



Murder on the Orient Express

CHAPTER 8 – extract – www.onyourmarks.org The Armstrong Kidnapping Case

M. Poirot and M. Bouc are discussing the discovery.

“I have discovered the identity of the victim. I know why he had to leave America”, said Poirot.

“Who was he?”

“Do you remember reading of the Armstrong baby? This is the man who murdered little Armstrong. Cassetti.”

“I recall (1) it now. A shocking affair – though (2) I cannot remember the details.”

“Colonel Armstrong was an Englishman, he was half American. He married the daughter of Linda Arden, the most famous tragic American actress of her day. They lived in and had one child – a girl whom they idolized (3). When she was years old, she was kidnapped, and an impossibly high sum (4) demanded as the price of her return. After her parents had paid over the enormous sum of two hundred thousand, the child’s dead body was discovered. And there was worse than that. Mrs Armstrong was expecting (5) another Following the shock of the discovery she gave birth (6) prematurely to a dead child, and herself died. Her broken-hearted shot himself (7)..”

“Mon Dieu, what a tragedy, I remember now,” said M. Bouc. “There was another death if I remember rightly?”

“Yes, an unfortunate French or Swiss nursemaid. The police were convinced that she had some knowledge (8) of the crime. They refused to believe in her hysterical denials. Finally, in a fit of despair (9) the poor girl threw from a window and was killed. It was proved afterwards that she had been absolutely innocent.”

“It is not good to think of,” said M. Bouc.

“After six months this man Cassetti was arrested. But because he was rich, he was acquitted. He changed his and left America. Since then he has been a gentleman travelling abroad and living on his rentes.”

“Ah, quel animal!”, M. Bouc said.

“The question now is : is this murder the work of some rival gang or is it an act of private vengeance ?”

“Are there any members of the Armstrong family living?,” asked M. Bouc.

“That,, I do not know,” M. Poirot answered.



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CHAPTER 8 – worksheet – www.onyourmarks.org The Armstrong Kidnapping Case

NOTES on the EXTRACT

- (1) recall = remember (se rappeler) (2) though = although : bien que
 (3) idolize : adorer (4) sum : somme d'argent (5) expect : attendre un enfant
 (6) give birth to : donner naissance à (7) shoot oneself : se tuer avec une arme
 (8) knowledge : connaissance (9) in a fit of despair : dans un accès de désespoir

ACTIVITY 01 Complete the text with these words

unfortunately - herself - three - Daisy - dollars - husband - name - baby – America

ACTIVITY 02 Match the 2 parts of the sentence

a It seemed probable that Ratchett was killed	1 a woman's handkerchief.
b One of them was probably a woman	2 and murdered a child called Daisy Armstrong.
c Also, M. Bouc found	3 by more than one person.
d The other killer was possibly a man	4 with some words on it.
e Then Dr Constantine believed Ratchett's watch	5 because Poirot found a pipe-cleaner.
f But Poirot wasn't convinced by these clues	6 because some wounds were slight.
g Then he found a piece of burnt paper	7 that the dead man was Cassetti.
h The words revealed to Poirot	8 showed the time of the murder.
i In America Cassetti had kidnapped	9 because they could be false.

ACTIVITY 03 Find 9 adjectives and match them to their opposites in the list

c a r e f u l k i x t p	long	_____
n d g m h p t w q f j o	genuine	_____
v o b s c u r e l t p o	old	_____
w s n q k x y o z x u r	huge	_____
z f e b s h o r t d g i	rich	_____
f a h n j m q o v w r k	careless	_____
t l j e n s c z k x v b	famous	<u>obscure</u>
y s u w z m o d e r n q	old-fashioned	_____
d e m k g h a t x u r w	dead	_____
p f h l c y d g k t z p		
w a f q m s v a l i v e		
s m a l l r b d f h k v		