good *feeling*. I felt ill yesterday, but today I *feel* very happy.

strange /streɪndʒ/ (adj) That's *strange*! The car is empty. Where are our bags?

took /tuk/ (v, past of *take*) I *took* some money from my bag and went to the ticket office.

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British English

Original

Bea lives under a bridge. She watches people, but they don't look at her. Then, one day, a policeman stops and talks to her. Bea doesn't like talking and she doesn't remember much. But he is looking for a little girl, and there was a child in Bea's old life. Can she remember now?

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