

MACMILLAN READERS

BEGINNER LEVEL

MIKE ESPLEN

Marco



MACMILLAN

'I live on a farm near a village.
I have lived there all my life.
It's a very small village.
There's nothing to do there.
There isn't even a cinema.

I work for my father during the week.
At the weekend, I do nothing.
One day, I'll leave home.
One weekend –
I don't know when.'

Marco

Friday Afternoon

Friday afternoon. It was always the same. Marco was on the farm as usual. It was hot – too hot for work.

‘Get up,’ shouted a voice.

Marco looked up at his father.

‘Get up,’ said his father again. ‘Look at those trees. They’re full of peaches.’

Marco didn’t answer. He got up slowly and picked the peaches, one by one.



It's always the same, his father thought. Marco doesn't like work.

It's always the same, thought Marco. Nothing but work.

At three o'clock it was too hot to work. The men on the farm rested. They smoked and talked. Then they lay on the ground and slept.

But Marco and his father were busy. There was still a lot to do. Marco had to count the boxes of peaches.

'Two hundred and thirty-nine . . . two hundred and forty . . .'

'That's not bad,' said his father. 'The peaches are good this year. We'll make a lot of money.'



Marco did not listen. He wasn't interested. He never talked much with his father. They worked together, but they weren't friends.

Soon a lorry arrived. Marco's father called the men. 'Another hour,' he told them. 'Then we finish.'

The men were busy again. Marco helped them. They put labels on the boxes. Then they put the boxes onto the lorry.

The week's work was nearly over. Marco's father watched the men and smiled. But Marco didn't smile.

Carlo – the driver of the lorry – signed a piece of paper. Then he shook hands with Marco's father. Carlo was taking the peaches to the city. He was going to sell them in the market.



Marco went inside the farmhouse. His mother was cooking a meal. It was spaghetti. Friday night was always spaghetti. Marco wasn't hungry.

It was cool inside the house. Marco stood at the window and watched the lorry move away.

Tomorrow is Saturday, he thought. What can I do at the weekend? There's nothing to do here.

Then he had an idea. There was a train to the city every Saturday. It left early in the morning.

I'll get on the train and go to the city tomorrow, thought Marco. I'll leave the farm early. Nobody will know.



Saturday Morning

The next morning, Marco got up early. It was five o'clock. His father and mother were asleep; he didn't wake them.

He took a pair of jeans and a shirt and put them in a bag. And a little money. It was enough. Then he left the farm quietly.

It was a long walk to the village. The sun was still low and not too hot. Marco carried the bag over his shoulder and walked quickly. He didn't want to meet anybody on the road.

In half an hour he was in the village. It was empty. The village was *always* empty. Marco wanted to shout. He wanted to wake everybody up. He wanted to hear the noise of people and cars. Everything in the village was always too quiet.

Marco arrived at the station and looked down the platform. One person was waiting. He looked down the railway line. There was no train. He waited in silence.

Soon a man arrived on the platform. Marco knew him. The man sold tickets for the train. Marco didn't want to buy a ticket. He didn't have enough money. He hid behind a fence at the end of the platform and waited.

At last the train came into the station. One or two people got off.