

Sir Arthur Conan Doyle

# A Study in Scarlet



Audio CD



Vicens Vives - A Study in Scarlet

(Blackcat. Reading & Training) - ISBN: 9788853002952

Sir Arthur Conan Doyle

# A STUDY *in Scarlet*



Retold by Nancy Timmins


Activities by Richard Elliott and Eleanor Donaldson

BLACK CAT

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First Certificate in English Examination-style exercises

T: GRADE 7

Trinity-style exercises (Grade 7)



This story is recorded in full.

These symbols indicate the beginning and end of the extracts linked to the listening activities.

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**Sir Arthur Conan Doyle**  
(1927)  
by Henry L. Gates.

# Sir Arthur *Conan Doyle*

**A**rthur Ignatius Conan Doyle was born on 22 May 1859 in Edinburgh. He was the second of ten children of Charles Doyle and Mary Foley. In 1885 Conan Doyle received a degree in medicine from the University of Edinburgh. He was taught by Joseph Bell, a surgeon at the Edinburgh Infirmary. Much of the character of Sherlock Holmes is based on Joseph Bell, particularly his powers of deduction.

One of Conan Doyle's first jobs was as a doctor on an Arctic whaler,<sup>1</sup> an experience he enjoyed. He then became a doctor on a

1. **whaler** : ship used to hunt and catch whales.

## PART ONE

# Dr Watson Remembers



## CHAPTER ONE

# INTRODUCTIONS

I

In the year 1878 I became a doctor of medicine at the University of London, and then joined the Army as a surgeon. My first job was in Afghanistan, where I was shot in the shoulder. I went to hospital and started to recover, but then I became ill with a fever. For many months I was close to death, but finally I was strong enough to make the journey back to England.

My health was very weak and I had no friends or family in England. The Government gave me a small allowance <sup>1</sup> for each



1. **allowance** : amount of money given to someone regularly.



## INTRODUCTIONS

day and with this money I lived well enough for a while in a hotel in London. But it soon became too expensive and I needed to find somewhere cheaper to live. That is how I met Mr Sherlock Holmes.

One day, I left the hotel and by chance I met a young man I knew called Stamford.

‘Why, you’re very thin and as brown as a nut,<sup>1</sup> Watson. What have you been doing?’

We went to lunch together and I told him about my adventures and my current money problems.

‘I may be able to help you,’ said Stamford. ‘I know a man who needs someone to share some nice rooms he’s found. They’re too expensive for him on his own.’

‘I’m just the right man for him. When can I meet him?’

Stamford gave me a strange look. ‘You don’t know Sherlock Holmes yet,’ he said. ‘You might not get on with<sup>2</sup> him.’

‘But why?’ I asked. I was extremely curious about him.

‘He’s a decent man,’ said Stamford, ‘but he has some strange ideas. He studies many different things; medicine, science, anatomy... but apparently with no reason.’

‘I’d still like to meet him,’ I said.

After lunch we went to meet Sherlock Holmes at the laboratory where he worked.

‘Dr Watson, Mr Sherlock Holmes,’ said Stamford, introducing us.

‘How are you?’ he said, shaking my hand firmly. ‘You’ve been in Afghanistan, I perceive.’

1. **brown as a nut** : Watson’s skin is brown from the sun in Afghanistan.
2. **get on with** : like or enjoy someone’s company.



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## Go back to the text

### FCE 1 Comprehension

For questions 1-4, choose the answer (A, B, C or D) which you think fits best according to the text.

- 1 Which is the best description of Doctor Watson's situation at the beginning of Chapter One?
  - A  He has no money and is living with a friend.
  - B  He is very ill and still in hospital.
  - C  He has just returned to London and is looking for cheaper accommodation.
  - D  He has just arrived in London and is looking for a hotel room.
  
- 2 What do we know about Sherlock Holmes from Watson's friend Stamford?
  - A  He smokes a pipe.
  - B  He is a man with strange ideas.
  - C  He is an intellectual and a scientist.
  - D  He does not like the company of other people.
  
- 3 What does Watson tell Sherlock Holmes about his own character?
  - A  He is a smoker, does not like noise and gets up very early.
  - B  He makes a lot of noise at night, but is very lazy during the day.
  - C  He does not like noise, gets up at strange times and is lazy.
  - D  He does not like noise, but likes doing chemical experiments.
  
- 4 Which of these sentences best describes the rooms at 221B Baker St?
  - A  There were two bedrooms and a sitting room where guests were interviewed.
  - B  There was one bedroom and a sitting room used as a second bedroom.
  - C  There were three bedrooms and an office used to welcome guests.
  - D  There were two bedrooms and a sitting room used by Watson for his work.

**2 Summary**

Put these events in the order they happen in the story (the first one is done for you). One of them does not happen – do not write a number next to this sentence.

- A  A marine hands Sherlock Holmes an envelope.
- B  Watson reads a strange newspaper article at breakfast.
- C  Sherlock Holmes, Watson and Stamford are in the laboratory.
- D  Holmes talks to Watson about the rooms in Baker Street.
- E  Watson is in hospital in Afghanistan.
- F  Holmes and Watson are present at the scene of a murder.

Use the true sentences as a basis to make a short summary of Chapter One in your own words. Use the past tense.

**3** Use the pictures to explain how Holmes knew that Watson had been in Afghanistan. If you met Watson today, where would you guess he had been, if you had the same information as Holmes did?

