

*A Strong Motive*

By M.H.

Robert Louis Stevenson tells of a Welsh blacksmith who, at the age of twenty-five, could neither read nor write. He then heard a chapter of *Robinson Crusoe* read aloud. It was the scene of the wreck, and he was so impressed by the thought of what he missed by his ignorance, that he set to work that very day, and was not satisfied until he had learned to read in Welsh. His disappointment was great when he found all his pains had been thrown away, for he could only obtain an English copy of the book. Nothing daunted, he began once more, and learned English, and at last had the joy and triumph of being able to read the delightful story for himself.

A strong motive and a steady purpose overcome the greatest difficulties.

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Checking for Understanding

1. Describe the blacksmith's personality using evidence from the text to support your answer.
2. What does "daunted" mean as it is used in the following sentence: "Nothing daunted, he began once more, and learned English, and at last had the joy and triumph of being able to read the delightful story for himself."

Vocabulary

- ignorance
- difficulties