

中学英语拾级读物

GRADED
ENGLISH
READERS

第八级

Trent's Last Case

名探失误

第 2 册

上海外语教育出版社

中学英语拾级读物 ·

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方 飞 沈全娣 注释

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前 言

受国家教育委员会中学司委托,由上海外国语学院、北京外国语学院、北京师范大学、华东师范大学所属的四家大学出版社联合编辑、出版的《中学英语拾级读物》(简称《拾级读物》或《GE》)与读者见面了,这是我国中学英语教学的一项重要配套工程,旨在促进中学英语教学的改革。

取名《拾级读物》,不仅因为它有十个级别五十本书,而且还寓有“循序渐进,拾级而上”之意,中学生从初二开始阅读,逐级向上攀登,便可达到借助词典读懂浅近原著的水平。

《拾级读物》每册的词汇量、字数以及对应的年级大致如下:

级别	词汇量	每册大约字数	对应年级
一	500—700	10 万	初二
二	600—900	10 万	初二
三	800—1200	12 万	初三
四	1000—1500	12 万	初三
五	1400—1800	12 万	高一、高二
六	1700—2000	12 万	高二、高三
七	2000—2500	14 万	重点中学高三
八	2500—3000	16 万	外国语学校高三
九	3000—3500	18 万	高材生、中学教师
十	3000—3500	18 万	高材生、中学教师

阅读是学好任何一种语言的必由之路,也是获取信息的主要渠道。只做习题,不大量阅读,是学不好英语的。近年来

不少学生为了应付考试,花费大量的精力和时间去做各种各样的复习题,模拟试题,但收效甚微,对外语能力的提高并无多大益处,这是外语教学中的一种偏向。《拾级读物》的出版正是为了给中学英语教学提供一套可读性与系统性相结合的课外读物。

《拾级读物》主要供学生自己阅读,但教师可根据学生的实际水平帮助他们选择使用,并进行适当的辅导,特别在阅读方法上教师可作示范性的讲示,引导学生逐步摆脱语法和汉语的束缚。在此过程中,一是抓篇章大意和故事情节;二是注意学过语言现象的再现和在新环境下的发展。对不易理解之处,要启发学生先根据上下文去琢磨,实在影响阅读时再查阅词典。对不影响理解全文的语言难点则要舍得放过。只有这样,才能培养学生良好的阅读习惯,保持他们阅读的兴趣,提高他们阅读的速度。

《拾级读物》的级别是衡量中学生英语阅读水平的客观尺度,为了便于检查,我们还准备编写一套相应的测试材料和教学参考书。

《拾级读物》除供中学生使用外,还可作为中学英语教师培训、进修的教材。

本册读物是第八级第二册。全书选收了英国作家所写的四篇小说。本书语言浅近,情节生动曲折,内容丰富,适合高中三年级学生以及同等水平的读者阅读。

鉴于编者水平有限,读物在选材、注释等各方面肯定存有不少缺点,敬请广大师生、各界读者不吝指正,供我们再版时参考。

《中学英语拾级读物》编辑委员会

一九八七年五月

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名探失误

家财万贯的银行家曼德逊在自己的别墅被人暗杀。颇有名气的业余侦探特伦特受报界委托前去调查。在调查过程中特伦特了解到曼德逊是人人切齿的坏蛋，连其温柔可爱的妻子也可能卷入谋害他的行列。尽管现场有种种令人不解的现象，特伦特以独特的观察能力和思维方法推断出曼德逊是被其秘书马洛所害，原因是这位秘书与曼德逊太太相爱。特伦特生怕美丽的太太受牵连，因为他也爱上了这位可爱的少妇，所以未把自己的推断报告交报社登载，而是交由曼德逊太太处理，随后只身出国。半年后他重返伦敦，再次碰到曼德逊太太，后者告诉特伦特他的那份报告观察仔细，推断有理，然而结论却错了，因为马洛并未与她相爱，也不可能是凶手。于是他们请来了马洛，请他叙说当时遗漏的有关情况。马洛说曼德逊为人狡诈，由于误认为马洛与其妻相爱，决定用自杀的办法来达到加害马洛和其妻的目的。马洛走后，特伦特的老朋友柯波披露了曼德逊真正的死因。至此，特伦特决定从此不再涉足侦探行当，并表示此案是他的最后一个案子，因为他马上要同曼德逊太太成亲。

Trent's Last Case

1. Trent is Asked to Help

The telephone on Sir James Molloy's desk buzzed¹ and his secretary, Mr Silver, answered it. The secretary looked at Sir James and said, "It's Calvin Bunner, Sigsbee Mander-son's right-hand man. He says he must speak to you and no one else. It's bad news. He's speaking from Mr Mander-son's house at Marlstone."

Sir James looked angrily at the telephone and took it up.

"Well?" he asked.

"Yes," he said. The next minute, Silver, watching him, saw a look of horror on his face.

"Good heavens!" said Sir James. Still holding the phone, he got to his feet. As he listened he kept on saying "Yes." Then he looked at the clock and said quickly to Silver, "Get Figgis." Silver darted out.

Sir James Molloy, well known in the newspaper world, was head of the famous morning paper, the *Record*, as well as the evening paper, the *Sun*.

"You are sure that's all?" asked Sir James, still on the telephone. "And how long has this been known? ... Yes, of course, the police are. But the servants? The news must be all over the place down there by now... Well, thanks for let-

ting me know, Bunner. Goodbye."

Sir James put down the telephone and picked up a railway timetable, looked at it and threw it down angrily just as Figgis and Silver hurried into the room.

"Figgis," he said, "I want you to get this down. Then put it into shape as quick as you can for the *Sun*." Figgis drew up a chair.

"And you, Silver," said Sir James, "tell Jones to get our man on the spot to Marlstone at once. Tell Mr Anthony to hold himself ready for a story that'll knock the town sideways². Oh, and see if you can get Mr Trent on the line."

Sir James turned to Figgis. "Now then, are you ready? Sigsbee Manderson, the rich American banker, has been murdered. He and his wife and two secretaries have been for the past fortnight at the house called White Gables at Marlstone. He bought it four years ago. He and Mrs Manderson have since spent a part of each summer there. Last night he went to bed about half past eleven, just as usual. No one knows when he got up and left the house. He was not missed until this morning. About ten o'clock a gardener found his body lying in the garden near a shed. He had been shot in the head and must have died at once. He hadn't been robbed, but there were marks on his wrists which pointed to a fight having taken place. Dr Stock, of Marlstone, was sent for. The police were soon there but they are saying very little and don't seem to know who killed Sigsbee Manderson."

Sir James finished. "Now," he said to Figgis, "off you

go!" At that point Trent came on the line.

"This is Molloy," said Sir James.

"I know it is," the voice said. "This is Trent. I am in the middle of painting a picture, and you've stopped me."

"Trent," said Sir James, "I want you to do some work for us. Something very bad has happened."

"What?"

"Sigsbee Manderson has been murdered—shot through the head—and they don't know who has done it. They found the body this morning. It happened at his place at Marlstone." Sir James went on to tell Trent the facts of the case. "What do you think of it?" he ended.

"Look here, Molloy," the voice broke out, "the thing may be a case for me, or it may not. We can't tell. It may be hard to find out how he died or it may be as simple as bacon and cheese. He was not robbed, but he may have been killed by a tramp whom he found sleeping in the garden and tried to kick out. It's the sort of thing he would do. Such a murderer might have left the money and not stolen it, just to trick us. I can't say I'm sorry to hear of his death. Not a man like Sigsbee Manderson."

Sir James smiled at the telephone because he had talked Trent into doing what he wanted him to do.

"Come, my boy," he said "Tell me that you want to go and have a look at the case. You know you do. If it's anything you don't want to handle, you're free to drop it. And can you get here soon, say in an hour?"

“I suppose I can,” the voice grumbled. “How much time have I?”

“Good man!” Well, there’s time enough. The only good train of the day went half an hour ago. The next is a slow one, leaving Paddington at twelve o’clock tonight. You could have my fast car, if you like, but you wouldn’t get down in time to do anything tonight.”

“And I’d miss my sleep. No, thanks. The train for me. I like going on the railway, you know. But will your people look out a hotel near where the body was found, and get a room for me?”



“It will be done at once,” said Sir James. “Come here as soon as you can.”

Sir James put down the telephone. He turned to work at his desk again. It wasn't long before he could hear boys rushing down the steps of the building and shouting in the street to sell their newspapers. Each boy carried a lot of newspapers and a big poster with the headline:

MURDER OF SIGSBEE MANDERSON

Sir James smiled to think that his newspaper was the first with the news.

2. Breakfast

At about eight o'clock the next day, Mr Nathaniel Burton Cupples stood just inside the hotel at Marlstone. He was thinking about breakfast. He remembered that on the day before he had eaten much less food than usual. The finding of the body of the dead man had stopped his feeling hungry. This morning he was very hungry, having already been up and about for an hour; and he made up his mind that he would eat another piece of toast and another egg at breakfast.

Mr Cupples liked the beauty of the rocks and the sea and the woods. He was nearly sixty years old, but he looked younger. He had a beard and a moustache. He looked like a parson³ though he was not one. He looked sad, but kind. Until he retired he had worked in a bank; he had no children

and his wife was dead. Just as Mr Cupples was finishing his meal at a little table, a big motor car turned into the drive in front of the hotel.

"Who is this?" he asked the hotel servant.

"It's the manager. He has been to meet a young man who came on the train."

The car stopped near the front door of the hotel and Mr Cupples looked glad to see the young man who stepped from the car and threw his hat on a chair. He had a happy smile; his clothes and his hair were not very tidy.

"Why, it's Cupples," cried the young man before Mr Cupples could get up from his chair. Next he took Mr Cupples's hand in a hard grip.

"My luck is in today," said the young man. "This is my second piece of good luck in an hour. How are you, my best of friends? And why are you here? Why are you sitting beside what's left of your breakfast? I *am* glad to see you."

"I was half expecting you, Trent," answered Mr Cupples, smiling happily. "You're looking very well, my dear friend. I will tell you all about it. But you cannot have had your breakfast yet. Will you have it at my table here?"

"Yes, thank you," said the young man, who was Trent, the young amateur detective. "I want a very big breakfast, too. Will you get them to lay the table for me while I go and wash? I shan't be three minutes." He went into the hotel, and, after a minute's thought, Mr Cupples went to use the telephone.

He came back to find his young friend already sitting down, pouring out tea and showing a clear interest in his food.

"I expect this will be a hard day for me," he said. "I shan't eat again till the evening, I expect. You guess why I'm here, don't you?"

"Yes," said Mr Cupples. "You have come down to write about the murder."

"That's rather a dull way of saying it," Trent said, as he ate his fish. "I should rather say that I have come down here to hunt down the murderer. That's my line. I say, Cupples, I have made a good start already. Wait a bit, and I'll tell you."

There was a silence, while Trent ate quickly and Mr Cupples looked on happily.

"The manager of this hotel," said Trent, "thinks I'm a clever detective. He knows more about my best cases than I do myself. The newspaper, the *Record*, telephoned last night to say I was coming, and when I got out of the train at seven o'clock this morning, there he was waiting for me with a car as big as a haystack."⁵ Trent drank a cup of tea and went on.

"His first words were to ask me if I would like to see the body of the murdered man—if so, he thought he could fix it for me. He is very keen to help me. The body is now in Dr Stock's house, you know, down in the village, looking just the same as it did when it was found. He drove me down

to the doctor's house, telling me all about the case as we went. He had told me all the strange things about it before he showed me the body. He is a friend of the doctor's. The doctor and the policeman let me see the body."

"I also saw the body before it was moved," said Mr Cupples. "I shouldn't have said there was anything strange about it, except that the shot in the eye hadn't made the face look different, and that he had lost very little blood. There were scratches and bruises on the wrists. I expect you, with your sharp eyes, will see other strange things about the body."

"I have seen other things that are strange," said Trent, "but I don't understand them. Take the wrists. How was it you could see bruises and scratches on them? I dare say you had met Sigsbee Manderson here before the murder?"

"Yes," said Mr Cupples.

"Well, did you ever see his wrists?"

Mr Cupples thought. "Now you talk about his wrists," Cupples said, "I remember that he wore stiff cuffs at the end of his shirt-sleeves, and they came well down over his hands."

"He always did, when he was alive," said Trent. "But when I saw the body I couldn't see the cuffs of his sleeves, and they were pulled up inside the sleeves of his coat as though he had put his coat on quickly without putting his shirt on properly. That's why you could see his wrists."

"Do you think," asked Cupples, "that when he got up

out of bed, he put his clothes on in a hurry?"

"Yes, but did he? Sigsbee Manderson always dressed smartly. He was proud of his clothes and liked to look neat. The hotel manager thinks that Manderson got up secretly very early in the morning, before anyone else was awake, and went out into the garden in a great hurry. Because Manderson hadn't tied the laces of his shoes, and because he left his false teeth in his bedroom, the manager thinks he was in a hurry. But I can't understand why he should part his hair so carefully. He did part of his dressing very carefully. He put on all his underclothes, put studs⁶ and cuff-links⁷ in his shirt, put his watch and chain in his pocket, and also his money and keys. But he didn't put his false teeth in, he didn't tie his shoe laces and he didn't put his shirt on properly."

Mr Cupples thought. "Perhaps," he said, "he began to dress slowly, and then hurried at the very end. He would put his coat and shoes on last."

"But he wouldn't put his false teeth in last," Trent said. "You ask anyone who wears them. Also he had not had a wash. This suggests that he was in a great hurry from the start. As I have said, he did some things in a great hurry but he took a lot of care with other things. It's very odd. But for today I am not guessing why he did it. I must find out some other things first." Trent stopped talking and went on with his breakfast.

Mr Cupples smiled at him. "I can help you."

Trent looked up at him in surprise.

"I told you I expected you. I will tell you why. Mrs Manderson, who is my niece —"

"What!" Trent cried, dropping his knife and fork with a bang. "Cupples, you're joking."

"I'm telling the truth," Mr Cupples answered. "Her father was my wife's brother. I never told you I had a niece or who she was married to. I did not like to talk about it, because I hated Sigsbee Manderson. To go back to what I was about to say: last night, when I was over at the house—by the way, you can see it from here. You passed it in the car." He pointed to a red roof among the trees.

"Yes," said Trent, "I passed the house. The hotel manager told me all about it."

"Other people here have heard about how you have found the murderers in other cases," Mr Cupples went on. "As I was saying, when I was over at the house last night, Mr Bunner, who was Manderson's American secretary, said he hoped that the newspaper, the *Record*, would send you down to deal with the case, as the police couldn't understand who had killed him. He talked about cases in the past when you had found the murderer, and Mabel, my niece, was interested when I told her afterwards what Mr Bunner had said. She's very brave about her husband's death and about all the fuss that the newspapers are making. She has begged me to keep newspaper men away from the house as much as I can, but as you are a friend of mine, she said she would like