

A top-down view of a person's hands holding a dark grey spiral-bound notebook on a grassy surface. The person is wearing a magenta long-sleeved top and blue jeans. The notebook has two text overlays: a light green box at the top and a dark green box at the bottom. The background is a field of green grass.

Comma hunting

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Once upon a time there was a peaceful text that was about to face troubles.

Let me explain! On the first day of autumn the comma hunting season was decided!



Do you know what? The poor little commas were no sooner told about it that the first shootings were to be heard: bang, bang, bang...

Look over there! This one, hidden behind the world «tomorrow» was aimed: fortunately the hunter missed his target. Yet the impact was so close that its curve was blown up into the air and the comma gets upside-down, its tails looking up at the sky!



As a result «tomorrow» that was absent-minded as usual,

thought it was in the wrong direction and flipped over too.

Very soon, part of the text was wholly turned upside down, its head looking down at the bottom of the page.

tomorrow

Nevertheless, the hunters were not deterred at all and went on looking for commas! They were heavily strolling about the pages, searching behind every single «M»'s leg, searching over the top of all the «I»...

m, m i m

From time to time they were firing, splashing onomatopoeia all over the text:



– Woe are we! We are about to be pierced like ordinary strainers! How awful this text is going to look with pierced commas! one of them groaned.

– If there is still a little something of us left. I do think they want to get rid of all of us, that's all, you know! another one moaned.

– Anyway, without us the meaning of the text will be changed....

and what about the reader?



Have they even thought of him?
He will have to read the whole
text in one go, without being
allowed to catch his breath.

The readers... THEY were the
solution! They had to be
called, to be informed of what
was going on right here, within
this little insignificant text and to
be asked for help.

No sooner had the comma
whispered «Hey
psstttttttttttttt!» than the
answer was «BANG-BANG».

Gosh! They'd better keep quiet
if they didn't want to get their
curves pierced!

Then, some commas took
advantage of a breathing space to
wave their tails in order to attract
the reader's attention. But he
carried on watching the text just
like that. Damn... He hadn't even
noticed their game!

– la la lalala la, la la la...
Some words were moving about in
the text, a song on their lips.
– Well WE do not want to get
pierced! So we are singing to be
heard and to avoid being shot!
Among the singers there were a
few well-hidden commas.

”

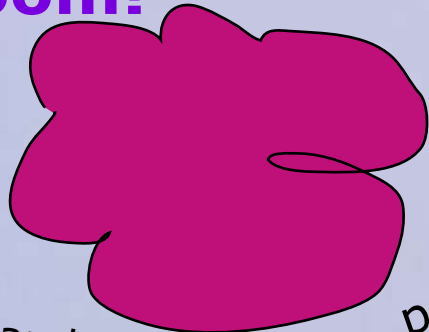
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”””

The story did not mean anything any longer:
-time once upon more than tomorrow was called,,,,,

boom!

prince



crash!



princess

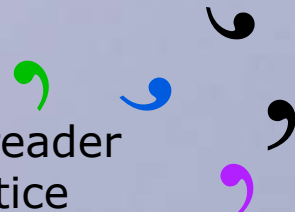
bang

and they'd got a lot of children

But the astrotrophe from «they'd got a lot of children» was unfortunately mistaken for a flying comma, and the poor apostrophe was shot like an ordinary shooting range balloon. As a result, the word «they» moved closer to the comforting «d».... and became « theyd »

In some parts of the text, piled up commas could be seen, shaking with fear and waving theirs tails as tadpoles would do in their ponds.

At last, a young reader called Tim did notice something. He started reading the story and could not understand it. Nothing unusual, so far...



Yet, he was attracted by the sound balloons which sprang up here and there in the text, among the words..



That was super! When he was playing cowboys and Indians, the same sounds could be heard! Great! At last he has found a friendly reading-text that fancied having fun with him! He came and took his sheriff popgun and he started shooting too.

All the commas were in a panic. You can imagine, can't you ?
– We are surrounded! The reader himself goes hunting! We are snipped from all sides!

But very soon, they realised that they didn't need to fear his shootings: they were nothing but harmless sounds! So incognito, they escaped to a new page where no hunters could be seen.

Then, some words of the text moved and joined them. After a while, the whole story was rewritten, exactly as it was at the beginning, on the new page.

- Phew, no need to worry any longer!

The commas could have a break and the readers could breathe again. From that very moment, they had time to catch their breath and they felt much better.

At the top of the page it was written:

Comma hunters are
not allowed on this
page!

Here,,,,, we do
breathe,,,,, we do take
time to enjoy words.
Have a nice time
reading.

Dear reader,,,,,,,,,,,,, Have
a nice time,,,,,, reading!

”

”