

## CHAPTER 1 VOCABULARY GLOSSARY

*Britt-Marie Was Here* by Fredrik Backman

**absorb** (verb) /əb'zɔ:rb/ ub-ZORB: "The baking soda absorbs dirt and humidity, leaving the mattress much fresher" (p. 5).

Definition: If something absorbs a liquid, gas, or other substance, it soaks it up or takes it in.

**acquaintance** (noun) /ə'kweɪntəns/ uh-KWAYN-tunss: "Because of thoughtfulness there are coasters and proper coffee cups and beds that are made so tightly in the mornings that Kent jokes with his acquaintances about how, if you stumble on the threshold on your way into the bedroom, there's 'a smaller risk of breaking your leg if you land on the floor than the bedspread'" (p. 4).

Definition: An acquaintance is someone who you have met and know slightly, but not well.

**administration** (noun) /əd,mɪnɪ'streɪʃən/ ad-min-ih-STRAY-shun: "A preposterous amount of administration for society to let one take part" (p. 3).

Definition: Administration is the work that involves managing and organizing the affairs of a company, institution, or organization.

**admittedly** (adverb) /əd'mɪtɪdli/ ad-MIT-id-lee: "Admittedly there's no cutlery in sight, but it's on her mind because it sums up everything that's gone wrong recently" (p. 1).

Definition: You use admittedly when you are saying something that weakens the importance or force of your statement.

**artifact** (noun) /'ɑ:rtɪfækt/ AR-tih-fakt: "'A pencil sharpener?' asks the girl, as if she had been asked for a thousand-year-old magical artifact" (p. 7).

Definition: An artifact is an object that was made a long time ago and is of historical interest.

**astonishingly** (adverb) /ə'stɒnɪʃɪŋli/ uh-STON-ish-ing-lee: "It's an astonishingly, astonishingly presentable balcony" (p. 8).

Definition: If you describe something as astonishingly good or bad, you mean that it is very good or bad indeed.

**aware** (adjective) /ə'wɛər/ uh-WAIR: "Because Kent is always urging Britt-Marie to 'be more socially aware' she just smiles as diplomatically as she can" (p. 2).

Definition: If you are aware of something, you know about it.

**baking soda** (noun) /'beɪkɪŋ 'səʊdə/ BAY-king SOH-duh: "Whenever Britt-Marie and Kent go away, Britt-Marie sprinkles the mattress with baking soda for twenty minutes before she makes the bed" (p. 5).

Definition: Baking soda is a white powder that is used in baking to make cakes rise, and also as a cleaning substance.

**burst out** (phrasal verb) /bɜːrst aʊt/ burst owt: "Surely we can't write lists in ink?' she bursts out" (p. 7).

Definition: If you burst out saying something, you suddenly say it.

**carton** (noun) /'kɑːrtən/ KAR-tun: "The girl offers her two tiny disposable cartons of the sort of milk that doesn't have to be kept in the fridge" (p. 2).

Definition: A carton is a plastic or cardboard container in which food or drink is sold.

**chill** (noun) /tʃɪl/ chil: "It's January outside, a winter chill in the air but no snow on the ground" (p. 8).

Definition: A chill is a feeling of coldness.

**civilized** (adjective) /'sɪvəlaɪzd/ SIV-uh-lyzd: "But surely no civilized person would even think of arranging a cutlery drawer in a different way from how cutlery drawers are supposed to be arranged?" (p. 1).

Definition: If you describe a society as civilized, you mean that it is advanced and has sensible laws and customs.

**clasp** (verb) /klæsp/ klasp: "Britt-Marie clasps her hands together over her stomach and says: 'I absolutely must be allowed to make the bed before we leave, Kent'" (p. 5).

Definition: If you clasp something or someone, you hold them tightly in your hands or arms.

**coaster** (noun) /'kəʊstər/ KOH-stur: "'You forgot to give me a coaster,' says Britt-Marie, smiling, with all the social awareness she can muster" (p. 2).

Definition: A coaster is a small mat that you put underneath a glass or cup to protect the surface of a table.

**competence** (noun) /'kɒmpɪtəns/ KOM-pih-tunss: "He's an entrepreneur, you must understand. So he understands these kind of things, which are possibly a little outside your field of competence" (p. 6).

Definition: Competence is the ability to do something well or effectively.

**conclude** (verb) /kən'kluːd/ kun-KLOOD: "Surely they'd conclude that Kent and Britt-Marie lived in their own dirt?" (p. 5).

Definition: If you conclude that something is true, you decide that it is true using the facts you know as a basis.

**considerate** (adjective) /kən'sɪdərət/ kun-SID-ur-ut: "Britt-Marie is not actually passive-aggressive. She's considerate" (p. 3).

Definition: Someone who is considerate pays attention to the needs, wishes, or feelings of other people.

**counter** (verb) /'kaʊntər/ KOWN-tur: "'I suppose I'm supposed to just sit and wait,' counters Britt-Marie with a diplomatic smile, 'as if I didn't have anything better to do?'" (p. 6).

Definition: If you counter something that someone has said, you say something that expresses a different or opposite opinion.

**courageous** (adjective) /kə'reɪdʒəs/ kuh-RAY-jus: "'It's very courageous of you to wear your hair so short when you have such a large forehead'" (p. 6).

Definition: Someone who is courageous shows courage.

**crossword** (noun) /'krɔːswɜːrd/ KROSS-wurd: "'For your information, I solve an enormous number of crosswords. Which is not the sort of thing one can do without an education'" (p. 4).

Definition: A crossword or a crossword puzzle is a word game in which you work out the answers to clues and write them in the white squares of a pattern of black and white squares.

**cutlery** (noun) /'kʌtləri/ KUT-luh-ree: "'But surely no civilized person would even think of arranging a cutlery drawer in a different way from how cutlery drawers are supposed to be arranged?'" (p. 1).

Definition: Cutlery consists of the knives, forks, and spoons that you use when eating.

**database** (noun) /'deɪtəbeɪs/ DAY-tuh-bayss: "'You are registered in our database. We'll be in touch!'" (p. 6).

Definition: A database is a collection of data that is stored in a computer and that can easily be used and added to.

**deprive** (verb) /dɪ'praɪv/ dih-PRYV: "'Not even baking soda has any effect on death'" (p. 5).

Definition: If you deprive someone of something that they want or need, you take it away from them, or you prevent them from having it.

**diplomatically** (adverb) /ˌdɪplə'mætɪkli/ dip-luh-MAT-ik-lee: "'Because Kent is always urging Britt-Marie to 'be more socially aware' she just smiles as diplomatically as she can'" (p. 2).

Definition: If you do or say something diplomatically, you do or say it in a way that is sensitive to people's feelings and avoids offending them.

**disappointment** (noun) /ˌdɪsə'pɔɪntmənt/ dis-uh-POYNT-munt: "'The girl smiles to hide her disappointment, as people do when they don't have the ability to distinguish between 'a place to live' and 'a home'" (p. 4).

Definition: Disappointment is the state of feeling disappointed.

**dismissively** (adverb) /dɪs'mɪsɪvli/ dis-MIS-iv-lee: "'Yes,' says Britt-Marie dismissively, as if this was highly irrelevant" (p. 6).

Definition: If you do or say something dismissively, you do or say it in a way that shows you think something is not important or not worth considering.

**disposable** (adjective) /dɪ'spəʊzəbl/ dis-POH-zuh-bul: "The girl offers her two tiny disposable cartons of the sort of milk that doesn't have to be kept in the fridge" (p. 2).

Definition: A disposable product is designed to be thrown away after it has been used.

**distinguish** (verb) /dɪ'stɪŋɡwɪʃ/ dih-STING-wish: "The girl smiles to hide her disappointment, as people do when they don't have the ability to distinguish between 'a place to live' and 'a home'" (p. 4).

Definition: If you can distinguish one thing from another or distinguish between two things, you can see or understand how they are different.

**educational background** (noun phrase) /ˌɛdʒʊ'keɪʃənəl 'bækgraʊnd/ ej-oo-KAY-shun-ul BAK-grownd: "'What's your educational background, Britt-Marie?'" (p. 4).

Definition: Your educational background is the qualifications and training you have received.

**emphasize** (verb) /'ɛmfəsaɪz/ EM-fuh-syz: "Immediately after saying this, Britt-Marie always firmly closes her mouth, to emphasize this is the last thing she intends to say on the subject" (p. 8).

Definition: To emphasize something means to indicate that it is particularly important or true, or to draw special attention to it.

**entrepreneur** (noun) /ˌɒ:ntreɪprə'nɜ:ɪ/ on-truh-pruh-NUR: "Kent is Britt-Marie's husband. He's an entrepreneur" (p. 2).

Definition: An entrepreneur is a person who starts businesses or organizes business deals, often taking risks in order to make a profit.

**evidently** (adverb) /'eɪvɪdəntli/ EV-ih-dunt-lee: "The girl points at a piece of paper and smiles, evidently in a hurry" (p. 1).

Definition: You use evidently to say that something is obviously true.

**exaggerate** (verb) /ɪg'zædʒəreɪt/ ig-ZAJ-uh-rayt: "Kent says she exaggerates, but people do actually drop dead all the time when they're away" (p. 5).

Definition: If you exaggerate, you indicate that something is, for example, worse or more important than it really is.

**field of competence** (noun phrase) /fi:ld əv 'kɒmpɪtəns/ feeld əv KOM-pih-tunss: "So he understands these kind of things, which are possibly a little outside your field of competence" (p. 6).

Definition: Your field of competence is the area of knowledge or activity in which you have skill or expertise.

**finality** (noun) /faɪ'nælɪti/ fy-NAL-ih-tee: "'That's all I've got.' The girl says this with some finality" (p. 7).

Definition: If you say something with finality, you say it in a way that shows that you have made a decision and will not change your mind.

**financial crisis** (noun phrase) /faɪ'nænʃəl 'kraɪsɪs/ fy-NAN-shul KRY-sis: "'Well, Britt-Marie, quite honestly, because of the financial crisis and all that, I mean, there's a scarcity of jobs for people in your . . . situation'" (p. 6).

Definition: A financial crisis is a situation in which a person, business, or country does not have enough money.

**fingertip** (noun) /'fɪŋgətɪp/ FING-gur-tip: "'What? Oh. Thanks,' she replies, her fingertips moving self-consciously towards her scalp" (p. 6).

Definition: Your fingertips are the ends of your fingers.

**formal education** (noun phrase) /'fɔːrməl ˌɛdʒʊ'keɪʃən/ FOR-mul ej-oo-KAY-shun: "'But no formal education?" (p. 4).

Definition: Formal education is the education you receive at school, college, or university.

**fresher** (adjective) /'frɛʃər/ FRESH-ur: "The baking soda absorbs dirt and humidity, leaving the mattress much fresher" (p. 5).

Definition: Something that is fresher is cleaner and more pleasant than before.

**fridge** (noun) /'frɪdʒ/ frij: "But the only fridge here is full of very small bottles of alcohol" (p. 8).

Definition: A fridge is the same as a refrigerator.

**glance** (verb) /glæns/ glanss: "The girl glances at the surface of the desk, which looks as if toddlers have been trying to eat potatoes off it" (p. 3).

Definition: If you glance at something or someone, you look at them very quickly and then look away again immediately.

**goodwill** (noun) /'ɡʊd'wɪl/ good-WIL: "She quickly decides to give the girl a compliment, just to show her goodwill" (p. 6).

Definition: Goodwill is a friendly or helpful attitude towards other people, countries, or organizations.

**grasp** (verb) /græsp/ grasp: "The girl hesitates. Britt-Marie grasps the pen as if it's sticky" (p. 8).

Definition: If you grasp something, you take it in your hand and hold it very firmly.

**highly** (adverb) /'haɪli/ HY-lee: "'Yes,' says Britt-Marie dismissively, as if this was highly irrelevant" (p. 6).

Definition: Highly is used before some adjectives to mean 'very'.

**hopeful** (adjective) /'hoʊpfəl/ HOHP-ful: "The girl looks hopeful. 'And when was that?'" (p. 4).

Definition: If you are hopeful, you are fairly confident that something that you want to happen will happen.

**hostel** (noun) /'hɒstəl/ HOS-tul: "The building has an address, but it's certainly neither a place to live nor a home. On the floor are two rectangular plastic boxes for balcony flowers, but the hostel room doesn't have a balcony" (p. 9).

Definition: A hostel is a large house where people can stay cheaply for a short period of time.

**humidity** (noun) /'hjuːmɪdɪti/ hyoo-MID-ih-tee: "The baking soda absorbs dirt and humidity, leaving the mattress much fresher" (p. 5).

Definition: Humidity is the amount of water in the air.

**in sight** (phrase) /ɪn saɪt/ in syt: "Admittedly there's no cutlery in sight, but it's on her mind" (p. 1).

Definition: If something is in sight, you can see it.

**irrelevant** (adjective) /ɪrɪləvənt/ ih-REL-uh-vunt: "'Yes,' says Britt-Marie dismissively, as if this was highly irrelevant" (p. 6).

Definition: If you describe something as irrelevant, you mean that it is not important or not connected with what you are discussing or doing.

**jobseeker** (noun) /'dʒɒbsiːkər/ JOB-see-kur: "'Well, my colleague will be in touch with you about a jobseekers' training course, an—'" (p. 7).

Definition: A jobseeker is an unemployed person who is actively looking for work.

**judge** (verb) /dʒʌdʒ/ juj: "Britt-Marie is certainly not the kind of person who judges other people" (p. 1).

Definition: If you judge someone or something, you form an opinion about them based on the evidence or information that you have.

**landlord** (noun) /'lændlɔːrd/ LAND-lord: "Just imagine if we die! What would the landlord think if they had to break down the door only to find an unclean mattress?" (p. 5).

Definition: Someone's landlord is the person from whom they rent a flat or house.

**latest** (adjective) /'leɪtɪst/ LAY-tist: "'My latest employment was as a waitress'" (p. 4).

Definition: You use latest to describe something that is very recent.

**life experience** (noun phrase) /laɪf ɪk'spiəriəns/ lyf ik-SPEER-ee-unss: "'Okay . . . what sort of life experience do you have?'" (p. 4).

Definition: Life experience is knowledge that you gain from living and from experiencing different situations in your life.

**loathe** (verb) /loʊð/ lohth: "Britt-Marie loathes it when he talks that way" (p. 4).

Definition: If you loathe something or someone, you dislike them very much.

**magical** (adjective) /ˈmædʒɪkəl/ MAJ-ih-kul: "'A pencil sharpener?' asks the girl, as if she had been asked for a thousand-year-old magical artifact" (p. 7).

Definition: Something that is magical seems to use magic or to be able to produce magic.

**mattress** (noun) /ˈmætrɪs/ MAT-riss: "Whenever Britt-Marie and Kent go away, Britt-Marie sprinkles the mattress with baking soda for twenty minutes before she makes the bed" (p. 5).

Definition: A mattress is the large, flat object which is put on a bed to make it comfortable to sleep on.

**mug** (noun) /mʌg/ mug: "'Milk and sugar?' the girl asks, pouring some coffee into a plastic mug" (p. 2).

Definition: A mug is a large deep cup with straight sides and a handle, used for hot drinks.

**muster** (verb) /ˈmʌstər/ MUS-tur: "'You forgot to give me a coaster,' says Britt-Marie, smiling, with all the social awareness she can muster" (p. 2).

Definition: If you muster something such as support, strength, or energy, you gather as much of it as you can in order to do something.

**offended** (adjective) /əˈfendɪd/ uh-FEN-did: "Why does the girl look offended? Britt-Marie wonders" (p. 6).

Definition: If you are offended, you feel upset and hurt because of something that someone has said or done.

**on one's mind** (phrase) /ɒn wʌnz maɪnd/ on wunz mynd: "Admittedly there's no cutlery in sight, but it's on her mind because it sums up everything that's gone wrong recently" (p. 1).

Definition: If something is on your mind, you are worried or concerned about it and think about it a lot.

**outstanding** (adjective) /aʊtˈstændɪŋ/ owt-STAN-ding: "'My latest employment was as a waitress. I had outstanding references'" (p. 4).

Definition: If you describe someone or something as outstanding, you think that they are very remarkable and impressive.

**passive-aggressive** (adjective) /ˌpæsɪv əˈɡresɪv/ pas-iv uh-GRES-iv: "'I don't suppose you've considered that it's because you don't use coasters,' she mutters, not at all in a 'passive-aggressive' way, which is how Kent's children once described her when they thought she wasn't listening" (p. 3).

Definition: If you describe someone's behavior as passive-aggressive, you mean that they express their negative feelings or resentment in an indirect way.

**peer** (verb) /pɪər/ peer: "Britt-Marie peers at the paper, which requires her to give assurances about where she lives and who she is" (p. 3).

Definition: If you peer at something, you look at it very hard, usually because it is difficult to see clearly.

**pencil sharpener** (noun phrase) /'pɛnsl 'ʃɑːrpənər/ PEN-sul SHARP-uh-nur: "'Might I trouble you for a pencil sharpener?' she asks" (p. 7).

Definition: A pencil sharpener is a small device for sharpening pencils.

**perform** (verb) /pə'fɔːrm/ pur-FORM: "'And what sorts of tasks did you perform in the company?'" (p. 4).

Definition: When you perform a task or action, especially a complicated one, you do it.

**pitchfork** (noun) /'pɪtʃfɔːrk/ PICH-fork: "The girl glances at the surface of the desk, which looks as if toddlers have been trying to eat potatoes off it. With pitchforks. In the dark" (p. 3).

Definition: A pitchfork is a farm tool with a long handle and two or three long curved metal points, which is used for moving hay.

**pleasantly** (adverb) /'plɛzəntli/ PLEZ-unt-lee: "'Okay,' says the girl pleasantly, turning back to the form, 'just write your address here'" (p. 2).

Definition: If you do or say something pleasantly, you do or say it in a friendly way.

**portion** (noun) /'pɔːrʃən/ POR-shun: "She tries to put his portion in the fridge" (p. 8).

Definition: A portion of something is a part of it.

**pour** (verb) /pɔːr/ por: "'Milk and sugar?' the girl asks, pouring some coffee into a plastic mug" (p. 2).

Definition: If you pour a liquid or other substance, you make it flow steadily out of a container by holding the container at an angle.

**presentable** (adjective) /prɪ'zɛntəbl/ prih-ZEN-tuh-bul: "Normal life is presentable" (p. 1).

Definition: If you say that someone or something is presentable, you mean that they look fairly tidy or attractive.

**preposterous** (adjective) /prɪ'pɒstərəs/ prih-POS-tur-us: "A preposterous amount of administration for society to let one take part" (p. 3).

Definition: If you describe something as preposterous, you mean that it is extremely unreasonable and foolish.

**protrude** (verb) /prə'truːd/ pruh-TROOD: "Then she holds out a plastic mug with plastic teaspoons protruding from it" (p. 2).

Definition: If something protrudes from somewhere, it sticks out.

**rectangular** (adjective) /rɛk'tæŋgjʊlər/ rek-TANG-gyuh-lur: "On the floor are two rectangular plastic boxes for balcony flowers" (p. 9).

Definition: Something that is rectangular is shaped like a rectangle.

**reference** (noun) /'rɛfərəns/ REF-ur-unss: "'My latest employment was as a waitress. I had outstanding references'" (p. 4).

Definition: A reference is a letter that is written by someone who knows you and which describes your character and abilities.

**registered** (adjective) /'rɛdʒɪstərd/ REJ-ih-sturd: "Britt-Marie has to be registered. As if she were a criminal" (p. 2).

Definition: If you are registered, your name has been officially recorded on a list or in a system.

**reluctantly** (adverb) /rɪ'lʌktəntli/ rih-LUK-tunt-lee: "In the end she reluctantly fills in her name, social security number, and her cell phone number" (p. 3).

Definition: If you do something reluctantly, you do it unwillingly and with hesitation.

**roadkill** (noun) /'rəʊdkɪl/ ROHD-kil: "Britt-Marie could not have looked more startled if she'd been offered roadkill" (p. 2).

Definition: Roadkill refers to animals that have been killed by cars on the road.

**robotically** (adverb) /rəʊ'bɒtɪkli/ roh-BOT-ik-lee: "'It was very nice to meet you,' says the girl robotically" (p. 8).

Definition: If you do something robotically, you do it in a way that seems mechanical and without feeling.

**scalp** (noun) /skælp/ skalp: "'What? Oh. Thanks,' she replies, her fingertips moving self-consciously towards her scalp" (p. 6).

Definition: Your scalp is the skin under the hair on your head.

**scarcity** (noun) /'skærʃɪti/ SKAIR-sih-tee: "'Well, Britt-Marie, quite honestly, because of the financial crisis and all that, I mean, there's a scarcity of jobs for people in your . . . situation'" (p. 6).

Definition: If there is a scarcity of something, there is not enough of it for the people who need it or want it.

**scratch** (verb) /skrætʃ/ skrach: "The girl glances at the surface of the desk, which looks as if toddlers have been trying to eat potatoes off it. With pitchforks. In the dark. 'It really doesn't matter; it's so old and scratched up already!' she says with a smile" (p. 3).

Definition: If a surface is scratched, it has thin lines or marks on it where something rough or sharp has been dragged across it.

**scream** (verb) /skri:m/ skreem: "Britt-Marie is screaming inside" (p. 3).

Definition: When you scream, you make a very loud, high-pitched cry, for example because you are in pain or are very frightened.

**scrupulously** (adverb) /'skru:pjʊləsli/ SKROO-pyuh-lus-lee: "The girl is obviously under the impression that this is the last time they'll meet, because she's unaware of how scrupulously Britt-Marie sticks to her lists" (p. 8).

Definition: Someone who is scrupulous takes great care to do what is fair, honest, or morally right.

**self-consciously** (adverb) /,sɛlfkɒnʃəsli/ self-KON-shus-lee: "'What? Oh. Thanks,' she replies, her fingertips moving self-consciously towards her scalp" (p. 6).

Definition: If you do something self-consciously, you do it in a way that shows you are nervous or embarrassed because you know that people are watching you.

**social security number** (noun phrase) /'soʊʃəl sɪ'kjʊrɪti 'nʌmbər/ SOH-shul sih-KYOOR-ih-tee NUM-bur: "'Just fill in your name, social security number, and address here, please'" (p. 1).

Definition: In the United States, your social security number is a number that the government assigns to you for identification and tax purposes.

**spin** (verb) /spɪn/ spin: "A few days ago she was sitting on her own bed, spinning her wedding ring, after cleaning the mattress extra carefully with baking soda" (p. 9).

Definition: If you spin something, you turn it round and round quickly.

**sprinkle** (verb) /'sprɪŋkl/ SPRING-kul: "Whenever Britt-Marie and Kent go away, Britt-Marie sprinkles the mattress with baking soda for twenty minutes before she makes the bed" (p. 5).

Definition: If you sprinkle a thing with something, you scatter that thing over it.

**staggeringly** (adverb) /'stægəɪŋli/ STAG-ur-ing-lee: "The girl who works here has staggeringly short hair" (p. 1).

Definition: You use staggeringly to emphasize that something is very surprising or shocking.

**startled** (adjective) /'stɑ:rtld/ START-uld: "Britt-Marie could not have looked more startled if she'd been offered roadkill" (p. 2).

Definition: If you are startled, you are slightly shocked or surprised by something.

**sticky** (adjective) /'stɪki/ STIK-ee: "Britt-Marie grasps the pen as if it's sticky" (p. 8).

Definition: A sticky substance is soft, or thick and liquid, and can stick to other things.

**strained** (adjective) /streɪnd/ straynd: "The unemployment office girl looks a little strained" (p. 3).

Definition: If someone's appearance or manner is strained, they look worried and nervous.

**stumble** (verb) /'stʌmbəl/ STUM-bul: "Because of thoughtfulness there are coasters and proper coffee cups and beds that are made so tightly in the mornings that Kent jokes with his acquaintances about how, if you stumble on the threshold on your way into the bedroom, there's 'a smaller risk of breaking your leg if you land on the floor than the bedspread'" (p. 4).

Definition: If you stumble, you put your foot down awkwardly while you are walking or running and nearly fall over.

**sum up** (phrasal verb) /sʌm ʌp/ sum up: "Admittedly there's no cutlery in sight, but it's on her mind because it sums up everything that's gone wrong recently" (p. 1).

Definition: If something sums up a situation or person, it represents or describes them clearly.

**swallow** (verb) /'swɒləʊ/ SWOL-oh: "The girl swallows" (p. 7).

Definition: If you swallow, you make a movement in your throat as if you are swallowing something, often because you are nervous or frightened.

**teaspoon** (noun) /'tiːspuːn/ TEE-spoon: "Then she holds out a plastic mug with plastic teaspoons protruding from it" (p. 2).

Definition: A teaspoon is a small spoon that you use to stir drinks such as tea and coffee.

**tentatively** (adverb) /'tɛntətɪvli/ TEN-tuh-tiv-lee: "The girl nods tentatively" (p. 5).

Definition: If you do something tentatively, you do it uncertainly or hesitantly.

**thoughtfulness** (noun) /'θɔːtʃfʊlnəs/ THAWT-ful-nuss: "It's actually thoughtfulness that makes the difference. Because of thoughtfulness there are coasters and proper coffee cups" (p. 4).

Definition: Thoughtfulness is when you think and care about other people's needs and feelings.

**threshold** (noun) /'θrɛʃhəʊld/ THRESH-hohld: "Surely civilized people lift their feet when they walk across bedroom thresholds?" (p. 4).

Definition: The threshold of a building or room is the floor in the doorway, or the doorway itself.

**toddler** (noun) /'tɒdlər/ TOD-lur: "The girl glances at the surface of the desk, which looks as if toddlers have been trying to eat potatoes off it" (p. 3).

Definition: A toddler is a young child who has only just learned to walk.

**turn up** (phrasal verb) /tɜːrn ʌp/ turn up: "'Absolutely, but it's difficult to say when something will turn up . . .'" (p. 7).

Definition: If you say that something has turned up, you mean that it has appeared or become available.

**twins** (noun) /twɪnz/ twinz: "'The children are twins and we have a balcony'" (p. 5).

Definition: If two people are twins, they have the same mother and were born on the same day.

**unclean** (adjective) /ʌn'kliːn/ un-KLEEN: "What would the landlord think if they had to break down the door only to find an unclean mattress?" (p. 5).

Definition: Something that is unclean is dirty.

**unemployment office** (noun phrase) /ˌʌnɪm'plɔɪmənt 'ɒfɪs/ un-im-PLOY-munt OFF-iss: "She's sitting at a desk in the unemployment office" (p. 1).

Definition: An unemployment office is a government office where people who are unemployed can get advice about finding work and can apply for financial help.

**urge** (verb) /ɜːrʒ/ urj: "Because Kent is always urging Britt-Marie to 'be more socially aware'" (p. 2).

Definition: If you urge someone to do something, you try hard to persuade them to do it.

**vex** (verb) /vɛks/ veks: "She seems uncomfortable, which vexes Britt-Marie" (p. 6).

Definition: If someone or something vexes you, they make you feel annoyed or worried.

**waitress** (noun) /'weɪtrəs/ WAY-truss: "'My latest employment was as a waitress'" (p. 4).

Definition: A waitress is a woman who works in a restaurant, serving people with food and drink.

**wedding ring** (noun phrase) /'wɛdɪŋ rɪŋ/ WED-ing ring: "A few days ago she was sitting on her own bed, spinning her wedding ring" (p. 9).

Definition: A wedding ring is a ring that you wear to show that you are married.