



ESL Podcast 62 – Missing Persons (2)

GLOSSARY

amateur detective – a person who solves crimes during his or her free time or as a hobby, not as part of his or her job

* The amateur detective in this movie is a truck driver who travels from city to city and solves crimes.

security agency – a company that provides protection and guard services for people or places, making sure that no crimes or other bad behavior occurs

* We hired a security agency to be there when the expensive painting is transported from one museum to another.

cop – police officer; policeman or policewoman; police detective

* It's comforting to see cops walking around these dangerous streets where children have to walk to school.

trick – something done to fool others for fun; something done to deceive others, usually done as a joke

* The children played a trick on the new teacher by putting a frog in his desk.

to be treated like – to have others behave toward one as though something is true, even though it may not be

* Don't treat me like an idiot! I know how to drive my own car.

to be arrested – for the police to officially take one to the police station because one is believed to have committed a crime

* Has anyone been arrested for committing the three bank robberies last month?

to be convicted – for a court of law to decide that one has committed a crime; to be found guilty of committing a crime

* When Leonora was 18 years old, she was arrested for reckless driving, but with the help of a clever lawyer, she was never convicted.

criminal record – an official police listing of crimes one has been convicted of or found guilty of

* You won't be able to become an elementary school teacher if you have a criminal record.

bodyguard – a person whose job is to protect another person so that no harm is done to him or her; a person hired to protect famous or very important people

* Rock stars sometimes travel with several bodyguards to discourage fans from touching or hurting them in their excitement.



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buff – enthusiast; a person who is very interested in and knows a lot about a specific topic

* Minnie is a comic book buff and knows all about superheroes and films made about them.

to take a look around – to search or look around a location to see if there is anything of interest to one

* We took a look around the car dealership, but didn't find a car that would be big enough for our family of 10.

stranger – a person whom one does not know; a person who is not familiar to one

* The children know not to open the door to strangers if no adults are home.

fancy – elaborate; with many parts; with a lot of functions or decorations

* Rebecca wants a simple wedding dress, not the fancy ones she saw at the store with too much lace and too many buttons.

stereo – equipment used to listen to music, usually with large speakers that produce sound so that many people can hear it

* Turn up the stereo! This is a party!

balding – beginning to lose the hair on one's head; with some of one's hair lost from one's head

* Jake is balding, while his twin brother has a full head of hair.



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CULTURE NOTE

The Classic Hero Zorro

Zorro was created by the writer Johnston McCulley. He wrote his first of many stories about Zorro in 1919. The story was called “The Curse of Capistrano.” (A “curse” is something you say to get a supernatural force to do harm to someone you don’t like, and Capistrano is a place.) It was a “serialized story” (with each part of the story published in the next issue of a magazine or newspaper, until the entire story is told) in a “pulp magazine” (inexpensive magazine printed on thin, cheap paper) called All-Story Weekly. The story was later published as a “novella” (short novel; short fiction book) in 1924 with the title The Mask of Zorro.

Zorro is a “native Californian” (born in California). He lived in “present-day” (what is known as now, but not back then) Los Angeles when it was still part of Mexico. Zorro’s real name in the original stories was Diego de la Vega, and he was a “nobleman” (man whose family has a high and respected position in society). He “adopted” (took; got) a secret identity so he could “anonymously” (without anyone knowing who he is) “avenge” (hurt someone in return for some harm he/she had done) people who were too weak to do it themselves, help people who were “oppressed” (suffering under the power of someone else), and punish bad and “cruel” (causing pain and suffering) politicians.

Zorro has been featured in many stories, books, films, TV shows, and radio dramas, and his character has changed since his introduction in 1919. However, what has not changed is the focus on his amazing skills. He is an incredible “acrobat,” able to jump, flip, and “seemingly” (seem to; appear to) fly from building to building and jump from great “heights” (high or tall places). He is a “master” (with great skill) “swordsmen” (a man who uses a “sword” (similar to a very long knife) to fight) and “marksman” (someone who is able to shoot a gun very well). Not only that, he was also a great “tactician,” able to carefully plan actions to defeat his enemy.



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COMPLETE TRANSCRIPT

Welcome to English as a Second Language Podcast number 62 – Missing Person, Part 2: “Beer and Cigarettes.”

This is English as a Second Language Podcast episode 62. I’m your host, Dr. Jeff McQuillan, coming to you from the Center for Educational Development in beautiful Los Angeles, California.

This episode is the second in our 12-part special series: Missing Person, a murder mystery. In part 1, we met Anne Prado, a student at the University of Southwestern California in Los Angeles. Anne has a sister, Sarah Salas, but for some reason Anne can’t locate or find her sister. She appears to have disappeared, or is missing.

Anne asked her professor, Dr. Reeves, to help her find her sister. The professor and Anne went over to Sarah’s apartment, but before they could get to the door, Dr. Reeves was attacked by another man who started fighting with him. The man eventually ran away. We also learned that Sarah’s husband, Bill, is also missing.

Now, part 2 of Missing Person: “Beer and Cigarettes.”

[start of story]

Some of my students know I’m an amateur detective. Before I became a university professor five years ago, I had a real job. I worked for a security agency that protected private homes and also important people like famous actors and politicians. I learned a lot about criminals. I also learned a lot about police work from my father, who was a cop for 34 years.

I had wanted to become a police officer, too. But that was impossible. I got into some trouble when I was a kid. It was a stupid high school trick, but because I was 18 years old, I was treated like an adult. I was arrested by the police, convicted, and now I have a police record. With a criminal record, I can never be a cop.

I worked for a while as a bodyguard. One of my cases was protecting a famous politician who was also a history buff. He and I became friends, he helped me go to college, and now I am a professor.



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As I said, when Anne came to see me this morning, I told her I would be happy to help. We came over to the apartment building where Sarah and Bill live, and that's when this mysterious man tried to stop us from going in.

"Let's see if we can get into their apartment and take a look around," I suggested.

We walked into the large white building and up to the third floor. Anne got an extra key from the apartment manager so we could get in.

"Apartment number 306, Anne?" I asked her.

"Yes. Here's the key," she answered.

"Let me open the door." I took the key from her. I opened the door very slowly. One thing I learned from my work as a bodyguard: Be careful when opening a stranger's door. You never know what's behind it.

I opened the door slowly. I went in first, making sure everything was okay before Anne followed. The living room was large and full of expensive things: a big-screen television, a fancy stereo, a CD player, two big brown leather chairs, and a comfortable-looking sofa. The living room alone was bigger than my entire apartment.

"My God, it smells like beer and cigarettes in here! Bill and Sarah didn't even smoke," Anne said.

I walked to the back of the apartment and saw myself in the mirror. I am always surprised at how I look: I'm 42 years old, 5 feet 11 inches tall, balding, average weight. But when I see myself in the mirror, I look 3 inches shorter, 5 years older, and 10 pounds heavier.

I checked the windows and the closets on each side of the apartment and went into the bathroom. Then I saw something move.

I quickly turned to Anne and put my hand up in the air, meaning: "Don't move." I put my finger to my lips, telling her to be quiet.

Someone was in the bathroom.

[end of story]



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This episode begins with our narrator – the person telling the story, Dr. Reeves – talking a little bit about his own background. He starts by saying that he’s “an amateur detective.” An “amateur” (amateur) is someone who doesn’t necessarily get paid to do what they do. Someone who gets paid is called a “professional.” A “detective” is someone who tries to find a criminal or tries to find information. Dr. Reeves explains that he has been a university professor for five years.

Before that, he worked for “a security agency that protected private homes” and “important people.” A “security agency” is a company that provides protection for a business or a home or a person. We call someone who works for a security agency a “security guard.” The narrator also says that his father was a police officer for 34 years. The term he uses is “a cop.” A “cop” (cop) is an informal term meaning a police officer, someone working for the police.

Dr. Reeves also wanted to become a police officer, but something happened. He doesn’t tell us exactly what, but he says it was “a stupid high school trick.” A “trick” (trick) is something that you do to someone else, usually something mean, something bad. We don’t know what it was, but because he was 18 years old – which in the United States is the legal age – he was “treated like an adult.” “To treat someone like” is an expression we sometimes use when talking about how we act toward someone. We might say, “Don’t treat me like a child,” meaning don’t act toward me like I’m a child or talk to me like I am a child.

Dr. Reeves was “arrested by the police.” When the police “arrest” you, they put handcuffs on you and take you to the police station – that’s where the police work, in a police station. Dr. Reeves was “convicted” (convicted), meaning he went to a trial in front of a judge and a jury – the group of people who decide if you are innocent or not, if you did the crime or not – and the jury said he was guilty. “To be found guilty” (guilty) is the same as to be convicted. The opposite would be “to be acquitted.” “To be acquitted” means you are found to be innocent, or not guilty.

Now Dr. Reeves has a police record. When we say someone has a “police record” – a “criminal record,” or sometimes we just say “a record” – we mean that they’ve committed some crime, and if you look up that person’s name on the police computer, his name will come up along with the name of his crime. Having a “criminal record” or “police record” means that there are some jobs that you can no longer apply for or get, and becoming a cop, according to Dr. Reeves, is one of those jobs.

The professor explains that he also worked as “a bodyguard.” A “bodyguard” (bodyguard) is very much the same as a security guard, except when we say



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“bodyguard,” we mean someone who is protecting a person instead of a place. So, the president of the United States has bodyguards. We actually call those bodyguards “the Secret Service,” but for regular private citizens it would be a bodyguard.

Dr. Reeves was once the bodyguard for “a famous politician who was also a history buff.” A “buff” (buff) is a person who really likes a particular topic. So, you could be an “art buff,” meaning you like to go and look at art, or a “theater buff,” meaning you like to go to the theater – it’s like being a fan. Now, Dr. Reeves explains, because of this famous person whom he protected, he got interested in history and became a history professor himself.

We then return to the story, to the apartment of the missing couple, Sarah Salas and her husband, Bill. Dr. Reeves suggests to Anne that they go into the apartment and “take a look around.” “To take a look around” can mean to look closely for a particular thing, often in a place that you haven’t been to before. You can also “take a look around” without having something you are looking for; you’re just looking. But here, Dr. Reeves and Anne are looking for clues about what happened to Sarah and Bill.

They go up to the apartment on the third floor. Anne gets the key and gives it to Dr. Reeves. She says, “Here’s the key.” That’s an expression we often use when we give something to someone: “Here’s your pen,” “Here is your . . .” whatever it happens to be. With the key, Dr. Reeves opens the door – very slowly, because it is “a stranger’s door.” A “stranger” is someone you don’t know.

The room is full of many expensive things, including “a big-screen television” – a television with a large screen – and “a fancy stereo.” Something that’s “fancy” is something that, in this case, is expensive. It has a lot of additional features and can do many different things – that would be something that is fancy. A “stereo” here just means a radio, probably with a CD and MP3 player. Anne says that it “smells like beer and cigarettes” in the apartment, and she points out that Bill and Sarah didn’t smoke.

The episode ends with Dr. Reeves going into the back of the apartment and mentioning how he looks in the mirror. He says that he’s 42 years old, 5 feet 11 inches – and that’s how we say how tall we are: we say, “I’m 6 feet 3 inches” or “I’m 6 feet 3 inches tall” – they mean the same thing. That’s just an example. I am not actually 6 feet 3 inches tall, although since you can’t see me, I could say that I was and you wouldn’t know the difference, would you?



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Dr. Reeves says that he's "balding." "To be balding" (balding) means that you're losing your hair. He checks the windows and the closets in the apartment and then begins to go into the bathroom. But he stops because he sees something move. He then turns to Anne and puts his hand up in the air. So, he takes his hand and indicates for Anne to stop. Then he puts his finger to his lips, indicating that she should be quiet. Why? Because someone is in the bathroom.

Now let's listen to the story, this time at a normal speed.

[start of story]

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[end of story]

In the next episode of Missing Person, we’ll find out what they discover in the bathroom. Be sure to come back for part 3: “A Woman in Pain.”

From Los Angeles, California, I’m Jeff McQuillan. Thanks for listening. Come back and listen to us again here on ESL Podcast.

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