

TEXTE A

"Since my husband died, five years ago, I have lived alone in a small house I own at Etretat. To be more exact, until last Sunday I was living there alone but for a maid, a local girl who had been in my service for several years. She died during Sunday night, Inspector; in a way, she died instead of me, and that is why I have come to beg your help. (...) May I, very briefly, tell you my story?"

"Please do".

"Every evening, for at least twenty years, I've been in the habit of taking some medicine to make me sleep, since I suffer from insomnia. It's a sleeping-draught in liquid form, rather bitter, but the bitterness / whose bitterness is counterbalanced by a strong taste of aniseed. (...) On Sunday, as on any other evening, I prepared my glass of medicine before going to bed, and Rose was (standing) next to me when I was ready to take it.

"I took one sip and found it tasted more bitter than usual. 'I must have put in more than twelve drops, Rose. I shan't / won't drink any more.'

"She took the glass as usual. Did she taste it out of curiosity? Did she swallow it all? It seems quite likely, because the glass was found empty in her room".

TEXTE B

Every morning around four, my father would crack my bedroom door open / would open my bedroom door and whisper: "Would you like to come? / Do you fancy coming (with us)?".

Neither uncle Jules's rumbling / thunderous / very loud snoring nor the wailing of cousin Pierre, who asked for / when he asked for / cried for his bottle / for milk around two (in the morning) were strong enough to cut through my sleep but my father's whispering would make me jump out of bed / would throw me out of bed.

I would get dressed in the dark noiselessly / quietly / silently (pour éviter 'IN silence') so as not to make little Paul up / not to awake little Paul. (Then / And) I would go down to the kitchen where uncle Jules, with the swollen / puffy and staring / dazed eyes of grown-ups when they have just woken up, was making coffee while my father was stuffing (un peu surtraduit mais pour éviter la répétition de 'fill') the gamebags and refilling the cartridge pouches / belts.

We would go out / step out in silence. Uncle Jules would double lock the door and would put / place the key on the kitchen window sill and then would push the shutters shut / would close the shutters.

The dawn was chilly. A few scared / frightened planets / stars would twinkle / flicker weakly.

TEXTE C

I had thus lived alone, without anyone to talk to, really, until I broke down in the Sahara desert, six years ago. Something had snapped inside my engine. Since no mechanic nor passengers were with me, I braced myself / I got ready for trying to get single-handedly through some difficult repairs. For me, it was a matter of life and death. I only had eight days' worth of water / I was left with drinking water for only 8 days.

On the first evening, I fell asleep on the sand a thousand miles away from any inhabited land. I was far more isolated than a castaway drifting on a raft in the middle of the ocean. So you can imagine my surprise when at dawn / at daybreak a funny/an odd little voice woke me up.

'Please...draw a sheep for me!'

'What?'

'Draw a sheep for me...'

I jumped to my feet as if I had been struck by lightning. I rubbed my eyes thoroughly. I looked carefully. And I saw quite an extraordinary small chap, contemplating me very seriously.