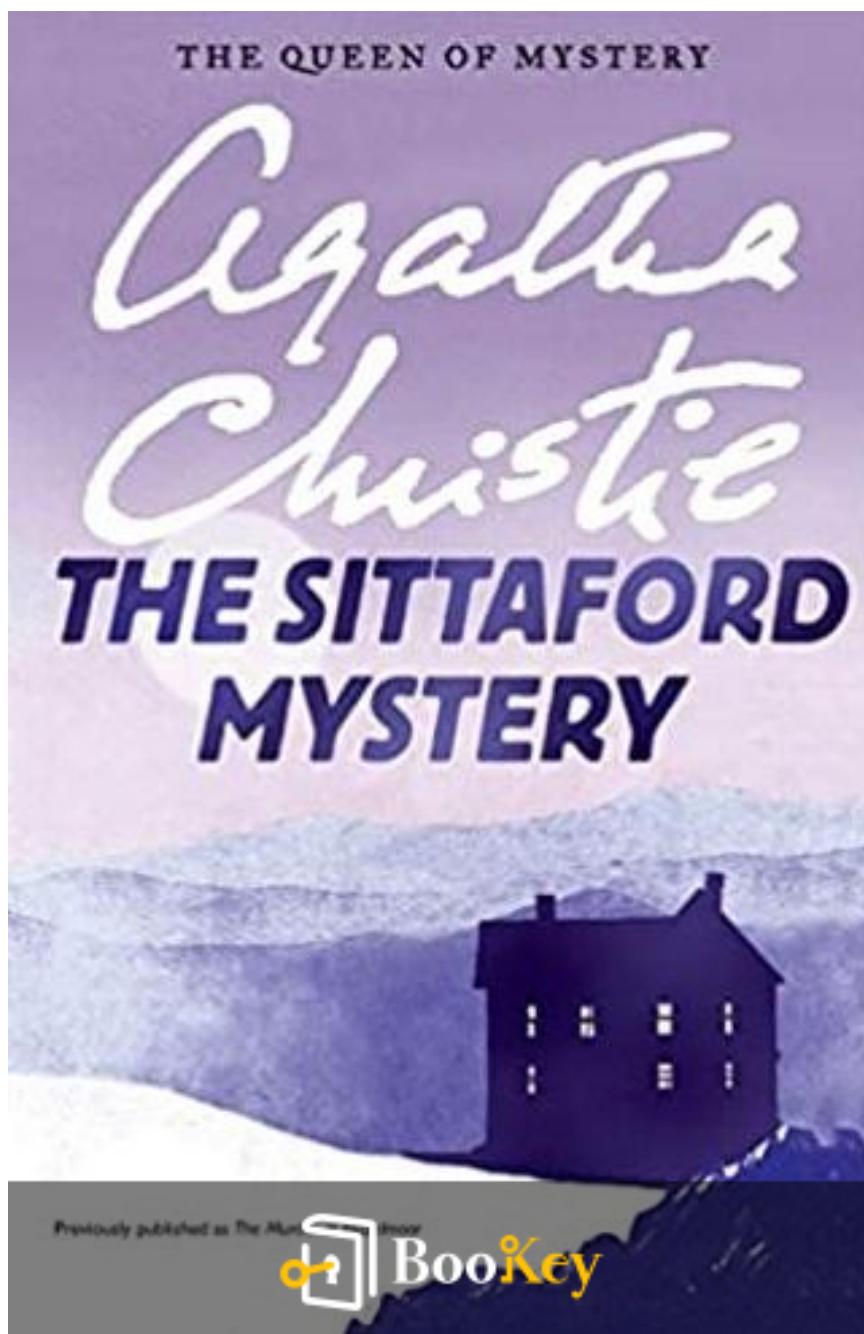


# The Sittaford Mystery PDF (Limited Copy)

Agatha Christie



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# **The Sittaford Mystery Summary**

A chilling murder unfolds in a snowbound village.

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## About the book

In Agatha Christie's enthralling novel "The Sittaford Mystery," set against the bleak and snowy backdrop of Dartmoor, a group of friends gathers for a séance that leads to an unexpected revelation: the chilling announcement of a murder. As stormy weather isolates the characters in a remote manor, tensions rise and secrets unravel, drawing readers into a suspenseful web of intrigue where every character is a suspect and nothing is as it seems. With Christie's signature flair for twists and turns, this gripping tale invites you to explore the darker sides of human nature and the perplexing nature of fate, ultimately challenging you to uncover the truth hidden within the eerie silence of the wintry landscape.

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## About the author

Agatha Christie, often referred to as the "Queen of Crime," is one of the most celebrated and prolific authors of detective fiction in history. Born in Torquay, England, in 1890, Christie began writing at a young age and quickly gained fame for her intricate plotting and masterful character development. Her works, which include iconic characters such as Hercule Poirot and Miss Marple, have captivated readers worldwide, leading to the publication of over 66 novels and 14 short story collections. Known for her clever twists and innovative storytelling, Christie transformed the mystery genre and remains a significant influence on contemporary crime fiction. Her enduring legacy is evidenced by the continued popularity of her works, which have been adapted into numerous films, television series, and stage productions.

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# Chapter 1 Summary:

## The Sittaford Mystery

### Chapter 1 Summary: Sittaford House

In the remote village of Sittaford, engulfed in deep snow during the Christmas season, Major John Burnaby dons his winter gear and braves the cold to visit Sittaford House, home to the recently arrived Mrs. Willett and her daughter, Violet. Sittaford House, a magnificent granite building built by Captain Joseph Trevelyan, boasts modern amenities and serves as a gathering place for locals during the harsh winter. Major Burnaby, a friend of Captain Trevelyan, reflects on the peculiarities of the Willetts; Mrs. Willett, a widow from South Africa, seems overly social and eager to engage her neighbors, while Violet is charming yet inexperienced in the ways of the wintery English countryside. As the chapter unfolds, Burnaby engages in small talk about his habits, friendships, and competitions with Trevelyan, unaware of the dark days ahead as they entertain visions of horror and mystery that will soon emerge from their quiet community.

### Chapter 29 Summary: The Second Séance

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A week after Captain Trevelyan's mysterious death, Mr. Rycroft decides to host a second séance at Sittaford House, despite its earlier unsettling results. He aims to uncover the truth behind the murder charge against James Pearson, Trevelyan's nephew, whom the police have accused. Joined by local residents—including the ever-skeptical Ronnie Garfield and the increasingly anxious Mrs. Willett—Rycroft pushes for the experiment, asserting that it might reveal the killer's identity. Despite initial resistance and a creeping sense of dread, they proceed with the séance. Tension fills the air as they call upon the spirit world, and just as they sense a response, Inspector Narracott enters, shocking everyone by arresting Major Burnaby for the murder of Captain Trevelyan.

### **Chapter 30 Summary: Emily Explains**

Following the dramatic arrest, Emily Trefusis reveals how Major Burnaby orchestrated the murder using skis to frame the scene and gain a substantial lottery prize. She begins by explaining the ski gear, previously overlooked by investigators, and how Burnaby's jealousy toward Trevelyan—who had excelled in every competitive field—led him to murder his old friend. Emily recounts the series of events and clues that led her to discover the truth. By the time she finishes her account, those present are in shock, realizing not only the depth of Burnaby's betrayal but also the lengths to which he would



go for financial gain. Her deduction stems from a combination of intuitive reasoning and specific observations that illuminate Burnaby's plan in chilling detail, all while ensuring James Pearson's potential culpability was simply an unfortunate consequence of the deception.

### **Chapter 31 Summary: The Lucky Man**

As the dust settles after unveiling the truth about Captain Trevelyan's murder, Emily Trefusis rushes to share her discoveries with Miss Percehouse, explaining how she pieced together the case and emphasizing the importance of her bond to Jim Pearson, now cleared of suspicion. While navigating her tumultuous feelings for both men—Jim and the charming Charles Enderby—she realizes her heart belongs to Jim, a convict with a troubled past. As she prepares to travel to London to sort things out for Jim, the chapter captures a moment of levity contrasted with the weight of her decisions. While rooted in both moral and emotional dilemmas, Emily contemplates her relationships, wrestling with societal expectations versus her deep loyalty. The narrative concludes with hints at her ultimate choice, underscoring a blend of romantic tension and resolve in the face of adversity.

Together, these chapters intricately weave the tale of mystery, human emotion, and betrayal set against the picturesque yet stark English

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countryside, with the characters facing the consequences of their actions amidst evolving relationships and moral lessons.

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## Chapter 2 Summary:

In **Chapter 2: The Message** of *\*The Sittaford Mystery\**, the atmosphere is light yet tinged with unease as a group of friends gathers at Mrs. Willett's home for an evening of entertainment. After some discussion, they settle on a game of table-turning, or "spooky" spirit communication, led by Mrs. Willett and joined by the eager Ronnie Garfield. The participants include the skeptical Major Burnaby, the serious Mr. Duke, the young and spirited Violet Willett, and the knowledgeable Mr. Rycroft, who is a member of the Psychical Research Society.

As they gather around a small round table in the dim light of the fireplace, they joke and tease each other about the presence of spirits. After a slow start, the table begins to move in response to their questions. The participants become increasingly intrigued as it communicates the name "Ida" and delivers a message specifically for Ronnie—mentioning "Diana." Curiosities pique as the name holds no significance for Ronnie, casting a shadow over the evening.

Suddenly, the tone of the game shifts dramatically when the table spells out that Captain Trevelyan is dead, sending shockwaves through the group. The unexpected revelation turns their lightheartedness into apprehension and fear. Mr. Duke probes further to confirm that Trevelyan has indeed been murdered, eliciting a violent response from the table affirming this grim



truth.

Panic ensues as each participant grapples with disbelief and concern. The attempt to bring levity back into the situation falters. As Mr. Rycroft switches on the lights, revealing pale faces, the group struggles for composure, but the fun is conclusively overshadowed by the eeriness of the message.

In the wake of this unsettling revelation, Major Burnaby—determined and stubborn—decides he must walk to Exhampton to ensure Captain Trevelyan is safe, despite the worsening weather conditions. The others express their alarm at his decision, but he is resolute, disregarding their protests. Burnaby steps into the night with a lantern, while Mrs. Willett and the others return to the fire, a tangible sense of anxiety filling the room as they contemplate the implications of the spirit's message and the fate of their friend.

As the chapter closes, the looming possibility of danger for Captain Trevelyan shrouds the group in worry and speculation, setting the stage for the mystery to unfold further. The intriguing balance between the mundane game and the darker undercurrents of mortality captures the reader's attention, establishing a foreboding atmosphere that will resonate throughout the narrative.

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## Critical Thinking

**Key Point:** The power of belief in the unseen can yield unexpected revelations.

**Critical Interpretation:** As you gather with friends, perhaps you don't realize the potential impact of your beliefs and intentions. In Chapter 2 of 'The Sittaford Mystery,' a seemingly innocent game of spirit communication shifts from lighthearted fun to a shocking revelation about Captain Trevelyan's fate. This stark transition reminds you that the mysteries of life often lie beyond rational understanding.

Embracing the possibility of the unknown could inspire you to remain open to new experiences and insights, urging you to explore deeper connections with those around you—and perhaps discover truths that lead to personal growth or warnings when least expected.

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## Chapter 3 Summary:

In Chapter 3 of *\*The Sittaford Mystery\**, Major Burnaby braves a storm to check on Captain Trevelyan at his home, "Hazelmoor." As the heavy snow begins to fall, Burnaby struggles to reach the house, sounding the bell and banging on the door with increasing urgency, but receives no response. Concerned about the captain's well-being, he heads to the nearby police station where he encounters Constable Graves. When Graves learns that it's Friday—a day when Trevelyan often goes out—the atmosphere shifts from casual concern to alarm.

Realizing that Trevelyan may be in trouble, they decide to summon Dr. Warren, who is initially reluctant to leave his dinner but ultimately joins the search. The trio returns to Hazelmoor, where their attempts to gain entry yield no success. They notice a window in the study is ajar, a peculiar sight given the stormy weather. As they enter the house, they are met with a shocking scene: Captain Trevelyan lies dead on the floor, surrounded by disarray and with signs of a struggle—a window has been forced open, and a green baize tube, resembling a sandbag, is identified as the likely murder weapon.

Dr. Warren quickly examines the body and concludes that Trevelyan has suffered a fatal injury—a fracture at the base of the skull—indicating foul play. The realization dawns on them that this is indeed a murder mystery.



Major Burnaby's panic escalates as he processes the grim timing of the captain's death, speculating that it aligns precisely with a fearful prediction he had heard earlier: "five and twenty past five." This shocking revelation sets the stage for the unfolding investigation.

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## Chapter 4:

In Chapter 4 of "The Sittaford Mystery," the story resumes the day after the tragic death of Captain Trevelyan. The scene is set in the study of Hazelmoor, where Inspector Narracott, summoned from Exeter, examines the circumstances surrounding the Captain's suspicious death. Described as a tall and efficient officer, Narracott possesses a logical mind and an acute attention to detail, traits that serve him well in his investigation.

As Narracott inspects the crime scene with Sergeant Pollock, they delve into their observations and theories about what transpired. The Captain, an athletic man in his sixties but appearing younger, was found in a chaotic room that seemed ransacked, suggesting a burglary gone awry. However, Narracott quickly dismisses this idea, pointing out that if the Captain had been upstairs, he would have left the light on, which would have deterred a burglar. Instead, it appears the lock on the window was broken from the outside to create the illusion of a break-in, raising the possibility that the murder was planned and executed by someone the Captain knew.

Pollock, a cautious man providing input based on his familiarity with the local community, shares that Captain Trevelyan was well regarded but somewhat stingy and had no known enemies. This leads Narracott to consider that motives may lie elsewhere, potentially linked to the Captain's wealth. The Inspector learns that the household staff was limited; Trevelyan



relied on one servant, a retired naval officer named Evans, who had just married and would likely know the Captain's habits well.

The dialogue between Narracott and Pollock reveals their developing theory that the murder might have involved inside knowledge, given that evidence

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## Chapter 5 Summary:

### Chapter 5 Summary: Evans

In the dining room of Sittaford House, Inspector Narracott meets Robert Henry Evans, the Captain's servant. Evans is a sturdy man with an air of cheerfulness despite his rough appearance. The Inspector begins his interrogation, establishing Evans' last interaction with Captain Trevelyan, who had dismissed him for the day due to the inclement weather, indicating that Major Burnaby, a friend who regularly visited, might not make it that day. This reversal of Evans' usual routine illustrates the Captain's considerate nature.

As the dialogue unfolds, we learn more about Captain Trevelyan, a man characterized by his meticulousness and somewhat reclusive tendencies, specifically regarding women. Evans mentions how the Captain recently expressed disdain for having female servants, suggesting a long-standing shyness possibly rooted in past experiences. He describes how he had hoped to have his wife assist him in serving the Captain, further highlighting the Captain's unwillingness to adapt to such changes.

The pair discuss Captain Trevelyan's relatives, revealing a distant relationship with his sister and a general absence of family ties, which might



have contributed to his solitary lifestyle. Evans recounts his whereabouts during the afternoon leading up to the Captain's death, confirming that he was at home with his wife due to the heavy snowfall.

Inspector Narracott examines the surroundings, noting the remnants of a meal prepared for the Captain, and draws insights from the impressive collection of trophies and keepsakes that showcase the Captain's lifetime of athletic pursuits. He also muses over the peculiar choice of novels displayed, which were less of literary value and more prizes from past competitions—a theme of quirky charm surrounding Captain Trevelyan.

The conversation shifts back to Mrs. Willett, the new tenant of Sittaford House. Evans claims she was a stranger to the Captain, although he notes her enthusiastic and somewhat flattering demeanor during their initial meeting. This raises questions for the Inspector about her true motives for wanting to rent the house and her possible connection to the Captain.

With the interview wrapped up, the Inspector decides to inspect the upper floors and confirms the orderliness of the Captain's bedroom, reflecting his disciplined personality. While Pollock, the Sergeant, delves into documents in the study, Narracott considers further investigations and feels satisfied about dismissing Evans for the time being.

The chapter concludes with Narracott leaving to gather more information,

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indicating a growing complexity in the narrative and a sense of urgency as he seeks to unravel the mystery surrounding Captain Trevelyan's untimely death.

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## Chapter 6 Summary:

In Chapter 6 of "The Sittaford Mystery," Inspector Narracott meets with Mrs. Belling, the lively and excitable owner of the Three Crowns inn. She recounts the previous night's strange events, particularly the murder of Captain Trevelyan, who had been found dead in an isolated part of Exhampton. Mrs. Belling expresses her disdain for the tramps and mentions how the Captain had no protection. The Inspector queries her about the guests who stayed at the inn on the night of the murder, learning of a Londoner named James Pearson who had left early the next morning after a brief visit that involved a walk outside around the time of the murder.

After gathering this information, Inspector Narracott moves on to speak with Major Burnaby, who is having breakfast alone. He introduces himself and seeks details about Captain Trevelyan's acquaintances and potential enemies. Burnaby staunchly defends the Captain, stating he had no known enemies and trusts Evans, the Captain's servant. Despite his affability, Burnaby shows signs of unease when discussing Trevelyan's will, revealing that he is the executor but withholding specifics about its contents.

The conversation also touches on the peculiar choice of residence for a widow and her daughter, who are living in the isolated Sittaford House, owned by Trevelyan. Major Burnaby characterizes them as sociable yet overly so for the small community's norms, and he dismisses the notion that



they might have had any advanced knowledge of Trevelyan or his estate.

As they converse, Inspector Narracott grows increasingly curious about the significance of the house itself and Trevelyan's unconventional actions, well aware that these details might hold clues to deciphering the murder mystery. With a focus on uncovering the circumstances surrounding the will and the connections between characters, the Inspector and Burnaby make plans to visit the local solicitors and estate agents to further their investigation.

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## Critical Thinking

**Key Point:** The importance of understanding personal connections and hidden motives

**Critical Interpretation:** In a world often filled with assumptions and surface interactions, Chapter 6 of 'The Sittaford Mystery' reveals the profound impact of understanding personal connections and hidden motives. As you immerse yourself in the dynamic exchanges between Inspector Narracott and Major Burnaby, consider how each character's relationships influence their reactions and decisions. This insight can inspire you to delve deeper into your own interactions, fostering a greater awareness of the people around you. By seeking to understand the motives behind actions and the complexities of relationships, you can enhance your empathy and improve your communication, ultimately enriching your personal and professional connections.

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## Chapter 7 Summary:

In Chapter 7 of *\*The Sittaford Mystery\**, Inspector Narracott and Major Burnaby visit the office of Messrs. Williamson in Exhampton, where a young clerk expresses excitement over the recent tragic events surrounding Captain Trevelyan, whose mysterious death has unsettled the town. The Inspector is focused on gathering information about the rental of Sittaford House by Mrs. Willet. The clerk explains that Mrs. Willet had contacted them by letter from the Carlton Hotel, expressing her desire for a winter rental without needing to see the property, this being the only house available that met her requirements.

Next, they proceed to meet Mr. Kirkwood, an elder lawyer and joint executor of Captain Trevelyan's will. Kirkwood informs them that the will was created about five or six years prior and confirms that it is in his office. Narracott, eager to understand the will's contents, learns important specifics about Trevelyan's estate. The will outlines bequests to various individuals, including a sum for Trevelyan's loyal servant and stipulations regarding his personal belongings and property. Kirkwood explains the estate's value is likely around £80,000 to £90,000, well beyond their initial assumptions.

As the Inspector gathers more details about Trevelyan's relatives, he inquires about information concerning the late Mrs. Pearson, Trevelyan's deceased sister, and her children. Kirkwood's vague answers suggest he is not closely

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acquainted with them either.

After leaving the lawyer's office, Inspector Narracott confronts Major Burnaby about the curious mention of a specific time—25 past five—involved in the case. Major Burnaby initially sidesteps the issue, claiming ignorance about any appointment involving Trevelyan and a nephew named James Pearson. However, under pressure from the Inspector, he reveals a rather strange incident from the previous day involving a séance, during which participants claimed to channel messages from beyond. This séance allegedly foretold Trevelyan's death, which Burnaby found ludicrous yet felt compelled to investigate.

The Inspector, surprised by this revelation, contemplates the implications of the séance and what it might suggest about the nature of Trevelyan's death. Although intrigued, he ultimately decides that understanding the supernatural elements is not his primary focus; his responsibility lies in uncovering the murder within the tangible realities of the case. Thus, the chapter ends with Narracott determined to pursue a concrete investigation, while the unsettling spirit message lingers in the background, suggesting deeper mysteries yet to come.

| Section | Summary   |
|---------|---|
| Setting | Inspector Narracott and Major Burnaby visit Williamson's office in Exhampton. |

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| Section                             | Summary   |
|-------------------------------------|---|
| Main Event                          | A clerk discusses Captain Trevelyan's tragic death and Mrs. Willet's rental request for Sittaford House.  |
| Key Information                     | Mrs. Willet desires a winter rental and the house was available without her visiting.   |
| Meeting with Mr. Kirkwood           | Kirkwood, executor of Trevelyan's will, reveals its existence and contents including various bequests and the estate's value (£80,000-£90,000). |
| Investigating Trevelyan's Relatives | Narracott inquires about Trevelyan's sister, Mrs. Pearson, but Kirkwood has vague knowledge of her children.                                    |
| Major Burnaby's Revelation          | Burnaby mentions a séance predicting Trevelyan's death, which he found absurd but felt necessary to investigate.                                |
| Inspector's Reflection              | Although intrigued by the séance, Narracott focuses on tangible evidence for the murder investigation.  |
| Conclusion                          | The chapter ends with Narracott resolved to pursue a concrete investigation amidst lingering supernatural implications.                         |

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## Chapter 8:

### ### Chapter 9: The Laurels

Inspector Narracott arrives at The Laurels, a run-down house in Exeter, just before noon. His initial observations indicate that the household is not well-off, which piques his curiosity about the recent death of Captain Trevelyan, whose demise appears to surround several beneficiaries. The Inspector is keen to remain impartial and thorough as he begins his investigation.

Inside, he is greeted by a disheveled maid named Beatrice, who confirms that Mrs. Gardner, the Captain's sister, is aware of her brother's death through a telegram. Narracott refrains from revealing his police identity initially to avoid influencing Beatrice's reactions. He asks her casual questions, trying to glean information about the family dynamics and the circumstances surrounding the Captain's death.

Beatrice turns out to be somewhat knowledgeable, revealing that Mrs. Gardner is not a widow but is married to an invalid husband who "lies in bed all day." This fact highlights the family's struggles and might hint at a potential motive connected to Captain Trevelyan's wealth.



When Mrs. Gardner enters, she displays remarkable composure. Upon being informed of her brother's murder, she expresses disbelief and wonders who could have wanted him dead. Inspector Narracott probes her estrangement from Captain Trevelyan over the years, particularly due to her husband's poor financial situation post-war, which may have soured their relationship. Mrs. Gardner recounts that she had asked her brother for help in the past, to which he declined, further deepening the rift between them.

During the conversation, the Inspector notes her peculiar calmness and lack of questions regarding her brother's death, which he finds odd. She does, however, provide information about other relatives, including her nephews and niece, who are also potential heirs. As they discuss the family further, it becomes evident that Mrs. Gardner harbors resentment due to her brother's financial decisions.

The chapter transitions to show Mrs. Gardner's newfound interest in her brother's inheritance, sparked by the news of his death, while her demanding husband calls for her. As she runs upstairs to attend to him, the Inspector takes the opportunity to speak with the nurse, who describes Mr. Gardner's condition. She reveals that his paralysis stems from a mental shock rather than a physical ailment. This revelation raises questions about Mr. Gardner's potential involvement in the events surrounding Captain Trevelyan's murder.

As Inspector Narracott prepares to leave, he notes the nurse's fond



observation of him, hinting at a budding tension beneath the surface of their brief interaction. The chapter closes with the Inspector eager to continue his investigation, armed with new insights into family relationships and possible motives, while the dynamics of The Laurels remain shrouded in secrecy and complex emotions.

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## Chapter 9 Summary:

### ### Chapter 10 Summary: The Pearson Family

In this chapter of *\*The Sittaford Mystery\**, Inspector Narracott updates Superintendent Maxwell about the ongoing investigation into the murder of Captain Joseph Trevelyan. Maxwell expresses the gravity of the case, emphasizing the potential for significant media attention and the importance of careful investigation. He instructs Narracott to locate James Pearson, the Captain's nephew, and clarify his whereabouts during the time of the murder.

Narracott, suspecting that James Pearson might have a dubious connection to the case, plans to travel to London to speak with him. However, since the roads to Sittaford are blocked by snow, he will also inquire about Mrs. Martin Dering, the niece's current situation. Mrs. Dering, also known as Sylvia Pearson, exhibits a mix of anxiety and disdain toward her uncle, revealing their fraught relationship. Narracott learns that Sylvia has been living away from her uncle for some time and describes him as unsympathetic and crude.

Upon arriving in London and managing to secure an appointment to see James Pearson, Narracott finds the young man in distressed circumstances.

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James, visibly shaken by the news of his uncle's death, reveals that he did visit his uncle the previous day but insists that it was an impulsive visit and that he left the Captain unharmed. However, his evasive answers trigger Suspicion in the experienced Inspector.

Following the lead of James' conflicting accounts, Narracott questions him about his timeline after his arrival at Exhampton. James struggles to recall specific times and details, raising further doubts. He admits to fleeing Exhampton after hearing of the murder, claiming fear as his motive. Just as Narracott prepares to take a formal statement, Emily Trefusis, James's fiancée, enters the scene, her keen sense of loyalty shining through. She defends James, insisting he is innocent and pressuring him to cooperate with the investigation. Emily's intelligence and strong personality introduce a new dynamic to the storyline, hinting that she may play a crucial role moving forward.

As the investigation unfolds, the interplay between fear, loyalty, and circumstantial evidence continues to weave a complex web, leaving the reader anticipating the revelation of the true circumstances surrounding the murder. The chapter ends with the Inspector preparing to document James's statement, setting the stage for a deeper exploration of motives and alibis in the upcoming events.

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## Chapter 10 Summary:

### ### Chapter 11: Emily Sets to Work

The inquest into Captain Trevelyan's mysterious death began on a Monday morning, attracting a flurry of media attention due to the involvement of Trevelyan's nephew, Jim Pearson, who was detained in connection with the murder. Despite the initial anticipation, the inquest was quickly adjourned for a week, leaving many journalists and onlookers disappointed. Amidst the chaos, Charles Enderby, a journalist drawn to the sensational story, found himself in a position of unexpected advantage due to a recent football competition prize he had won.

Enderby, keen to gather information, noticed a striking young woman at lunch, later revealed to be Emily Trefusis. Intrigued by her stylish demeanor and seeming independence from the growing media circus, he was soon approached by Emily, who asked for his guidance while exploring Exhampton. Through their conversation, Emily revealed that she was engaged to Jim Pearson and feared that he would be wrongfully accused of murder. She convinced Enderby of her need for assistance—asserting that men had more access to information and connections that women often lacked.



As Emily charmed Enderby with her confidence and insights, she proposed a partnership. She sought to investigate the circumstances surrounding her fiancé's uncle's death and wanted Enderby to aid her journalistic endeavors as an ally. Despite Enderby's initial reservations about his own obligations, the prospect of working with Emily was enticing, and he agreed to help.

The duo decided to travel to Sittaford together, with Emily displaying her tenacity by assuring Enderby they would find accommodations. At the ruins of a nearby castle, they began plotting their investigation. Emily firmly declared her belief in Jim's innocence, asserting she had a keen grasp of human nature, especially when it came to understanding men. She described Jim as gentle and incapable of committing such a violent act, emphasizing that they needed to uncover the real murderer.

Enderby, drawing on his journalistic expertise, speculated about suspects beyond Jim, including family members who might benefit from Trevelyan's death. Emily flagged her concerns about Jim's brother-in-law, a dubious character, and others in Jim's family who could hold motives for murder. She pointed out the anomalies surrounding the Trevelyan household, including the suspicious actions of the Willetts, who had rented Trevelyan's home in winter, and the eccentric incident of a recent séance that had connected to Trevelyan, prompting further intrigue.

As they concluded their discussion, Enderby arranged for immediate travel

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to Sittaford, intent on investigating thoroughly. Emily expressed her determination to gather information and offer emotional support to the beleaguered peerage. Their alliance promised both a pursuit of truth behind the murder and a sensational story, intertwining personal stakes with professional aspirations.

Thus, armed with a shared purpose, Emily and Enderby embarked on their journey, poised to unravel the threads of mystery surrounding Captain Trevelyan's untimely death. Emily, with her decisive character and savvy approach, was anything but an ordinary young woman.

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## Chapter 11 Summary:

In Chapter 12 of "The Sittaford Mystery," Emily is filled with urgency and determination as she prepares to leave the Three Crowns for Sittaford. Upon encountering Mrs. Belling, a sympathetic and motherly figure who runs the inn, Emily learns of the recent arrest of Mr. Pearson, her fiancé, which profoundly shocks her. Mrs. Belling shares the news that the police have taken him in, confirming Emily's worst fears.

Overwhelmed by emotions, Emily momentarily succumbs to tears, expressing her deep affection for Jim Pearson and her conviction that he is innocent. Mrs. Belling, sensing Emily's distress, quickly reassures her, dismissing the police's suspicions and promising her support. Emily's determination crystallizes as she resolves to uncover the truth and help Jim, despite the apparent odds against him.

During their conversation, Mrs. Belling provides practical advice about where Emily might stay in Sittaford, as options are limited. The only decent accommodations available belong to Mrs. Curtis, who rents rooms during the summer and lives in one of the six cottages built by Captain Trevelyan, the owner of Sittaford House. Emily plans to share travel arrangements with Charles Enderby, which she frames as acceptable by claiming familial ties to avoid any impropriety regarding their living arrangements.



As Emily prepares to leave, Mrs. Belling offers her a cup of tea to fortify her for the journey, reinforcing the bond of sympathy and support between them. Emily packs her things and consults a chambermaid, asking her to keep an ear out for any relevant news regarding Jim, which the maid promises to do eagerly.

With a sense of purpose, Emily departs from the inn with Charles Enderby, setting off towards Sittaford. They cleverly maintain the ruse of being cousins, allowing Emily to navigate the close-knit and sometimes judgmental country environment more easily. As they travel, Emily grapples with her worries about Jim but also feels a resurgence of hope and resolve, determined to confront the challenges ahead and find a way to save him.

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## Critical Thinking

**Key Point:** The power of determination and resolve in the face of adversity

**Critical Interpretation:** Just like Emily's urgent and unwavering commitment to uncovering the truth for Jim, we too can find strength in our own challenges. When faced with obstacles that seem insurmountable, channeling determination can ignite a powerful force within us, paving the way for solutions where we once saw none. Life may present unexpected hardships, but it is our resolve to pursue what is right and just that not only defines our character but also inspires those around us to rise up and confront their own battles.

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## Chapter 12:

### ### Chapter 13 Summary: Sittaford

Emily and her cousin Charles Enderby arrive in Sittaford, a small village nestled on the moors, roughly two miles from Exhampton. Their journey into the village reveals a quaint community characterized by a mix of rustic charm and the anticipation brought on by the recent murder of Captain Trevelyan. As they navigate the rough moorland roads, they discover the village consists of a smithy, a post office, a sweet shop, and a row of newly-built granite bungalows.

Upon reaching Mrs. Curtis's home, they are welcomed by the energetic and somewhat loquacious landlady, who is buzzing with news of the murder that has just reached the village. Mrs. Curtis, a thin, gray-haired woman with a shrewish disposition, insists on preparing them tea and urges them to stay with her and her husband, Mr. Curtis, while Emily and Charles quickly settle into their rooms. Emily's room offers a view of the Sittaford Beacon, while Charles's accommodation is minimally furnished.

Over cups of strong tea, the newcomers learn about the locals from Mrs. Curtis, who provides a colorful overview of the village's residents. There's Miss Percehouse, a spinster rumored to have moved to Sittaford to die, yet

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has thrived in the fresh air. Charles recalls Ronald Garfield, her nephew, who has been mentioned in connection with the table-turning and the murder. Curtis also shares insights about other residents, including a bashful man named Duke, a naturalist named Mr. Rycroft, and Major Burnaby, who had a close friendship with the deceased Captain Trevelyan. The gossip paints a picture of a small but complex community.

Their conversation shifts as Charles inquires about Major Burnaby's return. Mrs. Curtis shares that he had bravely trekked back from Exhampton amidst the snow, earning admiration for his resilience, while gossiping about how young men like Ronald Garfield would not have been capable of such a feat. This insight raises questions about the relationships and dynamics among the villagers, particularly their responsibilities to each other amidst calamity.

After finishing their tea, Charles and Emily decide to visit Major Burnaby to gain his perspective on the recent murder. As they leave, Mrs. Curtis speculates on the nature of their bond, suggesting that there might be more than mere cousinly affection between them and expressing her concerns about the implications of marrying cousins. She also suspects that Emily is investigating the murder for possible connections to the young man in custody.

The chapter is rich in character details and establishes an engaging backdrop for the unfolding mystery, blending the quaintness of Sittaford with the

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ominous shadows cast by Captain Trevelyan's murder. As Emily and Charles set out to uncover the truth, their interactions and observations hint at a tightly-knit community where secrets might be lurking beneath the surface.

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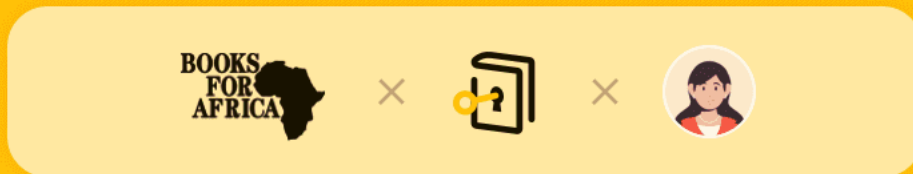




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## Chapter 13 Summary:

### The Sittaford Mystery - Chapter 14 Summary: The Willetts

As Charles and Emily head to visit Major Burnaby, Inspector Narracott sits in Sittaford House, preparing to interrogate Mrs. Willett. His delay in interviewing her was due to impassable roads, but upon meeting her, he immediately recognizes that she has taken command of the situation. Mrs. Willett is a tall, thin-faced woman with keen eyes, dressed in an ambitious knitted silk outfit unsuitable for the countryside, and adorned with expensive jewelry.

Upon entering, Mrs. Willett expresses her shock over Captain Trevelyan's murder and introduces her daughter, Violet, a striking girl with big blue eyes, who initially catches the Inspector's attention. Narracott quickly realizes Mrs. Willett is astute, possibly hiding more than her polite demeanor suggests.

She reveals that Trevelyan had distanced himself from them, citing his extreme shyness, and implies a curiosity to have drawn him out socially. The conversation shifts to the peculiar incident of table-turning that coincided with the discovery of Trevelyan's body, which Mrs. Willett initially dismissed as an inappropriate joke. However, she now describes the

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experience as "uncanny," revealing her and Violet's continuing agitation over the occurrence.

The Inspector notes Mrs. Willett's brisk attitude, but during their chat, he catches a moment of fear on Violet's face, indicating deeper emotions tied to the murder. When pressed about their move to Devonshire, Mrs. Willett explains that they were inspired by reading about the area and enthusiastic comments from a boy they met on a ship. However, when asked about how they found a house agent in Exhampton, Mrs. Willett falters, revealing cracks in her confident facade.

After a brief examination of their home, with little to uncover, Narracott departs but remains troubled by the new layer of unease suggested by Violet's behavior. Just as he is about to leave, he mentions Jim Pearson—who is engaged to a girl in London—only to witness Violet faint upon hearing the name. Mrs. Willett claims Violet's fainting is due to the stress of recent events, but the Inspector is suspicious of the connection between the Willetts and Pearson.

As Narracott leaves, he contemplates the implications of Violet's fainting and reflects on the list of local residents in his notebook, eventually deciding that he must visit Mr. Duke, the occupant of No. 6 The Cottages, next. The chapter ends with a sense of mounting intrigue regarding the Willetts, suggesting that their actions are more calculated than they appear.

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## Critical Thinking

**Key Point:** The facade of confidence can often conceal deeper truths.

**Critical Interpretation:** As you navigate through life, remember that not everyone who appears poised and in control is free from fear or uncertainty. Just like Mrs. Willett, who projects an image of command while hiding significant trepidation, you too may encounter people who wear masks of confidence. This realization can inspire you to look beyond appearances, encouraging a deeper understanding of those around you. It reminds you to be compassionate and to communicate openly when you feel unsteady. Embracing vulnerability can foster more genuine connections and help you recognize your own complexities as well.

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## Chapter 14 Summary:

In Chapter 15 of "The Sittaford Mystery," titled "Visit to Major Burnaby," Emily Trefusis and Charles Enderby visit Major Burnaby to glean more information about Captain Trevelyan, who has been murdered. This chapter takes place in Burnaby's cozy cottage, where his initial lack of enthusiasm transforms into concern upon meeting Emily, especially once he learns of her engagement to Jim Pearson.

Emily expresses her deep worries about Jim's innocence and directly asks Major Burnaby if he believes Jim is guilty. The Major assures her he does not suspect Jim but admits the young man may be weak in character. He speaks fondly of Trevelyan, noting that he had few enemies and led a normal life without complications. This leads to Emily probing for clues about Trevelyan's past and associates. Despite Burnaby's affable demeanor, he struggles to articulate any leads, remarking that Trevelyan received few letters and had no romantic entanglements.

As the conversation progresses, Emily also inquires about the Willetts, the new tenants of Sittaford House. She finds it peculiar that they would want to stay during this time of year and wonders if Mrs. Willett had ulterior motives for acquiring the house – possibly to be closer to Trevelyan. The Major finds her suggestions interesting but remains skeptical. Emily's intuition is piqued when she recalls the eerie table-turning séance that took



place shortly before Trevelyan's murder, prompting her to think that it may not have been mere superstition but rather a potential clue.

The idea of someone at the séance secretly knowing about Trevelyan's fate begins to take shape in her mind. She discusses this hypothesis with Enderby, noting that recognizing a name during a session could lead to unintentional movements of the table, thus betraying the person harboring secret knowledge. They meticulously consider the potential significance of each person who participated in the séance, particularly focusing on Mr. Duke, a newcomer, and the Willetts, whom Emily finds increasingly mysterious.

Distracted by the distant sound of a bell, they learn from Mrs. Curtis that it signals a convict has escaped from a nearby prison. Charles remarks on the unfortunate timing, lamenting that if the escape had happened earlier, it would have conveniently explained Trevelyan's murder. As the two conclude their meeting, Emily feels motivated by her investigative instincts, determined to link the scattered pieces of information she has gathered, while Charles provides a pragmatic counterpoint, doubting the likelihood of discovering the murderer among the current suspects.

Thus, this chapter encapsulates both the emotional turmoil of those still reeling from Trevelyan's death and the logical deductions required to uncover the truth behind the mystery, highlighting their evolving search for

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answers amidst a landscape filled with intrigue and suspicion.

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## Chapter 15 Summary:

In Chapter 16 of *\*The Sittaford Mystery\**, Emily Trefusis wakes early and decides to take a walk to clear her mind amidst the turmoil of the previous day's events. As she strolls along the lane, she ascends Sittaford Tor, a rocky outcrop with breathtaking views of the surrounding moorland. Here, she reflects on her lack of familiarity with Captain Trevelyan, the deceased, and her frustrations in gathering impressions solely from others.

Suddenly, she encounters Mr. Rycroft, an elderly gentleman with a courteous demeanor who introduces himself and expresses the community's sympathy for her situation. Rycroft, revealing a keen interest in criminology, offers his assistance in the investigation of Captain Trevelyan's murder, which has seen suspicion cast upon Trevelyan's nephew, Jim, due to the circumstances surrounding the crime.

Together, they explore the potential motives and suspects, including the possibility that the murder may have been committed by someone familiar with Trevelyan—a notion that leads them to consider the household staff, particularly a servant named Evans, who may have overheard a quarrel between Jim and the captain prior to the murder. Rycroft prompts Emily to consider the dynamics of the scene and points out the curious influence of psychic phenomena observed earlier, suggesting that the séance held may have a deeper significance yet to be unraveled.



Their conversation reveals various details about other characters present during the séance, such as Mr. Garfield, who seems to have little fortune, and the Willetts, a charming but unrefined colonial couple. Rycroft's insights add layers to Emily's understanding of human behavior and crime, and she is intrigued by his extensive collection of books on criminology.

As their dialogue continues, Emily grows more engrossed in the mystery, finding solace in Rycroft's scholarly approaches and enthusiasm for mutual collaboration. Their encounter culminates in an invitation to Rycroft's cozy cottage, where the walls are lined with books on criminology and occult phenomena—a fitting setting for their budding partnership in unraveling the dark complexities of the murder mystery.

As the chapter concludes with Emily feeling a renewed sense of purpose and support, she acknowledges the importance of a reliable ally in her investigation, setting the stage for further developments in her quest for the truth behind Captain Trevelyan's death.

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## Critical Thinking

**Key Point:** The importance of collaboration and seeking support from others.

**Critical Interpretation:** In the midst of life's complexities and challenges, much like Emily Trefusis navigating the murky waters of a murder mystery, you may find that assembling a supportive network is crucial for success. As you face obstacles, don't hesitate to reach out and build partnerships with those who share your interests and passions. Just as Emily's encounter with Mr. Rycroft inspires her to delve deeper into the nuances of human behavior and the case at hand, forming collaborations can provide you with fresh perspectives, encouragement, and resources to tackle your own challenges, leading you closer to the truth and resolution you seek.

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## Chapter 16:

In Chapter 17 of "The Sittaford Mystery," Emily Trefusis returns home to a breakfast of eggs and bacon, where she finds Charles Enderby awaiting her. Their conversation reveals Mrs. Curtis's excitement over a recently escaped convict, a situation that stirs local gossip and speculation about where the fugitive might head. Amongst the moors and small towns, Charles suggests the nearby Pixie's Cave as a potential hiding spot, a legendary location reportedly used by a soldier during the Civil War.

Charles, reflecting on the unexpected twists his visit has taken—from a simple football competition to involvement with a murder investigation—considers whether he should visit Princetown. However, he decides to postpone any plans related to Major Burnaby's cottage due to changing weather, maintaining his pretext for being in Sittaford as long as necessary. He mentions that he's sent an interview in which Emily is quoted discussing her fiancé James Pearson, who has been arrested and accused of murder.

Just then, they are interrupted by Ronnie Garfield, a young man sent by his aunt, Miss Percehouse, who wishes to see Emily. Despite his awkward demeanor, Ronnie communicates his aunt's desire to meet her, leading Emily to express her eagerness to visit Miss Percehouse, while leaving Charles to handle his own affairs.



At Miss Percehouse's cottage, Emily discovers the elderly woman to be sharp-tongued and astute. Their conversation quickly turns to the murder investigation, with Miss Percehouse appreciating Emily's proactive nature and her determination in seeking the truth. As they discuss the villagers, Miss Percehouse shares her insights on various locals, including Major Burnaby, Mr. Rycroft, and the Willetts, presenting a mix of sharp opinions and keen observations.

One significant revelation comes when Miss Percehouse produces a luggage label from a trunk belonging to the Willetts, suggesting they may not be truthful about their origins. This inconsistency arouses Emily's curiosity further regarding the Willetts, who have recently relocated to the village.

Miss Percehouse, unable to move freely due to illness, decides to send a note to the Willetts under the pretense of asking for a coffee cake recipe. She instructs Emily to deliver it, emphasizing the need to remain observant during her visit. Emily acknowledges Miss Percehouse's support and wisdom, appreciating the insightfulness she offers about the village and its inhabitants.

The chapter encapsulates Emily's growing determination to uncover the truth behind the murder while establishing her connection with Miss Percehouse, a formidable woman whose character resonates with Emily's own tenacity.

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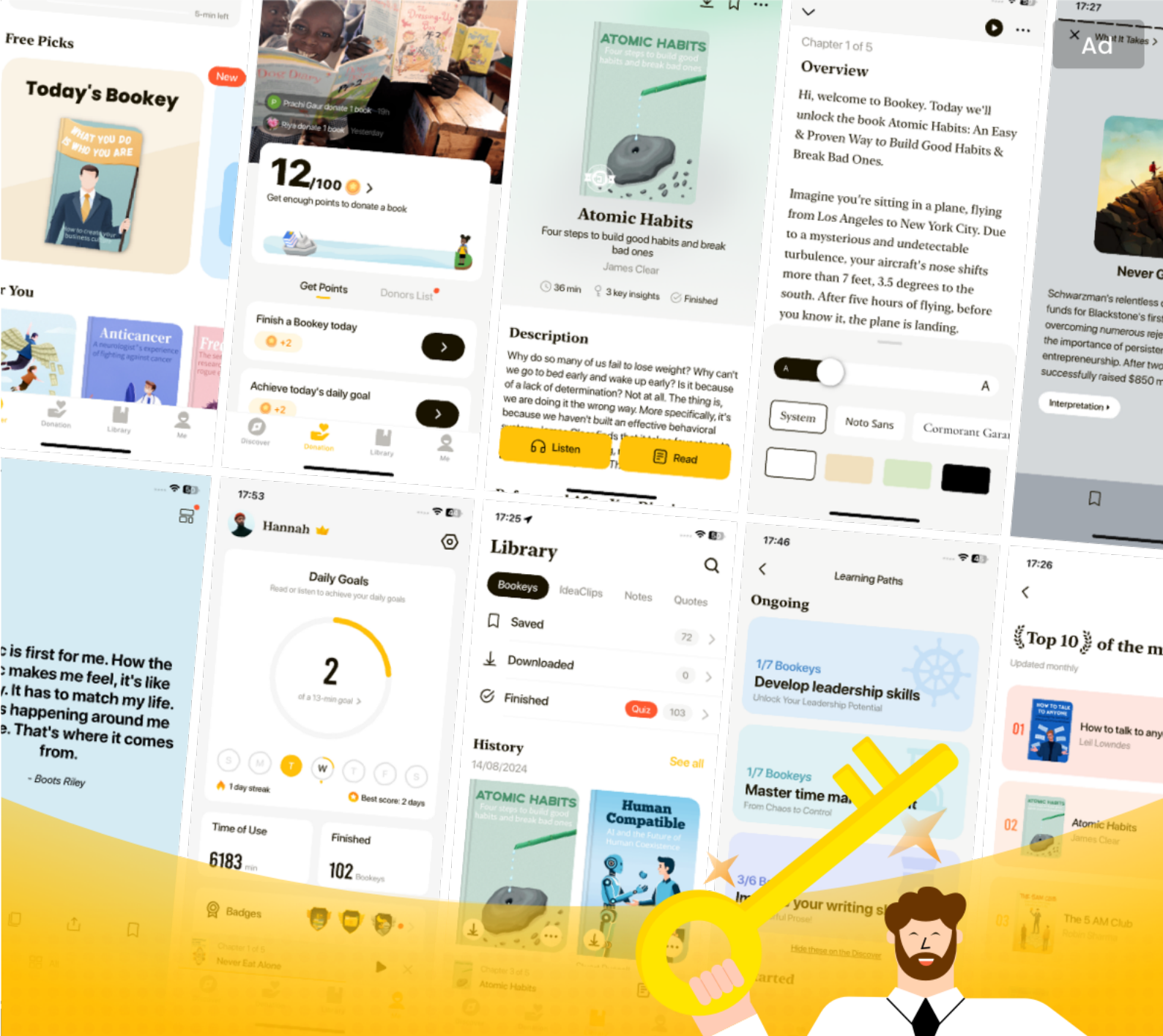
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This meeting solidifies the chapter's themes of inquiry, observation, and the complexities of human relationships within the backdrop of an unfolding mystery.

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## Chapter 17 Summary:

### ### The Sittaford Mystery: Chapter 18 Summary

As Emily navigates the foggy morning on her way to Sittaford House, she reflects on the dreary English weather. Her thoughts are interrupted by Captain Wyatt, an invalid man whom she recognizes as the owner of a nearby cottage. He inquires about his escaped bull terrier, which serves as a pretext for curiosity about Emily, the focus of local attention following the murder of Captain Trevelyan. Captain Wyatt shares his disdain for Trevelyan, describing him as a miserly man prone to arguments.

Despite Captain Wyatt's hospitality, Emily declines his invitation to enter his cottage, feeling pressed by her own appointment. Upon arrival at Sittaford House, Emily finds a polished exterior and is welcomed by a parlormaid, who initially informs her that Mrs. Willett is unavailable. However, upon presenting a note from Miss Percehouse, Emily is allowed in, revealing a well-furnished drawing-room with hints of domestic life, yet devoid of personal photographs.

Violet Willett, Mrs. Willett's daughter, enters looking both beautiful and anxious. She apologizes for her mother's absence, sharing that the family has been inundated with reporters seeking information on Trevelyan's

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murder. As they converse, Emily senses Violet's nervous tension, particularly when discussing the ominous events surrounding the séance held earlier, where feelings of fear and supernatural dread were palpable.

Violet recounts how the séance was meant to be lighthearted but took a serious turn, leaving many guests shaken. She observes how certain individuals, notably Major Burnaby and Mr. Rycroft, reacted strongly to the experience. Emily uses this moment to probe Violet's mind, feigning interest in the supernatural aspects of the incident. However, Violet's evasive responses and mounting anxiety only heighten Emily's suspicions.

Their conversation reveals that the staff is leaving due to fear instigated by Trevelyan's murder, which is not thought to have occurred within the house itself. Emily discreetly drops a glove to create an excuse to return, feeling a growing intuition that there is more to the Willetts' story and a potential connection to the tragic event.

As Emily feigns a search for her glove, she overhears a distressing fragment of conversation between Violet and her mother. A plaintive voice, likely Mrs. Willett's, expresses panic about the approaching night and its implications. This revelation adds to Emily's conviction that the Willetts are entwined in the mystery surrounding Trevelyan's fate, suggesting that deeper secrets may be hidden within Sittaford House.

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Determined to uncover the truth, Emily departs the house, armed with her observations and suspicions, pondering the tangled relationships and fears that might hold the key to the unfolding mystery.

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## Chapter 18 Summary:

### ### Chapter 19: Theories

Emily Trefusis returns to her cottage only to find her boyfriend, Charles Enderby, absent. Mrs. Curtis, the housekeeper, informs her that Charles is out with other young gentlemen. While sorting through her thoughts, she discovers two telegrams addressed to her, which Mrs. Curtis eyes with curiosity. Despite her reassurances to Mrs. Curtis that the telegrams contain no bad news, Emily yearns for solitude to organize her ideas.

As she sits down with a pencil and notepaper, Charles arrives, excitedly sharing that he has been the center of attention from Fleet Street, asserting his significant connections to the story surrounding Captain Trevelyan's murder. Emily interrupts his excitement, expressing her plan to depart for Exeter that afternoon to meet her solicitor Mr. Dacres, who is defending Jim, her boyfriend accused of the murder. As the conversation progresses, she weighs the potential guilt of various suspects, including Martin Dering, who is besmirched by his betting habits despite his seemingly solid alibi from a literary dinner.

Their discussion reveals Martin's absence at this dinner, which Charles gleans from a letter he received from a colleague named Carruthers. This

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discovery raises suspicions about Martin's alibi, prompting Emily to consider the possibility that Jim might not be the only suspect. Moreover, Emily mentions a peculiar sentence she overheard while leaving the Willetts, suggesting something odd is afoot.

Determined to uncover the mystery further, Emily instructs Charles to investigate what might happen that night at Sittaford House, emphasizing that the servants are being cleared out, indicating something unusual may occur. Charles, drawn in by the prospect of revelatory journalism, agrees to stake out the house.

Their exchange continues as they contemplate Jim's potential innocence, with Charles positing a theory that Jim might have discovered Captain Trevelyan dead and panicked, which leads Emily to consider how the timeline of events aligns with Jim's account. If Jim's alibi shifts based on when Trevelyan was killed, it could absolve him or incriminate him further.

Realizing she needs to act fast, Emily resolves to visit the local doctor who examined Trevelyan and ensures Jim's solicitor emphasizes the importance of revealing the complete truth. Before heading to Exhampton, she plans to quickly visit Mr. Duke, as he has not yet been consulted regarding the seance.

As fate would have it, Emily encounters Inspector Narracott leaving Mr.

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Duke's cottage. Initiating a conversation, she conveys her belief that Jim is not the murderer, prompting a reaction from the inspector that suggests doubt about his initial suspicions. She expresses her confidence that he shares her doubts regarding Jim's guilt.

Just then, Ronnie Garfield appears, seemingly troubled, and when queried, he reveals he would like to walk with Emily. She informs him of her plans to travel to Exeter but hands him a recipe to pass along to his aunt before ushering him away, noting his cheek's green paint.

Emily and Charles finalize their preparations as she gathers her suitcase from him. With anticipation and determination, they prepare to share crucial information with Inspector Narracott on the car ride to Exhampton, intensifying the mystery's unfolding.

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## Chapter 19 Summary:

### Chapter 20: Visit to Aunt Jennifer

At half past two, Dr. Warren speaks with Emily Trefusis regarding the circumstances surrounding Captain Trevelyan's death. Emily, sharp and determined, learns that the Captain had been dead for at least two hours by the time Dr. Warren examined the body. This timing is crucial as it places suspicion on Jim Pearson, Emily's fiancé, who desperately needed money and allegedly sought help from his wealthy uncle, only to be refused.

Emily visits Mr. Dacres, her lawyer, who reveals troubling information: the police have charged Jim with murder, and motives arise from his financial troubles. Jim had been borrowing money unsanctioned from his firm to speculate on stocks, and when he faced scrutiny as his uncle was found dead, Emily realizes he had a strong motive for murder—gaining access to Trevelyan's fortune. Mr. Dacres, however, thinks Jim is innocent at heart, although he laments that the evidence against him is formidable.

Emily then determines to visit Jim's Aunt Jennifer Gardner to learn more about her family and potentially gather new insights into the case. Upon arriving at The Laurels, she meets Nurse Davis, who has been caring for Uncle Robert, Jennifer's husband, and discusses the family's recent turmoil.



Emily learns more about Jennifer, a striking woman with a fierce spirit, yet one who seems burdened by her husband's illness and their financial struggles.

Their conversation reveals that while Jennifer has little sorrow for Trevelyan, whom she considers greedy, she still hopes for a financial breakthrough that could help them. The room fills with tension as Emily, overwhelmed by her emotions and the weight of the situation, unexpectedly bursts into tears. Rather than offering platitudes, Jennifer observes in silence, hinting at her own complexities and the dark atmosphere clouding their interactions.

As Emily seeks to untangle the web of family dynamics, alliances, and potential motives, she is struck by the emotional undercurrents within Jennifer's expressions and her own fragility in this dire situation. This visit intensifies Emily's resolve to uncover the truth behind the murder and protect Jim, even as the shadows of suspicion deepen around them.

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## Chapter 20:

### ### Chapter 21 Summary - The Sittaford Mystery: Conversations

As Charles Enderby immerses himself in the peculiar dynamics of Sittaford village, he turns to the well-sourced Mrs. Curtis for insights. Her anecdotes reveal a colorful tapestry of local characters, including Captain Wyatt, known for his fiery temper and affinity for young women; Mr. Rycroft, a curious intellectual with a fondness for strict order; and the Willett family, particularly Violet, who leads on Mr. Ronnie Garfield amidst rumors of her escapades on the moors. Notably, Mr. Duke, a newcomer, remains an enigma, engaging primarily in gardening.

After a disorienting afternoon filled with Mrs. Curtis's gossip, Enderby ventures out for a walk and serendipitously encounters Ronnie Garfield outside Sittaford House. Garfield, despite his apparent vexation, shares insights about the house's recent renovations since the Willetts moved in. Their conversation ventures into speculation about Captain Trevelyan, the recently murdered man whose disappearance has left a cloud over the village, and the potential reasons he left suddenly—implying a foreboding sense of danger.

Enderby learns that local law enforcement, particularly Inspector Narracott,

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is investigating Trevelyan's death, and Garfield expresses disbelief regarding the police's effectiveness. The unease in Sittaford stews around three major topics: the murder, a convict's escape, and the intriguing figure of Miss Emily Trefusis, whose presence is stirring up concerns among the villagers.

Across multiple households, the atmosphere reverberates with these themes. At Sittaford House, Violet and her mother, Mrs. Willett, discuss their suspicions about Miss Trefusis, viewing her as a potential threat given her engagement to the accused murderer, Jim Pearson. Mrs. Willett's dismissive attitude towards others, particularly Mrs. Curtis, frames her protective instinct over Violet.

Meanwhile, Major Burnaby listens as Mrs. Curtis relays her thoughts on the inhabitants of Sittaford, labeling Miss Trefusis as a potential manipulator, likening her to her own great aunt's notorious nature. The gossip swirls, positioning Violet as the object of attention and speculation, especially concerning her interactions with young men.

As these conversations unfold, Captain Wyatt's domineering demeanor overshadows Mr. Rycroft during their discussion about Miss Trefusis. Wyatt's brash opinions showcase a stark contrast to Rycroft's more subdued and observational character, as he tries to navigate Wyatt's rants and contempt for the local police. Wyatt's fixation on Miss Trefusis hints at his

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own motivations and desires, complicating the social web in Sittaford.

Simultaneously, Miss Percehouse reprimands her nephew, Ronnie, for his interest in Miss Trefusis, insisting there are more suitable romantic prospects in the village. Their dynamic reveals her curmudgeonly demeanor and her protective nature over family matters, further weaving the intricate connections among the village's characters.

The chapter encapsulates the complexities of interpersonal relationships, the undercurrents of suspicion, and the small-town gossip that fuels both intrigue and tension in Sittaford. As the narrative unfurls, the reader is drawn deeper into a world of secrets, speculations, and emerging connections that foretell the larger mystery at play.

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## Chapter 21 Summary:

In Chapter 22 of *\*The Sittaford Mystery\**, entitled "Nocturnal Adventures of Charles," we delve into the internal conflict of Charles Enderby as he prepares for a night vigil at Sittaford House. Despite his skepticism about the necessity of this outing—believing it a product of Emily Willett's overactive imagination—he feels a strong sense of obligation to her. The chapter opens with Charles reflecting on the biting cold and dreary fog that envelops the night, a stark contrast to the comfort of his cottage.

As he dons multiple layers of clothing, he recalls Emily's trust in him, which stirs a sense of responsibility within him. Despite his grumbling about the situation, he realizes he cannot disappoint her, and he stealthily leaves his home. En route, he carries a flask for warmth and gathers his thoughts about possible events that could occur that night, acknowledging a sense of unease at the thought of two women alone in the dark house.

Upon arriving at Sittaford House, he notes its darkened windows, except for one faint light, which fuels his curiosity and apprehension. As he quietly patrols the grounds, he is startled by the unexpected sound of a bolt being drawn back from inside the house. To his surprise, it is Violet Willett who steps out into the night, prompting Charles to follow her cautiously. He recognizes her through the fog as she walks away from the house towards a moor, indicating a secretive rendezvous.



Charles's keen observations lead him to a moment of anxiety when he hears a peculiar whistle exchanged between Violet and an unknown figure. This prompts him to take a more reckless approach, moving closer to uncover the nature of their meeting. However, in the process, he inadvertently steps on a twig, revealing his presence and triggering a confrontation with the man from the shadows.

Their ensuing struggle is short-lived; Charles quickly realizes he is outmatched in strength. As the intruder demands to know his identity, Charles cleverly deduces that he is facing Brian Pearson, a young Australian man, by piecing together clues from the confrontation. The tension shifts as Charles asserts his knowledge with a bold suggestion: they should move their conversation to a more secure location within the house.

This chapter deftly combines elements of suspense and characterization, showcasing Charles's evolution from doubt to determination, as well as introducing a new character, Brian Pearson, who adds complexity to the unfolding mystery surrounding Sittaford House. The careful balance of intrigue and introductory dialogue sets the stage for deeper revelations in the narrative to come.

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## Chapter 22 Summary:

### Summary of Chapter 23 of \*The Sittaford Mystery\*

In this chapter, Major Burnaby, a methodical former army officer, is immersed in his financial accounts, lamenting his poor investment choices in high-risk ventures like oil wells and diamond mines. His meticulous nature contrasts sharply with the carelessness he perceives in younger generations, particularly in Ronald Garfield, a young man with whom he has an uneasy relationship. Burnaby's hospitality is strained by his annoyance at Garfield's tardiness and casual demeanor.

Garfield informs the Major that he wants to accompany him to Exhampton, where the Major has been tasked with sorting through the belongings of the late Trevelyan, a local who has been recently murdered. Garfield's theories about Trevelyan's death, particularly his suspicion of Pearson—a newcomer from Australia—reveal a hint of conspiratorial thinking. Despite the Major's skepticism, he engages in the conversation but is clearly frustrated by Garfield's heedlessness.

After a trip to the town, Burnaby and Garfield arrive at Hazelmoor, where the murder took place. As they process Trevelyan's belongings, they are interrupted by a mysterious noise from upstairs, heightening the chapter's

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tension. This turns out to be Garfield, who has entered the house without the Major's knowledge. His curious behavior and lack of tact further irritate Burnaby, who is focused on the grim task at hand.

Garfield's flippant remarks about the murder disturb the atmosphere even more, and after a brief and awkward interaction, he leaves the Major and his retainer, Evans, to their unsettling work. While they complete their task, Evans expresses a desire to continue serving the Major, drawing a sentimental parallel between his loyalty to the deceased Captain and the Major's current needs. However, Burnaby's reluctance to accept Evans's offer underscores his struggle with vulnerability since the tragedy.

The chapter concludes with Evans pondering the whereabouts of Burnaby and Garfield, hinting at ongoing mysteries that will unravel as the story continues. The strain of the day emphasizes themes of loyalty, the burdens of service, and the complex dynamics between the characters.

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## Chapter 23 Summary:

### ### Summary of Chapter 24: Inspector Narracott Discusses the Case

In this chapter, Inspector Narracott expresses his doubts to the Chief Constable regarding their main suspect, James Pearson. Initially confident in the evidence against him, the Inspector has now discovered new information that changes his perspective. He reveals that another Pearson, Brian, who was supposedly in Australia, has actually been in England for two months, creating a potential connection to the murder of Captain Trevelyan, which shakes their case against James.

Brian Pearson's behavior raises suspicion; despite the media attention surrounding the murder and his brother's arrest, he did not come forward until a journalist, Enderby, found him at Sittaford House. Brian claims he was visiting his love interest, Miss Willett, under the cover of night to avoid her mother's knowledge, but the Inspector suspects that if Enderby hadn't found him, he would have left for Australia without revealing his presence.

Complicating matters, Martin Dering, Sylvia Pearson's husband and a novelist, becomes a person of interest. Despite initially claiming he was at a literary dinner on the night of the murder, evidence suggests he lied, indicating possible links to the crime. Inspector Narracott is wary but also



acknowledges the strong circumstantial evidence against James Pearson. However, he feels emotionally conflicted, as he doesn't believe James has the capacity for murder.

The Inspector investigates Dering's alibi, learning that Dering was supposed to have spent time with an American publisher, Edgar Rosenkraun, who has since left for New York. Dering's sudden reluctance to discuss his whereabouts further raises flags for the Inspector, who suspects that lies are covering up something more sinister.

Seeking the truth, Inspector Narracott asks Dering for a written statement to confirm his alibi. Dering begrudgingly complies but insists it remains a private matter to avoid damaging his reputation or career. As the Inspector leaves, he reflects on a past case, connecting the name "Rycroft" with the elderly gentleman residing near Sittaford, suggesting intertwining lives and hidden connections that may lead to further discoveries in this entangled investigation.

Overall, the chapter underscores the complexity of the relationships involved and the layers of deception that Inspector Narracott must untangle to find the truth behind Captain Trevelyan's murder.

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## Chapter 24:

### ### The Sittaford Mystery - Chapter 25 Summary

In the tranquil setting of Deller's Café in Exeter, Emily Trefusis and Charles Enderby engage in a confidential conversation following a peculiar series of events surrounding the murder of Captain Trevelyan. The café is relatively deserted at half past three, providing a rare moment of peace for the two friends as they ponder the implications of their recent encounters and observations.

Their discussion centers on Brian Pearson, a young man whose polite demeanor during a lunch with Emily and Charles seems incongruent with his fate. Despite being embroiled in a clandestine love affair, his anxious acceptance of a police inquiry raises Emily's suspicions about his integrity. She instinctively feels that this meekness does not fit the character she has come to know—a headstrong and possibly unscrupulous man who might resort to extreme measures to achieve his goals.

Emily lays out her theories regarding Pearson's potential involvement in Trevelyan's murder. She lists three critical factors: motive, opportunity, and a rather mysterious incident involving table-turning during a séance; she dismisses supernatural explanations and asserts that one of the present



witnesses must have colluded with the murderer. Here, the conversation shifts focus to the connection between Pearson and Violet Willett, suggesting that one or both might have knowledge of events related to the murder.

Emily also reveals her curiosity about Mr. Duke, a character shrouded in mystery who has no apparent ties to Trevelyan nor any significant insights into the case. The random encounter with Inspector Narracott outside Duke's residence deepens the intrigue; could Duke be involved in a darker narrative of the crime?

Amidst their musings, the café atmosphere changes as they notice a woman, later recognized as Aunt Jennifer, conversing with Ronnie Garfield, raising further questions about relationships within their circles. Emily's instinct leads her to believe that the apparent coincidences post-seance reveal much more than mere chance interactions; they hint at deeper connections that could prove significant to their ongoing investigation.

As they navigate through their suspicions and findings, there is a palpable undercurrent of emotional tension between Emily and Charles. Their mutual support solidifies as Charles expresses his unwavering commitment to Emily, hinting at a budding romance that lingers beneath their investigative undertakings. Despite the heavy tasks at hand, there remains a flicker of warmth and connection shared between them, revealing that personal and

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professional lines are beginning to intertwine in ways they might not have expected.

In conclusion, this chapter blends the complexities of their inquiry into Trevelyan's murder with the development of their personal relationship, setting the stage for future revelations that could unravel the truths both about the case and themselves.

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## Chapter 25 Summary:

In Chapter 26 of "The Sittaford Mystery," Emily Trefusis visits The Laurels with an unexpected desire to see Robert Gardner, her fiancé Jim's uncle. Her arrival is notable since Mrs. Gardner is out, which makes her request to see Mr. Gardner somewhat unusual. Beatrice, the maid, checks upstairs and soon invites Emily to meet him.

Robert Gardner is depicted as a large man with blue eyes and fair hair, lounging on a couch. Their conversation starts with a pointed remark from Robert about Emily being the "criminal's spouse to be," indicating his cynical view on the situation surrounding Jim, who is imprisoned on a murder charge. Emily responds with playful confidence, asserting that tracking down a murderer is thrilling, despite Robert's cruel jabs about Jim's predicament.

As Robert grows tired and dismissive of her visit, Emily leaves with a light-hearted farewell, cleverly "forgetting" her gloves to create an excuse to return upstairs. She runs into an intimate moment between Robert and his nurse, further solidifying the personal dynamics within the Gardner household. Yet, Emily's mind is already shifting toward her next encounter with Charles Enderby, who is waiting for her outside.

In the car, Emily is evasive about the details of her visit, wanting to keep her



findings to herself. As they discuss the investigation into Captain Trevelyan's murder, Emily suggests a strategic change in their approach; instead of counting potential suspects—who may seem guilty—why not focus on those who couldn't have done it? This approach leads them to discard several people from Sittaford who had alibis during the murder.

Their banter takes on a lighter tone as they joke about various absurd suspects, including the local blacksmith and his wife, who Emily humorously speculates could play a role in the crime. However, as they attempt to catalog possible losers, it becomes evident that their theory isn't as productive as they'd hoped. The chapter showcases a blend of serious investigation with playful dialogue, illustrating the tension between Emily's determination to solve the mystery and the comical absurdities of their process.

Ultimately, the chapter ends with Emily reflecting on her own whereabouts during the crime and how, in a twist, she finds herself humorously implicated. The back-and-forth conversation adds depth to the characters while moving the plot forward, as Emily's investigative instincts remain sharp amidst the levity.

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## Chapter 26 Summary:

### ### Summary of Chapter 27: Narracott Acts

Two days after the events surrounding Captain Trevelyan's murder, Emily Trefusis finds herself in the office of Inspector Narracott, having come from Sittaford with an air of determination. Inspector Narracott, a thoughtful and seasoned investigator, respects Emily's resilience, believing she deserves better than her current associate, Jim Pearson, whom he suspects may not be entirely innocent.

Narracott shares his approach to the investigation, emphasizing that his goal is to find the true culprit rather than merely secure a conviction based on circumstantial evidence. When Emily inquires about Jim's guilt, the inspector remains noncommittal, suggesting that they are thoroughly examining the evidence against others, including Jim's brother, Brian Pearson, who has been elusive during questioning.

Emily learns about Mr. Dering, Sylvia's husband, and is surprised to hear of Dering's alibi for the afternoon of the murder, confirmed by a message from Dering's acquaintance, Mr. Rosenkraun. Narracott's cleverness becomes apparent when he explains that he sought additional verification, resulting in a conflicting message that casts doubt on Dering's story. This nugget of



news piques Emily's interest in the dynamics of relationships, particularly the troubling nature of male camaraderie.

The conversation shifts as Emily exhibits curiosity about Mr. Duke, a character previously mentioned in connection with a séance that had taken place at Sittaford. Emily suggests that there may be more to Duke's history than meets the eye, as she speculates that the police might be aware of his past. Narracott, maintaining professional discretion, remains tight-lipped about Duke's background but acknowledges that some individuals might prefer their histories remain unexamined.

As the dialogue comes to a close, Emily's departure leaves Narracott pondering the details of the investigation. He continues to gather information, including confirming other witnesses and tracing movements of various suspects. He discovers a marriage record that leads him to piece together relationships and statuses among the characters involved, reinforcing that the investigation has indeed gathered momentum towards uncovering the truth behind the crime.

Overall, this chapter accentuates the interplay between Emily's intuitive curiosity and Narracott's methodical approach, as they both work through the murky waters of lies, secrets, and hidden motives surrounding the murder case.

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## Chapter 27 Summary:

### Summary of Chapters 1 and 28 of **The Sittaford Mystery**

### Chapter 1: Sittaford House

The story begins with Major Burnaby, a resilient and weathered man, venturing out into a snow-laden landscape that has blanketed the village of Sittaford for several days, isolating it from the outside world. He makes his way to Sittaford House, an impressive granite residence owned by Captain Joseph Trevelyan, a retired naval officer who has recently rented the house to Mrs. Willett, a widow from South Africa, and her daughter, Violet.

Despite the frigid winter conditions, the atmosphere inside Sittaford House is warm and inviting. Major Burnaby meets Mrs. Willett and her daughter, along with other guests, including Mr. Rycroft and the jovial Ronald Garfield. Through their interactions, we learn about Captain Trevelyan's somewhat unconventional decision to rent out his house in the cold season and the friendships he has formed with his neighbors, particularly the Major. Although Captain Trevelyan is described as wealthy and fond of money, he is also portrayed as somewhat reclusive, preferring not to socialize widely with women.

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As they gather around the fire, the conversation flows, but beneath the joviality lies an undercurrent of tension and intrigue—an odd mix of camaraderie among the villagers framed against the backdrop of an unforgiving winter. This chapter introduces the main characters and sets the stage for the events that will unfold, highlighting the close-knit community and their lives shaped by the harsh conditions of Dartmoor.

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## **Chapter 28: Boots**

In a twist of fate, Emily Trefusis is soup-searching for clues surrounding Captain Trevelyan's mysterious death. Despite initial reservations from Mr. Kirkwood, she insists on visiting Hazelmoor, Trevelyan's house, to explore the environment, convinced that it holds the key to unraveling the case. Emily's determination is sparked by a peculiar letter from Mrs. Belling, informing her that a pair of Captain Trevelyan's boots is missing. These boots, described as thick and suitable for winter outings, were not thought to be important by many, yet Emily feels there is much more to their absence.

Her investigation takes her first to Mrs. Evans, whose husband discovered the missing boots during the police search. Although Evans' remark about

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the boots seems trivial, Emily is convinced of their significance. She learns that the police are investigating all leads, including the luggage of young gentlemen connected to the case. As her inquiry deepens, Emily piques interest in Mr. Duke, continually present in the discussions and considered a key figure in the background of the mystery.

Upon finally gaining access to Hazelmoor, Emily meticulously examines the now-empty house. A sense of anticipation builds as she imagines the events that transpired within the walls. Her search culminates in a discovery that surprises her: the missing boots tucked away in the chimney. This shocking find hints at foul play, igniting further questions in her mind: Who hid them and why?

Armed with the boots, Emily realizes she must take immediate action. She resolves to confront Mr. Duke at his bungalow, believing she is closer than ever to solving the enigma of Captain Trevelyan's death. With tension mounting and the mystery deepening, she prepares to challenge the man who has become an enigma in her investigation.

Through these chapters, we see Emily's growth as she transitions from curiosity to conviction, unraveling the threads of deception and intrigue that surround her while simultaneously introducing key elements and characters tied to the central mystery. Her determination to uncover the truth speaks to her character's depth and determination amidst the unfolding drama.

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## Chapter 28:

### The Sittaford Mystery

#### Chapter 29: The Second Séance

The chapter opens with Ronnie Garfield greeting Mr. Rycroft as they walk towards the Willett residence in Sittaford. Their conversation touches on Mr. Rycroft's recent pleasant walk and the weather contrast to the previous week. Ronnie, in a light-hearted manner, criticizes his aunt Caroline's complaint about the Willetts holding a tea party shortly after the death of Captain Trevelyan. He reflects on the oddity of domestic concerns versus the tragic news, which leads to speculation about Mrs. Willett's mental state after Trevelyan's death.

Mr. Rycroft is shown to be contemplative, pondering upon the changes in Mrs. Willett, which leads to Ronnie suggesting an outrageous idea about her being Trevelyan's long-lost wife. They continue their discussion about their community's peculiar characters, including Captain Wyatt and Major Burnaby, who seem to be entangled in the recent emotional upheaval caused by Trevelyan's demise.

As they arrive at Sittaford House, they engage with various characters, each embodying unique reactions to their tragic situation. Major Burnaby

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expresses his reluctance to attend the tea, troubled by the sorrow surrounding Trevelyan's death, while Mrs. Willett struggles to maintain her composure amid mounting stress regarding her domestic situation.

The tension escalates when Mr. Rycroft proposes to repeat last week's séance, which had been both unsettling and controversial. His intention is to seek answers regarding Trevelyan's murder, particularly in light of the arrest of James Pearson, who is deeply entangled in the unfolding mystery. Mrs. Willett, uneasy about the idea, nonetheless finds herself pressured by the group and ultimately agrees to participate after the Major supports the notion.

The setup for the séance is laden with a heavy atmosphere, reflecting both the gravity of the situation and the wariness of those involved. Mr. Rycroft takes charge, directing everyone's focus onto the table, which becomes the center of their endeavor to connect with the spiritual realm.

As the séance begins, a strange tension grips the room, contrasting with the previous week's casual atmosphere. The scene quickly takes a turn when an inspector bursts in just as they attempt to contact the spirit world, disrupting their efforts. He apprehends Major Burnaby, accusing him of the murder of Joseph Trevelyan.

This uncanny conclusion not only heightens the suspense but also leaves the

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characters grappling with the blurred lines between the supernatural and the grim reality of their situation. The chapter ends on a cliffhanger, setting the stage for revelations yet to come as the investigation deepens.

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## Chapter 29 Summary:

### The Sittaford Mystery - Chapter 30: Emily Explains

In the aftermath of the tense events at Sittaford House, a crowd of bewildered individuals surrounds Emily Trefusis as she reveals the shocking truth about Captain Trevelyan's murder—Major Burnaby is the killer. Charles Enderby, filled with urgency, is desperate for clarification before rushing to the telegraph office.

Emily clarifies the timeline, asserting that Trevelyan actually died around 5:45 PM, not 5:25 PM as previously believed. She unveils a surprising method behind the murder—Burnaby used skis to conceal his actions. Anticipating the snow that would cover his tracks, Burnaby staged a table-turning incident to create chaos and a false sense of security for his crime. After feigning distress and leaving for Exhampton, he donned his skis, made the quick descent, and entered Trevelyan's home under a guise of friendship before committing the murder with a sandbag.

Emily elaborates on how Burnaby meticulously covered his tracks post-murder, hiding the skis among other belongings to avoid suspicion. Her deduction springs from her interactions with Inspector Narracott and Mr. Duke, who helped her piece together the puzzle. She also recalls a detail



from Charles, who mentioned that Captain Trevelyan submitted solutions to competitions in Burnaby's name—notably the £5,000 football competition—which Burnaby recently won. This financial windfall, she's surmised, motivated Burnaby's deadly scheme to eliminate Trevelyan and keep the prize.

Further, Emily recounts her discovery of ski boots hidden in a chimney, a clue that led her to realize the implication of skis in Burnaby's alibi. The boots, unaccountably stuffed away, hinted at a deeper deceit. A moment of tension arises when Brian Pearson accuses Burnaby of attempting to frame Jim, the local handyman, but Emily defends Jim as merely unfortunate.

As Charles rushes off to alert the authorities, the tension in the room lightens momentarily. Emily receives compliments for her bravery, yet she admits to feeling overwhelmed, sparking a conversation with Violet—a woman she learns has deeper ties to the situation through the presence of her convict father and her relationship with Brian.

Violet reveals that her father's escape was tied to their arrival at Sittaford, and together with Brian, plans were concocted for them to live inconspicuously. However, their plans have disintegrated due to the murder and the ensuing investigations. As Violet navigates her worries about her father's health, revealing that he is suffering from pneumonia, Emily empathizes with her plight, acknowledging the complexity of their

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situations.

In this chapter, Emily's brilliance and intuition shine through as she constructs a compelling narrative about ambition, betrayal, and the fragility of choices that foreshadow the intricacies of human relationships. As the mysteries unfold, personal stakes heighten—both for Emily and those entwined in this web of deceit and struggle for survival.

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## Chapter 30 Summary:

### Summary of Chapters 31, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, and 8 of \*The Sittaford Mystery\*

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### Chapter 31: The Lucky Man

In this chapter, Emily meets with Miss Percehouse after having heard about Captain Trevelyan's murder. She explains her suspicions about jealousy as a motive behind Burnaby's actions, emphasizing Burnaby's long-standing envy of Trevelyan's successes. Meanwhile, Emily reveals her intent to go to London to help her fiancé, Jim, faced with charges related to borrowed money. Miss Percehouse presses Emily about her feelings for the two men in her life, leading to a humorous moment when Emily declares her love for Jim over Charles, despite Charles's romantic advances. Just then, Charles arrives, excited about his newfound success as a journalist, but his happiness quickly fades when he learns of Emily's unwavering loyalty to Jim.

### Chapter 2: The Message

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As the characters gather for a game of bridge, Ronnie Garfield proposes a séance instead, prompting a lighthearted yet eerie interaction among the group. They conduct a table-turning session, during which a spirit claims that Captain Trevelyan is dead, causing unrest. The message escalates when the table spells out "murder," shaking the group to its core. The atmosphere shifts from jovial to tense as characters realize the seriousness of the claim, and the gathering ends on a disturbing note as the guests cannot dismiss their fears.

### **Chapter 3: Five and Twenty Past Five**

Major Burnaby, after walking through the heavy snowfall to check on Trevelyan, finds the door to Hazelmoor unresponsive. With growing concern, he enlists the help of Constable Graves and Dr. Warren. Upon forcibly entering through a window, they discover Trevelyan dead on the floor, surrounded by disheveled papers, indicating foul play. Dr. Warren determines the cause of death as a skull fracture, reinforcing the dread felt by Burnaby that Trevelyan had been murdered at approximately 5:25 PM—the same time as the previous evening's séance message.

### **Chapter 4: Inspector Narracott**

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Inspector Narracott arrives to take charge of the investigation into Trevelyan's murder. With his keen observational skills and logical mindset, he begins to piece together the circumstances surrounding the death. Noting the odd details of the scene—such as the forced window that suggests a staged burglary—he hypothesizes that the murder was committed by someone known to Trevelyan rather than a random burglar. Their discussion also reveals a local servant, Evans, who may have information about what occurred prior to Trevelyan's death.

## **Chapter 5: Evans**

Narracott interviews Evans, Trevelyan's servant, who expresses shock at his master's death. Evans recounts the last conversation he had with Trevelyan, highlighting Trevelyan's habitual routine and his dislike for having women in his home. The conversation reveals tension between Trevelyan and Evans regarding Evans's recent marriage, suggesting Evans may have been under pressure due to his master's expectations. The exchange establishes Evans's backstory and his potential motive should any tensions arise from his domestic situation.

## **Chapter 6: At the Three Crowns**

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At the Three Crowns, Narracott inquires about the previous night's happenings and discovers that, " Mrs. Belling" provides gossip about the shock of Trevelyan's murder. Major Burnaby joins the Inspector to discuss their findings, and they start to piece together the timeline of events leading up to Trevelyan's death. Narracott learns of a young gentleman from London who coincidentally arrived at the same time as Trevelyan's murder, increasing the mystery of this tangled web of relationships.

### **Chapter 7: The Will**

Narracott and Burnaby visit the solicitor's office to retrieve Trevelyan's will. Kirkwood reads from the document, revealing Trevelyan's wealth and detailing who would inherit his estate, including a sister and several nephews. His significant fortune raises questions about potential motives for murder and suggests possible family dynamics at play. As they leave, Narracott candidly discusses the importance of the will in understanding Trevelyan's relationships, hinting that the murderer may have been motivated by greed.

### **Chapter 8: Mr. Charles Enderby**

Major Burnaby encounters Charles Enderby, a journalist who has just won a

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large sum of money in a contest. Enderby is both eager and respectful as he interviews Burnaby, who remains cautious but begins to warm up to him. As they converse, Enderby expresses his desire for a compelling story out of the tragedy, hinting at his intentions to cover Trevelyan's murder comprehensively. The chapter is pivotal in unfolding the journalist's ambitions and the pressures of media attention in the face of a personal tragedy for Burnaby.

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This summary encapsulates the critical elements and main themes from the chapters, ensuring smooth readability while providing necessary context for characters and plot developments.

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