

Can You Believe It?

Stories and Idioms from Real Life

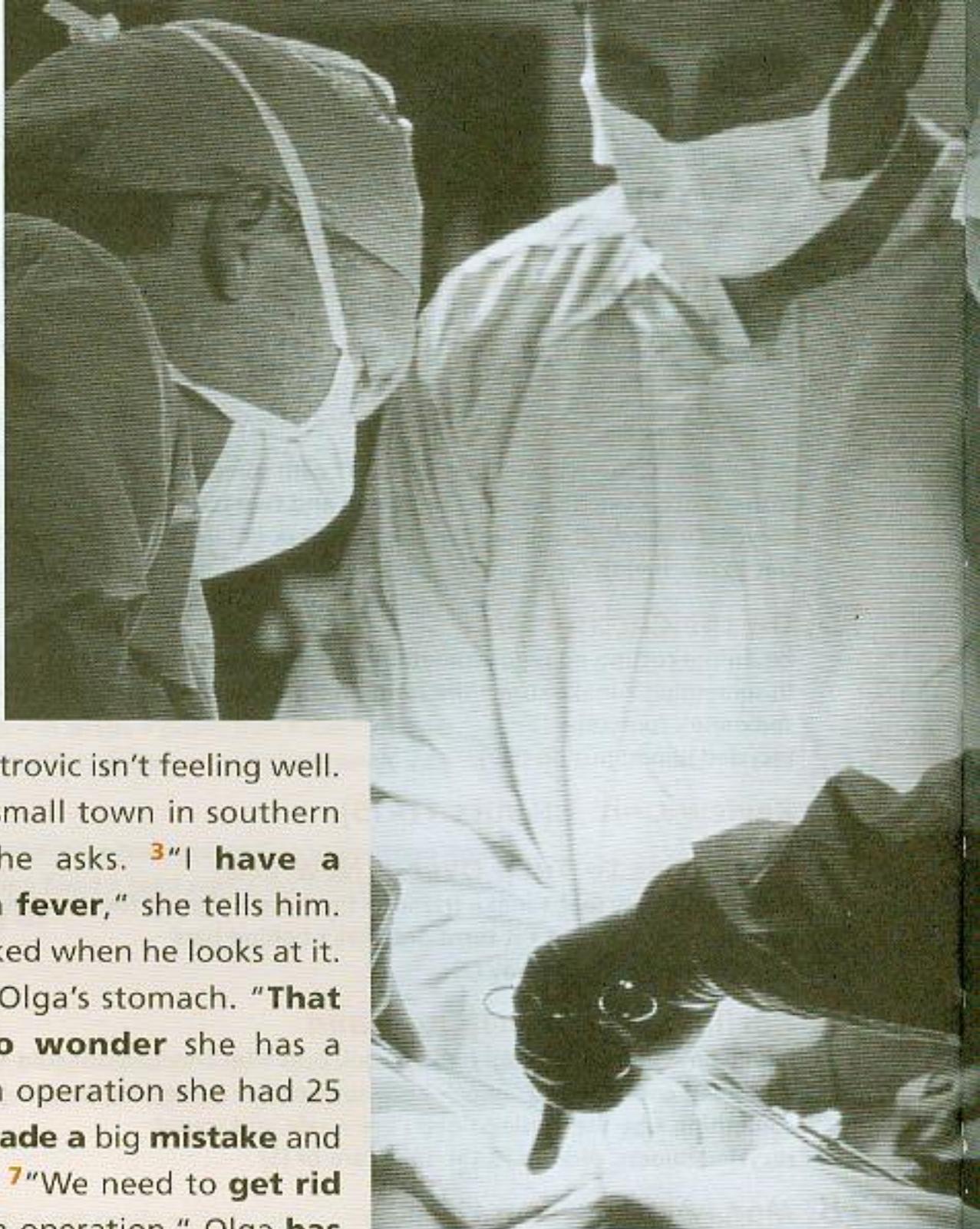
Book 2

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OXFORD

1 It's No Wonder!



1. Quick Reading

Look at the pictures on page 3.

What is the story about?

Now read quickly to get the main idea.

SARATOV, RUSSIA ¹One day, Olga Petrovic isn't feeling well. ²She goes to see the doctor in her small town in southern Russia. "What's the matter?" he asks. ³"I have a stomachache. ⁴And I'm running a fever," she tells him. ⁵The doctor takes an x-ray. He's shocked when he looks at it. There's a 12-inch piece of metal in Olga's stomach. "That takes the cake!" he thinks. "No wonder she has a stomachache!" ⁶Olga remembers an operation she had 25 years ago. Apparently, the surgeon made a big mistake and left a medical instrument inside her. ⁷"We need to get rid of it," says the doctor. "You need an operation." Olga has cold feet and wants to put it off. But her doctor wants her to have the operation right away. ⁸Now the medical instrument is gone and Olga is recovering.

New idioms and expressions

(it's) no wonder	it's not surprising
What's the matter?	What's wrong?
have a stomachache	feel pain in one's stomach
run a fever	have a high body temperature
That takes the cake!	That's really strange!; That's the worst!
make a mistake	do something incorrectly
get rid of something*	remove something
have cold feet	be afraid to do something
put something off*	delay or postpone something
right away	immediately

Words in parentheses () can occur with the idiom, but don't have to.

*phrasal verb (see Lexicon, pp. 116–150 and Appendix D, pp. 112–115)

2. Listen

Cover the story and look only at these pictures. Listen to the story two or three times.

Note: As the tape or your teacher says a number, look at the corresponding picture.



3. Read the Story

Now read the story carefully. Pay special attention to the idioms so that you're ready for Exercise 4.

4. Listen and Complete

Close your book. Listen to the story again. When the tape or your teacher pauses, try to complete the idiom.

5. Tell the Story

Cover the story and look at the pictures above. Tell the story using as many idioms as you can.

- First, work with the whole class to retell the story.
- Then tell the story to a partner or small group.

6. Answer the Questions

About the story.....

- What's the matter with Olga when she goes to the doctor?
- What does the doctor say when he sees the x-ray?
- What happened to her 25 years ago?
- Why does Olga need another operation?
- Why does she want to put it off?

About you.....

- Have you ever had an operation?
- How do you feel today? Do you have a stomachache, a headache, or a cold?
- How often do you think doctors make serious mistakes? Tell about a time when *you* made a big mistake.
- Are you putting off something that you should be doing? If so, what?
- Is there something you won't do because you have cold feet?
- Do you have any bad habits that you'd like to get rid of?

7. Write About Yourself

Complete the sentences, writing something true about yourself.

- When I'm running a fever, I _____.
- I often put off _____ because _____.
- I need to _____ right away.
- I want to get rid of some of my possessions, including _____.

8. Write a Dialogue

Work with a partner. Write a dialogue using at least three idioms from the unit. Act it out for a small group or the class.

9. Take a Dictation

10. Complete the Story

a. Read this true story and fill in the blanks with idioms from the box.

- it's no wonder
- made the mistake
- get rid of
- is running a fever
- has a stomachache
- right away

Doctors Make a BIG Mistake

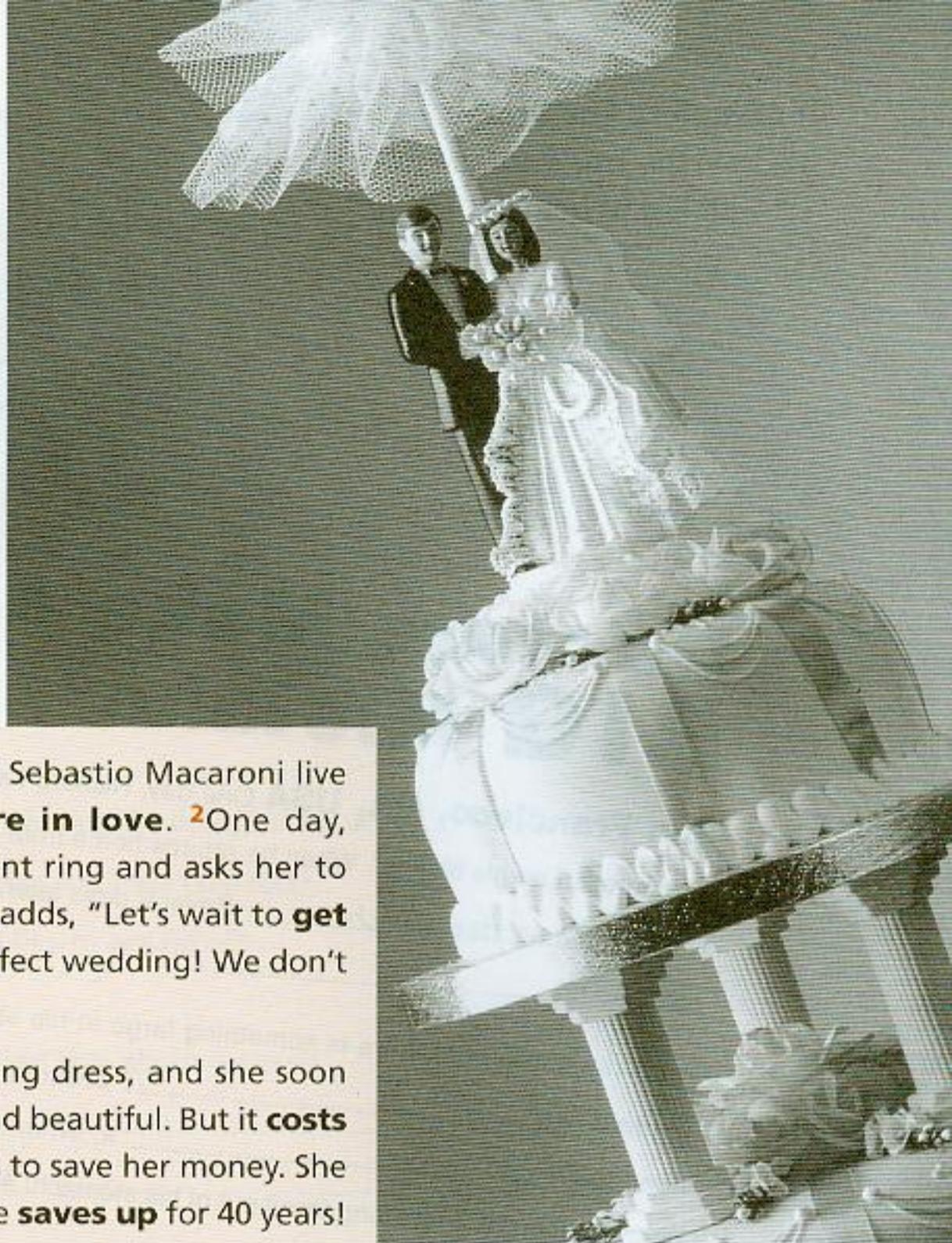
San Francisco, CA, USA One day, Richard Kearney, 47, has an operation on his bladder. When he returns home from the hospital, he (1) has a stomachache. Several days later, he has a lot of pain and (2) _____.

An X ray shows that there is something large in his stomach. Doctors operate (3) _____ because they know they need to (4) _____ it. When they cut Kearney open, they pull a 2-foot-long towel out of his stomach! Apparently, doctors left it inside him during the first operation.

(5) _____ that Kearney was in pain. He is taking the doctors who (6) _____ to court.

b. Read or tell the story to a partner.

It's About Time! 2



1. Quick Reading

Look at the pictures on page 7.

What is the story about?

Now read quickly to get the main idea.

ANTILLO, ITALY ¹Vittoria Celemi and Sebastio Macaroni live in a small village in Sicily. They **are in love**. ²One day, Sebastio gives Vittoria an engagement ring and asks her to marry him. ³Vittoria accepts, but she adds, "Let's wait to **get married** until we **can afford** the perfect wedding! We don't have enough money now."

⁴Vittoria begins to shop for a wedding dress, and she soon finds the perfect one. It's long, lacy, and beautiful. But it **costs an arm and a leg!** ⁵So Vittoria starts to save her money. She makes a small payment every year. She **saves up** for 40 years!

⁶**At long last**, after a 40-year engagement, Vittoria can buy the wedding dress. She and Sebastio decide to **tie the knot**.

⁷At the wedding, Vittoria looks beautiful in her dress. The newlyweds **are in seventh heaven**. They dance, drink champagne, and eat caviar. ⁸Afterward, they ride off in a horse-drawn carriage. Their friends watch them and think, "It's about time!"

New idioms and expressions

It's about time!	.....	It's later than expected!
be in love (with someone)	.....	love (someone) strongly in a romantic way
get married (to someone)	.....	marry (someone)
can afford something	.....	have enough money to buy something
cost an arm and a leg	.....	be very expensive
save up*	.....	keep money so one can use it later
at long last	.....	after a very long time; finally
tie the knot	.....	marry
be in seventh heaven	.....	be very happy

*phrasal verb (see Lexicon and Appendix D)

 **2. Listen**

Cover the story and look only at these pictures. Listen to the story two or three times.



3. Read the Story

Now read the story carefully. Pay special attention to the idioms so that you're ready for Exercise 4.

 **4. Listen and Complete**

Close your book. Listen to the story again. When the tape or your teacher pauses, try to complete the idiom.

5. Tell the Story

Cover the story and look at the pictures above. Tell the story using as many idioms as you can.

- First, work with the whole class to retell the story.
- Then tell the story to a partner or small group.

6. Answer the Questions

About the story

- a. What does Vittoria say to Sebastio when he asks her to marry him?
- b. What do you think of Vittoria's decision?
- c. How long does it take for the couple to tie the knot?
- d. How do the newlyweds feel?

About you

- e. Are you patient? Can you imagine waiting 40 years for anything? If so, what?
- f. Take a survey of your classmates. How many are single? How many want to get married? Find out their reasons.
- g. Is it important to be in love when you get married? Explain your ideas.
- h. In your country, when a man wants to marry a woman, does he need to get permission from her parents? Does he give something to the woman or her family? Does the woman give something to the man or his family?
- i. Vittoria's wedding dress cost an arm and a leg. Have you ever bought something that cost an arm and a leg? If so, what?

7. Write About Yourself

Complete the sentences, writing something true about yourself.

- a. I'm in seventh heaven when _____
_____.
- b. Recently, I bought _____, and it/they cost an arm and a leg.
- c. I'm saving up to buy _____ because I can't afford it/them now.

8. Write a Dialogue

Work with a partner. Write a dialogue using at least three idioms from the unit.

Act it out for a small group or the class.

9. Take a Dictation

10. Complete the Dialogue

a. Two friends, Eva and Stephanie, are talking.
Fill in the blanks with idioms from the box.

- I'm in seventh heaven
- can afford
- cost an arm and a leg
- get married
- tie the knot
- it's about time



Eva, hi! What's new?

Oh, hi, Stephanie. **Guess what!*** Mario and I are going to (1) get married in June!



Congratulations, (2) _____! You've been engaged for five years! I wasn't sure you were ever going to (3) _____.

Yeah. I had cold feet.



But now you're ready?

Yeah, I know Mario's the one for me. (4) _____!



Are you going to have a big wedding?

We don't know yet. I hope so. If we (5) _____ it, I'd like about 300 guests, a dance band, champagne...



Cool.** I know a great band—the Hot Peppers. And they don't (6) _____.

Oh, really? I want to get the details, but I should go now. I'll call you soon.



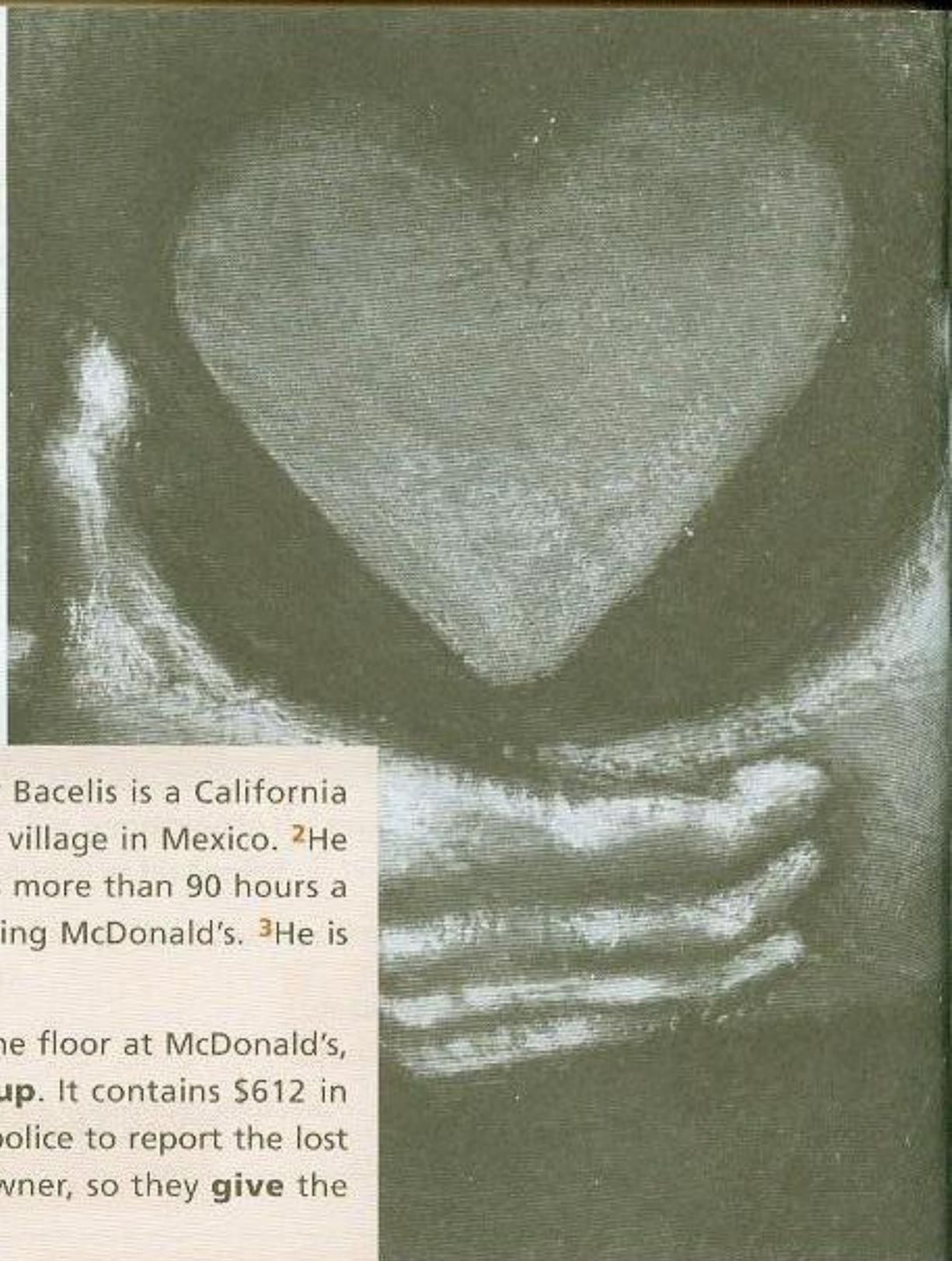
*Guess what!: a way of starting a conversation (informal)

**cool: great (informal)

recycled idiom: have cold feet

b. Work with a partner. Role-play the dialogue together.

A Heart of Gold



1. Quick Reading

Look at the pictures on page 11.

What is the story about?

Now read quickly to get the main idea.

ORANGE COUNTY, CA, USA ¹Victor Bacelis is a California immigrant who **grew up** in a poor village in Mexico. ²He **is used to** working hard. He works more than 90 hours a week at three different jobs, including McDonald's. ³He is saving up to buy a house.

⁴One day, while Victor is cleaning the floor at McDonald's, he finds an envelope and **picks it up**. It contains \$612 in cash! ⁵He **gets in touch with** the police to report the lost money. The police can't find the owner, so they **give** the money **back** to Victor.

⁶Then Victor reads a story in the newspaper about Adrian Sandoval, a baby who **is** very **sick**. ⁷Victor decides to **give** the cash **away** to help pay for the baby's surgery. "Life has been nice to me," Bacelis said. "**I'm healthy**. I have enough money. Adrian is a little boy, and his condition really touched me. This is what I want to do." ⁸Victor Bacelis truly **has a heart of gold**.

New idioms and expressions

have a heart of gold	have a kind and generous character
grow up*	become an adult
be used to (doing) something	be familiar with (doing) something
pick something up*	take or lift something off the floor (or a table, etc.)
get in touch with someone	contact someone by phone, fax, e-mail, etc.
give something back*	return something (to someone)
be sick	be unwell; have bad health
give something away*	give something as a gift
be healthy	be well; have good health

recycled idiom: save up

*phrasal verb (see Lexicon and Appendix D)