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NOËL
EN
CALIFORNIE

French for Intermediate Level

Before you start

This book is aimed at intermediate students to help you deepen your knowledge of French. The sentences are simple, using everyday vocabulary. Each chapter is accompanied by a list of the harder words and expressions to help you understand the text without the use of a dictionary. The complete English translation is included, so that you can double-check your understanding.

Always learn new words in a sentence, preferably in a sentence that relates to your experience, as it is a lot easier to commit them to memory that way.

The short stories are written in past tense, helping you practice the *passé composé*, the *imparfait*, and the *plus-que-parfait* in an easy way. You will also practice future, conditional and subjunctive forms, as well as the relative pronouns that link complex sentences.

When reading, be aware of *liaison*, the pronunciation of a final consonant that is normally silent because the word that follows begins with a vowel. The final consonant of the first word phonetically becomes a part of the first syllable of the second word (les_amis, *lay-za-mee*). *Liaison*, which beginning students often find challenging, will be marked with an undertie sign _˘ (for example, en_avril).

Le matin suivant, Ludovic, Robert et Martin sont partis à la recherche° d'un sapin de Noël°. A midi, ils sont rentrés avec un grand_arbre.

En le voyant, Catherine a poussé un cri°, son visage exprimant l'horreur pure.

—Qu'est-ce qui s'est passé ? a-t-elle demandé gravement°.

Ludovic a hoché° les_épaules et souri comme si de rien n'était bien qu'on_ait pu voir que quelques branches étaient cassées.

—Je n'ai pas bien_attaché le sapin sur le toit° de la voiture. L'arbre est tombé par terre° après que j'avais démarré°. Allez, ce n'est pas grave ! Les décorations vont couvrir tout ça !

à la recherche de = in search of
 le sapin de Noël = Christmas tree
 pousser un cri = to let out a cry
 gravement = gravely
 hocher les épaules = to shrug
 le toit = roof
 par terre = on the ground
 démarrer = to start the car

The following morning, Ludovic, Robert, and Martin left in search of a Christmas tree. At noon, they came back with a tall tree.

Seeing it, Catherine cried out, her face expressing pure horror.

"What happened?" she asked gravely.

Ludovic shrugged and smiled as if nothing were wrong even though they were able to see that some branches were broken.

"I didn't attach the Christmas tree well to the roof of the car. The tree fell on the ground after I had started the car. Come on, it's not that serious! Decorations are going to cover all that!"