

## English

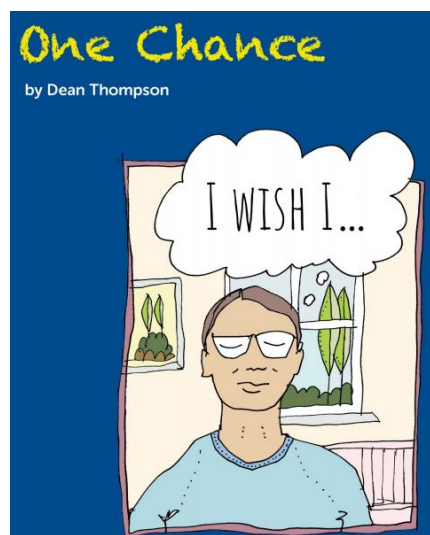
Wednesday 3<sup>rd</sup> June

*"Be careful what you wish for, you may receive it!"*

Read the story below:

### Once Chance

Outside, the evening was cold and wet. A squally wind howled, rattling the roof tiles and shaking the window frames of 13 Wager Road. Inside, shabby curtains were drawn, a humble fire crackled and a couple sat in silence. Jack was stretched out on the tired couch with an amused smile, turning the page of his favourite novel. Sarah scowled, silently seething. She scanned the room, noticing the worn-out furniture, peeling paint and, in her opinion, a pointless, lazy husband. She deserved so much more than this! Suddenly, the letterbox jangled and there was a solitary but decisive knock on the door. Hope, the Labrador, barked. Sarah pulled back the curtain and watched as a hooded figure slipped silently away up the road. Puzzled, she stared down at a golden card that had appeared, glinting on the frayed doormat. Tentatively, she gathered it up and read it out loud:



Golden Lottery Ticket Ltd.  
Congratulations!  
You have been selected as one of our lucky lottery winners.  
This golden ticket entitles you to receive one of three exclusive wishes.  
Simply, scratch the card and make your wish.  
Once you have claimed your wish, pass on the luck!

Wish 1	Redeemed
Wish 2	Scratch here
Wish 3	Scratch here

Small print: Remember to use your precious wish wisely – wealth is not the root of happiness.

Sarah gasped. This is just what she was looking for - another chance. Maybe lose the pointless husband as well, she thought, shaking her head. "I am going to give this a go. I am thinking lots of money to buy expensive clothes and maybe you can finally sort this house out," she muttered to Jack, rummaging desperately in the drawer for a coin.

"Utter nonsense," replied Jack, glancing up from his book and taking in the room. "I love this old house and you just the way you are. Even if all that did come true, there'll be a catch. No one gets something for nothing. Just throw it away." Sarah stopped and nodded sullenly. He was right. She was urged to throw the ticket on the fire, but something stopped her. Sneakily, she stashed it in her pocket.

Later that evening, as Jack slept, Sarah retrieved the ticket and greedily scratched 'Wish 2', dreaming of immense riches or, to be precise, £100,000. Outside, the wind continued to howl as if it was a sign of danger. Inside, nothing happened. Bitterly, she tossed the ticket into the bin.

The next day, the wind died down to a cool, whispering breeze. Jack prepared for his early morning walk with Hope. Pulling his woollen hat firmly down over his ears, he called out to Sarah that he wouldn't be out long and left. Sarah scowled. She could barely respond.

Eight hours passed and Sarah began to worry - where were Jack and Hope? Shaking with fear, she dialled 999, hoping for the best but fearing the worst. A massive search was launched but there was no sign. Jack and Hope had simply vanished. Sarah was distraught. Deep down she worried if their disappearance had anything to do with the golden ticket.

Days later, as the wind whipped up again, a woman in a black cloak knocked at the door. She told Sarah she had been sent to offer some compensation for her sad loss. Sarah was feeling desperate so asked, "How much?"

"Shall we say... £100,000?" responded the mysterious figure.

Shocked, Sarah recalled the greedy sum she had wished for. Could it be true? Had her selfish wish actually been granted? Quickly, she raced outside and rummaged desperately through the bin, trying to locate the discarded ticket. With sickening dread, she smoothed out the crumpled ticket and gasped in horror. It was true. The second wish had been redeemed.

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Sarah leaned against the bin for support, her head spinning, her thoughts in turmoil. Then she gathered herself together. There was still one final wish left ... Could she use it to try and bring Jack and Hope back? She needed a coin, quick. Just then, without warning, the squally wind howled and snatched the ticket from her hand. It spiralled, higher and higher like autumn leaves in a storm and then, like the eerie woman herself, it was gone. Sarah cried out of helpless pain. Inside, the shabby curtains were drawn and a humble fire crackled.

Below are a range of questions that involve literal, inference and opinion skills. Answer them in full and remember to refer to the story:

1. What words/phrases are used at the beginning of the story to set the mood and create tension?
2. What impression were we given of the house? Why do you think it was in this way?
3. When there was a knock at the door, what description gives the reader a feel that this isn't a 'friendly' visit?
4. In your opinion, why do you think Sarah deserved more and found her husband lazy?
5. What adverb was used to show how Sarah picked up the golden card? What does the word mean?
6. What did Sarah need to scratch the card off and where did she find this item?
7. Why did Jack urge Sarah to throw away the ticket?
8. At what cost did Sarah experience for her second wish to be granted?
9. What happened to the ticket as Sarah tried to make her final wish? What personification (giving objects human-like features) is used?
10. What different wishes could Sarah have wished for? Why did you choose those wishes?

Imagine you were Sarah...what wishes would you wish for? Would you have taken Jack's advice and thrown the ticket away?