“THE GIFT OF THE MAGI” BY O. HENRY: LISTENING EXERCISE

Listen to the following information while you follow along with the text below.

Underline any words that you hear that are different from what you see.

Jim was never late.

Della held the watch chain in her hand and sat near the door where he always entered. Then she heard his step in the hall and her face lost color for a moment. She often said little prayers quietly about simple everyday things.

And now she said: “Please God, make him think I’m still pretty.”

The door opened and Jim stepped in.

Listen again and write the correct forms of the words you underlined.

held
sat
heard
lost
said
said

What do you notice about the words you underlined? What do they have in common? They are all incorrect forms of irregular part tense verbs (simple past tense); the underlined verbs in the text were incorrectly formed as regular past tense verbs.

Text and audio excerpts from “Gift of the Magi” from The Gift of the Magi and Other Stories by O. Henry; published by the Office of English Language Programs, U.S. Department of State americanenglish.state.gov