Click on the audio to listen as you read the third chapter of *The Judge's House*.

CHAPTER THREE

Moore worked without stopping until about eleven o'clock. Then he put some more wood on the fire. He also made a pot of tea. He was enjoying himself very much. The fire was burning brightly. The firelight danced on the old oak walls and threw strange shadows around the room. His tea tasted excellent, and there was nobody to disturb him. Then for the first time he noticed how much noise the rats were making.

'Were they making all this noise while I was studying?' he thought. 'No, I don't think they were. Perhaps they were afraid of me at first. Now they have become braver, and they are running about as usual.'

How busy they were! And what a lot of noise they made! Up and down they rushed, behind the old oak walls, over the **ceiling** and under the floor. Moore remembered Mrs Dempster's words: 'You'll see plenty of rats, but you won't see any ghosts.'

'Well,' he said with a smile, 'she was right about the rats, anyway!'

He picked up the lamp and looked around the room. 'How strange,' he said to himself. 'Why doesn't anybody want to live in this beautiful old house?' The oak walls were very beautiful. There were some old pictures on the walls, but they were covered with dust and dirt and he could not see them clearly. Here and there he saw small holes in the walls. From time to time the curious face of a rat stared at him. Then with a scratch and a squeak, it was gone.

The thing that interested him most, however, was the rope of the great alarm bell on the roof. The rope hung down in a corner of the room on the right-hand side of the fireplace. He found a huge, high-backed oak chair and pulled it up beside the fire. There he sat and drank his last cup of tea. Then he put more wood on the fire and sat down at the table again with his books. For a time the rats disturbed him with their scratching and squeaking. But he got used to the noise, and soon he forgot everything except his work.

Suddenly he looked up. Something had disturbed him, but he did not know what it was. He sat up and listened. The room was silent. That was it! The noise of the rats had stopped. 'That's what disturbed me!' said Moore with a smile. He looked around the room - and saw an enormous rat. It was sitting on the great high-backed chair by the fire, and it was staring

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at him with hate in its small red eyes. Moore picked up a book and pretended to throw it. But the rat did not move. It showed its great white teeth angrily, and its cruel eyes shone mercilessly in the lamplight.

'Why, you-' cried Moore. Moore picked up the poker from the fireplace and jumped up. Before he could hit the rat, however, it jumped to the floor with a squeak. It ran up the rope of the alarm bell and disappeared in the darkness. Strangely, the squeaks and scratches of the rats in the walls began again.

By this time Moore no longer felt like working. Outside the house the birds were singing: soon it would be morning. He climbed into bed and immediately fell asleep.

Answer the following questions with short answers.

What was Moore doing until 11 o'clock? _____

What was throwing strange shadows on the wall? _____

What did Moore make himself to drink? _____

What did he notice the first time? _____

Where was the noise coming from? Mention three things.

_____

Who was right about the rats? _____

What did Moore notice in the walls? _____

What was it that interested Moore the most? _____

What did Moore do after exploring the room? _____

What disturbed him the second time? _____

What did he see sitting on the high-backed chair? _____

What did Moore do when he saw it? _____

What did it do? _____

What happened after it disappeared? _____

Drawing Task – draw a picture of this scene in the living room. Hand in your drawing to your teacher. Include the details described in the text.

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