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Детективна повість «Собака Баскервілів» – один із найцікавіших творів шотландського письменника сера Артура Конан Дойла про Шерлока Холмса та його друга доктора Ватсона. У ній розповідається про те, як злочинці намагалися заволодіти спадком останнього нащадка роду Баскервілів – баронета Генрі Баскервіля. Для цього вони скористалися моторошною родинною легендою про страшного примарного пса — Чорного Диявола, який уночі переслідує всіх Баскервілів на болотах Грімпенської трясовини.

Книга містить адаптований текст, словник, вправи для перевірки розуміння прочитаного та закріплення навичок мовленнєвої діяльності.

Рекомендується учням загальноосвітніх і спеціалізованих шкіл, гімназій, ліцеїв, а також усім, хто вивчає або вдосконалює свої знання з англійської мови.

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## Chapter 1

### Mr. Sherlock Holmes

Mr. Sherlock Holmes was having breakfast. He usually woke up very late in the mornings, but not when he was up all night. I stood on the rug near the fireplace and picked up the stick which our visitor had left behind him the night before. It was a fine, thick piece of wood. Just under the head was a broad silver band nearly an inch across. "To James Mortimer, M.R.C.S., from his friends of the C.C.H.," was written on it, with the date "1884." The old-fashioned family doctor used to carry such sticks.

"Well, Watson, what do you think of it?"

Holmes was sitting with his back to me, and I had given him no sign of what I was doing.

"How did you know what I was doing? I think you have eyes in the back of your head."

"I have a well-polished, silver coffee-pot in front of me," said he. "But, tell me, Watson, what do you think of our visitor's stick? We have been so unlucky to miss him and have no idea of his business. So this

stick that he left behind by accident is important. What can you say of the man by looking at his stick?"

"I think," said I, using as far as I could the methods of my friend, "that Dr. Mortimer is a successful, elderly doctor. I think people respect him because they have presented him with this stick."

"Good!" said Holmes. "Excellent!"

"I think also that he may be a country doctor who walks a lot to visit his patients."

"Why so?"

"This stick used to be very impressive but now it is worn down. So it is clear that he has done a lot of walking with it."

"Perfectly reasonable!" said Holmes.

"And then again, there is the 'friends of the C.C.H.' I think that is the Something Hunt, the local hunting club. He has possibly given some medical help to the members of that club. And they have made him a small present in return."

"Really, Watson, this is your best guess ever!" said Holmes, pushing back his chair and lighting a cigarette.

His words gave me great pleasure. I had often been upset because it seemed that he did not notice my admiration. I had tried to tell people about his methods. But it seemed he did not notice that either. I was proud, too. I thought that I had learned his system so well that I could use it and he said my guess was reasonable. He now took the stick from my hands and examined it for a few minutes. Then he seemed interested. He put down his cigarette. He carried the stick to the window and looked over it again with a magnifying glass.

"Interesting, though elementary," said he as he returned to his favourite corner of the sofa. "There are certainly one or two signs on the stick. It gives us the basis for several deductions."

"Have I missed anything?" I asked. "I think that there is nothing important which I have missed?"

"I am afraid, my dear Watson, that most of your guesses were not correct. When I said that it was your best guess, I meant that your mistakes led me towards the truth. You are not completely wrong. The man is certainly a country doctor. And he walks a lot."

"Then I was right."

"You were right about this fact."

"But that was all."

"No, no, my dear Watson, not all. I think that this present to a doctor is more likely to come from a hospital than from a hunting club. When you put the letters 'C.C.' before that hospital the words 'Charing Cross' very naturally come to mind."

"You may be right. Well, then, if that 'C.C.H.' stands for 'Charing Cross Hospital,' what else can we suggest?"

"What comes to mind? You know my methods. Use them!"

"I can only think of the obvious conclusion that the man has worked in town before going to the country."

"I think that we might say a little bit more than this. Look at it this way. On what occasion would a man receive such a present? When would his friends give him this kind of present? Obviously at the moment when Dr. Mortimer resigned from his position at the hospital in order to start his own practice. We know there has been a present. We believe there has been a change from a town hospital to a country practice. Is it, then, too brave to say that the present was made when there was some kind of change in Dr. Mortimer's life?"

"It certainly seems probable."

"Now, you will agree that he wasn't on the staff of the hospital. Only a well-established doctor could hold such a position in London. Such kind of person

would not move into the country. What was he, then? If he was in the hospital but he was not on the staff, my guess is he was a house-surgeon – little more than a senior student. And he left five years ago. The date is on the stick. So your serious, middle-aged family doctor disappears, my dear Watson, and there emerges a young man under thirty, friendly, unambitious, absent-minded, and the owner of a favourite dog. I should describe it roughly as being larger than a terrier and smaller than a mastiff."

I laughed because I could not believe that. Sherlock Holmes leaned back in his sofa and blew little rings of smoke up to the ceiling.

"As for his character and the dog, I don't have the possibility to check you," said I, "but at least it is not difficult to find out a few details about the man's age and professional career." From my small medical shelf I took down the Medical Directory and looked up the name. There were several Mortimers, but only one who could be our visitor. I read his record aloud.

"Mortimer, James, M.R.C.S., 1882, Grimpen, Dartmoor, Devon. House-surgeon, from 1882 to 1884, at Charing Cross Hospital."

"It doesn't say anything about that local hunting club, Watson," said Holmes with a cheerful smile, "but it says he is a country doctor. It was very clever of you to notice that. I think this proves my ideas. As to the adjectives, I said, if I remember right, friendly, unambitious, and absent-minded. Only a friendly man in this world can receive such kind of presents. Only an unambitious man can give up a career in London and move to the country, and only an absent-minded person can leave his stick and not his visiting-card after waiting an hour in your room."

"And the dog?"

"It has had the habit of carrying this stick behind his master. The stick is heavy. The dog has held it tightly by the middle. You can see the marks of his teeth very clearly. The dog's jaw, as you can see in the space between these marks, is too broad in my opinion for a terrier and not broad enough for a mastiff. Yes, it is a curly-haired spaniel."

He had stood up and walked up and down the room as he spoke. Now he stopped near the window. He sounded so confident that I glanced up in surprise.

"My dear friend, how can you possibly be so sure of that?"

"For the very simple reason that I see the dog on our door-step, and there is the ring of its owner. Don't move, I beg you, Watson. He has the same profession as yours, and you may help me. Now it is the dramatic moment of fate, Watson, and you do not know whether for good or ill. What can Dr. James Mortimer, the man of science, ask Sherlock Holmes, the specialist in crime? Come in!"

The appearance of our visitor was a surprise to me, because I had expected a typical country doctor. He was a very tall, thin man, with a long nose like a beak. His two keen, gray eyes were set closely together and sparkled brightly from behind a pair of gold-rimmed glasses. He was wearing professional but rather untidy clothes. His coat was dirty and his trousers worn. Although he was young, his long back was already bent. He walked pushing his head forward and had a general air of kindness. As he entered the room he noticed his stick in Holmes's hand, and he ran towards it with an exclamation of joy. "I am so very glad," said he. "I was not sure where I had left it. I would not lose that stick for the world."

"A present, I see," said Holmes.

"Yes, sir."