



ESL Podcast 65 – Missing Persons (5)

GLOSSARY

to make a/the drop – to place money in a secret place as agreed or instructed, usually for illegal purposes

* If you don't want anyone to know your secret, make a drop of \$5,000 under the bench in the park at noon tomorrow.

to make (something) crystal clear – to be completely clear or plain about something, leaving no possibility for doubts

* Mom made it crystal clear that if the house isn't clean when she gets home, we won't be allowed to go camping this weekend.

to hand over – to reluctantly give someone something you have or own; to give someone something even though you don't want to

* When Paulina drank too much wine at the restaurant, she had no choice but to hand over her car keys to her friend to drive her home.

geez – an exclamation showing surprise or frustration

* Geez, aren't you guys done yet? How long does it take to finish one soccer match?

pile of cash – a large amount of cash; a substantial amount of money

* Monica won a pile of cash betting on last night's baseball game.

to comfort – to do or say things to someone who is feeling bad to make them feel better

* When Carla didn't get the job she wanted, her boyfriend comforted her by making her dinner and being extra nice to her.

to come up with – to think of; to produce; to create

* We need to come up with some new ideas to sell these products that no one wants to buy!

to get a list down to – to reduce the number of possibilities to a smaller number; to eliminate some from a list so that there are fewer in number

* We had 12 applicants, but after looking at their resumes, we got the list down to four.

prime suspect – the main person one suspects of committing a crime, though his or her guilt has not yet been proven or shown

* The prime suspect in the murder is the man's wife.



ESL Podcast 65 – Missing Persons (5)

ex-employee – a worker one had employed in the past, but no longer works for one; a former employee

* Ex-employees are not allowed in the factory, even if they are only there to say hello to former co-workers.

rest – stopping work and relaxing so that one's body can recover or feel better again

* After three hours of digging and pulling weeds in the garden, we need some rest.

funny feeling – an uncomfortable thought that bothers one, telling one that something is not right and that something bad may happen in the future

* Jemima had a funny feeling about the phone call she received last night telling her that she had won money in a contest she doesn't remember entering.



ESL Podcast 65 – Missing Persons (5)

CULTURE NOTE

The Rise of Internet Programs

In the old days, if you wanted to watch a television show or a movie at home, you turned on your television. First, there were “network channels,” which everyone got if they owned a TV. Then came “cable television” that allowed many more channels to be seen through the TV. More recently, people are watching TV shows and movies through their Internet service.

Internet-based “content” (materials; programs) “exploded” (become very big, very popular) in the early 2010’s. People who wanted to watch TV shows and movies could now see them through their Internet services “on demand” (when they want them) and often weeks, months, or years after their original “broadcast” (showing on TV) or “release” (showing in movie theaters). This was made simpler as it became easier to watch these programs right on television screens, not just on a computer screen.

In the early 2010’s, Internet companies began to “green light” (give permission to begin a project) and “finance” (pay for) original “series” (programs with many episodes or shows) that people could pay to watch through their Internet service. Companies like Netflix, a very popular video rental company in the U.S., and Amazon had traditionally been resellers, businesses that took other people’s products and sold them. Beginning in the early 2010’s, they began “commissioning” (giving permission and money to make) original programs.

They had some early successes. That’s not surprising, especially since these companies had “invested” (put money into something with the expectation of earning money) big in Internet shows, with some shows costing \$1 million per episode to “produce” (make). By comparison, network shows cost about \$2 million to produce, but the Internet shows had the look and feel of “major productions” (high-quality projects). Only time will tell how future generations will get their entertainment, perhaps in ways none of us can imagine right now.



ESL Podcast 65 – Missing Persons (5)

COMPLETE TRANSCRIPT

Welcome to English as a Second Language Podcast number 65 – Missing Person, Part 5: “No Police.”

This is English as a Second Language Podcast episode 65. 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 fifth of our 12-part special series: Missing Person, a murder mystery. In our previous episode, Dr. Reeves and his student Anne Prado met with Bill. Bill is Anne’s brother-in-law. We learned that Bill’s wife, Sarah – who is Anne’s sister – has been kidnapped and that the kidnappers are demanding a large ransom: \$500,000. Bill said that both he and his wife were kidnapped, but that the kidnappers let him go so he could get the ransom money for his wife.

Now, we continue with part 5 of Missing Person: “No Police.”

[start of story]

“When does he want the money?” I asked.

“Tomorrow. He said he would call me this afternoon and tell me where to make the drop,” Bill said. “He also made it crystal clear that we are not to call the police. If I don’t hand over the money by the deadline, he said he’s going to kill Sarah!” Bill put his face in his hands. He turned to Anne, “Geez, Anne, I don’t know what to do!”

“We’ll get the money, Bill, don’t worry!” Anne said. “You know that my parents left Sarah and me a lot of money when they died.” Anne put her hand on Bill’s shoulder.

Anne and Sarah’s parents had owned a very large computer company in Los Angeles, Prado Computers, Incorporated. When they died a few years ago, Mr. and Mrs. Prado left their two daughters a very large pile of cash. That’s how Anne got the money to go to USC and how she could afford her cell phone, her Mercedes, and her apartment on the beach.

While Anne and Bill comforted each other, I called the young waitress over and asked for another iced tea. She wasn’t very friendly, but then most waitresses in L.A. aren’t. They all really want to be actresses.



ESL Podcast 65 – Missing Persons (5)

Drinking my tea and thinking about the case, the thought occurred to me that the kidnapper must know Anne and Sarah or at least know that they had a lot of money and could get it quickly.

“I know this is a difficult time, Bill,” I interrupted, “but I need to ask you and Anne a few questions. Does your family have any enemies? Anyone who might want to hurt you?” Anne looked at Bill, and they both began to think.

The two of them spent the next 20 minutes coming up with a list of people who might want to harm them. They got the list down to two prime suspects, both of whom used to work for the Prado Computer business before they were fired. They gave me the names of the two ex-employees.

“This will be a good place for me to start,” I told them. “Now, you two need to get some rest. I’ll drive you both back to Bill’s apartment.”

“No, Dr. Reeves, I want to go with you!” Anne insisted. I found it very hard to say no, but I had to. I needed time to be alone and to get some advice from an old friend.

“I’m really sorry, Anne,” I apologized, “but you need to rest and I need time to look into these names you gave me.”

“No police!” Bill quickly added.

“Don’t worry, Bill,” I told him, “there’ll be no police involved. Not yet, anyway.”

The three of us got up and started walking toward my car. I had a funny feeling that there was more to this mystery than any of us thought.

[end of story]

Our episode begins with Dr. Reeves, the narrator of the story, asking Bill when the kidnappers want the money. Bill replies, “Tomorrow,” and says that the kidnappers will tell him “where to make the drop.” “To make the drop” means to leave the money. The term “drop” (drop) is used by both criminals and police to mean money or information or something that is being left for someone else to pick up. So, the kidnappers will tell Bill “where to make the drop,” meaning where to leave the money.

Bill says that the kidnappers “made it crystal clear” that they were not to call the police. “To make something crystal clear” means to make it very clear, so there is



ESL Podcast 65 – Missing Persons (5)

no misunderstanding. A “crystal” (crystal) is a rock that is like a piece of glass that you can see through. So, “crystal clear” means very clear. Bill says that if he doesn’t “hand over the money by the deadline,” the kidnapper is going to kill Sarah. “To hand over” here means “to give.” It is usually used in situations in which you don’t really want to give the other person the money or whatever it is they want. So, if a robber tells you, “Hand over all your money,” it means “Give me all your money,” even if you don’t want to.

Bill then turns to Anne and says, “Geez Anne, I don’t know what to do.” The expression “geez” (geez) is one of those expressions you might use when you’re confused or you’re upset or maybe you’re mad. For example, you might say, “Geez, I just missed my train this morning,” or “Geez, I wish I had seen that movie last weekend.”

Anne tells Bill that he shouldn’t worry about the money, because Sarah and Anne’s parents had left them a lot of money when they died. Our narrator, Dr. Reeves, then explains that Anne and Sarah’s parents had owned a computer company in Los Angeles, and when they died, they left their two daughters “a very large pile of cash.” “Cash,” of course, is money, and a “large pile” would mean a lot of money. A “pile” (pile) is a stack – when you put one thing on top of another. You can pile things up. You can have a pile of paper, which would be many papers on top of each other. And when you say someone has a “pile of cash,” you mean they have a lot of money.

Anne and Bill then comfort each other. “To comfort” someone is to talk to them, to sympathize with them, to try to help them. Dr. Reeves, meanwhile, asks the waitress for another iced tea. While he is drinking his tea, he says, “The thought occurred to me that the kidnappers must know Anne and Sarah.” The expression “the thought occurred to me” is another way of saying, “I thought.” It is a little more complicated way of saying the same thing. “The thought occurred to me that I should go on vacation.” That would be the same as “I think I should go on vacation.” I do actually think I should go on vacation.

Dr. Reeves then asks Anne and Bill to think of any enemies they might have, people who might want to hurt them. Anne and Bill spend the next 20 minutes “coming up with a list of people.” “To come up with” something means to think about a problem or puzzle for a long time and then write or say whatever solutions you thought of. For example, “Come up with five people whom you really want to meet” means think about it and then either tell me or write down the names of those five people. You can also say, “I came up with the answer,” meaning you thought of the answer after thinking about it for a while.



ESL Podcast 65 – Missing Persons (5)

After making their list of people, Anne and Bill “got the list down to two prime suspects.” “To get something down to” means to reduce it, to make it less. “At the Italian restaurant, I wanted to order lasagna and pizza and raviolis, but I couldn’t order all three, so I got it down to two choices: the pizza or the ravioli.” “To get something down to” means to reduce the number of something.

“Prime suspect” is a term we use for someone who has probably committed a crime or done something wrong. A “suspect” (suspect) is someone who we think might have committed the crime. And the word “prime” (prime) here means the number one or the most likely suspect. The two prime suspects in this case are “ex-employees” or former employees – people who used to work for Prado Computer, Incorporated. These two people had been “fired” from the company. “To be fired” means to be told to leave your job, to be told that you can no longer work there.

Dr. Reeves tells Anne and Bill that they “need to get some rest.” Notice that “rest” is used here as a noun and not as a verb. You could tell someone, “You need to rest,” and in that case “rest” would be a verb. But you could also say, as Dr. Reeves does, “You need to get some rest,” meaning you haven’t had enough rest and therefore, you need to rest more. Anne wants to go with Dr. Reeves, but Dr. Reeves says, “You need to get some rest and I need to look into these names you gave me.” Bill then adds, “No police,” meaning no police should be involved. Dr. Reeves agrees and says, “Not yet, anyway.”

At the end of the episode, Dr. Reeves says, “I had a funny feeling that there was more to this mystery than any of us thought.” “To have a funny feeling” means to suspect or to think that there is something wrong. “I have a funny feeling that my neighbor is taking some of my roses at night,” meaning I suspect that this is what is happening. I don’t know for sure, but that’s what I’m thinking. The expression “more to this mystery than any of us thought” means there is something else going on here, something more that we don’t know about yet.

On the next episode of Missing Person, we’ll meet a friend of Dr. Reeves who will try to help him to solve or to find the answer to this crime.

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

[start of story]

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ESL Podcast 65 – Missing Persons (5)

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ESL Podcast 65 – Missing Persons (5)

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[end of story]

On the next episode of Missing Person, we’ll meet a friend of Dr. Reeves who will try to help him solve the mystery. Be sure to come back for part 6: “Kathy (Again).”

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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