



## ESL Podcast 68 – Missing Persons (8)

### GLOSSARY

**ambulance** – an emergency vehicle with a large enclosed space in the back to transport people who are injured to the hospital

\* The man injured in the car accident was taken to the hospital in an ambulance.

**victim** – a person who is harmed, hurt, or killed as a result of an accident, crime, or other action

\* The newspaper reported that there were five victims in last night's big storm that destroyed over 20 homes.

**to hurry up** – to move more quickly so that a task can be completed faster

\* Hurry up so we can get to the movie theater before all of the tickets for this showing are sold out!

**softly** – quietly; in a low voice; gently

\* Mona's mother spoke softly to Mona to calm her down after she had a bad dream.

**buddy** – a term used for a man whom one doesn't know or whom one doesn't know well

\* Hey, buddy, what are you doing in this building after business hours?

**pay phone** – a public telephone that anyone can use by putting money into it

\* Pay phones usually allow local and long distance calls as long as a caller has enough money.

**car registration** – the official government record of one's ownership of a car so that one can drive it legally

\* Elena's car registration expired last month, so she can't legally drive her car until she renews it.

**bartender** – a person whose job is to serve alcohol and other drinks from behind a bar area with a high counter, with customers on one side and the bartender on the other

\* It's hard to get the bartender's attention to order our drinks when there are so many people standing around.

**Las Vegas** – a city in the state of Nevada where many people go to gamble (play games of chance) and for other forms of entertainment

\* Why don't we go to Las Vegas this weekend to do some gambling and to see a show?



---

**ESL Podcast 68 – Missing Persons (8)**

---

**suspicion** – a feeling or thought that something may be possible or true

\* Mina's suspicion that her boyfriend was dating another woman turned out to be true.

**voice mail** – a telephone system that allows callers to leave a voice message if no one answers the call

\* I've called Gwendolyn three times to get the information she promised me, but I only get her voice mail each time.



---

**ESL Podcast 68 – Missing Persons (8)**

---

**CULTURE NOTE**

**A Remarkable Memory**

There is something very “remarkable” (unique and interesting) about a woman named Jill Price. She published a “memoir” (book about her own life) called The Woman Who Can’t Forget in 2008.

Jill Price is a 42-year-old woman who can remember every day of her life. She can remember what “day of the week” (whether it is Monday, Tuesdays, Wednesday, etc.) it was, what the weather was like that day, and what she did during that day.

A “neurobiologist” (a scientist who studies how messages move around people’s bodies, such as from the brain to the arms and legs) “studied” (researched) Price for five years. He gave her a lot of tests and “determined” (came to the conclusion; decided) that she was not “faking it” (pretending; saying that she is something that she is not) and truly had this incredible “memory” (ability to remember).

In Prices’ memoir, she wrote that she couldn’t decide whether her ability is a “blessing” (something to be thankful for) or a “curse” (something that causes a lot of pain and suffering). She can remember the details of all of the good times, but she can also remember all of the bad times, too.

She wrote in her book:

Imagine being able to remember every fight you ever had with a friend, every time someone “let you down” (did not do something they were supposed to do or that they promised to do), all the stupid mistakes you’ve ever made.



---

**ESL Podcast 68 – Missing Persons (8)**

---

**COMPLETE TRANSCRIPT**

Welcome to English as a Second Language Podcast number 68 – Missing Person, Part 8: “Tracing the Plates.”

This is English as a Second Language Podcast episode 68. 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 eighth in our 12-part special series: Missing Person, a murder mystery. In our previous episode, our narrator – Dr. Reeves – was having dinner at the apartment of his friend and ex-girlfriend, Kathy. He told Kathy about the case of the missing woman, Sarah Prado, and said that he had two suspects: two ex-employees of the company that Sarah and Anne Prado’s parents used to own.

After leaving Kathy’s apartment, Dr. Reeves decided to go and talk to one of the ex-employees at a club – a bar – near the airport. As he was driving to the airport, however, he heard on his police scanner, or police radio, a message about a car accident on the freeway involving his student, Anne Prado.

Now, we continue with part 8 of Missing Person: “Tracing the Plates.”

[start of story]

“Be careful! She might have broken bones,” the ambulance driver yelled.

I arrived at the accident scene just a few minutes after the police. Anne was already in the ambulance and ready to go to the hospital.

“Wait just one second,” I said to the police officer closing the back door of the ambulance. “I’m a friend of the victim. Can I talk to her?”

“Okay, go ahead,” she said, “but hurry up.”

“Thanks.” I turned and looked at Anne. She had hurt her arm and leg, but she was awake and able to speak. “Anne,” I said softly. “Anne, it’s me, Dr. Reeves.”

Anne opened her eyes slowly. “Dr. Reeves, wha – what are you doing here?”

“I heard about the accident on my police scanner. Anne, what happened?”



---

**ESL Podcast 68 – Missing Persons (8)**

---

“A . . . a car . . . red car . . . going very fast . . . hit me. Hit me from behind . . . tried to kill me . . .” It was difficult for her to talk.

“A red car, Anne?” I asked, hoping to get more information. “Did you see the driver?”

“No . . . didn’t see . . . but . . . I got the license plate . . . 3XZW . . . 4 . . . 5 . . . 1,” she said, running out of breath.

“Anne, that’s wonderful! Good work!”

“Thanks, Dr. Reeves.” She smiled a little and touched my hand softly.

“Okay, buddy, you’ll have to go now,” the policewoman yelled. “She needs to get to the hospital.”

I jumped out of the ambulance and it drove away. I got back in my car and drove to the nearest pay phone. I had to find out who owned that car.

“Hello, police department? Yes, get me Officer Cho.” Cho was an old friend of mine. When I needed a favor, he was always willing to help.

“Cho? This is Darren Reeves. Yeah, look, I need some information on a car registration. License number 3XZW451 . . . right, I’ll call you back in an hour. Thanks, Cho. You’re the best.”

It was now 7:45 p.m. and I still needed to talk to one of the ex-employees of Prado Computers who worked at a bar near the airport. I drove down the freeway and arrived about 20 minutes later.

When I got to the bar, I walked inside. It smelled of old beer, old cigarettes, and old men. I sat down at the bar and ordered a drink. I was here to speak to Lenny MacKay, an ex-employee of Prado Computers.

“Excuse me, bartender,” I said to the man serving the drinks, “I’m looking for Lenny, Lenny MacKay.”

“I never heard of Lenny MacKay,” he answered very quickly. “You got the wrong place. There ain’t no Lenny MacKay working here.”

I looked into his eyes, and I knew he was lying.



---

**ESL Podcast 68 – Missing Persons (8)**

---

I got up from the bar and walked to the back of the place. There was a door to the left. The door had a sign on it that said, "DO NOT ENTER." I entered.

"Hey!" A man yelled at me as I went into the back room. "Who are you?"

"I'm looking for Lenny MacKay. Are you Lenny?"

"Yeah, I'm Lenny. Now who are you?" he replied.

"My name's Reeves. Look, I'm not here to waste your time. I just want to ask you a few questions. Now, where were you two days ago at about 8:30 in the morning?"

"I was in Las Vegas with my girlfriend. Ask her. She'll tell you that I was with her."

I believed Lenny when he told me that he was in Vegas, but I needed to be sure. "Who's your girlfriend? What's her name?" I asked.

"Her name is Tanya. She's working here tonight. You can ask her!"

I walked over to a table and found a girl sitting by herself, drinking a beer. "Are you Tanya?" I asked.

"Yeah, I'm Tanya. What do you want, bud?"

"I just have a quick question for you: Where were you two days ago?"

"Who wants to know?"

"I'm investigating a girl who's gone missing, and I just want to clear someone of suspicion, that's all."

"I was in Las Vegas with my boyfriend, Lenny. Lenny MacKay."

"That's all I needed to know. Thanks." I walked out of the bar and got back into my car. As usual, Kathy was right: Lenny wasn't involved in the kidnapping.

I got back on the freeway and drove to my apartment. It was now 10:30 p.m. and I was tired. I needed to sleep before I could continue my investigation. As soon as I got into my apartment, I checked my voice mail for messages. There was only one. It was from a man with a very deep voice.



## ESL Podcast 68 – Missing Persons (8)

The message was short but very clear: “Darren Reeves, stop trying to find Sarah Salas! If you don’t stop looking for her now, you will die!”

[end of story]

The title of this episode is “Tracing the Plates.” “Plates” (plates) here refers to the license plates on a car. “To trace (trace) the plates” means to talk to the police, who can then find out who the car belongs to by looking up the license plate number on a computer.

As Dr. Reeves arrives at the scene of the accident on the freeway, the ambulance driver yells, “Be careful! She may have broken bones.” An “ambulance” (ambulance) is a truck that transports people who are sick or hurt and need to get to the hospital right away. It “transports” them, meaning it takes them there. Most cities in the United States have an ambulance system. Usually the ambulances have what are called “paramedics.” A “paramedic” (paramedic) is not a doctor, but someone who is trained to help sick or injured people until they can get to the hospital.

Dr. Reeves asks the police officer if he can talk to Anne, saying, “I’m a friend of the victim.” A “victim” (victim) is someone who has had something bad happen to them, such as a crime. You can also be a victim of a natural disaster like a hurricane or an earthquake. The police officer says, “Go ahead, but hurry up.” “To hurry up” means to do something quickly. Dr. Reeves says softly to Anne, “Anne it’s me.” To say something “softly” is to lower your voice, to speak in a quiet voice like this. Dr. Reeves asks Anne what happened, and Anne tells him that a red car going very fast hit her “from behind,” meaning it hit the back of her car.

Anne was lucky enough to get the license plate number of the car that hit her, and she gives the number to Dr. Reeves. The policewoman then tells Dr. Reeves that he has to go. She says, “Okay buddy, you’ll have to go now.” “Buddy” (buddy) is a word used to refer to a guy or a man. Technically, a “buddy” is a friend, but people also use it with strangers, like when we say, “Hey, buddy!” It often has a slight negative connotation or negative meaning when it’s used like that. Dr. Reeves says that he “jumped out of the ambulance and it drove away.” “To jump out of the ambulance” means to get out of the ambulance very quickly.

He then makes a call from a pay phone. A “pay phone” is not a very common thing anymore. It’s a public telephone where you can pay to make a call. There are still pay phones in the United States, but because almost everyone has a cell phone now, they’re not as popular. Dr. Reeves calls the police department and



## ESL Podcast 68 – Missing Persons (8)

tells the operator, “Get me Officer Cho,” meaning “I want to talk to Officer Cho. Put him on the line.” Because he is a police officer, he is called “Officer Cho.” If I were a police officer, I would be called “Officer McQuillan.” I’m not a police officer, of course.

Dr. Reeves says that he needs “some information on a car registration.” “Car registration” means who the car is registered to. In the United States, you have to register any car you own. So, there is a record – there’s a file – with your name and your car’s license plate number. Dr. Reeves tells Officer Cho that he’ll call him back in an hour. At the end of the conversation, he tells Officer Cho, “You’re the best!” meaning “You’re great. You are the best at what you do.”

Dr. Reeves then goes to the bar by the airport. He goes into the bar and talks to the bartender. A “bartender” (bartender) – all one word – is the person who works behind the bar serving drinks. He asks the bartender if he knows Lenny McKay, and the bartender says, “I never heard of Lenny MacKay. . . . There ain’t no Lenny McKay working here.” The expression “there ain’t no” is an informal expression. It means the same as “there isn’t any,” but the word “ain’t” is very informal and not something you should use at work or at school.

Well, Dr. Reeves doesn’t believe the bartender, so he goes over to a door with a sign that says “DO NOT ENTER” and he opens the door. “Do not enter” means “Do not go in,” but Dr. Reeves opens the door anyway, and he finds Lenny McKay. He asks Lenny where he was two days ago at 8:30 in the morning, and Lenny says that he was in Las Vegas with his girlfriend. “Las (Las) Vegas (Vegas)” is a big city in the state of Nevada where people go to gamble. Dr. Reeves says, “I believed Lenny when he told me that he was in Vegas.” Sometimes, as Dr. Reeves does here, we call Las Vegas simply “Vegas.” “He was in Vegas” is the same as saying “He was in Las Vegas.”

Dr. Reeves decides to check Lenny’s story by talking to Lenny’s girlfriend, Tanya. Tanya responds, “What do you want, bud?” “Bud” (bud) here is the same as “buddy.” It is a shortened form of buddy, and it’s not a very polite thing to say – it has a somewhat negative meaning. Dr. Reeves asks where she was two days ago, and she says, “Who wants to know?” Again, that is a not very polite and somewhat challenging thing to say. You might say that to someone when you don’t want to give them much information about yourself.

Dr. Reeves explains that he’s “investigating a girl who’s gone missing.” “To go missing” means to be missing, to be lost, to have disappeared. He says he wants to “clear someone of suspicion.” “Suspicion” (suspicion) is when you think that someone is guilty of doing something wrong, and “to clear someone of suspicion”



---

**ESL Podcast 68 – Missing Persons (8)**

---

means to provide evidence or proof that they didn't do anything wrong. Tanya says that she was in Las Vegas with her boyfriend, Lenny, and Dr. Reeves thanks her and then decides to drive home.

When he gets home, he checks his voice mail. "Voice mail" is where you can leave someone a telephone message. Dr. Reeves has only one message, from "a man with a very deep voice" – meaning a very low voice – who tells him to stop trying to find Sarah Salas, and that if he doesn't, he will die.

On the next episode of Missing Person, Dr. Reeves investigates another one of his suspects.

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

[start of story]

"Be careful! She might have broken bones," the ambulance driver yelled.

I arrived at the accident scene just a few minutes after the police. Anne was already in the ambulance and ready to go to the hospital.

"Wait just one second," I said to the police officer closing the back door of the ambulance. "I'm a friend of the victim. Can I talk to her?"

"Okay, go ahead," she said, "but hurry up."

"Thanks." I turned and looked at Anne. She had hurt her arm and leg, but she was awake and able to speak. "Anne," I said softly. "Anne, it's me, Dr. Reeves."

Anne opened her eyes slowly. "Dr. Reeves, wha – what are you doing here?"

"I heard about the accident on my police scanner. Anne, what happened?"

"A . . . a car . . . red car . . . going very fast . . . hit me. Hit me from behind . . . tried to kill me . . ." It was difficult for her to talk.

"A red car, Anne?" I asked, hoping to get more information. "Did you see the driver?"

"No . . . didn't see . . . but . . . I got the license plate . . . 3XZW . . . 4 . . . 5 . . . 1," she said, running out of breath.



---

**ESL Podcast 68 – Missing Persons (8)**

---

“Anne, that’s wonderful! Good work!”

“Thanks, Dr. Reeves.” She smiled a little and touched my hand softly.

“Okay, buddy, you’ll have to go now,” the policewoman yelled. “She needs to get to the hospital.”

I jumped out of the ambulance and it drove away. I got back in my car and drove to the nearest pay phone. I had to find out who owned that car.

“Hello, police department? Yes, get me Officer Cho.” Cho was an old friend of mine. When I needed a favor, he was always willing to help.

“Cho? This is Darren Reeves. Yeah, look, I need some information on a car registration. License number 3XZW451 . . . right, I’ll call you back in an hour. Thanks, Cho. You’re the best.”

It was now 7:45 p.m. and I still needed to talk to one of the ex-employees of Prado Computers who worked at a bar near the airport. I drove down the freeway and arrived about 20 minutes later.

When I got to the bar, I walked inside. It smelled of old beer, old cigarettes, and old men. I sat down at the bar and ordered a drink. I was here to speak to Lenny MacKay, an ex-employee of Prado Computers.

“Excuse me, bartender,” I said to the man serving the drinks, “I’m looking for Lenny, Lenny MacKay.”

“I never heard of Lenny MacKay,” he answered very quickly. “You got the wrong place. There ain’t no Lenny MacKay working here.”

I looked into his eyes, and I knew he was lying.

I got up from the bar and walked to the back of the place. There was a door to the left. The door had a sign on it that said, “DO NOT ENTER.” I entered.

“Hey!” A man yelled at me as I went into the back room. “Who are you?”

“I’m looking for Lenny MacKay. Are you Lenny?”

“Yeah, I’m Lenny. Now who are you?” he replied.



---

**ESL Podcast 68 – Missing Persons (8)**

---

“My name’s Reeves. Look, I’m not here to waste your time. I just want to ask you a few questions. Now, where were you two days ago at about 8:30 in the morning?”

“I was in Las Vegas with my girlfriend. Ask her. She’ll tell you that I was with her.”

I believed Lenny when he told me that he was in Vegas, but I needed to be sure. “Who’s your girlfriend? What’s her name?” I asked.

“Her name is Tanya. She’s working here tonight. You can ask her!”

I walked over to a table and found a girl sitting by herself, drinking a beer. “Are you Tanya?” I asked.

“Yeah, I’m Tanya. What do you want, bud?”

“I just have a quick question for you: Where were you two days ago?”

“Who wants to know?”

“I’m investigating a girl who’s gone missing, and I just want to clear someone of suspicion, that’s all.”

“I was in Las Vegas with my boyfriend, Lenny. Lenny MacKay.”

“That’s all I needed to know. Thanks.” I walked out of the bar and got back into my car. As usual, Kathy was right: Lenny wasn’t involved in the kidnapping.

I got back on the freeway and drove to my apartment. It was now 10:30 p.m. and I was tired. I needed to sleep before I could continue my investigation. As soon as I got into my apartment, I checked my voice mail for messages. There was only one. It was from a man with a very deep voice.

The message was short but very clear: “Darren Reeves, stop trying to find Sarah Salas! If you don’t stop looking for her now, you will die!”

[end of story]

On the next episode of Missing Person, Dr. Reeves investigates another person who may have kidnapped Sarah Salas. Be sure to come back for part 9: “At the Beach.”



English as a Second Language Podcast  
www.eslpod.com

### **ESL Podcast 68 – Missing Persons (8)**

---

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

English as a Second Language Podcast is written and produced by Dr. Lucy Tse, hosted by Dr. Jeff McQuillan. This podcast is copyright 2006.