

## A Scandal in Bohemia

by Sir Arthur Conan Doyle

### Chapter 3

**Author:** Daniel Barber

**Level:** Intermediate

**Age:** Young adults / Adults

**Time:** 45 minutes (60 with optional activity)

**Aims:** In this lesson, students will:

1. learn some vocabulary needed to follow the story;
2. listen for gist and detail to answer multiple choice questions;
3. compare and contrast the use of time expressions in present and past descriptions (optional);
4. play a celebrity guessing game.

**Materials:** One copy of the worksheet per student; Track 1 (full audio), Track 2 (first extract from Chapter 3) and Track 3 (second extract from Chapter 3) downloaded from onestopenglish; one copy of the full transcript per student

**Summary:** This is a rare case for Sherlock Holmes; the visit to his Baker Street residence by a worried foreign gentleman heralds the beginning of a mystery in which Holmes, for once, meets his match and fails to outwit an impressive and surprising adversary. In Chapter 3, Holmes recounts to Watson the eventful day he has had spying on Irene Adler's house and his unexpected role at a wedding. To show for his efforts, he has useful information about Adler and a plan to get back the compromising photograph.

### Vocabulary

**Aim:** to learn some vocabulary needed to understand the story

1. Hand out the worksheet, one per person. Ask the students to read the definitions in the vocabulary activity, explaining that these are words in Chapter 3.

2. When they have read them all, point out the gapped sentences below. Tell them to choose one of the words in bold to complete the sentences. In some cases, they will need to change the form of the word.

3. Elicit the answers from the class to make sure everyone agrees on the answers.

**Key:** 1. *cabs*; 2. *disguised*; 3. *likely*;  
4. *grooms*; 5. *do my duty*; 6. *interfere*;  
7. *clergymen*; 8. *shabby*; 9. *break the law*;  
10. *willing*

### Listening 1

**Aim:** to listen for gist and detail

1. Tell students that they are going to listen to the whole of Chapter 3. Before they do so, tell them to read through the multiple choice questions on the worksheet.

2. Play Track 1. Afterwards, give students a minute to compare answers in pairs.

3. Hand out a copy of the transcript to each student. Allocate students different questions to check. For example, if you have twenty students, allocate one question for every two students.

4. Nominate those responsible to give the answers to their respective questions. Ask them to justify their answers with evidence from the text.

**Key:** 1. *b*; 2. *a*; 3. *c*; 4. *c*; 5. *b*; 6. *a*; 7. *c*;  
8. *b*; 9. *b*; 10. *c*

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### Time expressions with past narratives and routines and habits (optional)

**Aim:** to compare time expressions used in describing present habits and narrating the past

1. Ask students to look at the time expressions activity on the worksheet. Explain that the time expressions in the box tend to be used with either:

- the present simple to describe habits and routines;
- or past tenses to narrate past events.

Tell them to write them in the correct box. Suggest that they try saying each expression with *I go* and *I went* to help them make the decision.

2. Copy the table onto the board and invite students to fill it with an expression each.

3. Explain that they are going to listen to an extract and they should tick the expressions that they hear. Play Track 2.

4. Using the table on the board again, have them tick expressions that they heard. The ticked expressions should all be in the first column. Ask students why this is and elicit that it is because Holmes is describing Irene's daily routine.

5. Now, do the same with Track 3. Have them underline the expressions they hear. This time, the expressions should all be in the second column. Elicit the reason, which is that Holmes is describing events from earlier in the day. (Note that two of the phrases are not present in the extract; they come from elsewhere in the chapter.)

### Key:

expressions used to talk about present habits and routines	expressions used to narrate past events
<i>always</i> ✓ <i>every day</i> ✓ <i>in the mornings</i> ✓ <i>not very often</i> ✓ <i>twice a day</i> ✓	<i>after I had</i> <i>after a minute</i> <i>for a while</i> <i>soon</i> <i>soon after he left</i> <i>this morning</i> <i>when I arrived at the church</i>

### Speaking

**Aim:** to practise talking about present habits and past events using appropriate time expressions

1. Elicit from the class some celebrities that they know. Encourage ideas with prompts of types of celebrity: actors, TV presenters, musicians, directors, politicians, etc.

2. Tell them to imagine that they are journalists for the gossip columns and their job is to investigate the private lives of celebrities. Ask them to each choose one of the celebrities they have thought of or another celebrity they think everyone will know. They mustn't reveal their choice.

3. Tell them to imagine that they have been investigating using two methods: by interviewing neighbours about the celebrity's daily habits and movements and by spending two days spying on them from a car parked outside the celebrity's house. Explain that they are going to play a guessing game in which they tell their observations to other students who have to guess who the celebrity is.

4. Give them five minutes to make notes about the things they heard and the things they saw. Point out the sentence stems on the worksheet, which they can use to get started. Go around the room offering help, suggesting ideas and correcting their use of English.

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5. Put students in groups of four or five. Ask them to take turns reporting their observations but without mentioning the name of the celebrity. At the end, the other members of the group make their guesses.

#### Follow-up tasks

- The students write an essay on the following: What does the expression *doing your duty* mean to you? Give examples from your own life.
- Students write a description of their daily routines and habits.

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#### Vocabulary

Look at the vocabulary and definitions in the box below. Use the words in bold to complete the sentences that follow.

A carriage is a vehicle with wheels pulled by horses. A **cab** is a carriage when used as a taxi.

A **groom** is someone who looks after horses.

A **clergyman** leads religious ceremonies such as weddings and services in a church.

You **break the law** when you do something illegal.

If you **interfere** in a situation, you deliberately get involved in it and try to influence it.

You **do your duty** when you do what you morally or legally should do.

If you **disguise** yourself, you change your appearance so that other people do not recognize you.

**Shabby** clothes, furniture, etc are old and in bad condition.

If you are **willing** to do something, you do it when someone asks you, even if you do not want to.

If something is **likely**, it is probably going to happen.

1. Before London's famous black taxis, horse-drawn \_\_\_\_\_ could take you wherever you wanted to go.
2. Cameron Diaz spent a day in London \_\_\_\_\_ in dark glasses and a hat.
3. Do you want me to tell Ben? It's \_\_\_\_\_ that I'll see him today.
4. Every rich person's house in the nineteenth century employed \_\_\_\_\_ to care for the family's horses.
5. I don't like looking after small children but I told my mum that I would \_\_\_\_\_.
6. I've told you not to \_\_\_\_\_. This is an argument between me and Josh.
7. In some religions, \_\_\_\_\_ cannot be married or own possessions.
8. Linda felt \_\_\_\_\_ standing next to Andrea in her fashionable clothes.
9. Punishment for people who \_\_\_\_\_ can be very severe in some states.
10. She asked the manager but he wasn't \_\_\_\_\_ to give her her money back.

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#### Listening

Listen to Chapter 3. Choose the correct answers.

- Holmes came home ...
  - ... with a drunk man.
  - ... in a very bad condition.
  - ... when Watson was not expecting him.
- Holmes had gone to see ...
  - ... a woman's house.
  - ... a friend called John Wood.
  - ... how easy it would be to gatecrash a wedding.
- He learnt about Irene Adler by ...
  - ... watching her in her garden.
  - ... by telling her he loved her.
  - ... by giving some men alcohol.
- Irene Adler ...
  - ... sings every morning.
  - ... stays in every morning.
  - ... goes to the park every day.
- Holmes would be worried about Mr Norton ...
  - ... if he was more handsome.
  - ... if he was her lawyer.
  - ... if he visited Miss Adler more often.
- Godfrey Norton went ...
  - ... first to Briony Lodge, then to a jewellery shop, then to a church.
  - ... first to a church, then to Briony Lodge, then to a jewellery shop.
  - ... first to Briony Lodge, then to a church, then to a jewellery shop.
- Norton told Holmes that he needed him to ...
  - ... get out of the church.
  - ... break the law.
  - ... watch an important moment.
- Holmes and Watson have to act quickly because ...
  - ... the Nortons are going on holiday in London.
  - ... time is running out to do what the king wants them to do.
  - ... Holmes has broken the law and the police are looking for him.
- Doctor Watson ...
  - ... once committed a crime for a good reason.
  - ... is prepared to do something illegal if necessary.
  - ... wants to break the law because it will be fun.
- Holmes tells Watson ...
  - ... he must do something unpleasant to Holmes.
  - ... he must do absolutely nothing except watch.
  - ... he needs to act at the right moment.

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#### Time expressions with past narratives and routines and habits

Categorize the time expressions according to whether they are normally used to talk about someone's habits or to narrate past events.

after I had	every day	not very often	twice a day
after a minute	in the mornings	soon after he left	when I arrived at the church
always	for a while	this morning	soon

expressions used to talk about present habits and routines	expressions used to narrate past events

Listen to the first extract and tick (✓) the time expressions you hear. Is the extract describing past events or present habits?

Now, listen to the second extract and underline the time expressions you hear. Is the extract describing past events or present habits?

#### Speaking

Make notes about a celebrity's daily life and their specific movements in the last couple of days. Use the sentence stems to help you.

- Every day, he/she ...
- He/She always ...
- Once/ Twice/ Three times a day/ week/ month, he/she ...
- He/She doesn't often ...
- Yesterday, he/she ...
- After he/she ..., he/she ...
- This morning, ...
- Soon after he/she ..., he/she ...

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Track 1

When I arrived at Baker Street the next afternoon, Holmes was not at home. I sat down to wait for him and after an hour I heard footsteps on the stairs. The door opened and a very **shabby** man entered, whose clothes were old and torn. His face was red and he looked as if he drank too much. He was dressed like the kind of man who takes care of horses – a groom. Holmes’s skill at disguising himself had been useful in many of his cases. So I was not surprised when the ‘groom’ went into Holmes’s bedroom. And I was not surprised when my friend came out of the room a few minutes later, looking as smart as usual.

He sat down in his chair and he laughed happily.

‘I’ve been a witness at a wedding, Watson,’ he said when he had finished laughing. ‘Let me tell you about it.

‘This morning, I went to look at Irene Adler’s house in St John’s Wood. It’s a small house with a garden behind it and no garden in front of it. The front of the house is next to the street. The windows of the house are large with the usual English kind of lock and they are quite easy to open from the outside. It will be simple to break into the house if we have to do that.

‘There is a row of buildings next to the garden where people keep their horses and their carriages,’ Holmes continued. ‘I talked to some of the grooms there and they were very indiscreet. London grooms are never discreet, Watson. After I had bought them something to drink, they were very willing to tell me about Irene Adler. They’re all in love with her, of course! I learnt that she doesn’t leave her house very often in the mornings, except if she is going to sing at a concert. But she always goes out in the afternoon, between five and seven o’clock, to drive in Regent’s Park. I learnt that she is often visited at home by a gentleman. The gentleman visits Briony Lodge every day, sometimes twice a day, and he is her only male visitor. And I learnt that the gentleman is a lawyer and that his name is Mr Godfrey Norton. He is a dark-haired, handsome man with important friends, the grooms told me.

Track 2

‘That news worried me a little, Watson,’ Holmes said. ‘If Mr Norton was her lawyer, I told myself, she had probably given him the photograph, to keep it in his safe. But if he was her lover, I thought, it was unlikely that he knew about the photograph. It was unlikely that he knew about her friendship with the king at all. So I hoped that he was her lover.

‘After I’d talked to the grooms, I watched the street in front of the house for a while,’ he went on. ‘Soon a cab stopped by Briony Lodge and a man got out. I knew he was Godfrey Norton because he was exactly like the man the grooms had described. He went into the house. I could see him through the windows as he talked to someone inside. He seemed very anxious and he was waving his arms about. I didn’t see Miss Adler herself. The man didn’t stay very long and when he came out again, I heard the words he spoke to the driver of his cab. He asked to be taken to the shop of a famous jeweller, and then to St Monica’s Church in Edgware Road. He said that he had to be at the church in twenty minutes.

Track 3

‘Soon after he left, a small carriage arrived at the house. Irene Adler came out and got into it. Good heavens, she’s a lovely woman, Watson! She also asked her driver to take her to St Monica’s Church. And she also had to be there in twenty minutes. You can guess what I thought was going to happen.

‘I quickly found a cab and I followed the carriage,’ Holmes said. ‘When I arrived at the church, there was no one outside, so I went in. Miss Adler and Mr Norton were talking to a

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**clergyman** at the far end of the church, so I sat down near the door to watch them. But after a minute, Mr Norton saw me and came towards me. "You're going to help me," he said firmly. "Do you understand?" He thought that I was a poor groom and he wasn't polite. "You must be a witness for me," he said. "I'm getting married. And I can't get married without a witness." Well, I **did my duty**. The two of them got married and I was the witness. Then they agreed to meet again late this evening and they left the church separately.

'So that was my morning's work, Watson,' Holmes finished. 'Irene Adler is now Mrs Norton, and I was a witness at her wedding.'

'We must act quickly now, Watson,' he said. 'Mr and Mrs Norton might leave London soon for a holiday after the wedding. We must recover the king's photograph before they leave. Will you help me?'

'Of course I'll help you,' I replied.

'Are you willing to break the law?' he asked.

'If it is broken for a good reason, then yes, I will break the law,' I said.

'Listen carefully, then,' said Holmes. 'This evening we will go to St John's Wood together. I will leave you a short distance from Briony Lodge. You must watch what happens after that, but you mustn't **interfere** in it. Do you understand? You must only watch. Something unpleasant will happen to me, but you mustn't try to help me. I will be taken into the house. You must then come near to the house and stand by the left-hand window. Soon the window will be opened and you'll see me inside the room. When you see me raise my hand, you must throw this through the window.'

As he spoke, he took a small smoke bomb from his pocket and gave it to me. 'Now I must change my clothes, and after that we must go to St John's Wood,' he went on. 'I'll tell you more about my plan on the way.'

### Glossary

**shabby** dressed in clothes that are old or in bad condition

**clergyman** a man who leads religious services in Christian churches

**to do your duty** to do something that you are legally or morally obliged to do

**interfere** (*to interfere in something*) to deliberately become involved in a situation and try to influence the way that it develops