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Episode #146

Abandoned Towns and Villages

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Hi, everybody! I am Georgiana, your English teacher and founder of SpeakEnglishPodcast.com. My mission is to help you speak English fluently.

Today I'm going to talk about towns, where no one lives anymore for one reason or another. With a mini-story, we will meet John, a man who, tired of his lifestyle, makes a radical decision.

Very good. Thank you for listening once again. We have reached 22 million downloads of this podcast; thank you very much for following me! If you want to help me, please share and recommend my website SpeakEnglishPodcast.com by mentioning my podcast. Thank you very much in advance.

Okay, let's get to today's topic.

In every country in the world, there are villages where no one lives.

I find this phenomenon fascinating.

There are several words you can use to describe such a town. They all mean the same thing:

- **Abandoned:** This means that those who lived in that area have left. Therefore, people abandoned the place at some point in the past.
- **Uninhabited:** This word implies that it was previously inhabited. The inhabitants inhabit a place. If those people leave and don't live there anymore, it becomes uninhabited.
- **Ghost.** A ghost town is simply a town without inhabitants, without anyone living there. This word sometimes gives a sinister air to the place. All kinds of legends can arise in certain abandoned places. Some people's imaginations can be very vivid.
- **-Deserted** merely means that there is no one there. For example: "The village was deserted, there was absolutely no one."

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Now, let's use a little imagination. Imagine that you decide to move to a deserted town. Moving means going to live permanently in a new place. So you would be the only inhabitant. You could put a sign with the name of the village and the number of inhabitants: one.

There are many advantages. For example, if you have a car, you can park almost anywhere. No more going around and around the streets to find a parking space. You don't have to respect speed limits or traffic lights, which don't work, or don't exist, because there is no police.

As for the neighbours...no more hassles, no more noises, no more arguments. You can just relax because no one is going to bother you.

Since you are alone in town, you can run for mayor. The result would be obvious. Only you would vote, and you would win with 100% of the votes. Unbelievable!

Now you could say, But what about the supplies? The food? Well, you can order on Amazon, right? I'm sure they won't get the wrong house.

There's just one small problem. A place like this can be terrifying. Being all alone in a town and hearing a strange noise. I don't know; maybe it's not such a good idea.

But in reality, multiple causes explain why certain towns are abandoned. Here are a few:

- **Epidemics.** Certain towns suffered devastating epidemics such as smallpox, typhus, or cholera that reduced the population.
- **Decline of mining.** The mines' work attracted many people, and many houses were built, forming towns near the mine. When the mine was no longer profitable, people left the village.
- **Industrial revolution.** Many peasants engaged in agriculture left their hard work to go to the factories to get hard but perhaps safer work.

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Many villages are not abandoned, but every year they lose inhabitants. There are several initiatives to stop this depopulation. Some towns even offer free housing and work. There are also subsidies for companies and entrepreneurs to set up their business there. The truth is that with the Internet, perhaps some of these towns can be saved because it is feasible to run a business with a computer.

Mini-Story

(Improve your Fluency)

Now let's continue with a **mini-story**.

How does it work?

I give you the information, and I ask you simple questions. After each question, there is a pause where you can answer. After the pause, I give you a correct answer for you to compare.

Easy, right? Well, at first, it may be a little more complicated. I recommend that you listen several times until it's easy to answer.

Sometimes I call it a **conversation simulator** because you practice your English like in a **real conversation**.

Let's start!

John was a successful executive who lived downtown.

Was John successful?

Yes, he was a successful executive.

Did John live downtown or in the suburbs?

Downtown. He lived downtown, not in the suburbs.

In the suburbs means out of town.

Where did John live in the city?

Downtown. He lived in the city centre.

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John was always stressed out and not satisfied with his work.

Was John relaxed and calm?

No, he wasn't relaxed and calm. He was stressed out.

Was John satisfied with his work?

No. He was not satisfied. He was not satisfied with his work.

John was stressed out, but was he satisfied with his work?

No, John was not satisfied with his work.

One day John made a radical decision.

Did John make a decision?

Yes, he made a decision.

Did John sell some of his things?

No, he didn't sell some of his things. He sold everything.

How was John's decision?

Radical. His decision was radical.

John sold everything and went to live in an abandoned village.

Did he sell some of it or all of it?

All of it. He sold everything, not only a some of it. He sold 100% of what he owned.

Did he go to live on the beach?

No, no. He went to live in an abandoned village.

Who went to live there?

John. John went to live there.

He sold everything and went to live in an abandoned village. The first year was great.

Was the first year horrible with all kinds of problems?

No, no. It wasn't horrible. It was great. There were no problems. The first year was quiet, without neighbors, and with all the tranquility in the world.

How many years were great?

Just one. Only one year was great. Only the first year was great.

Word got out that John's town was a great place to visit.

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What word got out?

Word got out is an expression to say that many people were talking about the place.

Did word get out that John's town was too noisy?

No, no. Word didn't get out that John's town was noisy. People said it was fantastic.

Who was living in the town when word got out?

John. He was living in the town when word got out.

Now, John has to put up with tourists every day.

Can John now enjoy himself?

No, he can't enjoy himself. Now he has to put up with it. That is, he's going through a situation he doesn't like.

Who does John have to put up with?

Tourists. He has to put up with tourists every day.

Does he have to put up with tourists every year?

No. No. He has to put up with tourists every day.

John is already looking to move to a new abandoned town.

Is John thinking of building a hotel?

No. No. He's looking to go to a new abandoned town.

Where does he want to go? Back to the city?

No. No. He wants to go to another abandoned town. Here it's full of tourists, and he doesn't seem to like that.

Perfect! It's the end of this mini-story. And as you can see, through questions and answers, you can practice and improve your speech just like in a **real conversation**.

Let me ask you something. **Is my podcast helping you** with your English?

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That's all for today.

Take care!

Bye! Bye!



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