

CHAPTER 7 VOCABULARY GLOSSARY

Britt-Marie Was Here by Fredrik Backman

alcoholic (noun) /ˌælkəˈhɒlɪk/ al-kuh-HOL-ik: "'No,' answers Britt-Marie, not because she dislikes wine, but because if you say you like wine, people may come to the conclusion that you're an alcoholic" (p. 51).

Definition: An alcoholic is someone who cannot stop drinking large amounts of alcohol, even when this is making them ill.

assemble (verb) /əˈsɛmbl/ uh-SEM-bul: "And Britt-Marie is going to assemble it herself" (p. 54).

Definition: If you assemble something, you fit the different parts of it together.

associate (noun) /əˈsɔʃiət/ uh-SOH-shee-ut: "She made no friends of her own, just the odd acquaintance, usually the wife of one of Kent's business associates" (p. 46).

Definition: Your associates are the people you are closely connected with, especially at work.

balcony plant (noun) /ˈbælkəni plænt/ BAL-kuh-nee plant: "Love has a great deal in common with balcony plants in that way. Sometimes not even baking soda makes a difference" (p. 46).

Definition: A balcony plant is a plant that is grown in a container on a balcony. [You will not commonly hear these words in Texas, where we don't have many balconies.]

barbarian (noun) /bɑːrˈbɛəriən/ bar-BAIR-ee-un: "'Is it really necessary to swear all the time, as if we were a horde of barbarians?'" (p. 52).

Definition: If you describe someone as a barbarian, you disapprove of them because they behave in a way that is cruel or uncivilized.

batch (noun) /bætʃ/ batch: "She has just sprinkled another batch of baking soda over the sofas when there's a knock at the door" (p. 49).

Definition: A batch of things or people is a group of things or people of the same kind.

block (noun) /blɒk/ blok: "From time to time there were other children living on their block" (p. 47).

Definition: A block of apartments or offices is a large building containing them.

bloom (verb) /blu:m/ bloom: "It's difficult to know when love blooms; suddenly one day you wake up and it's in full flower" (p. 46).

Definition: When a plant or tree blooms, it produces flowers.

bounce (verb) /baʊns/ bownss: "Kent laughed in the way that he did after drinking vodka and orange in front of a soccer match, his stomach bouncing up and down and the laughter gushing forth in little snorting bursts through his nostrils" (p. 48).

Definition: When something bounces, it moves up and down repeatedly.

burst (verb) /bɜːrst/ burst: "It may be that a heart only finally breaks after leaving a hospital room in which a shirt smells of pizza and perfume, but it will break more readily if it has burst a few times before" (p. 48).

Definition: If something bursts, it suddenly breaks open or apart, often because it is full or under pressure.

carefree (adjective) /ˈkærfriː/ KAIR-free: "For a fleeting, carefree moment the thought occurs to her that she might try to mend it" (p. 49).

Definition: A carefree person or period of time doesn't have or involve any problems, worries, or responsibilities.

check-in time (noun) /ˈtʃɛkɪn taɪm/ CHEK-in tym: "Once, Kent made a mistake about the check-in time for the flight when they were going home after a hotel visit" (p. 46).

Definition: The check-in time is the time by which you must report your arrival at an airport or hotel.

clasp (verb) /klæsp/ klastp: "Britt-Marie, filled with discomfort, clasps her hands together over her stomach and looks as if she'd like to brush some invisible specks of dust from the opening of a black hole, and then sink into it herself" (p. 52).

Definition: If you clasp something or someone, you hold them tightly in your hands or arms. [Remember how this word was used in *Number the Stars*? Clasp (noun)—There is a clasp on the girl's necklace that connects one end to the other.]

coffee filter (noun) /ˈkɒfi ˈfɪltər/ KOF-ee FIL-tur: "'The wine is good but a bit, what's-it-called? Muddy! You have to strain it a few times with a coffee filter, huh, everything okay then!'" (p. 51).

Definition: A coffee filter is a piece of paper or cloth that you put in a coffee machine to separate the liquid from the grounds.

collapse (verb) /kəˈlæps/ kuh-LAPS: "Somebody's face collapses with undisguised surprise" (p. 52).

Definition: If a person collapses, they suddenly fall down because they are very ill or weak.

complicated (adjective) /ˈkɒmplɪkətɪd/ KOM-plih-kay-tid: "It takes Britt-Marie a fair amount of time to open it, because running into the bathroom and doing her hair in front of the mirror without functioning lights is a somewhat complicated process" (p. 49).

Definition: If something is complicated, it has so many parts or aspects that it is difficult to understand or deal with.

condole (verb) /kənˈdoʊl/ kun-DOHL: "'Ah . . . what the hell . . . I . . . what's-it-called? Condole,' says Somebody sadly" (p. 51).

Definition: If you condole with someone, you express sympathy for them because of something sad that has happened to them. [More commonly, we use the noun form of the word: condolence]

congratulations (noun) /kən.grætʃʊ'leɪʃənz/ kun-grach-uh-LAY-shunz: "I wanted to give to you, you know, as your congratulations-for-new-job present" (p. 51).

Definition: Congratulations are words used to congratulate someone.

core activity (noun) /kɔːr æk'tɪvɪti/ kor ak-TIV-ih-tee: "Hotel? Why would I have one of those? No, no, no, Britt-Marie. I keep to my, what's-it-called? Core activity!" (p. 52).

Definition: A core activity is the main or most important activity that a business does.

cough (verb) /kɒf/ kof: "Then she starts laughing. Loudly. Then coughing. Then laughing even louder" (p. 53).

Definition: When you cough, you force air out of your throat with a sudden, harsh noise.

cushion (noun) /'kʊʃən/ KOOSH-un: "Britt-Marie rubs the nozzle as hard as she can over the sofa cushions" (p. 54).

Definition: A cushion is a fabric case filled with soft material which you put on a seat to make it more comfortable.

decent (adjective) /'diːsənt/ DEE-sunt: "Children who, although they weren't her own, came for Christmas in spite of everything. Or at least tried to pretend they had a decent reason not to" (p. 47).

Definition: Decent means acceptable or good enough.

delivery time (noun) /dɪ'lɪvəri taɪm/ dih-LIV-ur-ee tym: "Okay, okay, okay, you know. Calm, calm, calm. Fix white door. No problem. Don't get lemon in arse now. But white door will have, what's-it-called? Delivery time!" (p. 50).

Definition: Delivery time is the time it takes for something that you have ordered to arrive.

demonstrative (adjective) /dɪ'mɒnstrətɪv/ dih-MON-struh-tiv: "She goes to the vacuum cleaner in a very demonstrative way—to attack the sofa covers, which are covered in baking soda" (p. 53).

Definition: If you describe behavior as demonstrative, you mean that it is intended to show something very clearly and obviously.

dent (noun) /dɛnt/ dent: "Somebody looks at her. Looks at the coffee machine. Looks at the mop. Then she starts laughing. Loudly. Then coughing. Then laughing even louder. Britt-Marie is deeply offended" (p. 53).

Definition: A dent is a hollow in the surface of something which has been caused by hitting or pressing it.

discomfort (noun) /dɪs'kʌmfɔːrt/ dis-KUM-furt: "Britt-Marie, filled with discomfort, clasps her hands together over her stomach" (p. 52).

Definition: Discomfort is a feeling of slight pain or of being physically uncomfortable.

divide up (phrasal verb) /dɪ'vaɪd ʌp/ dih-VYD up: "Kent was funny and Britt-Marie went into the kitchen and took care of the washing-up. That was how they divided up their responsibilities" (p. 53).

Definition: If you divide something up, you separate it into smaller parts.

double (adjective) /'dʌbl/ DUB-ul: "Sleeping on one of the sofas in the corner of the recreation center is not even worth thinking about, because they were so filthy that Britt-Marie had to wear double latex gloves when she covered them with baking soda" (p. 45).

Definition: You use double to indicate that something is twice the usual size or contains twice the usual quantity of something.

enclose (verb) /ɪn'kloʊz/ in-KLOHZ: "The recreation center encloses her in a guarded silence" (p. 48).

Definition: If something encloses you, it surrounds you.

excrement (noun) /'ɛkskrəmənt/ EK-skruh-munt: "Britt-Marie looks at the goo of melted snow and gravel left behind by the wheels with only marginally less horror than if it had been excrement" (p. 50).

Definition: Excrement is the solid waste matter that is passed out of a person's or animal's body through their bowels. [This is the more proper, technical term for "poop" or "crap."]

exultantly (adverb) /ɪg'zʌltəntli/ ig-ZUL-tunt-lee: "Somebody nods exultantly" (p. 50).

Definition: If you do something exultantly, you do it in a way that shows you are very happy and triumphant about something. [This is a term commonly used in literature but not in daily conversation.]

fall off the back of a truck (idiom) /fɔ:l ɒf ðə bæk əv ə trʌk/ fawl of thuh bak uv uh truk: "'Good wine, you know. Cheap. Fell off the back of a truck, huh!' says Somebody quite smugly" (p. 50).

Definition: If something has fallen off the back of a truck, it has been obtained illegally or dishonestly.

Fanta (noun) /'fæntə/ FAN-tuh: "'Shit, Britt-Marie! I show. You must filter. It's okay. Or, you know, mix with Fanta. I have cheap Fanta, if you want. From China!'" (p. 52).

Definition: Fanta is a brand of fruit-flavored soft drink.

filter (verb) /'fɪltər/ FIL-tur: "'Shit, Britt-Marie! I show. You must filter'" (p. 52).

Definition: To filter a substance means to pass it through a device which is designed to remove certain particles contained in it.

flaming (adjective) /'fleɪmɪŋ/ FLAY-ming: "Britt-Marie stands in silence, with flaming cheeks" (p. 52).

Definition: If your cheeks are flaming, they are very red because you are embarrassed. [In popular culture, the word "flaming" is often used on a derogatory way to refer to someone who identifies as LGBTQ.]

fleeting (adjective) /'fli:tɪŋ/ FLEE-ting: "For a fleeting, carefree moment the thought occurs to her that she might try to mend it" (p. 49).

Definition: Fleeting is used to describe something which lasts only for a very short time.

flip the channel (phrase) /flɪp ðə 'tʃænl/ flip thuh CHAN-ul: "Always so close to the remote control that she could feel the tips of his fingers against her knee when he fumbled with it to flip the channel to a soccer match" (p. 49).

Definition: If you flip the channel, you change the television channel quickly.

foyer (noun) /'fɔɪər/ FOY-ur: "She found she had neighbors who called her a 'nag-bag' when she worried about what the Germans would think if there was rubbish in the foyer or the stairwell smelled of pizza" (p. 46).

Definition: The foyer is the large area where people meet or wait just inside the main doors of a building such as a theater, hotel, or public building.

fumble (verb) /'fʌmbl/ FUM-bul: "Always so close to the remote control that she could feel the tips of his fingers against her knee when he fumbled with it to flip the channel to a soccer match" (p. 49).

Definition: If you fumble for something, you try to find it or reach it using your hands in a clumsy way.

functioning (adjective) /'fʌŋkʃənɪŋ/ FUNGK-shun-ing: "It takes Britt-Marie a fair amount of time to open it, because running into the bathroom and doing her hair in front of the mirror without functioning lights is a somewhat complicated process" (p. 49).

Definition: If something is functioning, it is working or operating.

goo (noun) /guː/ goo: "Britt-Marie looks at the goo of melted snow and gravel left behind by the wheels with only marginally less horror than if it had been excrement" (p. 50).

Definition: Goo is a thick unpleasant sticky substance.

grandmothers (noun) /'grænmʌðərz/ GRAN-muth-urz: "But the children always had mothers or grandmothers who came home at some point" (p. 47).

Definition: Your grandmother is the mother of your father or mother.

grin (verb) /grɪn/ grin: "Somebody grins as if this is a joke" (p. 51).

Definition: When you grin, you smile broadly.

guarded (adjective) /ˈgɑːrdɪd/ GAR-did: "The recreation center encloses her in a guarded silence" (p. 48).

Definition: If someone's behavior is guarded, they are careful not to show their feelings or give away information.

gush (verb) /gʌʃ/ gush: "Kent laughed in the way that he did after drinking vodka and orange in front of a soccer match, his stomach bouncing up and down and the laughter gushing forth in little snorting bursts through his nostrils" (p. 48).

Definition: When liquid gushes out of something, or when something gushes a liquid, the liquid flows out very quickly and in large quantities. [We often use this word figuratively to mean expressing strong positive feelings in an enthusiastic, overflowing way—especially praise, admiration, or affection. "She gushed about your presentation."]

hilarity (noun) /hɪˈlæɪti/ hih-LAIR-ih-tee: "There was not space in their relationship for more hilarity than his" (p. 53).

Definition: Hilarity is great amusement and laughter.

horde (noun) /hɔːrd/ hord: "'Is it really necessary to swear all the time, as if we were a horde of barbarians?'" (p. 52).

Definition: A horde is a large crowd of people. [More commonly you'll hear the homonyms "hoarder" (noun) and "hoard" (verb) used in American English. Noun: A hoarder is a person who keeps a very large number of things and finds it difficult to throw anything away, even when many of the things are not useful. Verb: If someone hoards things, they collect and keep large amounts of them, often more than they need, and they do not get rid of them.]

horrified (adjective) /ˈhɒrɪfaɪd/ HOR-ih-fyd: "'What's happened to my door?' Britt-Marie asks, horrified" (p. 50).

Definition: If you are horrified, you feel shocked and disgusted by something.

IKEA (noun) /aɪˈkiːə/ eye-KEE-uh: "Kent always said, 'women can't even put together IKEA furniture,' when they watched women in television programs about house building or renovation" (p. 49).

Definition: IKEA is a Swedish company that sells furniture which customers put together themselves.

insecure (adjective) /ˌɪnsɪˈkjʊər/ in-sih-KYOOR: "This makes Britt-Marie insecure, and her natural reaction to insecurity is irritation" (p. 53).

Definition: If you are insecure, you lack confidence because you think that you are not good enough or are not loved.

irritation (noun) /ɪrɪ'teɪʃən/ ir-ih-TAY-shun: "This makes Britt-Marie insecure, and her natural reaction to insecurity is irritation" (p. 53).

Definition: Irritation is a feeling of annoyance, especially when something is happening that you cannot easily stop or control.

latex (noun) /leɪtɛks/ LAY-tek: "Sleeping on one of the sofas in the corner of the recreation center is not even worth thinking about, because they were so filthy that Britt-Marie had to wear double latex gloves when she covered them with baking soda" (p. 45).

Definition: Latex is a type of rubber made from the sap of a rubber tree.

laundry basket (noun) /'lɔːndri 'bæskɪt/ LAWN-dree BAS-kit: "In the end all she dreamed of was a balcony and a husband who . . . occasionally put his shirt in the laundry basket without her having to ask him to do it, (p. 47).

Definition: A laundry basket is a large basket in which you put dirty clothes before they are washed.

layer (noun) /leɪər/ LAY-ur: "But she doesn't sleep, because she remembers the thick layer of dust on the floor of the recreation center before she started cleaning" (p. 45).

Definition: A layer of something is a quantity or piece of it that covers a surface or that is between two other things.

lump (noun) /lʌmp/ lump: "'No, damn it! Don't put wine in fridge, you get lumps in it!' yells Somebody" (p. 52).

Definition: A lump is a small solid piece of something.

marginally (adverb) /'mɑːrdʒɪnəli/ MAR-jih-nuh-lee: "Britt-Marie looks at the goo of melted snow and gravel left behind by the wheels with only marginally less horror than if it had been excrement" (p. 50).

Definition: Marginally means to only a small degree.

mend (verb) /mɛnd/ mend: "For a fleeting, carefree moment the thought occurs to her that she might try to mend it, but she comes to her senses and moves away from it" (p. 49).

Definition: If you mend something that is broken or not working, you repair it, so that it works properly or can be used.

mop (verb) /mɒp/ mop: "Someone who came home to a newly mopped floor and a hot dinner on the table and, on the odd occasion, noticed that she had made an effort" (p. 48).

Definition: If you mop a surface such as a floor, you clean it with a mop.

muddy (adjective) /'mʌdi/ MUD-ee: "'The wine is good but a bit, what's-it-called? Muddy!'" (p. 51).

Definition: If something is muddy, it is dirty and contains mud or looks as if it contains mud.

mumble (verb) /'mʌmbəl/ MUM-bul: "Somebody's laughter slowly turns into a titter, and then into general mumbling about flying stones" (p. 53).

Definition: If you mumble, you speak very quietly and not at all clearly with the result that the words are difficult to understand.

nag-bag (noun) /næg bæɡ/ nag bag: "She found she had neighbors who called her a 'nag-bag' when she worried about what the Germans would think if there was rubbish in the foyer or the stairwell smelled of pizza" (p. 46).

Definition: A nag-bag is an insulting term for someone who complains or criticizes a lot. [In American English, you'll hear "nag" but not "nag-bag."]

nostril (noun) /'nɒstrəl/ NOS-trul: "Kent laughed in the way that he did after drinking vodka and orange in front of a soccer match, his stomach bouncing up and down and the laughter gushing forth in little snorting bursts through his nostrils" (p. 48).

Definition: Your nostrils are the two openings at the end of your nose.

nozzle (noun) /'nɒzl/ NOZ-ul: "Britt-Marie rubs the nozzle as hard as she can over the sofa cushions" (p. 54).

Definition: The nozzle of a hose or pipe is a narrow piece fitted to the end to control the flow of liquid or gas.

on behalf of (phrase) /ɒn bɪ'hæf əv/ on bih-HAF uv: "Kent said that Britt-Marie was socially incompetent, so she stayed home for another few years so he could be social on behalf of the both of them" (p. 47).

Definition: If you do something on behalf of someone, you do it for them or as their representative. [Notice that it is "on" behalf of, not "in" behalf of.]

on the odd occasion (phrase) /ɒn ði ɒd ə'keɪʒən/ on tuh od uh-KAY-zhun: "Someone who came home to a newly mopped floor and a hot dinner on the table and, on the odd occasion, noticed that she had made an effort" (p. 48).

Definition: If something happens on the odd occasion, it happens occasionally or sometimes.

once upon a time (phrase) /wʌns ə'pɒn ə taɪm/ wunss uh-PON uh tym: "She knows that once upon a time he did care" (p. 46).

Definition: Once upon a time is used at the beginning of children's stories to introduce something that happened in the past.

oxidized (adjective) /'ɒksɪdaɪzd/ OK-sih-dydz: "'Nothing! Nothing! Just a question, huh! Yellow door? Not good? It's, what's-it-called? Oxidized! Old door. Almost not yellow anymore. Almost white now'" (p. 50).

Definition: If something is oxidized, it has been chemically changed by reacting with oxygen.

parquet (noun) /pɑːrˈkeɪ/ par-KAY: "In the end all she dreamed of was a balcony and a husband who did not walk on the parquet in his golf shoes" (p. 47).

Definition: A parquet floor is a floor that is covered with small rectangular blocks of wood.

past their sell-by date (phrase) /pæst ðeər sɛl baɪ deɪt/ past thair sel by dayt: "It's not that Britt-Marie chose not to have any expectations, she just woke up one morning and realized they were past their sell-by date" (p. 47).

If something is past its sell-by date, it is no longer useful or effective.

premises (noun) /ˈpreɪmɪsɪz/ PREM-ih-siz: "'Ha, I suppose you also have a hotel on your premises'" (p. 52).

Definition: The premises of a business or an institution are all the buildings and land that it occupies in one place.

propel (verb) /prəˈpɛl/ pruh-PEL: "Somebody propels her chair forward and tugs at the kitchen drawers until she finds the coffee filters" (p. 52).

Definition: To propel something in a particular direction means to cause it to move in that direction.

quota-filling (noun) /ˈkwɒtə ˈfɪlɪŋ/ KWOH-tuh FIL-ing: "'Quota-filling,' he used to call it" (p. 49).

Definition: Quota-filling is the practice of selecting people to fill positions primarily to meet a required number or proportion, rather than on merit.

readily (adverb) /ˈrɛdɪli/ RED-ih-lee: "It may be that a heart only finally breaks after leaving a hospital room in which a shirt smells of pizza and perfume, but it will break more readily if it has burst a few times before" (p. 48).

Definition: You use readily to say that something happens or is done quickly and easily.

realization (noun) /ˌriːələˈzeɪʃən/ ree-uh-lih-ZAY-shun: "It's not that Britt-Marie chose not to have any expectations, she just woke up one morning and realized they were past their sell-by date" (p. 47).

Definition: A realization is when you suddenly understand or become aware of something.

remote control (noun) /rɪˈmoʊt kənˈtroʊl/ rih-MOHT kun-TROHL: "Always so close to the remote control that she could feel the tips of his fingers against her knee when he fumbled with it to flip the channel to a soccer match" (p. 49).

Definition: A remote control is a device that you use to control a machine or piece of equipment from a distance by using radio or electronic signals.

renovation (noun) /ˌrɛnəˈveɪʃən/ ren-uh-VAY-shun: "Kent always said, 'women can't even put together IKEA furniture,' when they watched women in television programs about house building or renovation" (p. 49).

Definition: Renovation is the activity of improving something by repairing or rebuilding it.

repeatedly (adverb) /rɪˈpiːtɪdli/ rih-PEE-tid-lee: "Britt-Marie rubs the nozzle as hard as she can over the sofa cushions. Repeatedly, until Somebody gives up" (p. 54).

Definition: If something happens repeatedly, it happens many times.

responsibility (noun) /rɪˌspɒnsɪˈbɪlɪti/ rih-spon-sih-BIL-ih-tee: "Kent was funny and Britt-Marie went into the kitchen and took care of the washing-up. That was how they divided up their responsibilities" (p. 53).

Definition: If you have responsibility for something or someone, or if they are your responsibility, it is your job or duty to deal with them.

rubbish (noun) /ˈrʌbɪʃ/ RUB-ish: "She found she had neighbors who called her a 'nag-bag' when she worried about what the Germans would think if there was rubbish in the foyer or the stairwell smelled of pizza" (p. 46).

Definition: Rubbish is waste material such as old food and paper that has been thrown away. [More commonly used in British English. In American English, we use the words "trash" or "garbage."]

rush off (phrasal verb) /rʌʃ ɒf/ rush of: "So, just before Britt-Marie rushed out of the door, she ran into the bathroom to turn on the shower for a few seconds" (p. 46).

Definition: If you rush off, you leave a place very quickly.

sell-by date (noun) /sɛl baɪ deɪt/ sel by dayt: "It's not that Britt-Marie chose not to have any expectations, she just woke up one morning and realized they were past their sell-by date" (p. 47).

Definition: The sell-by date on a food container is the date by which the food should be sold or eaten before it starts to go bad.

shift (verb) /ʃɪft/ shift: "Britt-Marie shifts her weight from left foot to right, and finally goes to the refrigerator and puts the wine box inside" (p. 52).

Definition: If you shift your weight, you change the position of your body.

slam (verb) /slæm/ slam: "Somebody partly gives Britt-Marie the box and partly throws it at her before she forces her way inside, the wheelchair slamming across the threshold, to have a look around" (p. 50).

Definition: If a door or a lid slams, or if you slam it, it shuts noisily and with great force.

slip (verb) /slɪp/ slip: "Britt-Marie doesn't know when their marriage slipped out of her hands" (p. 46).

Definition: If something slips from your hand or grip, it slides from it.

smugly (adverb) /'smʌɡli/ SMUG-lee: "'Good wine, you know. Cheap. Fell off the back of a truck, huh!' says Somebody quite smugly" (p. 50).

Definition: If you do or say something smugly, you do or say it in a way that shows you are very pleased with yourself.

snort (verb) /snɔːrt/ snort: "Kent snorted at her and said she was always too bloody concerned about what people thought of her" (p. 46).

Definition: When someone snorts, they make a loud noise by breathing air quickly out through their nose, often in order to show disapproval or amusement.

sod (noun) /sɒd/ sod: "Once, Kent made a mistake about the check-in time for the flight when they were going home after a hotel visit, although Kent still maintains that 'those sods can't even write the correct time on the sodding ticket'" (p. 46).

Definition: Sod is a rude word that some people use when they are annoyed or angry.

speck (noun) /spɛk/ speck: "Britt-Marie, filled with discomfort, clasps her hands together over her stomach and looks as if she'd like to brush some invisible specks of dust from the opening of a black hole, and then sink into it herself" (p. 52).

Definition: A speck is a very small mark or amount of something.

stairwell (noun) /'steərwɛl/ STAIR-wel: "She found she had neighbors who called her a 'nag-bag' when she worried about what the Germans would think if there was rubbish in the foyer or the stairwell smelled of pizza" (p. 46).

Definition: A stairwell is the part of a building that contains the stairs.

straighten (verb) /'streɪtn/ STRAY-tun: "Finally she clears her throat, straightens her back and looks Somebody right in the eye as she answers" (p. 52).

Definition: If you straighten something, you make it neat or put it in its proper position.

strain (verb) /streɪn/ strayn: "'The wine is good but a bit, what's-it-called? Muddy! You have to strain it a few times with a coffee filter, huh, everything okay then!'" (p. 51).

Definition: When you strain food, you separate the liquid part of it from the solid parts.

swear (verb) /swɛər/ swair: "'Is it really necessary to swear all the time, as if we were a horde of barbarians?'" (p. 52).

Definition: If someone swears, they use language that is considered to be rude or offensive.

tax authority (noun) /tæks ə'θɔːrti/ takz aw-THOR-ih-tee: "'But, you know, I have to pour into bottle with label and all that crap, in case tax authority asks about it,' says Somebody" (p. 50).
Definition: The tax authority is the government organization that is responsible for collecting taxes.

tersely (adverb) /'tɜːrsli/ TURS-lee: "'I'm well aware of that,' she says tersely" (p. 53).
Definition: If you say something tersely, you say it in a brief and unfriendly way.

titter (noun) /'tɪtər/ TIT-ur: "Somebody's laughter slowly turns into a titter, and then into general mumbling about flying stones" (p. 53).
Definition: A titter is a short, quiet laugh.

tolerate (verb) /'tɒləreɪt/ TOL-uh-rayt: "'I will certainly not tolerate a yellow door on my white car!'" (p. 50).
Definition: If you tolerate a situation or person, you accept them although you do not particularly like them.

topple (verb) /'tɒpl/ TOP-ul: "But now Somebody sits here laughing so much that her wheelchair almost topples over" (p. 53).
Definition: If someone or something topples somewhere or if you topple them, they become unsteady and fall over.

trace (noun) /treɪs/ trayss: "Britt-Marie can still hear a trace of tittering in her voice" (p. 53).
Definition: A trace of something is a very small amount of it.

tug (verb) /tʌg/ tug: "Somebody propels her chair forward and tugs at the kitchen drawers until she finds the coffee filters" (p. 52).
Definition: If you tug something, you give it a quick and usually strong pull.

undisguised (adjective) /ˌʌndɪs'gaɪzd/ un-dis-GYZD: "Somebody's face collapses with undisguised surprise" (p. 52).
Definition: If a feeling is undisguised, it is not hidden or disguised in any way.

vacuum cleaner (noun) /'vækju:m 'kliːnər/ VAK-yoom KLEE-nur: "She goes to the vacuum cleaner in a very demonstrative way—to attack the sofa covers, which are covered in baking soda" (p. 53).
Definition: A vacuum cleaner is an electric machine which sucks up dust and dirt from carpets.

wilt (verb) /wɪlt/ wilt: "It's difficult to know when love blooms; suddenly one day you wake up and it's in full flower. It works the same way when it wilts—one day it is just too late" (p. 46).
Definition: If a plant wilts, it gradually bends downwards and becomes weak because it needs more water or is dying.

worn (adjective) /wɔːrn/ worn: "Britt-Marie doesn't know when their marriage slipped out of her hands. When it became worn and scratched up no matter how many coasters she used" (p. 46).

Definition: Something that is worn is damaged or thin because it is old and has been used a lot.