
BBC LEARNING ENGLISH

The White Elephant

12: Shock!



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ENGLISH

NB: This is not a word-for-word transcript

Ceilia

Thanks for coming in earlier than normal. I wanted to give the kitchen a good spring clean. Hopefully the others will be here soon to help.

Mary

No problem although it was a bit of a **shock to the system** getting up so early!

Ceilia

What on earth was that?

Mary

I heard something too. Hang on, I'm just going to go and put the lights on. Oh, it's Gordon! He gave me **the shock of my life**.

Ceilia

Gordon? What's he doing sleeping in the kitchen?

Gordon

Oh... err... Hello Ceilia, hello Mary. I was just err...

Mary

... sleeping on the floor. Gordon, you made me **jump out of my skin**.

Gordon

Yes, sorry about that. I was just checking the... cooker connections.

Ceilia

Sleeping more like. The last time I saw you looking this bad was when you came back drunk from that party and I kicked you out.

Gordon

Well... errr... I've been kicked out again. It happened **out of the blue**. I came home last night and my girlfriend... my new girlfriend... my new ex-girlfriend, said she was sick of me coming home late and stinking of fried food.

Mary

Yes, so I can smell.

Ceilia

Gordon, I'm **stunned**. I thought your girlfriend had no taste but now I can see she has!

Peter

Sorry I'm late. Oh, what's that smell?

Mary

It's Gordon. He's been kicked out of his house and he's been sleeping here. Hang on a minute Peter – don't you have space at your house?

Peter

Yes I have.

Mary

Could Gordon stay with you until he sorts himself out?

Peter

What a great idea Mary. I'd love a bit of company. You can sleep on the sofa. Is that OK?

Ceilia

That's great! Gordon the great chef sleeping on the sofa of the little waiter. Sounds perfect! But you're going to have to get some earplugs Peter.

Peter

Why?

Ceilia

Well he snores!

Vocabulary

a shock to the system

an unexpected surprise

what on earth

(said to show complete surprise or anger)

the shock of my life

a very big shock

jump out of my skin

very surprised or shocked

out of the blue

completely unexpected

stunned

very shocked or surprised

Questions

1. What gave Mary a 'shock to the system'?

(Hint: She's come in to do some extra work.)

- a) She was chased by a dog on the way to work
- a) She had to get up early
- b) She got an electric shock from the light switch

1. Gordon explained he was kicked out of his home by his girlfriend. What phrase did he use?

(Hint: Check the vocabulary reference.)

- a) It happened out in the blue
- b) It was happening out of the blue
- c) It happened out of the blue

2. Why does Ceilia think Peter should wear earplugs?

(Hint: Someone makes a certain noise.)

- a) Because Gordon snores
- b) Because Gordon moans a lot
- c) Because Gordon talks in his sleep

Answers

1. What gave Mary a 'shock to the system'?
 - a) She was chased by a dog on the way to work (Wrong. That didn't happen.)
 - b) She had to get up early (Well done. That's correct.)**
 - c) She got an electric shock from the light switch (Not correct. That didn't happen.)

2. Gordon explained he was kicked out of his home by his girlfriend. What phrase did he use?
 - a) It happened out in the blue (That's not quite right. Try again.)
 - b) It was happening out of the blue (Wrong. That's not quite right.)
 - c) It happened out of the blue (That's right. He said it happened out of the blue, meaning it was completely unexpected.)**

3. Why does Ceilia think Peter should wear earplugs?
 - a) Because Gordon snores (Correct, well done!)**
 - b) Because Gordon moans a lot (He does but that's not the reason here.)
 - c) Because Gordon talks in his sleep (Not correct.)