

**PART 1**  
**READING ALOUD**

*In this passage, a woman finds a long-lost hero.*

Sara Lee had always loved what she called 'her kind of music'. This was blues music from the American South. She played guitar herself, and she had a big collection of early recordings – some of them very rare.

Disaster struck when some of her recordings – many on old cassette tapes – were damaged when a neighbour's water pipe burst and Sara's apartment was briefly flooded. Sara knew she should have transferred that music onto CDs or to computer files, but now it was too late.

She searched the internet to find replacements for what she had lost, and had some success. But she could not find a recording of music by Blind John Cole – a particular favourite who had only recorded about ten songs in his short life.

Then, one day, the owner of a shop in a city 400 miles away sent Sara an email. "I think we may at last have something you've been looking for," it said. Sara wasted no time.

The shop was untidy, and the shop-owner was a huge man with a grey beard and an earring. "Have a listen to that," he said to Sara, passing her the headphones. It was Blind John Cole, at last – all on a single CD.

An enormous smile spread across Sara's face as she listened. "Wow!" she exclaimed. "You've even cleaned up the sound."

"The guy I got it from did that," said the shop-owner, grinning. "He's in Alaska. Do I take it you want to buy it?"



© Singapore Press Holdings