

## The Second Stain

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. recap what they know about the story so far;
2. study some vocabulary about crime;
3. listen for details and gist;
4. look at the use of *except* in emphatic discourse;
5. explore the relationship and motives of Mr and Lady Hope through a role-play.

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

**Summary:** Sherlock Holmes and his assistant, Doctor Watson, are visited by two very important gentlemen: the Prime Minister and the Minister for Europe, Mr Hope. They want Holmes's help in an extremely delicate matter. Hope has lost a document, the existence of which, if made public, could threaten the peace and stability of Britain. In Chapter 3, Holmes believes there is still a chance that he and Watson can intercept the terrible letter and prevent it becoming public. A murder close to Hope's house in London seems too much of a coincidence to be unrelated to the mystery they are investigating. All of a sudden, Holmes has a lead.

### Writing

**Aim:** to recap the story so far in a collaborative task

1. Hand out the worksheet and direct students to the writing activity. Explain that they are going to summarize the story. Tell the class to think about what they remember. They must complete at least three of the six sentences on their own. Give them a couple of minutes for this, going around and helping out where necessary. Write the sentence stems on the board in preparation for whole-class feedback.
2. Invite suggestions for the end of the first sentence. Elicit a few students' versions and ask the class to decide which is best and why. You may get, for example: 'Holmes is visited by two important men' and 'Holmes is visited by the Prime Minister and the European minister'. The class may decide that the second sentence

is more informative. When the class has decided on the best sentence, invite the student who said it to write their sentence on the board.

3. Do the same for the other sentences. Ask the students to copy the sentences down and add one more sentence of their own choosing to the summary. Ask students to read out these final sentences to the class.

### Vocabulary

**Aims:** to prepare students for listening by making sure some key words are understood; to pre-teach other related words from Chapters 4 to 7 as one lexical set: *crime*

1. (Optional) Put the students into pairs. Ask them to think of as many different crimes as possible in two minutes and to write them down.

## The Second Stain

by Sir Arthur Conan Doyle

### Chapter 3

2. When the two minutes are up, prepare a table on the board like this:

name of crime	verb	person
crime	commit	criminal
murder		

Quickly write their ideas into the table, eliciting the correct names of the crimes, associated verbs and the names of the criminals who commit the crimes. Point out that the associated words are not necessarily different forms of the same word.

#### Possible answers:

name of crime	verb	person
crime	commit	criminal
murder	murder / kill	murderer
theft	steal	thief
pickpocketing	pickpocket / steal	pickpocket
robbery	rob	robber / thief
embezzlement	embezzle / steal	embezzler / thief
burglary	burgle / rob (a house)	burglar

3. If you have time, put the students in groups and get them to allocate suitable punishments to each crime. Provide them with some useful vocabulary related to punishment, such as:

- life imprisonment;
- capital punishment;
- a £500 fine;
- community service.

Get whole-class feedback to let students compare and discuss their ideas with those of the other groups.

4. Back in their pairs, have them look at the vocabulary activity on the worksheet. Explain that some of the words appear in this chapter but others are in future chapters. Give them three minutes to match the words to their definitions.

**Key:** 1. e; 2. d; 3. b; 4. i; 5. c; 6. a; 7. f; 8. g; 9. h

#### Listening 1

**Aim:** to listen for key details

1. Tell the class they are going to listen to the first part of the chapter. Ask them to read the questions on the worksheet.

2. Play Track 1. When it has finished, let the students compare answers. Then, hand out the transcript for them to check their answers.

**Key:** 1. He hopes that a spy still has the document and will accept money from the British government for the document.; 2. spies living in London; 3. that Eduardo Lucas is dead, murdered the night before; 4. He was killed with a knife.; 5. a policeman; 6. The motive is not clear. Nothing was stolen so it does not look like burglary.; 7. The two houses are close to one another.

## The Second Stain

by Sir Arthur Conan Doyle  
Chapter 3

### Listening 2

**Aim:** to listen for the main ideas in the rest of the chapter

1. Tell the class that the chapter they are listening to is called 'A Visit from a Lady'. As they listen to the rest of the chapter, they should answer two questions:

- *Who visits them?*
- *Why does she visit them?*

The students have copies of the transcript so you may decide to either tell them not to look at this while they listen or offer them the choice to read and listen or just listen.

2. Play Track 2. When it has finished, get the students into pairs or small groups to discuss their answers.

**Key:** *Lady Hilda Hope, wife of Mr Trelawney Hope; to find out the contents of the letter*

In whole-class feedback, make sure they are all aware of the discrepancy between the reason she gives for her visit and the fact that Holmes does not believe her. Encourage speculation as to the real reason.

### Language: emphasis with *except* (optional)

**Aim:** to practise an emphatic discourse structure with *except*

1. Ask the class to look at the extract in the language activity on the worksheet. Point out that the sentence turns on the word *except* so that the first part of the sentence – 'My husband and I have no secrets from each other' – is qualified by the second part. Point out how the second sentence is related to the first in that it gives extra information about the first.

2. Have them read sentence stems 1 to 6 and invite suggestions as to how to finish the first one so that it follows the same

structure as the extract. Doing the first with the whole class should clarify the task for everyone.

3. Have the students complete the sentences on their own. Go around the class, checking all students are on task and have ideas of what to write. When they have finished, ask them to choose their favourite sentence, stand up and walk around the room telling everyone that sentence and listening to each other's sentences.

4. Finally, ask some individuals for the best sentences that they heard.

### Speaking

**Aim:** to explore the characters of Mr and Lady Hope and their relationship

1. Indicate the speaking activity on the worksheet. Ask the students to imagine that we are back at the Hope household. Lady Hope and her husband, Mr Hope, are having dinner. Put them in pairs to decide which sentences might be said by Mr Hope and which by his wife. There are no right answers for this, as long as students can justify their ideas.

2. Now, get students to say the sentences as if they were the characters. They may find it helpful to think about the emotion of the lines and it may be useful to think about which words are emphasized most. Give them a few minutes for this, visiting the pairs and listening to check for natural sounding expression of the lines.

3. Now, ask them to put their worksheets away, as they will not need them. Explain that they are now going to act out the dialogue in the dining room at the Hope house. If you can, put on some suitable background music, set up each table as if it were a dining table, ask the class what they are having for dinner, to imagine they are eating, and so on. Ask them to say who will start the conversation and suggest a first line, such as: 'Darling, are you alright? You look tired.'

## The Second Stain

by Sir Arthur Conan Doyle  
Chapter 3

4. Leave the pairs to play their roles. Monitor their conversations quietly, listening for any conversations that take interesting or unexpected turns.

5. When most of the class has stopped talking, nominate a few of the pairs to explain to the rest of the class what happened in their dialogues. Round up by asking which of the dialogues, if any, were perhaps closest to the true relationship of the Hopes, and why.

### Follow-up tasks

- The students write a script of the imagined conversation between Mr Hope and his wife, Lady Hope.
- The students write about a crime, either real or imagined, using some of the vocabulary studied in the lesson.

## The Second Stain

by Sir Arthur Conan Doyle

### Chapter 3

#### Writing

Complete at least three of these sentences. Include as many details as you can about the story so far.

- Sherlock Holmes is visited by ...
- The European minister has ...
- They want Holmes to ...
- The letter is ...
- Holmes thinks ...
- If ...

#### Vocabulary

The words in bold, associated with crime, appear in the rest of the story. Match them to their definitions.

- |  |  |
|--|--|
| 1. She's serving life for acting as an <b>accomplice</b> to murder.                                      | a. a group of usually twelve members of the public who judge a court case                    |
| 2. <b>Burglaries</b> are on the increase in the area, so home security is essential.                     | b. to do something illegal or morally wrong  |
| 3. The study aims to find out what makes people <b>commit</b> crimes.                                    | c. an official attempt by a court to find the cause of someone's death                       |
| 4. He was found guilty of <b>murder</b> and given life imprisonment.                                     | d. the crime of entering a building illegally in order to steal things                       |
| 5. The <b>inquest</b> into the death of her husband will be held next week.                              | e. someone who helps another person to do something illegal                                  |
| 6. The <b>jury</b> found him guilty of stealing from the company.  | f. the process or act of accusing someone of a crime and asking a court of law to judge them |
| 7. He could face <b>prosecution</b> over the incident.   | g. believing that someone has probably done something wrong                                  |
| 8. His colleagues became <b>suspicious</b> when he started acting strangely.                             | h. evidence that someone was somewhere else when a crime was committed                       |
| 9. His <b>alibi</b> on the night of the murder was strong – he was with friends when the crime happened. | i. the crime of killing someone deliberately   |

## The Second Stain

by Sir Arthur Conan Doyle  
Chapter 3

### Listening 1

Listen to the first part of Chapter 3 and answer the questions.

1. Why does Holmes believe that money might be the answer to their problem?
2. Who are Oberstein, La Rothiere and Eduardo Lucas?
3. What does Watson know that Holmes does not?
4. How did the victim die?
5. Who found the body?
6. What is strange about the crime?
7. What connects this crime with the missing document?

Read the transcript to check your answers.

### Language: emphasis with *except*

Read the extract from the story. Then, complete sentences 1 to 6 in a similar way using *except*.

"My husband and I have no secrets from each other, except in one area of life – the area of politics. He refuses to talk about politics with me."

1. I love animals. There isn't a single animal I don't like, except one – ...
2. She passed all her exams ...
3. They won every match they played that season ...
4. There was nothing in the fridge ...
5. I'd do any job ...
6. (your own idea)

## The Second Stain

by Sir Arthur Conan Doyle  
Chapter 3

### Speaking

Imagine a conversation between Lady Hope and her husband that evening.  
Which sentences below would be spoken by Lady Hope? Which by Mr Hope?

Are you sure you're OK?

I'm so worried for you, my dear.

You wouldn't understand.

Have you lost anything important?

I wish you'd let me help you.

There's nothing the matter, darling.

You have nothing to worry about.

How do you know I've lost something?

Is there anything you'd like to tell me?

I know how important your job is to you.

You know I just want to help, don't you?

You know I can't tell you about my work.

You know you can tell me anything.

There shouldn't be any secrets between us.

Is there something you're not telling me?

I just have one or two difficult jobs to do at work, that's all.

You never tell me about the really important things in your life.

I'm hurt that you can't trust me, darling.

Imagine how the characters would say the lines. Practise saying them with a partner.

## The Second Stain

by Sir Arthur Conan Doyle

### Chapter 3

Track 1

Transcript and glossary

When our visitors had left, Holmes was silent for a long time. He sat in his chair, thinking about our new problem, as I read the morning newspaper. There had been a shocking crime – a murder – in London the previous evening and the paper had a story about it.

At last, Holmes looked up. He was ready to talk again.

‘Perhaps we are not too late after all, Watson,’ he began. ‘Perhaps we still have some hope. I must find out which of those three spies had the letter. Perhaps he still has it. Perhaps he is waiting to see who offers him the most money for it. It’s possible that I could buy it back. Our government will pay any price.’

‘But who are the three spies you mentioned?’ I asked. ‘How do you know that one of them has the letter?’

‘There are only three spies who live in London and who could have done this, Watson,’ said Holmes. ‘Oberstein, La Rothiere and Eduardo Lucas. I must try to talk to all three of them.’

‘Does Eduardo Lucas live in Godolphin Street, Holmes?’ I asked.

‘Yes, that’s the man,’ Holmes replied. He was surprised that I knew.

‘Then I’m afraid you won’t see him,’ I said. I opened the newspaper and pointed to a story. ‘He was murdered last night at his house.’

Holmes was obviously shocked by my news. He took the newspaper from me and read the story.

A mysterious crime was committed in London last night. It happened in a beautiful house in Godolphin Street, near the Parliament buildings in Westminster. The owner of the house, Mr Eduardo Lucas, was found dead with a knife in his body. Mr Lucas was aged thirty-four and was not married. Mr Lucas lived in the house with an elderly housekeeper, Mrs Pringle, and a valet, John Mitton. Last night, Mrs Pringle was in her room at the top of the house and Mitton was not at home. At a quarter to twelve, a policeman saw that the front door was open. He knocked on the door to ask if anything was wrong. There was no reply, but he saw that there was a light on in the front room. He entered the room and found Mr Lucas lying dead on the floor.

The knife, which was still in Mr Lucas’s body, was his own property. It had hung on a wall in the room for some years. Much of the furniture in the room had been turned over. But the strange thing is that nothing in the room had been stolen. It seems that **burglary** was not the reason for the crime. Inspector Lestrade of Scotland Yard is in charge of the case for the police.

‘Well, Watson,’ said Holmes when he had finished reading. ‘What do you think about this?’

‘It’s an amazing **coincidence**, Holmes,’ I replied.

‘I don’t believe it. It can’t be a coincidence,’ said Holmes. ‘There must be a connection between this crime and the one we are trying to solve.’

‘Is the missing letter still our problem?’ I asked. ‘The police must know everything now.’

‘No, Watson, you’re wrong. They won’t know about the letter,’ Holmes said. ‘The Prime Minister still won’t tell them about that. We are the only people who know about both

## The Second Stain

by Sir Arthur Conan Doyle

### Chapter 3

crimes, and we are the only people who can find the connection between them. The first thing that seems interesting is that Godolphin Street is very close to Whitehall Terrace. That's a kind of connection between the households – Lucas's and Hope's. The other two spies live much further to the west. If Lucas had the letter, he probably had an **accomplice** in Hope's household. Now we must look for more connections.'

Shortly after that, Holmes's thinking was interrupted by a surprising visitor. It was **Lady Hilda Hope**. Lady Hilda, we knew, was the wife of Mr Trelawney Hope, who had already visited us that morning.

The lady who entered the room was one of the most beautiful young women in London. But that day, she looked pale and very frightened.

'Mr Holmes,' she said, 'I think that my husband has already been here today. Before I say anything else, I must ask you to keep my visit a secret. My husband must never know about it. Please promise me that.'

'I cannot promise anything until I know the reason for your visit,' Holmes replied. 'Please sit down and tell us why you have come.'

'I will tell you the truth, Mr Holmes,' Lady Hilda said. 'I hope that, in return, you will tell me the truth. My husband and I have no secrets from each other, except in one area of life – the area of politics. He refuses to talk about politics with me. Now, I understand that something terrible happened in our house last night. I understand that a document has disappeared, and that its loss is very serious. I know that my husband consulted you about this loss this morning. Will you tell me what the document is, Mr Holmes? My husband is in despair and I want to help him, but he won't tell me what the problem is. If you can tell me what has really happened, I will do my best to help him.'

'Lady Hilda,' Holmes replied, 'I cannot tell you and I cannot help you. I promised complete secrecy to your husband and to Lord Bellinger. If your husband won't tell you what has disappeared, it's not in my power to tell you. I'm sorry.'

'If you won't tell me that, Mr Holmes, will you answer this question?' Lady Hilda asked. 'Will this disappearance be bad for my husband's political career? Will it ruin his reputation?'

'Yes,' said Holmes, 'it will be bad for his career. I think I can tell you that.'

'And is our country in danger as a result of this disappearance?' Lady Hilda went on.

'Yes, it is,' Holmes answered. 'But I cannot tell you any more.'

'Then I hope you will do as I asked and keep my visit a secret,' said Lady Hilda. Then she turned and left the room.

After we heard the front door close behind her, Holmes laughed. 'I wonder what she really wanted,' he said. 'Well, Watson, I'm going out. I'm going to Godolphin Street to see what the police are doing about Eduardo Lucas's murder. Our friend Inspector Lestrade will tell me all about it. And I might be able to help him. I'll see you later in the day.'

'Holmes,' I said, as he put on his coat. 'What is your theory? What connects the two crimes?'

'We must never make theories before we have facts, Watson,' he replied.

Track 2

## The Second Stain

by Sir Arthur Conan Doyle  
Chapter 3

### Glossary

**burglary** the crime of entering a building illegally in order to steal things. Someone who commits this crime is a burglar.

**coincidence** a situation in which separate things happen by chance at the same time or in the same way

**accomplice** someone who helps another person to do something illegal

**Lady** the title of a woman of a high social class, the wife or daughter of someone of a high social class or the wife of a knight