

Please replace the words in bold with a word from the table below

colossal	settled	appeal	bizarre	second
ludicrous	moment	grabbed	dreamed	stumbled
yelped	flash	mission	chose	hastily
glare	establish	grasp	thrown	lurched

Montague Towers couldn't fail on his very first real **assignment**<sup>1</sup>.

He just couldn't.

He followed the men along the corridor and back into the main part of the bank. He needed a plan, and he needed one quick. What could he do?

He could try reaching into the man's pocket, but Monty really didn't think that would work. Nick, the man with the paper, was the same one who had felt Monty's hand on his shoulder and his breath in his ear. As soon as he felt someone's hand reaching in, he would **grab**<sup>2</sup> for it, invisible or not, and Monty would be done for.

The two henchmen were now outside the bank, and Monty had not a **moment**<sup>3</sup> to lose. He ran outside, and headed straight for the goon with the map in his pocket. Monty bumped hard into his back and, at the same time, let the paper he had written on fall to the footpath.

Nick **staggered**<sup>4</sup> forward and almost fell over, but his companion reached out and **steadied**<sup>5</sup> him.

'What the—?' He looked around wildly, trying to work out what had run into him, but there was nothing there. 'Did you see something?' he asked Mick.

'What are you talking about?' Mick asked.

'Something just hit me. Hard. In the back. This is getting **ridiculous**<sup>6</sup>!'

'You're crazy! You must have just **tripped**<sup>7</sup> over something.'

'I didn't, I tell you, it was... ' Nick looked down at his feet, as if to **prove**<sup>8</sup> there was nothing there for him to trip on. And that's when he saw the folded paper that Montague had dropped at his feet. The folded paper with 'Here It Is' **hurriedly**<sup>9</sup> scrawled on it.

Nick bent down and picked it up. He could see in an **instant**<sup>10</sup> that it was not the map from the safety deposit box. Any fool could see that. Not the right shape, not the right colour, and when he unfolded it, he could see it wasn't a map at all, just a blank bank form.

And yet, someone had written 'Here It Is on the front'. How very **curious**<sup>11</sup>.

And then he did what Montague **hoped**<sup>12</sup> he would do. He did what anyone would do in those circumstances, no matter how bizarre it seemed.

He reached into his pocket to take out the real map, just to check it was all right, to check he wasn't going crazy.

He took it out, turned it over once or twice, opened it up to **stare**<sup>13</sup> at it again, and then refolded it.

And that's when Montague grabbed it.

'Hey!' said Nick as the map was **snatched**<sup>14</sup> out of his hand and began floating through the air.

'Hey!' he yelled as it started flying down the road, as if **propelled**<sup>15</sup> by magic.

'Hey!' he **bellowed**<sup>16</sup> as the piece of paper suddenly disappeared completely.

Monty was running as fast as he could, as he stuffed the map under his jumper. He was dodging people on the street, jumping over kerbs and trying to avoid small dogs and rubbish bins. He looked back to see if the henchmen were following him, and that was a mistake.

Please replace the words in bold with a word from the table below

turmoil	conundrum	raised	jumped	eventually
interest	outright	surprising	speckled	slow
circular	flowing	muddle	considered	hurried
instantly	simply	muttering	rectangular	genuinely
scarcely	identified	surprised	lowered	infinite

A **remarkable**<sup>1</sup> object at once concentrated our attention. It was the queerest-looking thing you could imagine: round and elongated like a boiler, it had bulging ends and seemed to be made of polished steel. Its total length was about eighteen feet (5.5 m), and its width ten feet (3 m).

Edmund approached one end of the thing and opened a door, which was wide and high enough for us to enter without stooping or crouching.

'Step in, gentlemen,' he said, and **unhesitatingly**<sup>2</sup> we obeyed him. Edmund turned on a bright light, and we found ourselves in an **oblong**<sup>3</sup> chamber, beautifully fitted with polished woodwork, leather-cushioned seats running round the sides, and many metallic knobs and handles shining on the walls.

Edmund **finally**<sup>4</sup> sat down with us on one of the leather-covered benches, and began his explanation.

'As I was telling you earlier,' he said, 'I've solved the **mystery**<sup>5</sup> of the atoms, and I now have **unlimited**<sup>6</sup> power at my command. These knobs and handles that you see are my keys for turning it on and off, and controlling it as I wish.'

This power comes right out of the heart of what we call matter. The world is chock-full of it—we have known it was there ever since radioactivity was **discovered**<sup>7</sup>, but it looked as though we would never be able to set it free from its prison. But I am able to control it as perfectly as if it were steam from a boiler.'

We watched him with growing **curiosity**<sup>8</sup> as he pressed a knob on the wall; instantly we felt that the chamber was rising in the air, rocking a little like a boat in ocean waves. We were **startled**<sup>9</sup>, of course, but not alarmed.

‘Hello!’ exclaimed Jack. ‘What kind of a balloon is this?’

‘It’s something more than a balloon,’ was Edmund’s reply. As he spoke, he touched another knob, and we felt the car, as I must now call it, stop. When Edmund opened a shutter on one side, we all **sprang**<sup>10</sup> up to look out; below us we saw tiny roofs, and cars that looked like ants were **barely**<sup>11</sup> visible as they scrambled through the city.

‘What do you think of it now?’ asked Edmund quietly.

‘Wonderful! Wonderful!’ we all exclaimed.

‘How are we breathing so easily? The air should be thin, like it is on tall mountains,’ wondered Henry, looking down below.

‘Look up,’ said Edmund. He pointed at a row of what seemed to be grinning steel mouths, barred with innumerable black teeth and half concealed by a projecting ledge at the bottom of the wall opposite the entrance. ‘They feed on the carbon from your breath. It’s rather remarkable that every time you expel the air from your lungs you help this car to go,’ **mused**<sup>12</sup> Edmund.

None of us knew what to say; our astonishment was beyond speech and none of us spoke a word or asked a question for many minutes. As Edmund spoke, he **lifted**<sup>13</sup> the tops from some of the benches along the walls, and revealed excellent beds. ‘I believe that I have forgotten nothing that we shall really need,’ he added.

‘Beds, instruments, books, clothing, furs, and good things to eat... Now, I believe it would be time to retire on Earth.’

When I woke, windows were open on both sides of the car, and brilliant sunshine was **streaming**<sup>14</sup> in through one of them. Henry was still asleep and Jack was yawning in his bunk, but Edmund stood at one of the windows staring out, so I **hastened**<sup>15</sup> to his side.

‘Good morning,’ he said heartily, shaking my hand. ‘Look out here, and tell me what you think of the prospect.’

As I put my face close to the thick, transparent glass covering the window, my heart jumped into my mouth! ‘In Heaven’s name, where are we?’ I cried out.

Hearing my **agitation**<sup>16</sup>, Jack and Henry jumped out of their bunks and ran to join me. Jack gasped as he gazed out, and **truly**<sup>17</sup>, it was enough to take away one’s breath!

The sky, as black as ink, was ablaze with stars, although bright sunlight was streaming into the opposite window behind us! I could see nothing of the city we had left, but then I noticed in front of us, a long way off, a most unique object in the sky. At first glance I thought that it was a cloud, round and **mottled**<sup>18</sup>.

Suddenly, catching sight of it, Jack whistled and fixed his eyes in a stare. ‘What’s that?’ he asked.

‘That’s Earth!’ said Edmund, looking at us with a quizzical smile. A shock ran through my nerves, and for an instant my brain whirled.

‘What have you done?’ whispered Henry.

‘Nothing that ought to appear very extraordinary,’ answered Edmund, with uncommon warmth.

‘If men had not been fools for so many ages they might have done this long ago. For centuries, instead of grasping the power that nature placed in front of them, they wasted time burning whole mines of coal and whole lakes of oil. But it’s interatomic force that has brought us out here—not coal or oil—and it’s going to carry us even further.’ He paused to let us digest this.

‘Where are we going, then?’ quavered Henry.

‘Well,’ Edmund replied, ‘now we are part way there, I don’t see any objection to telling you. We are going to Venus.’

‘Venus!’ we all cried in a breath.

‘Edmund,’ Henry said, after **mumbling**<sup>19</sup> for a while under his breath, ‘this is the most **utter**<sup>20</sup> tomfoolery that ever I heard of. Here you’ve got an invention that would revolutionise mechanics, and instead you rush off into space on a hare-brained adventure. You might have been twenty times a billionaire inside of a year if you had stayed at home and developed the thing.’

Edmund smiled and said, ‘Well, I’m sorry for you, Henry, but cheer up. When we go back, perhaps I’ll let you take out a patent, and you can make the billions. For my part, Venus is more interesting to me than all the money you could pile up between the Atlantic Ocean and the Rocky Mountains.’ Then, he straightened up, adding with pride, ‘Am I not the Columbus of Space and you my lieutenants?’

‘Yes!’ cried Jack enthusiastically. ‘The Columbus of Space. Who needs money?’

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## Synonyms 1

- 1 mission
- 2 grasp
- 3 second
- 4 lurched
- 5 settled
- 6 ludicrous
- 7 stumbled
- 8 establish
- 9 hastily
- 10 flash
- 11 bizarre
- 12 dreamed
- 13 glare
- 14 grabbed
- 15 thrown
- 16 yelled

## Synonyms 2

- 1 surprising
- 2 instantly
- 3 rectangular
- 4 eventually
- 5 conundrum
- 6 infinite
- 7 identified
- 8 interest
- 9 surprised
- 10 jumped
- 11 scarcely
- 12 considered
- 13 raised
- 14 flowing
- 15 hurried
- 16 turmoil
- 17 genuinely
- 18 speckled
- 19 muttering
- 20 outright