

# The Antipode & a Czech Teacher

Memory Mission Part  
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## INSTRUKCE - 1. KAPITOLA

Každá sekce má samostatnou stránku – když si to budeš tisknout, máš prostor na poznámky.

Zvýrazněná slova, obraty a fráze:

- a) Vysvětlené v sekci "learning tip"
- b) Nevysvětlené zkus odhadnout
- c) Opakující se, dříve vysvětlené – ověř si, zda si je pamatuješ

V závorce šedě "that" – logicky do věty patří, ale běžně se vypouští; na nižším levelu by bez toho mohla být věta těžko pochopitelná, proto ho párkrát naznačuji, později už bude přirozeně vypuštěné

Gramatické jevy nad level A2 vysvětlím separátně

*např. Předminulý čas "had been, had gone, had given..."*

Zvládnout 1. kapitolu je úkol na 1. týden. Aplikuj co nejvíce kroků metody R.E.A.D. – při čtení i při poslechu audioknihy.

Využij cokoli jako podnět pro praktický trénink. Čekám na whatsappu 😊

Katka

# PART I

## 1.1 James

### 1.1.1

James looked at his watch. Seven more minutes, and then he could close the shop.

He could **even** close now. As usual, on Tuesdays there were no customers at this time. And it was his shop; he could close when he wanted.

He was so **focused on** reading that book that he completely ignored how much he needed to go to the bathroom. Now, it was urgent.

It could be so easy – he would just lock the shop and go to **the loo**.

But the regular regime was comfortable. If he ever started to forget again, he would know one thing for sure: I closed the shop at seven o'clock that day.

Because he closed at seven every day. He opened at exactly eleven in the morning and closed at exactly seven in the evening.

And if something extraordinary happens, he **writes it down**.

But nothing special happened. He was just waiting. Waiting for old memories that were erased from his mind five years ago.

And haven't come back.

### *LEARNING TIP*

**even** – dokonce, i, klidně

**to write something down** – zapsat

### 1.1.2

When he walked through the airport hall that day, he stood in front of the sliding doors with a very small suitcase, the smallest that had ever flown halfway around the world.

**Actually**, he wished he could forget, but not **literally**.

His time in Prague started well. He was still in the airport lounge, standing in front of the sliding doors, which he did not want to go through. Not because of his new life ahead of him but because of the weather.

He had come from the hot summer in Melbourne. He wore jeans, a T-shirt, and sneakers, and 24 hours later, he was in Prague, where it was very cold. The cold hit him immediately, but he just stood there **as if he was stuck**.

How could I be so stupid?

That was the best thing. He had to think about something else **right away**, not what he was worried about during the trip. Even though he **dozed off** a couple of times during the flight, he was uncomfortable in his seat. The seat was fine for most people, but not for a tall guy like him.

Now he was standing in a T-shirt, jeans, and sneakers in the airport lounge. People in warm jackets, boots, and hats walked by, and he felt the cold in his bones.

### *LEARNING TIP*

**actually** – vlastně

**literally** – doslova

**right away** – hned, rovnou

**to doze off** – zdřímnout si

### 1.1.3

**Even** now, in his shop, he shivered. It seemed that he was cold, but it was because he needed to go to the toilet.

He had to wait until seven. Three more minutes. I must wait. I am in control, he thought. My peace depends on it.

In the first years, he waited for someone - who knew him before - to come and help him remember. **Even if** he did not remember, he hoped they would help him understand.

He was sure (that) someone would come when he got home from the hospital. But no one came **right away**.

Maybe next month, he thought. But no one came. Not in one year. Not in two.

He wanted so much to find out what had happened in the year between his arrival in Prague and his accident. He tried to remember, but he couldn't.

He often met with Dana, the psychotherapist, to help him remember the accident and his past. But these days, he went to see her more for the sex. He no longer believed he could put the year back together.

### *TRUE A FALSE?*

On Tuesdays, there were many customers in the shop just before closing time.

#### 1.1.4

He knew (that) he was born in Australia. His mother was a Czech who moved there.

He came to Prague to settle his uncle's estate.

He remembered why he decided to keep his uncle's **antique bookshop** and run it. He remembered that he suddenly did not want to go back to Australia, but now he did not know why. It made no sense because he flew here only with a small suitcase. He planned to sort things out quickly and fly home.

He couldn't remember any details.

The whole year before the accident was gone from his mind. The interesting thing was that he did not forget Czech. He knew only a little Czech from his mother and learned a little bit more in the first year.

He forgot everything, except Czech. He spoke Czech well; it was the only thing that stayed in his mind.

Seven at last. He crossed the shop quickly and climbed the six steps to the door in two strides. He locked the door and turned around, and in seconds he was in the toilet. He washed his hands and looked around the room where **he was staying**.

The small, dark space was comforting. His uncle owned several apartment buildings in Prague, and a law firm managed them. James had moved into this damp basement room. There was a window from the room to the courtyard, just **a foot** above the ground from the outside.

But he liked the darkness, so **he did not mind**.

#### *LEARNING TIP*

**to be staying somewhere** – bydlet někde dočasně; být ubytovaný

### 1.1.5

He returned to the shop and saw that he had left the key in the lock. He also needed to close the curtains.

**After hours**, he used the bookshop as a living room. The front wall was glass, the old thick kind, and he wanted privacy. He lived in the city center, near the **Faculty of Arts**.

During the day, tourists walked by to see the Jewish sites.

At night, groups of foreigners drank cheap Czech beer and were noisy.

Now it was May, and the weather was nice, but in winter, the curtain on the front window kept the room warmer.

Someone told him to renovate the house, so the shop and his tiny apartment would be in better condition, with sealed windows and doors. But he did not like the idea of moving the old books out and back again.

He only replaced the windows in the flats above. And he only painted the window and door frames on the ground floor, so they wouldn't contrast so much with the new facade.

This meant there was always a draft in his shop. But at least his tenants were comfortable. They paid rent, and this was **his living**.

**It did not matter** how much he earned at the store. He did not need it.

He just needed to stay busy.

### *LEARNING TIP*

**after hours** – po zavírací době

**Faculty of Arts** – Filosofická fakulta

**his living** – jeho živobytí

### 1.1.6

Before he **pulled back** the heavy curtain, he saw someone on the corner across the street again.

She probably had her own habits, like him. Every time he locked up at seven, she was there. He assumed that she was a smoker, coming out at the same time for her **fag**.

He never really watched her long enough to see if she really smoked, but it made absolute sense. Why else would she stand there?

Today, he saw her leaving her **favorite** spot. It was already past seven. He came back to get the key a few minutes later than usual.

To his surprise, she did not enter the house but walked away. **It no longer made sense**, and that interested him.

He noted it as the unusual moment of the day; in case he started forgetting again.

She walked with strange, unsteady steps, as if she was drunk. But then he noticed how she kept close to the wall and remembered Hesther, his **neighbor** in Melbourne. She always walked down the corridor near the wall and had a similar unsteady walk. **Multiple sclerosis**. Nasty disease.

### *LEARNING TIP*

**pulled back** – zatáhl

**It no longer made sense** – (v tu chvíli) už to nedávalo smysl

**Multiple sclerosis** – roztroušená skleróza

**favorite** (US spelling, in UK it would be "favourite")

**neighbor** (US spelling, in UK it would be "neighbour")



### 1.1.7

He put his hand behind the curtain, took the key from the lock, and walked to the counter.

He reached for the book that had interested him so much that he forgot his basic needs like needing **the loo**.

He realized (~~that~~) he did not remember why he started reading it. Where did it come from? Which shelf? And why this one?

Hmm, it may not be important. He just wanted to read, reached for the closest book, opened it, and started reading.

Leopold Kočandrle. **Even if** he was a famous Czech writer, James would not know. He did not grow up here, so he did not know Czech culture. But he did know a few important names: Hašek, Čapek, Havel. And Jirásek, because he had sold some of his books.

He also knew Neruda, because of Neruda Street, which he liked. Somebody told him who Neruda was. But who? Who could have told him and then disappeared forever?

James could not understand how he had spent a year here without a single friend or **acquaintance**. Nobody. And that scared him.

Because the unknown could be anything. He did not like uncertainty.

### *TRUE OR FALSE?*

James came to the city to visit his mother and decided to stay and manage his uncle's estate.

### 1.1.8

He left the book on the counter and went back to his room to eat dinner. He opened the fridge and took out a stick of dry salami.

It still surprised him that he had not forgotten Czech. He even remembered typical phrases. In the meat shop, they repeated the same question, asking if he wanted *30 dekagrams of salami*.

Thirty dekagrams, whole or sliced?

And then in the pub, how they talked about beer.

*A large one* instead of a **pint**, *a small one* instead of a **half-pint**.

*Ten or twelve?* That meant something like **lager or bitter**.

That is what he remembered. And nothing else.

He did not even know which pub **he went to** for the beer. He did not remember who **he went with** either. It was not easy to find the place again in the **center** of Prague.

He went to a few pubs to see if anyone would remember him. But all the pubs and restaurants near his place were tourist traps with different staff every month. There was **no point** in searching this way.

Only in the meat shop on the corner of Perlovka Street did the assistant remember him. She always asked, "*Lovecky or Polican? Thirty dekagrams whole, as usual?*"

But it was clear she knew nothing about him except his salami preferences.

### LEARNING TIP

**center** (US spelling, in UK it would be "centre")

**There's no point in something** – nemá cenu, nemá smysl

### 1.1.9

He peeled a piece of salami, cut a few slices, and used the tip of a knife to pick them up, dipping each slice in a plastic cup of mustard.

He was hungry. He only ate once a day. He slept late, so he did not eat breakfast before opening the shop. He opened the shop at eleven, so there was no time for lunch.

**He got used to it.** In fact, he did not know if he had to get used to it. Maybe he always ate once a day. He did not remember.

The fact that he was so thin suggested it. And he always was. He knew because he still wore the same jeans which he wore the day he arrived in Prague five years ago. **Obviously**, he had not lost any weight with his current diet.

Whether he had always eaten like this or only after the accident... either way, it was enough for him.

But today, a few slices of sausage would not be enough. He had no bread. Here in Czechia, people eat a lot of bread. They eat it with everything. With salami, with soup, with lentils, with goulash. A culture of bread, **draft beer**, and freshly sliced salami. He liked it.

He stood up, put his wallet in his back pocket, grabbed his keys, and left the **apartment**. He locked the door, walked down the long corridor, and stepped out into the street. Tonight, he would have dinner in a restaurant.

And he would have a *big light one*. Maybe two.

### LEARNING TIP

**To get used to something** – na něco si zvykonout

**Obviously** – očividně, evidentně

**draft beer** – točené pivo

**apartment** (US, in UK it would be "flat")

=END OF CHAPTER 1=