

Unit 5

Unit 5 Extension

1 Read this extract from a travelogue written by a travel writer. Are the sentences true (T) or false (F)?

- 1 The travel writer is Greek.
- 2 Initially, the travel writer doesn't trust the estate agent's judgment on what kind of house he is looking for.
- 3 The location of the house matches the writer's preferred location.
- 4 The price of the house is beyond the writer's budget.

'Look, I'm afraid there's been a misunderstanding. I'm not interested in living in the town. I want to be by the sea or up in the mountains.' I was driving along a quiet street in the sleepy town of Xanthi, in the region of Thrace, north-eastern Greece and only six hours' bumpy bus ride from the exotic delights of Istanbul.

'Stop talking and drive the car, James,' instructed Soula, who was sitting in the back seat, smoking a cigarette. She was in her late 20s or early 30s, unmarried (no wedding ring) and bossy. Attractive, with long, dark hair, she was wearing rather a lot of make-up and a pair of very Hollywood sunglasses. She told me she had been brought up in Australia, as part of the large Greek immigrant community there but had returned 'home' to Greece five years ago and now made her living buying and selling houses for English clients in Thrace.

I was in the market for an old house, preferably in the mountains, by a lake or stream or by the sea. I wanted some land to grow vegetables with enough space to live, together with peace and quiet to write. Soula was, she said, the person who could make my dreams come true.

'Turn right at the end of the road and the house is 100 metres down the track.'

'But Soula, there are no mountains here and we're miles from the sea,' I complained.

'I know. Drive.'

There was no point in arguing, but I made a mental note to find another estate agent. Then we turned the corner and I was looking at my ideal home. Fig trees were everywhere, lazy cats stretched in the early evening sun, a stream bubbled by a garden bursting with fruit, vegetables and even vines. Whisps of woodsmoke curled from the chimney.

'Here you are close to the town and in the countryside. And there,' she pointed, 'are the mountains. Perfect.'

'But it's huge. I can't afford this.'

'Don't worry,' said Soula. 'You have enough money to buy the house and some extra land. Come and meet the owner. He's called Takis.'

2 Read the extract again and answer the questions.

- 1 In which two landscapes would the travel writer, James, prefer to buy a house?

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- 2 How does James deduce the estate agent's marital status?

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- 3 Why does James want to live somewhere quiet?

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- 4 What phrase does James use to describe the house when he sees it for the first time?

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- 5 According to the estate agent, why is the house 'perfect'?

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- 6 Why is James worried about the house?

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