

DailyStep English

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Level 5: Advanced Daily Audio Lessons

DailyStep-5_story-boat-002_GB-03

Eva: So, was your friend a qualified sailor?

John: Well, he assured me that he knew what he was doing and I didn't press him on it too much although I should have done because I know from experience that you have to take anything that Tarquin says with a pinch of salt. So, we set off from the quay and I must admit to a certain trepidation and a slight nagging doubt in the back of my mind about Tarquin's seamanship. But he deftly negotiated his way past the harbour enclosure and through the maze of buoys that led out to the open sea. He seemed quite at home behind the wheel with his captain's hat set on his head at a rakish angle. If he had had a big, bushy beard he would have even looked the part.

Eva: So, you were lulled into a false sense of security?

John: You could say that! Though outright conned would be more accurate! But the sun was out and the sea was calm as a mill pond. I stretched out on the deck and thought to myself "This is the life!", and then dozed off. And so did Tarquin.

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Situation: John explains how he was quite impressed with Tarquin's sailing skills as he manoeuvred his yacht out of the harbour.

Style: informal conversation, quite dramatic

Functions:

1. **Referring to a promise:** Well, **he assured me that** he knew what he was doing and I didn't press him on it too much... (*note: please copy the tone and emphasis carefully here.*)
2. **Expressing regret:** ... although **I should have done because** I know from experience that you have to take anything that Tarquin says with a pinch of salt. (*note: please copy the tone and emphasis carefully here.*)
3. **Emphasising a negative opinion:** and **I must admit to** a certain trepidation
4. **Hypothetical sentence:** **If he had had** a big bushy beard **he would have** even looked the part.
5. **Agreeing partially or doubtfully:** **You could say that!** (*note: please copy the tone and emphasis carefully here.*)
6. **Correcting someone in their choice of words:** **Though** outright conned **would be more accurate!** (*note: please copy the tone and emphasis carefully here.*)

Notes:

1. a qualified sailor = an experienced sailor who has passed sailing examinations
2. he assured me that = he promised me that
3. I didn't press him on it too much = I didn't ask him too much about it / I didn't push for too much information about it
4. to take anything that Tarquin says with a pinch of salt (*idiom: to take something someone says with a pinch of salt = to be doubtful about the veracity of someone's statement*) = to not always accept as the truth everything that Tarquin says
5. we set off (*phrasal verb*) = we left / we sailed away / we started our journey
6. the quay = the harbour side
7. I must admit to a certain trepidation = I must admit, I had a certain trepidation
8. trepidation = fear or worry that something might happen
9. a slight nagging doubt in the back of my mind about (*idiom*) = a persistent worry that it was difficult for me to stop thinking about
10. seamanship = ability and knowledge of sailing
11. he deftly negotiated his way past the harbour enclosure = he expertly and efficiently sailed past the harbour wall
12. the maze of buoys = the confusing pattern of buoys
13. a maze = labyrinth / paths or walkways laid out (*phrasal verb*) in a confusing pattern
14. buoys = plastic ball-shape floats that are tied to the seabed and used to guide boats and ships along the deep channels and prevent them from running aground
15. He seemed quite at home (*idiom*) = He seemed relaxed and capable, as if he knew what he was doing
16. the wheel = the ship's wheel, which controls the rudder
17. with his captain's hat set on his head at a rakish angle = wearing his captain's hat in a way that made him look interesting or enigmatic
18. rakish = displaying a dashing, cheeky or slightly disreputable quality or appearance (*You might describe Casanova or Don Juan as being rakish.*)
19. a big, bushy beard = a very full, hairy beard

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20. he would have even looked the part (*idiom*) = he would have even looked like a ship's captain
21. you were lulled into a false sense of security (*idiom: to lull somebody into a false sense of security = to falsely make someone feel relaxed. For example, a boxer might pretend that he is not a good fighter in order to lull his opponent into a false sense of security, therefore making his opponent vulnerable*) = you were deceived into feeling confident about his abilities
22. You could say that! = = Yes, that is one way of describing the situation (**note:** *the phrase 'you could say that' is usually followed by a more accurate choice of words.*)
23. Though outright conned would be more accurate = But completely deceived might be a better way to describe it
24. the sun was out (*phrasal verb*) = the sun was shining
25. the sea was (as) calm as a mill pond (*simile – sometimes we omit the first 'as'*) = the sea was very flat and calm, just like the water in a mill pond
26. I stretched out on (*phrasal verb*) the deck = I lay on the deck
27. the deck = the floor of a ship or boat
28. This is the life! = Life is very good! / This is how I want to live my life! (**note:** *we often use this phrase when we are in a lovely situation, feeling happy and relaxed.*)
29. then dozed off (*phrasal verb: to doze off = to fall asleep unexpectedly or suddenly. We often use the phrasal verb 'doze off' if you are sitting in a chair and you fall asleep, or if you fall asleep after a meal.*) = then fell asleep because I was feeling relaxed
30. And so did Tarquin (*using only the auxiliary*) = And Tarquin also dozed off
31. The sound that you can hear at the end is a **gasp**. When she hears that Tarquin also dozed off, Eva **gasps** in horror or shock at the thought of what might have happened next!

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