**NARRATION TEXT Four**

AN ENIGMA

Mr. Coleman had started in to Hassanieh in the morning, driving himself in the lorry with the letters in a knapsack. He also had one or two commissions to do for the expedition. It was pay-day for the men, and he would have to go to the bank and bring out the money in coins of small denominations. All this was a long business and he did not expect to be back until the afternoon. I rather suspected he might be lunching with Sheila Reilly.

Work on the dig was usually not very busy on the afternoon of pay-day as at three-thirty the paying-out began.

The little boy, Abdullah, whose business it was to wash the pots, was established as usual in the centre of the courtyard, and again, as usual, kept up his queer nasal chant. Dr. Leidner and Mr. Emmot were going to put in some work on the pottery until Mr. Coleman returned, and Mr. Carey went up the dig.

Mrs. Leidner (Louise) went to her room to rest. I settled her as usual and then went to my own room, taking a book with me as I did not feel sleepy. It was about a quarter to one, and a couple of hours passed quite pleasantly… When I put the book down at last and looked at my watch I was quite surprised to find it was twenty minutes to three!

I got up , straightened my uniform, and come out into the courtyard.

Abdullah was still scrubbing and still singing, and David Emmot was standing by him sorting the scrubbed pots, putting the ones that were broken into boxes to await mending. I strolled towards them just as Dr.Leidner came down the staircase from the roof.

" Not a bad afternoon", he said cheerfully. "I've made a bit of a clearance up there. Louise will be pleased. She's complained lately that there 's not room to walk about. I'll go and tell her the good news"

He went over to his wife's door, tapped on it and went in.

It must, I suppose, have been about a minute and a half later that he came out again. I happened to be looking at the door when he did. It was like a nightmare. He had gone in a brisk, cheerful man. He came out like a drunken one--- reeling a little on his feet, and with a queer dazed expression on his face.

I saw at once something was wrong and I ran across to him. He looked awful--- his face was grey and twitching and I saw he might collapse any minute.

"My wife…" he said " My wife… Oh, my God".

I pushed past him into the room. Then, I caught my breath. Mrs. Leidner was lying in a dreadful huddled heap by the bed.

I bent over her. She was quite dead--- must have been dead an hour at least. The cause of the death was perfectly plain--- a terrific blow on the front of the head just over the right temple. She must have got up from the bed and been struck down where she stood. I didn't handle her more than I could help.

I glanced round the room to see if there was anything that might give a clue, but nothing seemed out of place or disturbed. The windows were closed and fastened, and there was no place where the murderer could have hidden. Obviously he had been and gone long ago.

I went out, locking the door behind me.

**Murder in Mesopotamia** Agatha Christie

1. **Answer the following questions:**
2. What point of view is the story narrated from? Justify your answer.
3. How many characters are mentioned in the passage?
4. How many of these characters are on the scene of the murder at the time when it takes place?
5. Which characters cannot be suspected of having committed the murder? Explain
6. Using the information given by the author, what is the presumed time of the murder?
7. Can you guess who the murderer is? Give your reasons.
8. **Account for sentence variety in the text.**
9. **Vocabulary:**
10. Look up 'to collapse'. Make a card for it, then, give a synonym for it in the sentence.
11. Explain "dreadful huddled heap".
12. Consider Aghata Christie's use of verbs of motion. Try and explain why the author uses these verbs, and why she uses them precisely at these points of the action.
13. Look at the passage and note the various prepositions used in association with "to go" and "to come".
14. Try and find a synonym for each of them.
15. Add the suitable preposition after each verb or adjective:
16. To agree…………………………. a decision.
17. To agree…………………………..a friend.
18. To trust ………………………….. God.
19. To be keen ………………………. math's.
20. To be engaged ……………………. a girl.
21. To be engaged ……………………. a task.
22. To recover ………………………… an illness.
23. To be determined…………………. .carrying on.
24. To be weary………………………....something.
25. To be eligible ………………………promotion.
26. Account for space and time references in the above text.

TIME AND TIDE WAIT FOR NO ONE