

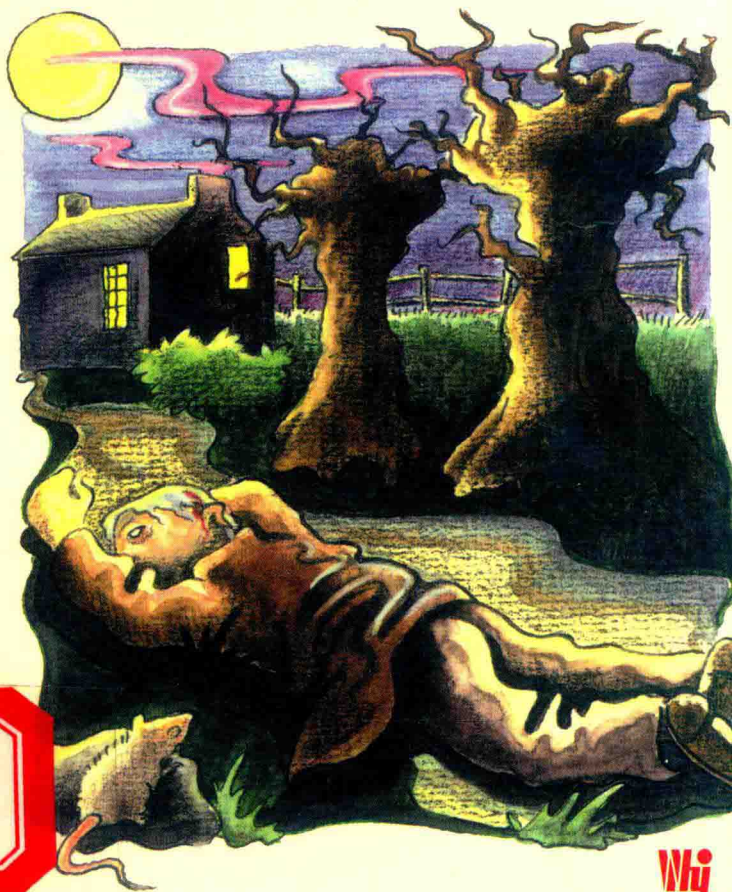
惊险历程

● 死胡同

● 野鸟观察者

● 寻迹追踪

● 逃出魔掌



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C 級 驚險歷程

Dead End for Murder

死 胡 同

Rosemary Hellyer-Jones

Peter Lampater

注釋 高玉輝



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简 介

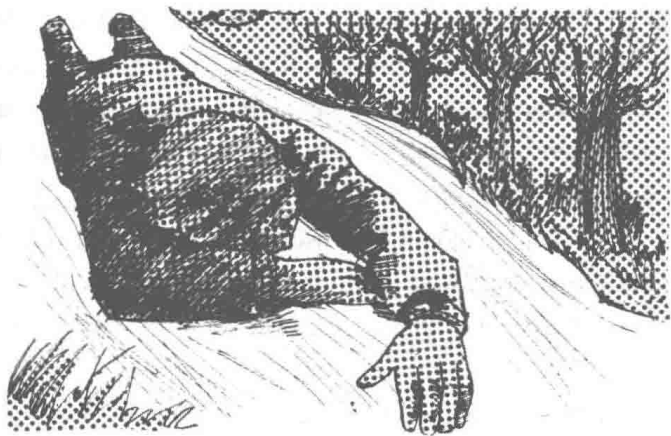
《外教社—克萊特學生英語分級讀物》由上海外語教育出版社從德國最大的教育出版機構克萊特出版社精選引進出版。本系列讀物由英美專家用淺顯的英語撰寫，供以英語為外國語的學生閱讀，以培養學生用英語直接獲取文化信息的能力。故事多以青少年為主角，精彩生動，扣人心弦。全套讀物按文字難度分 A、B、C 三級，A 級供初中學生閱讀，B 級供高一、高二學生閱讀，C 級供高三和更高水平的學生閱讀。

本書為 C 級的驚險歷程專集，由 *Dead End for Murder*, *The Birdwatcher*, *Tiger by the Tail*, *Escape in New York* 4 個分冊組成。

警探查普曼剛到小鎮就接到了一個棘手的案子：湯森上校被謀殺了。凶手究竟是誰：他的朋友，他的妻子，還是流浪漢？故事 *Dead End for Murder* 錯綜複雜，扑朔迷離，讓你欲罷不能。

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Death in Field Lane

I had been at Great Stapleton for only a few weeks when Colonel^① Townsend was found murdered. Nobody could have been more surprised than I was myself, for Great Stapleton isn't exactly the kind of place where you would expect to investigate^② a case of murder! It is a small country town in the South of England, not much bigger than a village. Its inhabitants^③ live quiet lives; there are only a few shops in the High Street^④, and if you want to go out in the evenings, the local cinema and the 'Horse and Jock-

① colonel 上校 ② to investigate 调查 ③ inhabitant 居民
④ High Street 城镇的主要大街

ey^① are the only places that are open. When Mr Robb the postman, his round face red with excitement, rushed into my room at the police station on Friday morning with the news, I thought at first that it must be a joke.

“What? Colonel Townsend murdered?” I asked in horror when I saw that the postman was serious.

“Found him in Field Lane just a few moments ago, Inspector. I was on the way to his house with a few letters, and suddenly I saw him there, lying on the ground. Terrible!”

Who could have done it, I wondered? Or had the postman made a mistake? Perhaps the Colonel was ill and had had some kind of an attack^②; I had seen him go into Dr Sutton's surgery^③ only the day before. I decided that this was the most likely explanation. But if it was murder after all ... ? I realized that I would

be in rather a hopeless position, for I only knew the Colonel by sight^④, and had no idea who his friends or enemies might be; I wished that I had been at Great Stapleton longer.



Constable^⑤ Davis and I put on our coats and a moment or two later we could

① jockey 职业赛马骑师 ② attack (疾病的)突然发作

③ surgery 诊所 ④ know sb by sight 面熟 ⑤ constable 警察

see for ourselves that Mr Robb's astonishing^① story was true. I recognized Colonel Townsend at once. He lay motionless^② on the ground. He wore a light coat and no hat; I noticed spots of blood in his thick grey hair. Dr Sutton had been informed, of course, and shortly after we had arrived, he drove up the narrow lane in his car, jumped out and hurried over to us, his black bag in his hand.

The doctor was the only person at Great Stapleton whom I felt I knew at all. I had joined the local golf club a week before, and he and I had had a couple of games together. He was slightly younger than myself, about 35, I guessed, and I felt that we had something in common^③, for he, too, was a comparative^④ 'newcomer' to the town — he told me he had come to Great Stapleton about three years ago. He came up to us now with a serious expression on his usually smiling face.

"Good heavens! Colonel Townsend! What an awful thing! But you don't really believe it's murder, do you, Inspector?"

"I'm afraid it looks like it, Doctor," I said. "Have a look at him."

Dr Sutton bent down and examined the body. It

① astonishing 令人惊讶的 ② motionless 不动的, 静止的

③ have sth in common 有共同之处 ④ comparative 比较而言的

only took him a few moments. He looked up at us with a shake of the head.

“You’re right, Inspector. He seems to have been hit over the head from behind. Death must have been immediate.”

“Any idea what kind of weapon the killer could have used, Doctor?” I asked.

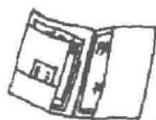
His answer was what I had expected. “Some kind of blunt^① instrument. Something heavy, I suppose. Impossible to be absolutely sure.”

“Quite. And the time of death?”

“Oh, obviously quite some hours ago,” said Dr Sutton, looking down at the Colonel’s body and then at myself. “Eight or ten hours. Possibly longer.”

I looked at my watch. It was just after nine. So he must have been killed some time during the night. I tried to imagine the scene ...

“Noticed this, sir?” said Davis. He pointed to a brown leather glove lying beside the body. “Could be a useful clue^②, sir.”



wallet

I smiled, and turned to the doctor. “I think Constable Davis has been reading too many detective stories. He looks for clues in everything.”

I picked up the glove.

① blunt 钝的

② clue 线索

“You may be right, Davis,” I said, putting it into my pocket. “But that wallet over there in the road will probably help us more. Have a look at it, Davis.”

The black leather wallet that had been thrown away was marked inside: H. R. T. It was empty.

“Someone after the poor old Colonel’s money,” said Dr Sutton. “And someone with rather violent^① methods. What a way to get a few pounds!”

It certainly looked as if the Colonel had been attacked by someone who was after the money in his wallet. I doubted whether there had been a struggle; he had been hit from behind and probably never knew who it was. It was a bad business^②. Of course it was possible that the killer had acted from other motives^③. The empty wallet might be a blind^④... As for the glove, I guessed that it must belong to the Colonel himself.

In the afternoon I saw Mrs Townsend. It was the first time I had been inside Rose Cottage, the Townsends’ house. In fact, since I had arrived at Great Stapleton a few weeks before, I had not been inside more than one or two people’s houses. I had not made any friends, though I hoped that



① violent 暴力的 ② business 事情 ③ motive 动机
④ blind 掩人耳目的幌子

a friendship might develop between myself and Dr Sutton. My wife and I agreed that nobody seemed to be very interested in newcomers to the town; we felt that we were outsiders, and that we would never be allowed to enter the circle of true 'Stapletonians'. As I walked through the garden, I wondered how Mrs Townsend would receive me.

I had expected to see an older person, for the Colonel⁴ was at least sixty. So I was surprised when an attractive well-dressed woman of between 35 and 40 came forward to shake hands. She had already put on a black skirt and blouse^①, and was very pale, but there was no sign of emotion in her voice when she spoke to me.

“Inspector Chapman?”

“Mrs Townsend?”

“Some questions about my husband, I suppose?”

I nodded. She showed me into the large sitting-room. The furniture was nearly all new, and everything was expensive-looking. There was a beautiful Persian carpet^② on the floor. I sat down in one of the large armchairs.



“When did you last see your hus-

① blouse 宽大短外套, 罩衫; 女衬衫
地毯

② Persian carpet 波斯

band, Mrs Townsend?"

"Last night, before he went to the chess club."

"The chess club?"

"Yes. My husband always played chess at the club on Thursday evenings."

I couldn't help noticing how she had used the past tense, without hesitation^①. 'My husband always played ...' It was interesting.

"And how long did he usually stay at the club?" I asked.

"Oh, he was always at home again by half past ten or eleven o'clock."

"And last night? Didn't he come home?"

Mrs Townsend blushed^② slightly. "I — I'm afraid I really don't know, Inspector. You see, I went to bed myself at about ten, and I didn't know that he was missing until breakfast time this morning."

"You and your husband had separate bedrooms, then?" I asked.

She nodded.

"But who could have done it, Inspector?" she asked suddenly. At last a flash of emotion crossed her face. "Who could it have been? Who could have wanted to kill him?"

I showed her the wallet.

① without hesitation 毫不犹豫地

② to blush (脸色)变红

“This was your husband’s, wasn’t it?”

“Yes, it was. He was robbed, you mean?” she asked, seeing that the wallet was empty.

“It looks like it,” I said. “And just one more thing before I go, Mrs Townsend. Is this your husband’s glove?”

I showed her the brown leather glove which Davis had thought was such a valuable clue. I was surprised when she shook her head.

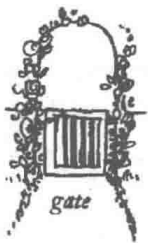
“Are you quite sure?”

“Absolutely.”

I thanked her and apologized for having disturbed her.

“Come again if there are any more questions,” she said.

I left Rose Cottage and walked down Field Lane in the direction of the chess club. I felt that I had already discovered something important about the Colonel, his life and his personal relationships^①. A picture



was beginning to take shape^② in my mind. He was obviously wealthy, he enjoyed a game of chess; his wife was not in love with him and had probably married him for his money. Killed him for his money perhaps? It was still impossible to guess.

① personal relationships 人际关系 ② take shape 成形

When I came to the place where Colonel Townsend had been murdered, I stopped. Everything was very still. I had not noticed until now how quiet Field Lane was. Not a single car had passed me since I had walked through the gates of Rose Cottage. The lane was a cul-de-sac^① about half a mile long, with Rose Cottage at the far end. On both sides of the lane there were tall trees which shut out the sunshine. A narrow path led through the trees in the direction of the main road between Great Stapleton and the next town. The nearest house to Rose Cottage was the vicarage^②, which stood in a large garden a few hundred yards further down the lane. How easy to murder someone here without being seen! Specially at night, for there were no street lamps between the vicarage and the Townsends' house.

After a few moments I continued my walk, past the vicarage and the fine old 11th century church, along the High Street where women with bags and baskets on their arms stood gossiping^③ outside the small shops. The chess club was on the upper floor of an old building, above a grocer's shop, which I first had to enter.

"Upstairs, first door on the right," said the grocer, and I went up.

① cul-de-sac 死胡同
say 说长道短

② vicarage 牧师的住宅

③ to gossip

Comprehension Questions

1. What did the postman discover in Field Lane?
2. What did people think when Colonel Townsend's body was found?
3. What did Constable Davis consider a useful clue?
4. What possible clue did Inspector Chapman notice?
5. What other people did Inspector Chapman talk to and what other places did he want to visit? Why?

Mr Beedie

Two old ladies were sitting at a table by the window, playing chess. They looked up as I entered the room.

“Why, Miss Graham, isn’t that Inspector Chapman, our new police inspector?” said one of the old ladies, looking over the top of her glasses at me, and then at her friend.

“Thinking of joining the chess club, are you?” said the lady whose name was Miss Graham, in a deep voice. “A wonderful game, Inspector. I hope you’ll play with me some time, though I’m afraid I’m not very good, am I, Miss Thorne?”

I smiled. “I’m sorry to disappoint you, ladies, but I don’t play chess.”

They looked surprised.

“Oh?” said Miss Thorne.

“I just wanted to ask you a few questions about Colonel Townsend,” I said. “I suppose you know that he died — was killed — last night?”

They had not heard the news, and I had to answer a lot of excited questions before I got the opportunity^① of asking anything myself. The old ladies

① opportunity 机会

were shocked, but at the same time interested to have something new to talk about. At last I was able to get the information I wanted.

“Were you at the chess club here last night?” I asked Miss Thorne.

“We both were,” said Miss Graham in her deep voice.

“Yes,” said Miss Thorne, “we’re here most evenings. Last night we played until nearly midnight.”

“Did you notice what time it was when Colonel Townsend left?”

Miss Thorne looked at her friend. “It was about half past ten, wasn’t it, Miss Graham?”

They both agreed that it had been at about half past ten.



“Did the Colonel leave the club alone?”

“Oh, no,” answered Miss Graham.

“He always walks home with Mr Beedie, the vicar^①, you know. They often play together on Thursday evenings.”

“Yes, they were playing together last night,” added Miss Thorne.

“Thank you, ladies,” I said. “You’ve been very helpful.”

① vicar 牧师