



Read the extract, then correct the mistakes. The first paragraph has no mistakes.

“My interpreter lived in the outskirts of the city and I had offered to see her home. The car entered a bit of motorway I did not know. “A very dangerous stretch, this,” she said. “People die here all the time. Do you see those cars?” In the shadows of an underpass I saw two strange vans with Thai writing on them, and some men in blue overalls standing nearby. “The body-snatchers,” said the woman. It was the first time I had heard the word in Bangkok. The story behind it was grisly.

According to popular belief, when a person dies violently his spirit does not rest in peacefulness. And if, in the moment of death, the body is destroyed, decapitated, crushed or torn in pieces, that spirit becomes particularly restless; unless the prescribed rites quickly performed it goes to join in the enormous army of ‘wandering spirits’. These spirits, along with the evil phiii, constitutate one of the great problems of today’s Bangkok. Hence the importance of the ‘body-snatchers’, volunteers from Buddhist associations who cruise in the city collecting the bodies of people that have died violently. They make the pieces together and perform the appropriate rites so that the souls may disembark in peace, and not hang out playing tricks on the living.

Apart from murder sufferers and suicide, the most obvious candidates for becoming wandering spirits those killed in road accidents. That is why the Buddhist associations are stationing their vans at the most famous black points on the roads, and why their men stand in guard, tuned on to the police radio frequencies, ready to rush in to corpses at the moment’s notice. And they really do rush, for this kind of work has become too profitable that the charitable associations are in strong competition, and each tries taking away more corpses than the others so as to get more donations from the public. The first to arrive has the right of the body, but the men from the different associations often come to fights over a dead person. Sometimes they carry someone that isn’t dead yet. To advertise their public service each association holds special exhibitions with macabre colour photographs of the victims, clearly showing the separated heads and hands, so that they can press for generous donations.

This evening Bangkok really felt in me like a city from which there was no escape. Despite the competitive zeal of the body-snatchers, the number of angry phii constantly increases. To find no peace, they wander about creating disasters. In vain have been thousands of bottles of holy water distributed by the Supreme command of the Armed Forces of Thailand to exercise the evil ear from the City of Angels, which the angels all seem to have forsaken.”

**Think about**

Vocabulary choice

Prepositions

Now check your answers**The Body-snatchers of Bangkok**

“My interpreter lived in the outskirts of the city and I had offered to see her home. The car entered a bit of motorway I did not know. “A very dangerous stretch, this,” she said. “People die here all the time. Do you see those cars?” In the shadows of an underpass I saw two strange vans with Thai writing on them, and some men in blue overalls standing nearby. “The body-snatchers,” said the woman. It was the first time I had heard the word in Bangkok. The story behind it was grisly.

According to popular belief, when a person dies violently his spirit does not rest in *peace*. And if, in the moment of death, the body is *mutilated*, decapitated, crushed or torn *to* pieces, that spirit becomes particularly restless; unless the prescribed rites *are* quickly performed it goes to join ~~in~~ the enormous army of ‘wandering spirits’. These spirits, along with the evil ~~phiii~~, *constitute* one of the great problems of today’s Bangkok. Hence the importance of the ‘body-snatchers’, volunteers from Buddhist associations who cruise *around* the city collecting the bodies of people *who* have died violently. They *put* the pieces together and perform the appropriate rites so that the souls may *depart* in peace, and not hang *about* playing tricks on the living.

Apart from murder *victims* and suicides, the most obvious candidates for becoming wandering spirits *are* those killed in road accidents. That is why the Buddhist associations ~~are~~ stationing their vans at the most famous black *spots* on the roads, and why their men stand ~~in~~ guard, tuned *in* to the police radio frequencies, ready to rush ~~in~~ to corpses at *a* moment’s notice. And they really do rush, for this kind of work has become *so* profitable that the charitable associations are in *fierce* competition, and each tries *to take* away more corpses than the others so as to get more donations from the public. The first to arrive has the right *to* the body, but the men from the different associations often come *to blows* over a dead person. Sometimes they carry *off* someone *who* isn’t dead yet. To advertise their public service each association holds special exhibitions with macabre colour photographs of the victims, clearly showing the *severed* heads and hands, so that they can press for generous donations.

This evening Bangkok really felt *to* me like a city from which there was no escape. Despite the competitive zeal of the body-snatchers, the number of angry ~~phii~~ *is* constantly increasing. *Finding* no peace, they wander about creating disasters. In vain have ~~been~~ thousands of bottles of holy water *been* distributed by the Supreme Command of the Armed Forces of Thailand to *exorcize* the evil eye from the City of Angels, which the angels all seem to have forsaken.”

A Fortune-Teller Told Me: Earthbound Travels in the Far East, by Tiziano Terzani (2002)

Talking points:

In the text, you read about *phii* – a kind of ghost or spirit - in Thailand. Are there similar beliefs in your country?

Think about the emergency services in your country: what happens at traffic accidents? Who funds the emergency services in your country?