



Scholarship Masters Persuasive Homework III

- Part A- Plan and write your own** *-Choose a prompt and plan a persuasive, then write it with the correct structure.*
- Part B- Vocabulary** *-Read the stories and answer the quiz.*
- Part c- Sentences** *-Choose a coloured word and write a sentence with it.*

Part A

Step One: Choose a prompt

Step Two: Write an enthymeme based on the prompt

Step Three: Write the persuasive essay in your homework book.

Prompts: Actions speak louder than words

Pen is mightier than the sword

Networking with others

Ignorance is bliss

More than one best friend

White lies



Remember!!!

If the Enthymeme has "IS , ARE or BE",
then the

I... will be beautiful because
B I eat lots of pizza. A

If the Enthymeme has "SHOULD", then the A
is on

People should eat pizza B
because it will make them beautiful.
A

Part B

Step One: Read the chapter

Step Two: Answer the quiz at 7.2.

Through the Trap Door



"LET'S find out who's in the attic!" Nancy urged as she ran from the room, Helen at her heels.

"Mother, will you be all right if I leave you a few moments?" Aunt Rosemary asked. "I'd like to go with the girls."

"Of course. Run along."

Nancy and Helen were already on their way to the third floor. They did not bother to go noiselessly, but raced up the center of the creaking stairs. Reaching the attic, they lighted two of the candles and looked around. They saw no one, and began to look behind trunks and pieces of furniture. Nobody was hiding.

"And there's no evidence," said Nancy, "that the alarming thump was caused by a falling box or carton."

"There's only one answer," Helen decided. "The ghost was here. But how did he get in?"

The words were scarcely out of her mouth when the group heard a man's spine-chilling laugh. It had not come from downstairs.

"Hehe's back of the wall!" Helen gasped fearfully. Nancy agreed, but Aunt Rosemary said, "That laugh could have come from the roof."

Helen looked at her aunt questioningly. "You you mean that the ghost swings onto the roof from a tree and climbs in here somehow?"

"I think it very likely," her aunt replied. "My father once told, my mother that there's a trap door to the roof. I never saw it and I forgot having heard

of it until this minute

Holding their candles high, the girls examined every inch of the peaked, beamed ceiling. The rafters were set close together with wood panels between them.

"I see something that might be a trap door!" Nancy called out presently from near one end of the attic. She showed the others where some short panels formed an almost perfect square.

"But how does it open?" Helen asked. "There's no knob or hook or any kind of gadget to grab hold of."

"It might have been removed, or rusted off," Nancy said.

She asked Helen to help her drag a high wooden box across the floor until it

was directly under the suspected section and Nancy stepped up onto it.

Focusing her light on the four edges of the panels, the young sleuth finally

discovered a piece of metal wedged between two of the planks.

"I think I see a way to open this," Nancy said, "but I'll need some tools."

"I'll get the ones I found before," Helen offered.

She hurried downstairs and procured them. Nancy tried one tool after

another, but none would work; they were either too wide to fit into the crack

or they would not budge the piece of metal either up or down.

Nancy looked down at Aunt Rosemary. "Do you happen to have an old-fashioned buttonhook?" she asked. "That might be just the thing for this job."

"Indeed I have in fact, Mother has several of them. I'll get one."

Aunt Rosemary was gone only a few minutes. Upon her return, she handed Nancy a long, silver-handled buttonhook inscribed with Mrs. Turnbull's initials. "Mother used this to fasten her high button shoes. She has a smaller

matching one for glove buttons. In olden days," she told the girls, "no lady's gloves were the pull-on type. They all had buttons.

Nancy inserted the long buttonhook into the ceiling crack and almost at once was able to grasp the piece of metal and pull it down. Now she began tugging on it. When nothing happened, Helen climbed up on the box beside her friend and helped pull

Presently there was a groaning, rasping noise and the square section of the ceiling began to move downward. The girls continued to yank on the metal piece and slowly a folded ladder attached to the wood became visible.

"The trap door's up there!" Helen cried gleefully, looking at the roof.

"Nancy, you shall have the honor of being the first one to look out."

Nancy smiled. "And, you mean, capture the ghost?"

As the ladder was straightened out, creaking with each pull, and set against

the roof, Nancy felt sure, however, that the ghost did not use it. The ladder

made entirely too much noise! She also doubted that he was on the roof, but it would do no harm to look. She might pick up a clue of some sort!

"Well, here I go," Nancy said, and started to ascend the rungs.

When she reached the top, Nancy unfastened the trap door and shoved it upward. She poked her head outdoors and looked around. No one was in

sight on the roof, but in the center stood a circular wooden lookout. It occurred to Nancy that possibly the ghost might be hiding in it!

She called down to Aunt Rosemary and Helen to look up at the attic ceiling for evidence of an opening into the tower. They returned to Nancy in half a minute to report that they could find no sign of another trap door.

"There probably was one in olden days," said Aunt Rosemary, "but it was closed up."

A sudden daring idea came to the girl detective. "I'm going to crawl over to

that lookout and see if anybody's in it!" she told the two below.

Before either of them could object, she started to crawl along the ridgepole

above the wooden shingled sides of the deeply slanting roof. Helen had raced up the ladder, and now watched her friend fearfully.

"Be careful, Nancy!" she warned.

Nancy was doing just that. She must keep a perfect balance or tumble down to almost certain death. Halfway to the tower, the daring girl began to feel

that she had been foolhardy, but she was determined to reach her goal.

"Only five more feet to go," Nancy told herself presently.

With a sigh of relief, she reached the tower and pulled herself up. It was circular and had openings on each side. She looked in. No "ghost"!

Nancy decided to step inside the opening and examine the floor. She set one foot down, but immediately the boards, rotted from the weather, gave way beneath her.

"It's a good thing I didn't put my whole weight on it," she thought thankfully.

"Do you see anything?" Helen called.

"Not a thing. This floor hasn't been in use for a long time."

"Then the ghost didn't come in by way of the roof," Helen stated.

Nancy nodded in agreement. "The only places left to look are the chimneys," the young sleuth told her friend. "I'll check them."

There were four of these and Nancy crawled to each one in turn. She looked inside but found nothing to suggest that the ghost used any of them for entry.

Balancing herself against the last chimney. Nancy surveyed the countryside around her. What a beautiful and picturesque panorama it was, she thought! Not far away was a lazy little river, whose waters sparkled in the sunlight.

The surrounding fields were green and sprinkled with patches of white daisies.

Nancy looked down on the grounds of Twin Elms and tried in her mind to reconstruct the original landscaping.

"That brick walk to the next property must have had a lovely boxwood hedge at one time," she said to herself.

Her gaze now turned to Riverview Manor. The grounds there were overgrown with weeds and several shutters were missing from the house. Suddenly Nancy's attention was drawn to one of the uncovered windowpanes. Did she see a light moving inside?

It disappeared a moment later and Nancy could not be sure. Perhaps the sun shining on the glass had created an optical illusion.

"Still, somebody just might be in that house," the young sleuth thought.

"The sooner I get over there and see what I can find out, the better! If the

ghost is hiding out there, maybe he uses some underground passage from one of the outbuildings on the property."

She crawled cautiously back to the trap door and together the girls closed it.

Aunt Rosemary had already gone downstairs to take care of her mother.

Nancy told Helen what she thought she had just seen in the neighboring mansion. "I'll change my clothes right away. Then let's go see Mr. Dodd, the realtor broker for Riverview Manor."

A half hour later the two girls walked into the real-estate office. Mr. Dodd

himself was there and Nancy asked him about looking at Riverview Manor.

"I'm sorry, miss," he said, "but the house has just been sold."

Nancy was stunned. She could see all her plans crumbling into nothingness. Then a thought came to her. Perhaps the new owner would not object if she looked around, anyway.

"Would you mind telling me, Mr. Dodd, who purchased Riverview Manor?"

"Not at all," the realtor replied. "A man named Nathan Comber."

CHAPTER XVIII

A Confession

NANCY DREW'S face wore such a disappointed look that Mr. Dodd, the realtor, said kindly, "Don't take it so hard, miss. I don't think you'd be particularly interested in Riverview Manor. It's really not in very good condition. Besides, you'd need a pile of money to fix that place up."

Without commenting on his statement, Nancy asked, "Couldn't you possibly arrange for me to see the inside of the mansion?"

Mr. Dodd shook his head. "I'm afraid Mr. Comber wouldn't like that."

Nancy was reluctant to give up. Why, her father might even be a prisoner in that very house! "Of course I can report my suspicion to the police," the young sleuth thought.

She decided to wait until morning. Then, if there was still no news of Mr. Drew, she would pass along the word to Captain Rossland.

Mr. Dodd's telephone rang. As he answered it, Nancy and Helen started to leave his office. But he immediately waved them back.

"The call is from Chief Rossland, Miss Drew," he said. "He phoned Twin Elms and learned you were here. He wants to see you at once."

"Thank you," said Nancy, and the girls left.

They hurried to police headquarters, wondering why the officer wanted to speak to Nancy.

"Oh, if only it's news of Dad," she exclaimed fervently. "But why didn't he get in touch with me himself?"

"I don't want to be a killjoy," Helen spoke up. "But maybe it's not about your father at all. Perhaps they've caught Nathan Comber."

Nancy parked in front of headquarters and the two girls hurried inside the building. Captain Rossland was expecting them and they were immediately ushered into his office. Nancy introduced Helen Corning.

"I won't keep you in suspense," the officer said, watching Nancy's eager face. "We have arrested Samuel Greenman!"

"The crinkly-eared man?" Helen asked.

"That's right," Captain Rossland replied. "Thanks to your tip about the used

car, Miss Drew, our men had no trouble at all locating him."

The officer went on to say, however, that the prisoner refused to confess that he had had anything to do with Mr. Drew's disappearance.

"Furthermore, Harry the taxi driver we have here insists that he cannot positively identify Greenman as one of the passengers in his cab. We believe Harry is scared that Greenman's pals will beat him up or attack members of his family."

"Harry did tell me," Nancy put in, "that his passenger had threatened harm to his family unless he forgot all about what he had seen."

"That proves our theory," Captain Rossland stated with conviction. "Miss Drew, we think you can help the police."

"I'll be glad to. How?"

Captain Rossland smiled. "You may not know it, but you're a very persuasive young lady. I believe that you might be able to get information out of both Harry and Greenman, where we have failed."

After a moment's thought, Nancy replied modestly, "I'll be happy to try, but

on one condition." She grinned at the officer. "I must talk to these men alone."

"Request granted." Captain Rossland smiled. He added that he and Helen would wait outside and he would have Harry brought in.

"Good luck," said Helen as she and the captain left the room.

A few moments later Harry walked in alone. "Oh hello, miss," he said to Nancy, barely raising his eyes from the floor.

"Won't you sit down, Harry," Nancy asked, indicating a chair alongside hers. "It was nice of the captain to let me talk to you."

Harry seated himself, but said nothing. He twisted his driver's tap nervously

in his hands and kept his gaze downward.

"Harry," Nancy began, "I guess your children would feel terrible if you were kidnapped."

"It would cut 'em to pieces," the cabman stated emphatically.

"Then you know how I feel," Nancy went on. "Not a word from my father for two whole days. If your children knew somebody who'd seen the person who kidnapped you, wouldn't they feel bad if the man wouldn't talk?"

Harry at last raised his eyes and looked straight at Nancy. "I get you, miss.

When somethin' comes home to you, it makes all the difference in the world. You win! I can identify that scoundrel Greenman, and I will. Call the

captain in."

Nancy did not wait a second. She opened the door and summoned the officer,

"Harry has something to tell you," Nancy said to Captain Rossland.

"Yeah," said Harry, "I'm not goin' to hold out any longer, I admit Greenman had me scared, but he's the guy who rode in my cab, then ordered me to keep my mouth shut after that other passenger blacked out." Captain Rossland looked astounded. It was evident he could hardly believe that Nancy in only a few minutes had persuaded the man to talk!

"And now," Nancy asked, "may I talk to your prisoner?"

"I'll have you taken to his cell," the captain responded, and rang for a guard.

Nancy was led down a corridor, past a row of cells until they came to one where the man with the crinkled ear sat on a cot.

"Greenman," said the guard, "step up here. This is Miss Nancy Drew, daughter of the kidnapped man. She wants to talk to you."

The prisoner shuffled forward, but mumbled, "I ain't goin' to answer no questions."

Nancy waited until the guard had moved off, then she smiled at the prisoner. "We all make mistakes at times," she said. "We're often misled by people who urge us to do things we shouldn't. Maybe you're afraid you'll receive the death sentence for helping to kidnap my father. But if you didn't

realize the seriousness of the whole thing, the complaint against you may turn out just to be conspiracy."

To Nancy's astonishment, Greenman suddenly burst out, "You've got me exactly right, miss. I had almost nothing to do with takin' your father away.

The guy I was with he's the old-timer. He's got a long prison record. I haven't. Honest, miss, this is my first offense.

"I'll tell you the whole story. I met this guy only Monday night. He sure sold me a bill of goods. But all I did was see that your pop didn't run away.

The old-timer's the one that drugged him."

"Where is my father now?" Nancy interrupted.

"I don't know. Honest I don't," Greenman insisted. "Part of the plan was for

somebody to follow the taxi. After a while Mr. Drew was to be given a whiff of somethin'. It didn't have no smell. That's why our taxi driver didn't catch on. And it didn't knock the rest of us out, 'cause you have to put the stuff right under a fellow's nose to make it work."

"And the person who was following in a car and took my father away, who is he?

"I don't know," the prisoner answered, and Nancy felt that he was telling the truth.

"Did you get any money for doing this?" Nancy asked him.

"A little. Not as much as it was worth, especially if I have to go to prison.

The guy who paid us for our work was the one in the car who took your father away."

"Will you describe him?" Nancy requested.

"Sure. Hope the police catch him soon. He's in his early fifties short and heavy-set, pale, and has kind of watery blue eyes."

Nancy asked the prisoner if he would dictate the same confession for the police and the man nodded. "And I'm awful sorry I caused all this worry, miss. I hope you find your father soon and I wish I could help you more. I guess I am a coward. I'm too scared to tell the name of the guy who talked me into this whole thing. He's really a bad actor no tellin what'd happen to me if I gave his name."

The young sleuth felt that she had obtained all the information she possibly

could from the man. She went back to Captain Rossland, who for the second time was amazed by the girl's success. He called a stenographer. Then he said good-bye to Nancy and Helen and went off toward Greenman's cell.

On the way back to Twin Elms, Helen congratulated her friend. "Now that one of the kidnapers has been caught, I'm sure that your father will be found soon, Nancy. Who do you suppose the man was who took your father from Greenman and his friend?"

Nancy looked puzzled, then answered, "We know from his description that he wasn't Gomber. But, Helen, a hunch of mine is growing stronger all the time that he's back of this whole thing. And putting two and two together, I

believe it was Willie Wharton who drove that c

"And I also believe Wharton's the one who's been playing ghost, using masks at times like the gorilla and the unshaven, long-haired man.

"Somehow he gets into the mansion and listens to conversations. He heard that I was going to be asked to solve the mystery at Twin Elms and told Comber. That's why Gomber came to our home and tried to keep me from coming here by saying I should stick close to Dad."

"That's right," said Helen. "And when he found that didn't work, he had Willie and Greenman and that other man kidnap your dad. He figured it would surely get you away from Twin Elms. He wanted to scare Miss Flora into selling the property, and he thought if you were around you might dissuade her."

"But in that I didn't succeed," said Nancy a bit forlornly. "Besides, they knew Dad could stop those greedy land owners from forcing the railroad to pay them more for their property. That's why I'm sure Gomber and Wharton won't release him until after they get what they want."

Helen laid a hand on Nancy's shoulder. "I'm so terribly sorry about this. What can we do next?"

"Somehow I have a feeling, Helen," her friend replied, "that you and I are going to find Willie Wharton before very long. And if we do, and I find out he really signed that contract of sale, I want certain people to be around."

"Who?" Helen asked, puzzled.

"Mr. Barradale, the lawyer, and Mr. Watson the notary public."

The young sleuth put her thought into action. Knowing that Monday was the deadline set by the railroad, she determined to do her utmost before that

time to solve the complicated mystery. Back at Twin Elms, Nancy went to the telephone and put in a call to Mr. Barradale's office. She did not dare mention Comber's or Willie Wharton's name for fear one or the other of them might be listening. She merely asked the young lawyer if he could possibly come to Cliffwood and bring with him whatever he felt was necessary for him to win his case

"I think I understand what you really mean to say," he replied. "I take it you

can't talk freely. Is that correct?"

"Yes."

"Then I'll ask the questions. You want me to come to the address that you gave us the other day?"

"Yes. About noon."

"And you'd like me to bring along the contract of sale with Willie Wharton's signature?"

"Yes. That will be fine." Nancy thanked him and hung up.

Turning from the telephone, she went to find Helen and said, "There's still lots of daylight. Even though we can't get inside Riverview Manor, we can

hunt through the outbuildings over there for the entrance to an underground passage to this house."

"All right," her friend agreed. "But this time you do the searching. I'll be the lookout."

Nancy chose the old smokehouse of Riverview Manor first, since this was closest to the Twin Elms property line. It yielded no clue and she moved on to the carriage house. But neither in this building, nor any of the others, did

the girl detective find any indication of entrances to an underground passageway. Finally she gave up and rejoined Helen.

"If there is an opening, it must be from inside Riverview Manor," Nancy stated. "Oh, Helen, it's exasperating not to be able to get in there!"

"I wouldn't go in there now in any case," Helen remarked. "It's way past supertime and I'm starved. Besides, pretty soon it'll be dark."

The girls returned to Twin Elms and ate supper. A short time later someone banged the front-door knocker. Both girls went to the door. They were amazed to find that the caller was Mr. Dodd, the realtor. He held out a large

brass key toward Nancy.

"What's this for?" she asked, mystified.

Mr. Dodd smiled.

"It's the front-door key to Riverview Manor. I've decided that you can look around the mansion tomorrow morning all you please."

CHAPTER XIX

The Hidden Staircase

SEEING the look of delight on Nancy's face, Mr. Dodd laughed. "Do you think that house is haunted as well as this one?" he asked. "I hear you like

to solve mysteries."

"Yes, I do." Not wishing to reveal her real purpose to the realtor, the young

sleuth also laughed. "Do you think I might find a ghost over there?" she countered.

"Well, I never saw one, but you never can tell," the man responded with a chuckle. He said he would leave the key with Nancy until Saturday evening and then pick it up. "If Mr. Comber should show up in the meantime, I have a key to the kitchen door that he can use."

Nancy thanked Mr. Dodd and with a grin said she would let him know if she found a ghost at Riverview Manor.

She could hardly wait for the next morning to arrive. Miss Flora was not told of the girls' plan to visit the neighboring house.

Immediately after breakfast, they set off for Riverview Manor. Aunt Rosemary went with them to the back door and wished the two good luck.

"Promise me you won't take any chances," she begged.

"Promise," they said in unison.

With flashlights in their skirt pockets, Nancy and Helen hurried through the

garden and into the grounds of Riverview Manor estate.

As they approached the front porch, Helen showed signs of nervousness.

"Nancy, what will we do if we meet the ghost?" she asked.

"Just tell him we've found him out," her friend answered determinedly.

Helen said no more and watched as Nancy inserted the enormous brass key in the lock. It turned easily and the girls let themselves into the hall.

Architecturally it was the same as Twin Elms mansion, but how different it looked now! The blinds were closed, lending an eerie atmosphere to the dusky interior. Dust lay everywhere, and cobwebs festooned the corners of the ceiling and spindles of the staircase.

"It certainly doesn't look as if anybody lives here," Helen remarked.

"Where do we start hunting?"

"I want to take a look in the kitchen," said Nancy.

When they walked into it, Helen gasped. "I guess I was wrong. Someone has been eating here." Eggshells, several empty milk bottles, some chicken bones and pieces of waxed paper cluttered the sink.

Nancy, realizing that Helen was very uneasy, whispered to her with a giggle, "If the ghost lives here, he has a good appetite!"

The young sleuth took out her flashlight and beamed it around the floors and walls of the kitchen. There was no sign of a secret opening. As she went from room to room on the first floor, Helen followed and together they searched every inch of the place for a clue to a concealed door. At last they

came to the conclusion there was none.

"You know, it could be in the cellar," Nancy suggested.

"Well, you're not going down there," Helen said firmly. "That is, not without a policeman. It's too dangerous. As for myself, I want to live to get

married and not be hit over the head in the dark by that ghost, so Jim won't

have a bride!"

Nancy laughed. "You win. But I'll tell you why. At the moment I am more interested in finding my father than in hunting for a secret passageway. He may be a prisoner in one of the rooms upstairs. I'm going to find out."

The door to the back stairway was unlocked and the one at the top stood open. Nancy asked

Helen to stand at the foot of the main staircase, while she herself went up the back steps. "If that ghost is up there and tries to escape, he won't be able

to slip out that way," she explained.

Helen took her post in the front hall and Nancy crept up the back steps. No one tried to come down either stairs. Helen now went to the second floor and together she and Nancy began a search of the rooms. They found nothing suspicious. Mr. Drew was not there. There was no sign of a ghost. None of the walls revealed a possible secret opening. But the bedroom which corresponded to Miss Flora's had a clothes closet built in at the end next to the fireplace.

"In Colonial times closets were a rarity," Nancy remarked to Helen. "I wonder if this closet was added at that time and has any special significance."

Quickly she opened one of the large double doors and looked inside. The rear wall was formed of two very wide wooden planks. In the center was a round knob, sunk in the wood.

"This is strange," Nancy remarked excitedly.

She pulled on the knob but the wall did not move. Next, she pushed the knob down hard, leaning her full weight against the panel.

Suddenly the wall pushed inward. Nancy lost her balance and disappeared into a gaping hole below!

Helen screamed. "Nancy!"

Trembling with fright, Helen stepped into the closet and beamed her flashlight below. She could see a long flight of stone steps.

"Nancy! Nancy!" Helen called down.

A muffled answer came from below. Helen's heart gave a leap of relief.

"Nancy's alive!" she told herself, then called, "Where are you?"

"I've found the secret passageway," came faintly to Helen's ears. "Come on down."

Helen did not hesitate. She wanted to be certain that Nancy was all right. Just as she started down the steps, the door began to close. Helen, in a panic

that the girls might be trapped in some subterranean passageway, made a

wild grab for the door. Holding it ajar, she removed the sweater she was wearing and wedged it into the opening. Finding a rail on one side of the stone steps, Helen grasped it and hurried below. Nancy arose from the dank earthen floor to meet her.

"Are you sure you're all right?" Helen asked solicitously.

"I admit I got a good bang," Nancy replied, "but I feel fine now. Let's see where this passageway goes."

The flashlight had been thrown from her hand, but with the aid of Helen's light, she soon found it. Fortunately, it had not been damaged and she turned it on.

The passageway was very narrow and barely high enough for the girls to walk without bending over. The sides were built of crumbling brick and stone.

"This may tumble on us at any moment," Helen said worriedly.

"Oh, I don't believe so," Nancy answered. "It must have been here for a long time."

The subterranean corridor was unpleasantly damp and had an earthy smell. Moisture clung to the walls. They felt clammy and repulsive to the touch. Presently the passageway began to twist and turn, as if its builders had found obstructions too difficult to dig through.

"Where do you think this leads?" Helen whispered.

"I don't know. I only hope we're not going in circles."

Presently the girls reached another set of stone steps not unlike the ones down which Nancy had tumbled. But these had solid stone sides. By their lights, the girls could see a door at the top with a heavy wooden bar across it.

"Shall we go up?" Helen asked.

Nancy was undecided what to do. The tunnel did not end here but yawned ahead in blackness. Should they follow it before trying to find out what was

at the top of the stairs?

She voiced her thoughts aloud, but Helen urged that they climb the stairs.

"I'll be frank with you. I'd like to get out of here."

Nancy acceded to her friend's wish and led the way up the steps.

Suddenly both girls froze in their tracks.

A man's voice from the far end of the tunnel commanded, "Stop! You can't go up there!"

CHAPTER XX

Nancy's Victory

THEIR initial fright over, both girls turned and beamed their flashlights toward the foot of the stone stairway. Below them stood a short, unshaven, pudgy man with watery blue eyes.

"You're the ghost!" Helen stammered.

"And you're Mr. Willie Wharton," Nancy added.

Astounded, the man blinked in the glaring lights, then said, "Ye-yes, I am. But how did you know?"

"You live in the old Riverview Manor," Helen went on, "and you've been stealing food and silver and jewelry from Twin Elms!"

"No, no. I'm not a thief!" Willie Wharton cried out. "I took some food and I've been trying to scare the old ladies, so they would sell their property.

Sometimes I wore false faces, but I never took any jewelry or silver. Honest

I didn't. It must have been Mr. Gomber."

Nancy and Helen were amazed. Willie Wharton, with little urging from them, was confessing more than they had dared to hope.

"Did you know that Nathan Gomber is a thief?" Nancy asked the man.

Wharton shook his head. "I know he's sharp that's why he's going to get

me more money for my property from the railroad."

"Mr. Wharton, did you sign the original contract of sale?" Nancy queried.

"Yes, I did, but Mr. Gomber said that if I disappeared, for a while, he'd fix

everything up so I'd get more money. He said he had a couple of other jobs which I could help him with. One of them was coming here to play ghost it was a good place to disappear to. But I wish I had never seen Nat Gomber or Riverview Manor or Twin Elms or had anything to do with ghosts."

"I'm glad to hear you say that," said Nancy. Then suddenly she asked, "Where's my father?"

Willie Wharton shifted his weight and looked about wildly. "I don't know, really I don't."

"But you kidnapped him in your car," the young sleuth prodded him. "We got a description of you from the taximan."

Several seconds went by before Willie Wharton answered. "I didn't know it was kidnapping. Mr. Gomber said your father was ill and that he was going to take him to a special doctor. He said Mr. Drew was coming on a train from Chicago and was going to meet Mr. Comber on the road halfway between here and the station. But Comber said he couldn't meet him had other business to attend to. So I was to follow your father's taxi and bring

him to Riverview Manor."

"Yes, yes, go on," Nancy urged, as Willie Wharton stopped speaking and covered his face with his hands.

"I didn't expect your father to be unconscious when I picked him up," Wharton went on. "Well, those men in the taxi put Mr. Drew in the back, of my car and I brought him here. Mr. Comber drove up from the other direction and said he would take over. He told me to come right here to Twin Elms and do some ghosting."

"And you have no idea where Mr. Comber took my father?" Nancy asked, with a sinking feeling.

"Nope."

In a few words she pointed out Nathan Comber's real character to Willie Wharton, hoping that if the man before her did know anything about Mr. Drew's whereabouts which he was not telling, he would confess. But from Wharton's emphatic answers and sincere offers to be of all the help h could in finding the missing lawyer. Nancy concluded that Wharton was not withholding any information.

"How did you find out about this passageway and the secret staircases?" Nancy questioned him.

"Comber found an old notebook under a heap of rubbish in the attic of Riverview Manor," Wharton answered. "He said it told everything about the secret entrances to the two houses. The passageways, with openings on each floor, were built when the houses were. They were used by the original Turnbells in bad weather to get from one building to the other. This stairway was for the servants. The other two stairways were for the family. One of these led to Mr. Turnbull's bedroom in this house. The notebook also said that he often secretly entertained government agents and sometimes he had to hurry them out of the parlor and hide them in the passageway when callers came."

"Where does this stairway lead?" Helen spoke up.

"To the attic of Twin Elms." Willie Wharton gave a little chuckle, "I know,

Miss Drew, that you almost found the entrance. But the guys that built the place were pretty clever. Every opening has heavy double doors. When you poked that screw driver through the crack, you thought you were hitting another wall but it was really a door."

"Did you play the violin and turn on the radio and make that thumping

noise in the attic and were you the one who laughed when we were up there?"

"Yes, and I moved the sofa to scare you and I even knew about the listening post. That's how I found out all your plans and could report them to Mr. Comber."

Suddenly it occurred to Nancy that Nathan Comber might appear on the scene at any moment. She must get Willie Wharton away and have him swear to his signature before he changed his min

"Mr. Wharton, -would you please go ahead of us up this stairway and open the doors?" she asked. "And go into Twin Elms with us and talk to Mrs. Turnbull and Mrs. Hayes? I want you to tell them that you've been playing ghost but aren't going to any longer. Miss Flora has been so frightened that she's ill and in bed."

"I'm sorry about that," Willie Wharton replied. "Sure I'll go with you. I never want to see Nathan Comber again!"

He went ahead of the girls and took down the heavy wooden bar from across the door. He swung it wide, pulled a metal ring in the back of the adjoining door, then quickly stepped downward. The narrow panel opening which Nancy had suspected of leading to the secret stairway now was pulled inward. There was barely room alongside it to go up the top steps and into the attic. To keep Comber from becoming suspicious if he should arrive, Nancy asked Willie Wharton to close the secret door again.

"Helen," said Nancy, "will you please run downstairs ahead of Mr. Wharton and me and tell Miss Flora and Aunt Rosemary the good news."

She gave Helen a three-minute start, then she and Willie Wharton followed. The amazed women were delighted to have the mystery solved. But there was no time for celebration.

"Mr. Barradale is downstairs to see you, Nancy," Aunt Rosemary announced.

Nancy turned to Willie Wharton. "Will you come down with me, please?"

She introduced both herself and the missing property owner to Mr. Barradale, then went on, "Mr. Wharton says the signature on the contract of sale is his own."

"And you'll swear to that?" the lawyer asked, turning to Willie.

"I sure will. I don't want anything more to do with this underhanded business," Willie Wharton declared.

"I know where I can find a notary public right away," Nancy spoke up, "Do you want me to phone him, Mr. Barradale?" she asked.

"Please do. At once."

Nancy dashed to the telephone and dialed the number of Albert Watson on Tuttle Road. When he answered, she told him the urgency of the situation and he promised to come over at once. Mr. Watson arrived within five minutes, with his notary equipment. Mr. Barradale showed him the contract of sale containing Willie Wharton's name and signature. Attached to it was the certificate of acknowledgment.

Mr. Watson asked Willie Wharton to raise his right hand and swear that he was the person named in the contract of sale. After this was done, the notary public filled in the proper places on the certificate, signed it, stamped

the paper, and affixed his seal.

"Well, this is really a wonderful job, Miss Drew," Mr. Barradale praised her.

Nancy smiled, but her happiness at having accomplished a task for her father was dampened by the fact that she still did not know where he was. Mr. Barradale and Willie Wharton also were extremely concerned.

"I'm going to call Captain Rossland and ask him to send some policemen out here at once," Nancy stated. "What better place for Mr. Comber to hide my father than somewhere along that passageway? How far does it go, Mr.

Wharton?"

"Mr. Comber says it goes all the way to the river, but the end of it is completely stoned up now. I never went any farther than the stairways." The young lawyer thought Nancy's idea a good one, because if Nathan Comber should return to Riverview Manor and find that Willie was gone, he would try to escape.

The police promised to come at once. Nancy had just finished talking with Captain Rossland when Helen Corning called from the second floor, "Nancy, can you come up here? Miss Flora insists upon seeing the hidden staircase."

The young sleuth decided that she would just about have time to do this before the arrival of the police. Excusing herself to Mr. Barradale, she ran

up the stairs. Aunt Rosemary had put on a rose-colored dressing gown while attending her mother. To Nancy's amazement, Mrs. Turnbull was fully dressed and wore a white blouse with a high collar and a black skirt. Nancy and Helen led the way to the attic. There, the girl detective, crouching on her knees, opened the secret door.

"And all these years I never knew it was here!" Miss Flora exclaimed. "And I doubt that my father did or he would have mentioned it," Aunt Rosemary added.

Nancy closed the secret door and they all went downstairs. She could hear the front-door bell ringing and assumed that it was the police. She and Helen hurried below. Captain Rossland and another officer stood there. They said other men had surrounded Riverview Manor, hoping to catch Nathan Comber if he did arrive there.

With Willie Wharton leading the way, the girls, Mr. Barradale, and the police trooped to the attic and went down the hidden staircase to the dank passageway below.

"I have a hunch from reading about old passageways that there may be one or more rooms off this tunnel," Nancy told Captain Rossland.

There were so many powerful flashlights in play now that the place was almost as bright as daylight. As the group moved along, they suddenly came to a short stairway. Willie Wharton explained that this led to an opening back of the sofa in the parlor. There was still another stone stairway which went up to Miss Flora's bedroom with an opening alongside the fireplace.

The searchers went on. Nancy, who was ahead of the others, discovered a padlocked iron door in the wall. Was it a dungeon? She had heard of such places being used for prisoners in Colonial times.

By this time Captain Rossland had caught up to her. "Do you think your father may be in there?" he asked.

"I'm terribly afraid so," said Nancy, shivering at the thought of what she might find.

The officer found that the lock was very rusty. Pulling from his pocket a penknife with various tool attachments, he soon had the door unlocked and flung it wide. He beamed his light into the blackness beyond. It was indeed a room without windows.

Suddenly Nancy cried out, "Dad!" and sprang ahead.

Lying on blankets on the floor, and covered with others, was Mr. Drew. He was murmuring faintly.

"He's alive!" Nancy exclaimed, kneeling down to pat his face and kiss him.

"He's been drugged," Captain Rossland observed. "I'd say Nathan Comber has been giving your father just enough food to keep him alive and mixing sleeping powders in with it."

From his trousers pocket the officer brought out a small vial of restorative

and held it to Mr. Drew's nose. In a few moments the lawyer shook his head, and a few seconds later, opened his eyes.

"Keep talking to your dad," the captain ordered Nancy.

"Dad! Wake up! You're all right! We've rescued you!"

Within a very short time Mr. Drew realized that his daughter was kneeling beside him. Reaching out his arms from beneath the blankets, he tried to hug her.

"We'll take him upstairs," said Captain Rossland. "Willie, open that secret entrance to the parlor."

"Glad to be of help." Wharton hurried ahead and up the short flight of steps.

In the meantime, the other three men lifted Mr. Drew and carried him along the passageway. By the time they reached the stairway, Willie Wharton had opened the secret door behind the sofa in the parlor. Mr. Drew was placed on the couch. He blinked, looked around, and then said in astonishment:

"Willie Wharton! How did you get here? Nancy, tell me the whole story."

The lawyer's robust health and sturdy constitution had stood him in good stead. He recovered with amazing rapidity from his ordeal and listened in rapt attention as one after another of those in the room related the events of

the past few days.

As the story ended, there was a knock on the front door and another police officer was admitted. He had come to report to Captain Rossland that not only had Nathan Comber been captured outside of Riverview Manor, and all the loot recovered, but also that the final member of the group who had abducted Mr. Drew had been taken into custody. Comber had admitted everything, even to having attempted to injure Nancy and her father with the truck at the River Heights' bridge project. He had tried to frighten

Miss Flora into selling Twin Elms because he had planned to start a housing project on the two Turnbull properties.

"It's a real victory for you!" Nancy's father praised his daughter proudly.

The young sleuth smiled. Although she was glad it was all over, she could not help but look forward to another mystery to solve. One soon came her way when, quite accidentally, she found herself involved in The Bungalow Mystery.

Miss Flora and Aunt Rosemary had come downstairs to meet Mr. Drew.

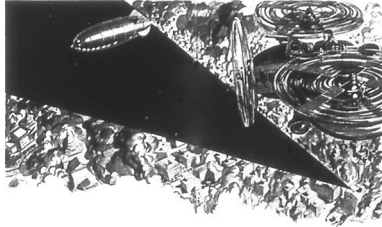
While they were talking to him, the police officer left, taking Willie Wharton with him as a prisoner. Mr. Barradale also said good-bye. Nancy and Helen slipped out of the room and went to the kitchen.

"We'll prepare a super-duper lunch to celebrate this occasion!" said Helen happily.

"And we can make all the plans we want," Nancy replied with a grin.

"There won't be anyone at the listening post!"

Part D



The Invisible Death VI

Write a variety of sentences

Do not start the same way

Do not repeat the same words or phrases or names

Do not write dialogue

Do not use 1st person

Underline the word

Write the sentence number at the end.

Eg: The very worst of him was our very best. (25)

30 x

Do not use these telling verbs:
is, am, are, was, were, being, been and be

In the Blue Room of the White House the Council listened to old Luke Evans's exposition of his invention with feelings ranging from **incredulity** to hope.

"I've been at work all the time," said the old man, "not far from here. I knew the day would come when you'd need me. I put my pride aside for the sake of my country."

"Tell us in a few words about this discovery of yours, Mr. Evans," said Colonel Stopford.

Luke Evans placed the square black case upon the table. "It's simple, like all big things, sir," he answered. "The original shadow-breaking device that I invented was a heavy, inert gas, invisible, but almost as viscous as paint. Applied to textiles, to **inorganic** matter, to animal bodies, it **adheres** for hours. Its property is to render such substances invisible by absorbing all the visible light rays that fall upon it, from red to violet. Light passes through all substances that are coated with this paint as if they did not exist."

"And this antidote of yours?" asked Colonel Stopford.

"Darkness," replied Luke Evans. "A beam of darkness that means absolute invisibility. It can be shot from this apparatus"—he indicated the box upon the table. "This box contains a minute portion of a gas which exists in nature in the form of a black, crystalline powder. The peculiar property of this powder is that it is the solidified form of a gas more volatile than any that is known. So **volatile** is it that, when the ordinary **atmospheric** pressure of fifteen pounds to the square inch is removed, the powder instantly changes to the gaseous condition."

"By pressing this lever"—Evans pointed at the box—"a vacuum is created. Instantly the powder becomes a gas, which shoots forth through this aperture with the speed of a **projectile**, taking the form of a beam of absolute blackness. Or it can be discharged from cylinders in such

a way as to extend over a large area within a few minutes."

"But how does this darkness make the invisible airships luminous?" asked Stopford. "Why does not your darkness destroy all light?"

"In this way, sir," replied the old inventor. "The shadow-breaking gas with which the airships are painted confers invisibility because it absorbs sunlight. But it does not absorb the still more rapid waves, or **oscillations** which manifest themselves as radio-activity. On the contrary, it gathers and reflects these.

"Now Roentgen, the discoverer of the X-ray, observed that if X-rays are allowed to enter the eye of an observer who is in complete darkness, the retina receives a **stimulus**, and light is perceived, due to the fluorescent action of the X-rays upon the eyeball.

"Consequently, by creating a beam of complete darkness, I bring into clear visibility the fluorescent gas that coats the airships; in other words, the airships become visible."

"If a light ray is **nullified** upon entering the field of darkness, will it emerge at the other edge as a perfect light ray again?" asked Stopford.

"It will emerge unchanged, since the black beam destroys light by slightly slowing down the vibrations to a point where they are not perceived as light by the human eye. On emerging from the beam, however, these **vibrations** immediately resume their natural frequency. To give you a homely **parallel**, the telephone changes sound waves to electric waves, and re-converts them into sound waves at the other end, without any appreciable **interruption**."

"Then," said Stopford, "the logical application of your method is to plunge every city in the land into darkness by means of this gas?"

"That is so, sir, and then we shall have the advantage of invisibility, and[46] the enemy ships will be in **fluorescence**."

"Damned impracticable!" muttered Stopford.

"You seriously propose to darken the greater part of eastern North America?" asked the Secretary for War.

"The gas can be produced in large quantities from coal tar besides existing in crystalline **deposits**," replied Luke Evans. "It is so volatile that I estimate that a single ton will darken all eastern North America for five days. Whereas the concentration would be made only in specific areas liable to attack. The gas is distilled with great facility from one of the tri-phenyl-carbinol coal-tar **derivatives**."

Vice-president Tomlinson was a **pompous, irascible** old man, but it was he who hit the nail on the head.

"That's all very well as an emergency measure, but we've got to find the haunt of that gang and smash it!"

An orderly brought in a telegraphic dispatch and handed it to him. The Vice-president opened it, glanced through it, and tried to hand it to the Secretary of State. Instead, it fluttered from his **nerveless** fingers, and he sank back with a groan. The Secretary picked it up and glanced at it.

"Gentlemen," he said, trying to control his voice, "New York was bombed out of the blue at sunrise this morning, and the whole lower part of the city is a heap of ruins."

In the days that followed it became clear that all the resources of America would be needed to cope with the Invisible Empire. Not a day passed without some blow being struck. Boston, Charleston, Baltimore, Pittsburg in turn were devastated. Three cruisers and a score of minor craft

were sunk in the harbor of Newport News, where they were concentrating, and **thenceforward** the fleet became a fugitive force, seeking **concealment** rather than an offensive. Trans-Atlantic sea-traffic ceased.

Meanwhile the black gas was being hurriedly manufactured. From cylinders placed in central positions in a score of cities it was discharged continuously, covering these centers with an **impenetrable** pall of night that no light would penetrate. Only by the glow of radium paint, which commanded fabulous prices, could official business be transacted, and that only to a very small degree.

Courts were closed, business suspended, prisoners released, perforce, from jails. Famine ruled. The remedy was proving worse than the disease. Within a week the use of the dark gas had had to be discontinued. And a temporary suspension of the raids served only to **accentuate** the general terror.

There were food riots everywhere, demands that the Government come to terms, and counter-demands that the war be fought out to the bitter end.

Fought out, when everything was disorganized? Stocks of food congested all the terminals, mobs rioted and battled and plundered all through the east.

"It means surrender," was voiced at the Council meeting by one of the members. And nobody answered him.

Three days of respite, then, instead of bombs, **proclamations** fluttering down from a cloudless sky. Unless the white flag of surrender was **hoisted** from the summit of the battered Capitol, the Invisible Emperor would strike such a blow as should bring America to her knees!

It was a twelve-hour ultimatum, and before three hours had passed thousands of citizens had taken possession of the Capitol and filled all the approaches. Over their heads

floated banners—the Stars and Stripes, and, blazoned across them the words, "No Surrender."

It was a spontaneous uprising of the people of Washington. Hungry, homeless in the sharpening autumn weather, and nearly all **bereft** of members of[47] their families, too often of the breadwinner, now lying deep beneath the rubble that littered the streets, they had gathered in their thousands to protest against any attempt to yield.

Dick, flying overhead at the apex of his squadron, felt his heart swell with elation as he watched the orderly crowds. This was at three in the afternoon: at six the **ultimatum** ended, the new frightfulness was to begin.

At five, Vice-president Tomlinson was to address the crowds. The old man had risen to the occasion. He had cast off his pompousness and vanity, and was known to favor war to the bitter end. Dick and his **squadron** circled above the broken dome as the car that carried the Vice-president and the secretaries of State and for War approached along the Avenue.

Rat-tat, rat-a-tat-tat!

Out of the blue sky streams of lead were poured into the assembled multitudes. Instantly they had become converted into a panic-stricken mob, turning this way and that.

Rat-a-tat-tat. **Swaths** of dead and dying men rolled in the dust, and, as wheat falls under the reaper's blade, the mob melted away in lines and by **battalions**. Within thirty seconds the whole terrain was piled with dead and dying.

"My God, it's massacre! It's murder!" shouted Dick.

They had not even waited for the twelve hours to expire. To and fro the invisible airplanes shot through the blue evening sky, till the last **fugitives** were streaming away in all directions like hunted deer, and the dead lay piled in ghastly heaps everywhere.

Out of these heaps wounded and dying men would stagger to their feet to shake their fists **impotently** at their murderers.

In vain Dick and his squadron strove to dash themselves into the invisible airships. The pilots **eluded** them with ease, sometimes sending a **contemptuous** round of machine-gun bullets in their direction, but not troubling to shoot them down.

Two small boys, carrying a huge banner with "No Surrender" across it, were walking off the ghastly field. Twelve or fourteen years old at most, they **disdained** to run. They were singing, singing the National Anthem, though their voices were inaudible through the turmoil.

Rat-tat! Rat-tat-a-tat! The fiends above loosed a storm of lead upon them. Both fell. One rose, still clutching the banner in his **hand** and waved it aloft. In a sudden silence his childish treble could be heard:

My country, 'tis of thee
Sweet land of lib-er-ty—

The guns rattled again. Clutching the blood-stained banner, he dropped across the body of his companion.

Suddenly a broad band of black soared upward from the earth. Those in charge of the cylinders placed about the Capitol had released the gas.

A band of darkness, rising into the blue, cutting off the earth, making the **summit** of the ruined Capitol a floating dome. But, fast as it rose, the invisible airships rose faster above it.

A last vicious volley! Two of Dick's flight crashing down upon the piles of dead men underneath! And nothing was visible, though the darkness rose till it **obliterated** the blue above.

At dawn the Council sat, after an all-night meeting. Vice-president Tomlinson, one arm shattered by a machine-gun bullet, still occupied the chair at the head of the table.

Outside, immediately about the White House, there was not a sound. Washington might have been a city of the dead. The railroad terminals, however, were occupied by a mob of people, busily looting. There was great **disorder**. Organized government had simply disappeared.

Each man was occupied only with obtaining as much food as he could carry, and taking his family into rural[48] districts where the Terror would not be likely to pursue. All the roads leading out of Washington—into Virginia, into Maryland, were **congested** with columns of fugitives that stretched for miles.

Some, who were **fortunate** enough to possess automobiles, and—what was rarer—a few gallons of gas, were trying to force their way through the masses ahead of them; here and there a family trudged beside a pack-horse, or a big dog drew an improvised sled on wheels, loaded with flour, bacon, blankets, pillows. Old men and young children trudged on uncomplaining.

The telegraph wires were still, for the most part, working. All the world knew what was happening. From all the big cities of the East a similar **exodus** was proceeding. There was little bitterness and little disorder.

It was not the airship raids from which these crowds were fleeing. Something grimmer was happening. The murderous attack upon the populace about the Capitol had been merely an incident. This later development was the fulfilment of the Invisible Emperor's **ultimatum**.