

Lesson - 9

The White Visitor

1. What do you know about ghosts?
2. Do you believe in them?
3. Write the names of movies, T.V. serials, books or stories which you have seen or read on ghosts*.

Act - I

An office in Kali Ghat, in Kolkata. On the walls of the office there are several notices about houses and shops for sale. The time is about ten in the morning. Mr. Choudhary is writing at a table. Doctor Dass walks in.

Dass : Good morning! Are you Mr. Choudhary?

Choudhary : Please, sit down. *(they both sit)*

Dass : I'm Doctor Dass. I have come to live and work in Kali Ghat, and I need a house.

Choudhary : I see. You are ready to buy a house, I suppose.

Dass : Yes, if it doesn't cost too much.



Choudhary : It's not very easy at present, Doctor Dass. A lot of people are coming to live here and there aren't many houses. The prices are going up every week.

Dass : Well, can you give me some idea?

Choudhary : There's a nice house. *(He points to the notice on the wall).* The owner wants ten lac.

Dass : Oh! that's too much for me. Isn't there a house for less than that?

Choudhary : How much are you ready to pay?

Dass : Well, I thought about five lacs or a little more.

Choudhary : You won't find a house at that price here.

Dass : What's that? (*He points to one of the notices.*)

Choudhary : That's Shanti Bhawan, but you don't want that, of course.

Dass : Why? What's the matter with it? Where is it?

Choudhary : In the middle of the town.

Dass : Well, that will suit me very well. How much is it?

Choudhary : er..... three lac or so.

Dass : Is that all? That's not much, is it? Why such a low price?

Choudhary : It hasn't always been as low as that. Mr. Ghosh wanted six lac at first; then the price fell to four lac. Now it's just three lac. But no one wants that house.

Dass : Why?

Choudhary : Well-er- the truth is er..... .

Dass : Go on, go on. Don't you want to sell it? Is it in a bad state?

Choudhary : Oh! no, it's in good order. But there are some strange stories about Shanti Bhawan. The owner was a woman, Mrs Ghosh. She died in the house two years ago. She wasn't a happy woman but she loved Shanti Bhawan. And people say that she comes back in the night to visit her old house.

Dass : What? Two years after her death!

Well, I don't believe that kind of thing. Can you take me to the house now, please?

Choudhary : I can do so, if you wish. But you mustn't buy that house.

Dass : Please show it to me.

Choudhary : (*sadly*) As you wish. (*they go out together*)
(*The same office an hour later. Dass and Choudhary walk in, and sit down*)

Dass : I'll buy Shanti Bhawan. Who's the owner?

Choudhary : Mr. Ghosh. He lives in Chennai. He's the dead woman's brother.
He wants to sell it. But of course no one wants to live there with all these stories about the White Visitor.

- Dass : I don't believe in such stories.
- Choudhary : Well, don't come back to me later and say that I didn't warn you about these things earlier.
- Dass : Will Mr. Ghosh let me sleep in Shanti Bhawan for a night before I buy it?
- Choudhary : I am not sure. But it's not the house for you.
- Dass : Please write and ask him. If he's ready to let me do that, I'll spend the night in the house next Tuesday.
- Choudhary : Where will you sleep? And what about light? There isn't any over there.
- Dass : Look, I'm an old soldier. I have a small cot and a small lamp too. I'll take them with me.
- Choudhary : As you wish.

ACT-II

A bedroom in Shanti Bhawan. Dass is reading in bed by the light of a small lamp. It is one minute to twelve.

- Dass : *(looking at the watch)* : Well, it's almost midnight *(the sound of the big clock outside is heard)*. It is twelve! Now the visitor from the other world will come, if she ever does!
(He hears a sound just outside the bedroom door). The door opens very slowly and quietly)
 Who is there? *(He sits up. Something **dressed** in white from head to foot comes quietly in and stands at the end of the room.)*
 Hey! Who are you? What do you want? Why don't you speak?



Visitor : Go away.

Dass : No, I won't, You go away. I'm busy, I'm reading. Can't you see?

Visitor : (slowly, with long pauses between the words) This is my house. You have to leave now.

Dass : Go away. I want to finish this book.

: I'm not afraid of you. (*He throws his book at the Visitor. The Visitor moves its head out of the way*) Ha! you are not a ghost, you're certainly a human being. (*Dass jumps out of bed and **pulls** the white cloth off the Visitor's face*) Ha! Mr. Choudhary, I believe. Good evening. Please sit down. Mr. Choudhary, I'm very glad to see you. Why have you come?

Choudhary : I didn't want you to buy the house.

Dass : No, of course not. The price is only three lac. If I buy a house for five lac, you'll get more money, won't you?

Choudhary : That wasn't the reason.

Dass : Well, what was the reason then?

Choudhary : I wanted to buy this house for myself.

Dass : Well, why didn't you do it earlier?

Choudhary : The price was falling. I have one and a half lac, and the bank was ready to give me a loan of one lac. That comes to two and a half. But the price is three lac. I wanted the price to come down further by another fifty thousand rupees.

Dass : I see. Those stories came handy, didn't they? Who started them? Perhaps you did yourself, Mr. Choudhary. And you wanted me to tell everyone about the White Visitor. The White Visitor is Mr. Choudhary, isn't he?

Choudhary : Please don't tell anyone, Doctor Dass. **I'll lose my business.**

Dass : Why didn't you think of that before? Now, good night, Mr. White Visitor. I just want to have a good night's sleep. I'll come to your office tomorrow at ten and buy the house.

1. Read and Learn:

several	price	too much
by the light	afraid of	in the middle of
at the end of	warn	prices are going up
in a bad state	incident	in good order
soldier	long pause	

2. Comprehension:

1. Why did Dr. Dass need to buy a house?
2. Why did he want to buy Shanti Bhawan?
3. What reason did Mr. Choudhary give Dr. Dass so that he wouldn't buy Shanti Bhawan?
4. Why did Dr. Dass want to spend a night in the house before buying it?
5. Who was the 'White Visitor'? Do you think Dr. Dass suspected any one else before he 'caught' the ghost?
6. What qualities of Dr. Dass helped him in buying the house?
7. Why did Mr. Choudhary ask Dr. Dass not to talk about this incident?

3. Word Power:

A) The words, given below, tell you about people's qualities. Some of them describe Dr. Dass and some describe Mr. Choudhary. Write them in separate columns meant for both of them.

(smart, intelligent, not straightforward, determined, lacks confidence, clever, brave, greedy)

Dr. Dass	Mr. Choudhary

B) Match the following :

- | | |
|---|-------------|
| 1. one who lends money | ghost |
| 2. one who rents out a house | singer |
| 3. one who arrests thieves | moneylender |
| 4. one who sings | mahout |
| 5. one who builds houses | landlord |
| 6. one who works with and rides an elephant | builder |
| 7. the spirit of a dead person | policeman |

4. Grammar in Use:

A) Learn these phrases with their meanings and fill in the blank spaces in the sentences given below using the suitable phrase in its correct form:

to visit, dressed in, in a bad state, afraid of, by the light of, in good order, at the end, head to foot.

1. All my records are _____ .
2. His grandmother is very old, she is _____ of health.
3. Sohan went _____ his sister last month.
4. He is working _____ the moon.
5. Suman was _____ a khadi saree to act as a leader.
6. The sick child gets cured _____ of the story.
7. She was wearing black clothes from _____ .
8. I am not _____ ghosts.

B) Rewrite the following sentences in indirect form of narration as it is given in the example :

Example : Seema asked Geeta, "What are you doing today?"

Seema asked Geeta what she was doing that day.

1. Geeta said, " I am going to my grandmother's place."
2. Seema asked, "How far is your grandmother's house?"
3. Geeta said, "It is not very far. I will have to take a bus to Sonpur village."
4. Seema said, "Sonpur is a nice village. I have seen it."

C) Read the following words and write them in the right column:

pencil, king, mother, baby, cup, parent, father, tree, girl, boy, uncle, book, aunt, lioness, teacher, queen, cousin, box, ghost.

he (boy)	she (girl)	he/she boy / girl	(tree) it
king	queen	baby	pencil

5. Let's Talk:

A) Work in pairs and answer the questions :

1. What stories did Mr. Choudhary tell about 'Shanti Bhawan' ?
2. Does Dr. Dass believe in Mr. Choudhary's stories ?
3. How does he plan to find out the truth ?
4. What happens in Shanti Bhawan after midnight ?
5. What does Dr. Dass say to the White Visitor ?
6. How does Dr. Dass find out the truth ?

B) When the mystery of Shanti Bhawan is unfolded at the end, do you feel sorry for Mr Choudhary? Do you think he was greedy? Discuss in pairs and match the answers in column 'B' with the questions in column 'A'.

A	B
1. I feel sorry for Mr. Choudhary, don't you?	because I think Mr. Choudhary was trying to cheat.
2. Why don't you?	Yes, he did.
3. Do you think Dr. Dass was right?	Yes, he was.
4. Dr. Dass taught him a lesson, didn't he?	No, I don't.

6. Let's Write:

Imagine you are Dr. Dass. Write a letter to your sister, telling her how you managed to buy the house and what your future plans are about the garden which you intend to have outside the house.

Shyamla Hills,
Kolkatta
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Dear _____,

Yours affectionately,

7. Let's Do It:

Read stories about ghosts from your library and share them with your classmates. Narrate them in short sentences.