

The Mysterious Monk



Joseph Aigner decided to hang himself, but he failed. A mysterious Capuchin monk interceded and saved his life. This was in 1836 and in Vienna. Moving on to Budapest and becoming a portrait painter, Aigner still wasn't happy. In 1840 he tried to hang himself again. And who was there to prevent him from doing so? The very same Capuchin monk.

A further eight years ticked by. This time the government sentenced him to death via the gallows. It appears that Aigner got involved with revolutionary political activities. Amazingly he was reprieved at the instigation of that very same monk.

Aigner again decided he wanted to leave this world when he reached the age of 68. This time he shot himself with a pistol and this granted him his 'death wish'. His funeral service was conducted by that very same Capuchin monk.

Source: <http://www.67notout.com/2011/07/unbelievable-classic-coincidences.html>

Vocabulary: Give the simple/base form of the word being asked.
(EXAMPLE: *sit* is the base/simple form of *sat*, *sits*, and *sitting*)

1. Which verb in paragraph 1 also means "to mediate"?
2. Which noun in paragraph 1 means "a painting or drawing of a person"?
3. In paragraph 2, which word means "execution by hanging"?
4. In paragraph 2, which word means "pardon"?
5. Which word in paragraph 3 means "administer"?

Language Extra: Re-tell the ideas in the following sentences in your own words.

1. A mysterious Capuchin monk interceded and saved his life.
2. It appears that Aigner got involved with revolutionary political activities.
3. Aigner again decided he wanted to leave this world when he reached the age of 68.

Discussion questions:

1. What are your thoughts on suicide?
2. Why do you think people commit suicide?
3. What do you think about the character of Joseph Aigner?
4. Do you think a person has no right to intervene in someone else's suicide plans? Discuss.
5. Do you think suicide is right or wrong (or something else)? Discuss.