

DEATH IN THE NIGHT

That night we _____ (go) back to the house. When we _____ (see) Helen Stoner's **light**, Holmes and I _____ (**get**) **in quietly** *through* the window. Then we _____ (wait) **silently** in the *middle* bedroom **in the dark**. We waited *for* three hours and _____ (move, not). **Suddenly** we saw a light and _____ (hear) a **sound** from Dr Roylott's room. But nothing _____ (happen), and again we waited in the dark. Then there _____ (is) another sound, a very **quiet** sound. . . **Immediately** Holmes _____ (jump) up and _____ (hit) the **bell-rope** hard.

'Can you see it, Watson?' he _____ (shout). But I saw nothing. There was a quiet whistle. **We both** _____ (look up) at the *air-vent*, and suddenly we heard a **terrible cry** in the next room. **Then** the house was **silent** again.

'What _____ (mean)?' I asked. My **voice** _____ (shake). 'It _____ (finish),' answered Holmes. 'Let's go and see.' We went into Dr Roylott's room. The **metal box** was open. Roylott _____ (sit) on a chair, and his eyes _____ (is) **fixed on** the air-vent. **Round** his head was a **strange**, yellow speckled band. He **was dead**.

'The **band!** The **speckled** band!' _____ (say) Holmes very quietly. The band _____ (move) and _____ (begin) to turn its head. 'Be **careful**, Watson! It's a **snake**, an Indian snake - and its **poison** can _____ (kill) very **quickly**,' Holmes _____ (cry). 'Roylott _____ (die) immediately. We must _____ (put) the snake back in its box.' Very, very **carefully**, Holmes _____ (take) the snake and _____ (throw) it into the metal box.

'But how _____ (know, you) about the snake, Holmes?' I _____ (ask).

'At first, Watson, I _____ (think) that it _____ (is) the **gypsies**. But then I _____ (understand). I thought that **perhaps** something _____ (come) through the air-vent, down the **bell-rope** and **onto** the bed. **Then** there was the milk - and **of course**, snakes _____ (drink) milk. It was easy *for* the Doctor to get Indian animals. And because he was a doctor, he _____ (know) that this snake's poison is **difficult to find** in a dead body. So every night he _____ (put) the snake through the air-vent, and it went down the bell-rope onto the bed. **Of course**, nobody must see the snake, so every night he _____ (whistle) to **call it back**. The sound of metal **falling** was the door of the metal box, which was the snake's home. **Perhaps** the snake came through the air-vent **many times** before it _____ (kill) Julia. But **in the end** it killed her. And Helen, too, nearly _____ (die) **because of** this snake.

'But **tonight**, when I _____ (hit) the snake on the rope, it _____ (is) angry and _____ (go) back through the air-vent. And so it killed the Doctor. I _____ (sorry, not) about that.'

Soon after this Helen Stoner _____ (marry) her young man and _____ (try) to forget the terrible deaths of her sister and **stepfather**. But she never really _____ (forget) the speckled band.

