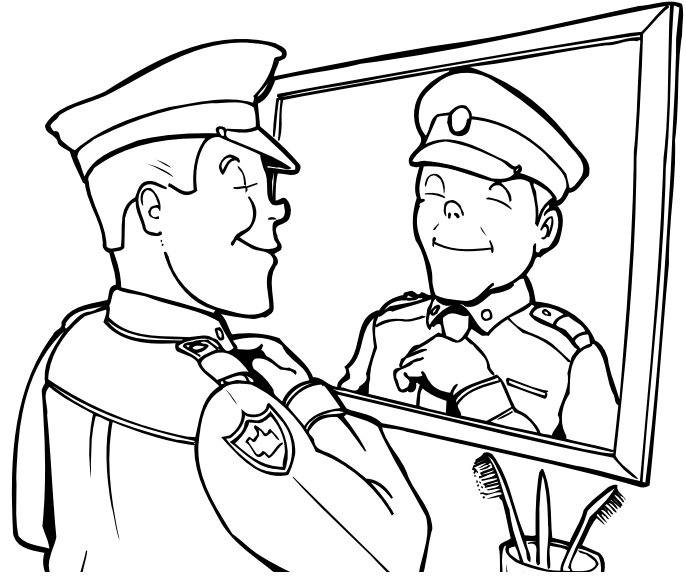


## Why Did He Get Fired?

Matthew Carter was very excited. It was Monday afternoon and he was setting off for the first taste of his new job as a night watchman at Noodlemeyer's Diamond and Jewelry Superstore.



His job was to guard the millions of dollars worth of jewelry in Noodlemeyer's huge safe.

That night he had a terrible dream. He dreamed that safecrackers were digging a tunnel under the building. In his dream, they used state of the art cutting equipment to enter through the floor and clean the safe out completely.

Matthew thought nothing of it, but the next night he had the same dream. It was so graphic that he woke up in a lather of sweat.

He went home and discussed the dreams he had had on successive nights with his wife. She said that it was probably just a coincidence brought on by the excitement of having his new night watchman's job in such a prestigious store.

When, however, he had the same dream on the third night he thought that it must have been a warning. Once

before he had had a dream that had come true. Surely this dream repeating itself three times on consecutive nights was warning him that the superstore was the target of thieves. He felt certain that when he told Mr. Noodlemeyer, he would increase security so that the jewelry would be safe.

He waited for Mr. Noodlemeyer to arrive in the morning and told him how he had experienced the same dream on three consecutive nights. He suggested an increase in security to guard against the threat.

Matthew thought that Mr. Noodlemeyer would be thankful for the warning, but was greatly surprised when he fired him on the spot. 👁

You, the Comprehension Detective, must find out why Mr. Noodlemeyer fired Matthew.

1. Use a dictionary to write a meaning for each word below.

(a) payola \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

(b) alimony \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

(c) scam \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

2. Write short answers to the questions below.

(a) Why was Matthew Carter excited?

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(b) What does a night watchman do?

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(c) At which store did Matthew Carter work?

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(d) What did he have to guard?

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(e) What did Matthew dream?

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(f) How did he feel about the dream at first?

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(g) What happened the next night?

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(h) With whom did he discuss his dream?

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(i) What happened once before when he'd had a dream?

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(j) What did Matthew think Mr. Noodlemeyer might do to ensure his jewelry was safe?

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(k) When did Matthew tell Mr. Noodlemeyer about his dream?

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(l) How did Matthew think Mr. Noodlemeyer would feel for telling him about his dream?

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3. Find words with these meanings in the story.

(a) giving a vivid, lifelike picture \_\_\_\_\_

(b) following one after another \_\_\_\_\_

(c) highly regarded \_\_\_\_\_

(d) a chance happening linked to another recent happening \_\_\_\_\_

4. Being a clever Comprehension Detective, you have probably found out why Mr. Noodlemeyer fired Matthew.

Write the reason in a few sentences. \_\_\_\_\_

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## Where's the Heir?

- Before you read the story, use the dictionary to find the meaning of "intestate." Write the definition here.

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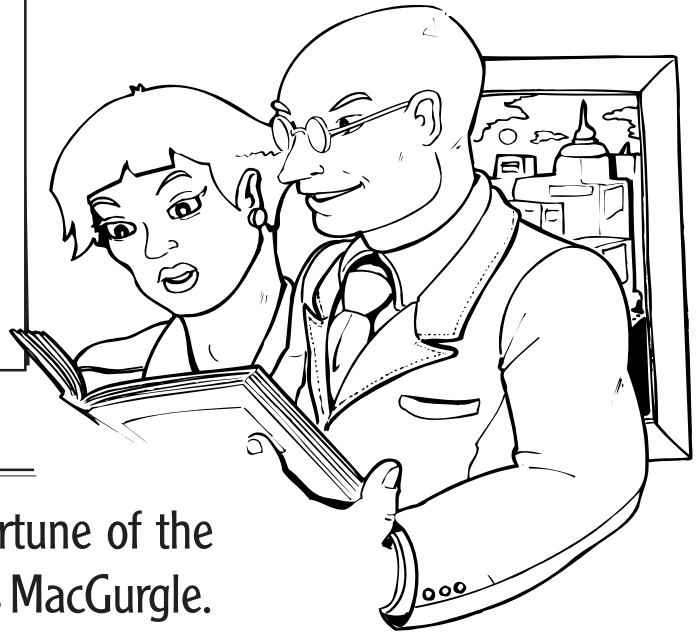
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The hunt was on for the heir to the fortune of the fabulously wealthy Scottish miser, Angus MacGurgle. MacGurgle so little liked the idea of parting with his money that he died intestate.

Had he made a will, he would probably have willed his money to himself. He had no known relatives. Now it was the job of special investigators to scour Scotland, and then the rest of the world if necessary, to find the person who was to inherit his enormous wealth.

The search extended to many countries, the last of them being the United States. The investigators were very thorough. Almost all of the "Macs" in the phone books throughout the country were contacted but none, so far, had been the person they were looking for. At last there were just three people to be traced.

Iris MacWhirter finally returned from a trip to the "old country" but a check of her details showed that she wasn't the person they were seeking.

Gupta MacDivot, too, was finally traced but he also wasn't the heir to the MacGurgle millions.

The only "Mac" left untraced was a "MacHinery" whose number hadn't answered for a month. The investigators decided to give it one last try and, to their surprise, there was a voice on the other end of the line.

"Sorry," said a male voice, "no MacHinery lives here. This is a business number anyway—Fleegle's Machine Factory. We make all sorts of motors and machines here, but we've been closed over the last month for the Christmas break. We've had this phone number for over fifteen years. I don't know how it got into the book under the name of MacHinery, though."

So the investigators returned to Scotland with one big query. They had tracked down every American "Mac" except "MacHinery." This was the one person in the whole world who could possibly be the heir to MacGurgle's millions, but where was he? Did he even exist? Why was his number listed under Fleegle's Machine Factory? 👁

— Dougal Funeral Parlor —  
Live life to the full but  
don't leave life without us  
contact Fergle MacDirge 508-555-5555

You, the Comprehension Detective, may be able to unravel the mystery of the missing MacHinery.

2. Write the dictionary meaning of "heir." (This word is pronounced "air.")

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3. Write short answers to the questions below.

- (a) Write the dictionary definition of "miser." \_\_\_\_\_
- (b) What did the investigator have to find? \_\_\_\_\_
- (c) Where did the investigators look first of all? \_\_\_\_\_
- (d) Which was the country they investigated last? \_\_\_\_\_
- (e) Which name beginning were they interested in? \_\_\_\_\_
- (f) Where had Iris MacWhirter been? \_\_\_\_\_
- (g) Who was the next person eliminated from the search? \_\_\_\_\_
- (h) Who was the last person the investigators wanted to contact? \_\_\_\_\_
- (i) Which business had MacHinery's phone number? (j) What was made there? \_\_\_\_\_
- (k) Why hadn't anyone answered the phone there in the previous month? \_\_\_\_\_
- (l) Even though great care is always taken when books are typeset for publishing, sometimes mistakes still occur. Write the names of the three American people in the story in lower case (small) letters.

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4. Explain what may have happened and why there probably wasn't any such person as MacHinery.

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5. Match these accidental "Mac" names with who they really are.

- |              |  |
|--------------|--|
| MacAroni •   | • an Irish term of endearment (like "darling") |
| MacAroon •   | • the art of tying decorative knots            |
| MacKerel •   | • the universe                                 |
| MacRocarpa • | • a tree with lemon-scented leaves             |
| MacRocosm •  | • a type of fish                               |
| MacUshla •   | • a light, sweet biscuit                       |
| MacRame •    | • a type of pasta                              |

6. Write the words as they should be.

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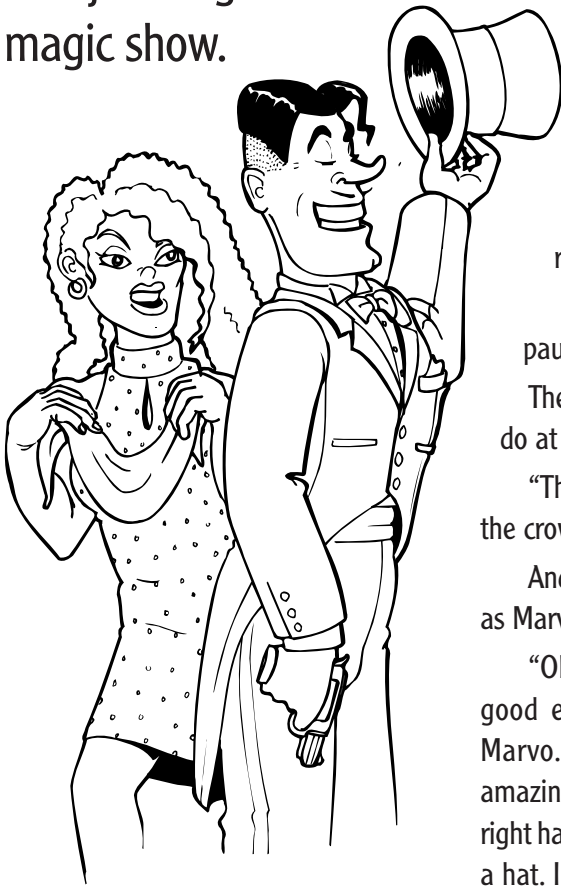
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## Sir Marvo the Dull

Sir Marvo the Dull,  
the World's Least  
Interesting Magician,  
had just begun his  
magic show.



"And now," he announced in a booming voice, "an amazing trick! I will throw this ball as hard as I can. It will leave my hand at tremendous speed, stop, and come straight back to me. As you can see, there is no elastic or string attached to the ball and it will not strike anything and rebound to me."

There was a drum roll. He paused, set himself . . . and threw!

The crowd did not gasp as they often do at magic shows. They groaned.

"That's not magic!" cried a voice in the crowd.

And yet the trick had worked exactly as Marvo had said it would.

"Oh, I see! A difficult audience! Not good enough for you, eh?" stormed Marvo. "You will love this, my most amazing and bewildering trick. In my right hand I have a pistol, in my left hand a hat. I shall raise my pistol so that the

barrel is pointing to the sky. My assistant, the lovely Louise, will blindfold me, then take the hat from me and hang it up. I shall walk fifty paces, stop, turn and shoot a bullet straight through the hat."

Sir Marvo did exactly what he said he would do but nobody in the audience was very impressed. How could he have done such a difficult sounding trick but still fail to get a single gasp from his audience?

"And that concludes the show for this evening!" said Sir Marvo.

The audience filed out of the huge theater looking rather bewildered. Sir Marvo may be playing at a venue near you now. Check the newspapers. It is said he has some fascinating new tricks in his act now. 👁

You, the Comprehension Detective, must solve the puzzle of Sir Marvo's tricks. Why did most people think they were dull?

1. See how many words of three letters or more you can make from "magician." No proper nouns. Ten is a good score.

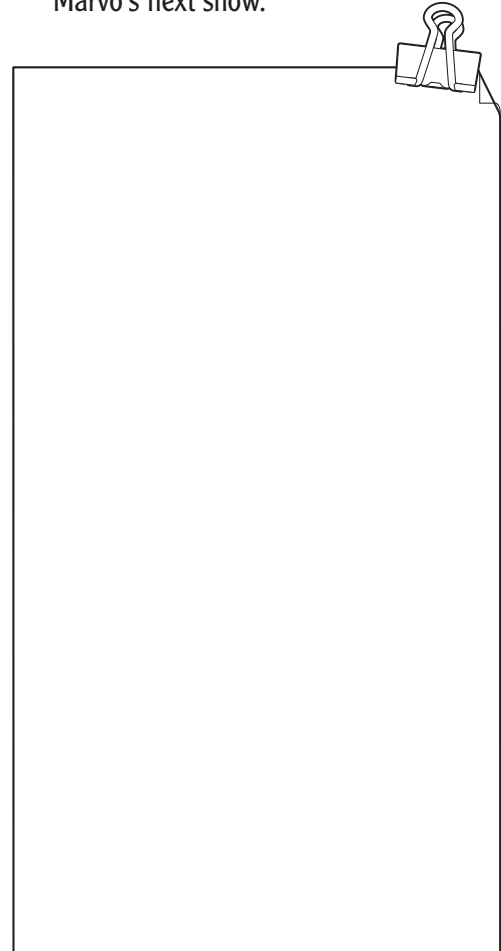
2. Write short answers to the questions below.

- (a) What sort of magician is Sir Marvo described as being? \_\_\_\_\_
- (b) What equipment did he use for his first trick? \_\_\_\_\_
- (c) What was he going to do with this object? \_\_\_\_\_
- (d) What unusual thing would it then do? \_\_\_\_\_
- (e) In which direction does a submarine travel to escape attack? \_\_\_\_\_
- (f) In which direction does a hot air balloon travel when it leaves the ground? \_\_\_\_\_
- (g) Study your answers to (e) and (f) because they will give you a clue about how Sir Marvo's trick worked. In which direction could Sir Marvo throw the ball to ensure that it came straight back to him? \_\_\_\_\_
- (h) Which two pieces of equipment were needed for his second trick? \_\_\_\_\_
- (i) What was in his left hand? \_\_\_\_\_
- (j) What was in his right hand? \_\_\_\_\_
- (k) Which three things would the lovely Louise do? \_\_\_\_\_
- (l) How many paces would Sir Marvo take? \_\_\_\_\_
- (m) What would he then do? \_\_\_\_\_
- (n) Are we told where the lovely Louise hung the hat? 

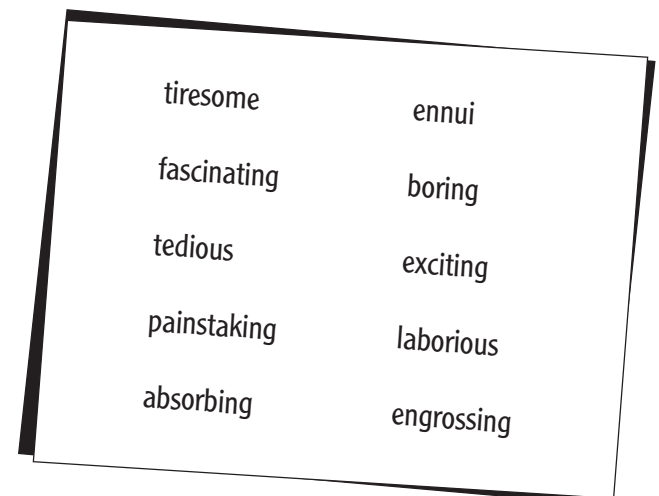
yes	no
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- (o) Where may she have hung the hat in order to allow Sir Marvo to do the trick easily? \_\_\_\_\_

3. Draw and color a poster advertising Sir Marvo's next show.



4. Highlight the words associated with INTERESTING yellow and those associated with DULL red.





**Think and Save Ink ..... Page 7**

- (There are other possibilities.)
  - Excellent work, Jonathon! One hundred percent! Keep it up.
  - Very neat work, Nancy. Show your book to Ms. Gumber.
  - Messy work, Joshua. Do this again neatly.
  - Good work, Chad. Keep trying hard.
  - Disappointing effort, Patrick. You can do much better.
- Teacher check

**Why Did He Get Fired? ..... Pages 8 – 9**

- payola – the practice of bribing someone so they will use their influence to promote a product
  - alimony – a spouse's (husband or wife's) provision for their divorced partner
  - scam – a dishonest scheme
- he was starting a new job
  - guard a premises at night
  - Noodlemeier's Diamond and Jewelry Superstore
  - the jewelry in the safe
  - safecrackers were digging a tunnel under the building to enter through the floor and clean out the safe
  - thought nothing of it
  - he had the same dream
  - his wife
  - it had come true (j) increase security
  - after having the dream three times
  - thankful
- graphic (b) consecutive
  - prestigious (d) coincidence
- If he was a night watchman he should not have been asleep and dreaming but awake and watching.

**It's All in My Book! ..... Pages 10 – 11**

- blank check – a check with the amount left for the payee to fill in
- perfume cloud – very favorable circumstances
- He had been the sole astronaut on the second manned space flight to the moon.
  - Australia
  - television satellite link
  - someone or something had tampered with the equipment
  - pursued by beautiful starlets, face on magazine covers, movie offers, book publishing offers
  - there is life on the moon
  - he did not know
  - bloodcurdling shriek

- \$49.95
  - knew he was telling lies
- plucked, vibrates, particles, motion, travels, higher, pitch, cannot, vacuum
  - Millington said that the moon had no atmosphere but that he heard a bloodcurdling shriek. Sound cannot travel where there is no atmosphere.

**The Great Train (Robbery)****Mess Up ..... Pages 12 – 13**

- a heist is a robbery
- a million dollars worth of old banknotes
  - to a big furnace (c) to be burned
  - a crime committed by someone working on the premises where it occurred
  - electric train
  - when the guard came crawling to the front car
  - on the back of the van
  - smoke from the engine hid it
  - they had just come out of a tunnel
  - Detective Orth, Damien Garlick, Nicholas Todd

3.

N	A	C	I	R	I	P	S	D	N
A	D	I	T	N	S	C	O	I	I
P	N	A	O	A	E	S	T	A	T
A	C	I	F	K	N	G	S	N	E
C	I	F	P	N	N	M	P	K	A
R	G	O	R	I	F	I	A	A	C
E	S	O	U	H	L	Y	N	C	O
S	E	H	T	S	A	R	C	I	R
S	R	N	A	U	R	O	I	F	S
S	T	E	P	H	E	N	S	O	N

- It was an electric train so there would be no smoke in the tunnel.

**The Rich Man's Lawns..... Pages 14 – 15**

- Plush Acres
  - about the size of five football fields
  - beautiful green carpet
  - two days of steady rain
  - racehorse trainer
  - to stop them from trying to win
  - to move her training establishment closer to Plush Acres
  - fired her; gave his seventy racehorses to another trainer
  - shark's tooth necklace
  - long, grey and tied back in a ponytail
  - ran the markets
  - couldn't train a monkey to eat bananas
  - galloping her horses across Voysey's lawns (trespass)
  - an hour earlier
- extravagantly bright or showy so as to be tasteless

- educated
- It had been raining. The lawns were soft. If Payne had galloped her horses over them the lawns would show evidence of this. They are described as being smooth like a giant billiard table.

**The Great Escape ..... Pages 16 – 17**

- Sears Tower (located in Chicago)
- telling stories that people thought were untrue
  - done them herself, knew someone who had done them, be related to someone who used to do them
  - told how she descended the sheer cliffs of the Himalayas
  - wrote a letter to the United Nations which had helped bring about peace talks in a major world trouble spot
  - people disbelieve them
  - a loud voice so even people she wasn't talking to could hear
  - Umpire State Building
  - de Vorzon Superstore
  - ground floor (j) fiftieth
  - she does not say (l) dust mites
  - none
  - jumped out of a window
- Phyllis does not say which floor she was on when the fire took place. She was obviously on the ground floor.
- negotiation – discussion aimed at reaching an agreement
  - indignant – showing anger or annoyance at being treated unfairly

**The Insurance Claim ..... Pages 18 – 19**

- hourglass (b) wristwatch
  - sundial
- New York City (b) The Big Apple
  - 20 degrees below zero/very cold
  - We Never Pay Insurance Company
  - there was an insurance claim
  - an expensive watch
  - Loren's friend/an unemployed television weather reporter
  - \$20,000
  - Elmo's Supermarket
  - Stacey Pickett (k) Roloff
  - won at the races
  - the duck pond in the park
  - it sank and disappeared in the mud
- 212°F = boiling point of water
  - 104°F = temperature on a hot summer's day
  - 97°F = healthy body temperature
  - 52°F = temperature on a cold winter's day

day

32°F = freezing point of water

4. The water in the duck pond would be frozen at 20° below zero. The watch couldn't sink into the mud.

### Charming Beauregarde ... Pages 20 – 21

- to search for something concealed in clothing
- (a) ill-mannered, lazy, oafish, self-centered, a worry to his parents, a nuisance  
(b) work and save up money  
(c) steal it  
(d) baseball cap, tracksuit, running shoes  
(e) in her shopping cart  
(f) her wallet  
(g) under his baseball cap  
(h) closing the store/a line-up  
(i) he'd had on a pair of sunglasses at the time he had stolen the purse/didn't want to appear suspicious  
(j) so Mrs. Plum would think it couldn't possibly be him because he was so charming  
(k) lifted his cap to her  
(l) she didn't get a good enough look at the suspect
- In trying to be overly polite and charming, he'd lifted his cap to Mrs. Plum, revealing her wallet underneath it.

### Where's the Heir? ..... Pages 22 – 23

- intestate – not having made a will before one dies
- heir – a person entitled to the property or rank of another on that person's death
- (a) a person who hoards wealth and spends as little money as possible  
(b) Angus MacGurgle's heir  
(c) Scotland (d) United States  
(e) Mac (f) a trip to Scotland  
(g) Gupta MacDivot (h) MacHinery  
(i) Fleegle's Machine Factory  
(j) motors and machines  
(k) they had been closed down over Christmas  
(l) macwhirter, macdivot, machinery
- MacHinery did not exist. It was a typographical error. Someone had hit upper case "h" to turn "machinery" into the mystery person, "MacHinery."
- 6. macaroni – a type of pasta  
macaroon – a light, sweet biscuit  
mackerel – a type of fish  
Macrocarpa – a tree with lemon-scented leaves  
macrocosm – the universe

macushla – Irish term of endearment

macrame – the art of tying decorative knots

### Nuisance Call ..... Pages 24 – 25

- hoax – a trick or practical joke
- (a) Meg Burrows, Officer Webber, Officer Cox, the chief  
(b) the prowler  
(c) a prowler was in her yard  
(d) hoax  
(e) six months earlier at the supermarket  
(f) she'd fainted  
(g) Meg kept calling him  
(h) wanted her to leave him alone  
(i) angry  
(j) use any breach of law you can find to punish her  
(k) 9:00 p.m. (l) too scared  
(m) 12 hours
- a claim that someone has done something illegal
- It has not been proved that the person has committed the crime.
- The battery would be dead if the lights were left on for 12 hours with the motor switched off. Meg said she started her car up straight away and drove into her garage.

### Innocent or Guilty? ..... Pages 26 – 27

- fraud – criminal deception for the purpose of financial gain
- legitimate – conforming to the law
- (a) he thought he was going to jail for burglary  
(b) he hadn't been involved in criminal activities  
(c) stern (d) theft, burglary  
(e) to make a fraudulent insurance claim  
(f) 2:00 a.m. on a Tuesday morning  
(g) the burglar had cut off the power  
(h) a safety match (i) on the wall  
(j) they'd spent three years together in jail  
(k) Kristine Hall – his fiancée
- Matches which ignite only when struck on a specially prepared surface, usually the side of a matchbox.
- Butling said that he'd struck safety matches on the wall.
- a public official who institutes legal proceedings against someone

### The Jilted Lover ..... Pages 28 – 29

- gingerly – with great care
- (a) two weeks  
(b) banging on doors and windows  
(c) on the city outskirts  
(d) a mess/building materials lying around  
(e) workshed; picket fence; cement slab for carport  
(f) Mills's foot sank to ankle depth in the mud.  
(g) grubby, unshaven  
(h) pouring the concrete slab for the carport  
(i) raining
- It had been raining for two weeks. Concrete is not poured when it is raining.
- harassment – repeatedly making aggressive attacks
- motive – a strong reason for doing something

### Working Vacation ..... Pages 30 – 31

- (a) Maine (b) Bar Harbor  
(c) insurance money  
(d) the difference between the high and low water marks is several meters  
(e) feeding on creatures left revealed by the fallen tide  
(f) he'd been roughed up/shop burned down  
(g) the price of the fraud is passed on to customers meaning an increased price for insurance  
(h) low  
(i) a cement block used for anchoring buoys  
(j) one foot (k) 15 hours  
(l) an old iron anchor piece  
(m) a mile  
(n) nothing/a rest in jail
- The tides in the region rise several meters from the low water mark. The concrete block was at the water's edge at low tide and Mitchell claimed he'd been chained to it with a chain about a foot long. He'd been unconscious for fifteen hours so, in that time there must have been a high tide. If this were true he would have drowned.
- (a) dramatically (b) ruin  
(c) artichoke (d) complex  
(e) temporarily (f) pry  
(g) exposed

### The Kidnapped Kidnapper Pages 32 – 33

- (a) hot, sunny  
(b) wasteful person, spendthrift  
(c) oil  
(d) He wanted him to work through the