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Grammar Rainbow – Explaining ‘Passive and Active Voice’

The third ‘P’ on structure and style is passive voice.

Many writers are against the passive voice and say that the active voice is a better way to be a writer, putting the subject of a sentence right at the heart of the writing:

Mandy removed the gun from the cabinet.

But what if I’m writing a detective story, and I don’t want anybody to know that Mandy took the gun? Well then, I would deliberately, as a writer, choose the passive voice:

The gun was removed from the cabinet.

Dun Dun Duuuun! Who did it? Very exciting. And so actually, rules like ‘passive voices out’ are unhelpful to a writer, because sometimes there are deliberate times when we need to hide the doer of the action.

‘The window was broken’, well, who broke it? You have to read on to find out.