

But Was it Murder?

Jania Barrell

Before reading

1. Look at the front cover and read the blurb on the back cover. What sort of story is this?
2. Read the contents on page 3. Say what you think will happen in the story?
3. Look at the map of south London on page 4. What do you know about this city?
4. If you have the cassette, listen to Chapter 1.

Check your reading

CHAPTER 1

1. Match the beginnings and endings.
- | | |
|----------------------------------|--|
| 1 Eliot was planning to | a a death in the Blackheath area. |
| 2 Bowen phoned to tell him about | b not being able to spend the weekend with his family. |
| 3 Eliot was annoyed about | c and gave his good wishes to his family. |
| 4 Eliot knew the journey | d have a beer on the way home. |
| 5 Eliot phoned Brighton | e would take ages in the heavy traffic. |

CHAPTER 2

1. True or false?
- a Bowen is lucky in love.
 - b Bowen is a good-looking man.
 - c Eliot does not have a good opinion of Bowen.
 - d Eliot recognised the face of the dead man.
 - e The dead man had musician's hands.
 - f The pathologist was happy in his work.

CHAPTER 3

1. Complete the summary.
- Forley lived , but cared for his house more than most men and had good and money. Eliot spoke to Forley's Mr Crowther was middle-aged but his wife was , beautiful and much They hadn't seen Forley for a but had been expecting him at that afternoon. Mr Crowther said Forley was like a to them.

CHAPTER 4

1. Match the questions with the answers.
- | | |
|---|---|
| 1 'Then you think it looked like suicide?' | a 'It must have been after three o'clock.' |
| 2 'Can you tell us about Mr Forley's job? You said he had a shop in Greenwich.' | b 'That's impossible. Alex would not have killed himself.' |
| 3 'You didn't hear anything, did you, my dear?' | c 'No. He had a girlfriend, though – Amanda Grant.' |
| 4 'What time was this?' | d 'Well, I do remember hearing a bang while you were out.' |
| 5 'Did he ever marry?' | e 'Forley Antiques. It's one of those big antique furniture shops on Park Street ...' |

CHAPTER 5

1. Look at the words in italics. Who is *she*, *he*?
- a *She* was certainly attractive, if you liked tall thin women ...
 - b *He* had been coming to work with dark circles under his eyes recently.
 - c But *he* seems quite ordinary. *He* must be rich, though ...
 - d And what had *she* wanted to say about the gun?
 - e *He* didn't seem to have left a note ...

CHAPTER 6

1. Put the events in the right order.
- a One look at Forley's hands was enough for her to be certain.
 - b She didn't show any emotion until she saw the body.
 - c Only the dead man's fingerprints had been found on the gun.
 - d Amanda Grant agreed to identify the body.
 - e Eliot and Bowen went to speak to Amanda Grant.

CHAPTER 7

1. Complete the summary.
- Amanda Grant had known Forley for almost years. They had had an about her the last time they met. Amanda said Forley had shared with Catherine Crowther, and had begun to find Ronald Crowther Eliot wanted to ask if Amanda was of Catherine, but didn't. Amanda also said that Forley had been having and had been to hospital for

CHAPTER 8

1. Match the beginnings and endings of the sentences.
- | | |
|---|---|
| 1 Eliot thought Amanda had strong feelings for Forley | a the same first name as Forley's doctor. |
| 2 Bowen was interested to know what | b but there had been problems between them. |
| 3 There was a message from a man called Philip – | c there was £2000 in cash on the desk. |
| 4 Bowen was surprised that | d because the money had not been stolen. |
| 5 Eliot knew Forley hadn't been killed for money | e Amanda and Catherine felt about each other. |

CHAPTER 9

1. Match the questions with the answers.
- | | |
|--|--|
| 1 'You said yesterday that you didn't believe it was suicide. What made you so sure?' | a '... He'd had a lot of headaches, and he took them very seriously.' |
| 2 'And was Mr Forley in a difficult situation?' | b '... She didn't always understand him. It caused problems between them.' |
| 3 'Now, you mentioned a gun last night. Can you tell me more about it?' | c 'Well, I could see he had something on his mind that he wouldn't talk about.' |
| 4 'Now, I understand Mr Forley had been worried about his health. Could you tell me about it?' | d 'I didn't know what I was saying yesterday, Inspector. Of course, it's possible that he killed himself.' |
| 5 'What was his relationship with Miss Grant like?' | e 'Did I? I was so shocked yesterday. I've forgotten what I said.' |

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2. You have now read half the book. Was it murder? Or was it suicide? What do you think?

CHAPTER 10

- Put the events in the right order.
 - Eliot felt sure the Crowthers were lying about the gun.
 - Bowen thought that Ronald Crowther might be frightened.
 - Linda Scott told the police that Forley had been worried and unhappy.
 - Mrs Crowther was embarrassed when Eliot asked about her painting.
 - Linda Scott said that Forley had taken £2,200 out of the shop.

CHAPTER 11

- True or false?
 - Eliot slept through most of the football match.
 - Bowen looked tired and stressed.
 - Forley's diary was not written in English.
 - Wilver's wife was relaxed and cheerful.
 - The Wilvers' sitting room was in an awful mess.
 - The tests showed there was something wrong with Forley.

CHAPTER 12

- Look at the words in italics. Who is *he*, *you*, *she*?
 - He* said he wanted my advice about something.
 - And would *you* say he was a weak man, sir?
 - She's* good-looking enough, but she obviously rules his life.
 - Be careful with the women *you* choose.
 - He's* hiding something from us too.

CHAPTER 13

- Eliot needs answers to these questions:
 - Why were the Crowthers not telling him the truth?
 - Had Catherine Crowther been having an affair with Forley?
 - What had made her suddenly change her style of painting?
 - And did anyone visit Forley after Wilver had left on Friday?
 - And what had Forley been so worried about?What do you think?

CHAPTER 14

- Complete the summary.

The pathologist's report said that Forley had been killed by a shot to the and had died There were no other signs of He had been in good but had been drinking. The time of death was between and Friday afternoon. Eliot now had to check who had an for that time. Bowen was making slow progress on Forley's as it was written in and

CHAPTER 15

- Match the beginnings and endings.
 - Mrs Brook told the police that
 - Forley was with Catherine Crowther for an hour
 - Mrs Brook had once seen
 - Bowen discovered from the secret diary
 - The barman in the pub noticed Ronald Crowther
 - going for a walk at the time of Forley's death.
 - Forley had visited Catherine Crowther on Wednesday.
 - that Forley had been having an affair.
 - and looked very uncomfortable when he left.
 - Ronald Crowther cleaning a gun.

CHAPTER 16

- Who ...
 - gave the gun to Forley?
 - were at the dinner party three weeks ago?
 - was surprised that Eliot wanted to ask more questions?
 - was having a secret affair with Forley?
 - was angry with Forley?
 - thought Catherine was finally telling the truth?

CHAPTER 17

- Put the events in order.
 - Amanda Grant told the police what she had done on Friday.
 - Eliot started to think it was suicide, not murder.
 - Micky, Eliot's son, helped him understand something.
 - Bowen checked her story and knew she was not guilty.
 - Eliot thought that Amanda Grant was the murderer.
- 'Thanks, Micky, I understand it now.' What do you think Eliot understood?

CHAPTER 18

- Complete the summary.

Wilvers phoned Forley on to say he needed and wanted to something, which explained the on Forley's desk. Also, Wilvers about the test results on Friday, saying Forley had a Wilvers knew about the and was sure Forley would himself. Wilvers knew Lisa was having an with Forley, but didn't want Sam to grow up without a

After reading

- At the end, Eliot thinks: 'But in life you could never be sure of anything.' Do you agree?
- Do you think *But Was it Murder?* is a good title? Make up a different title.
- Dr Wilvers, Ronald and Catherine Crowther have all committed crimes. How should they be punished?
- Which characters do you like best in the story?
- Do you think Bowen will be lucky in love? Write an extra chapter, including Bowen's first date with Linda Scott.
- Imagine ten years have passed. Write a letter from Philip Wilvers to his son Sam telling him the truth about what he did.
- Make a quiz for the other students to do. e.g. Write some True/False questions.
- Here is the blurb from another book at this level.

A Matter of Chance

Paul Morris's happy life in Italy changes when his wife dies suddenly. He develops an exciting relationship with Sandra, a friend at work. But all is not as it seems and Paul finds himself involved in a world of international crime and a car chase across Europe.

Do you want to read *A Matter of Chance*?