

A Posthumous Message

**Posmrtné
poselství**



At last, when all the children had fallen asleep, she and Mark sat down over their glasses of wine.

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Victoria loved the mornings in their house. Her husband Mark usually left for work early in the morning. Next she woke up their three children, made them breakfast and a snack for break-time and saw them off to their school and kindergarten. After that she came back home and started to do some cleaning, cooking and other housework. She did everything with love. Her tidy home and neat, sweet-smelling children made her pleased. There was absolutely nothing missing from her life. She felt perfectly happy and was absolutely satisfied with her way of life.

Her husband worked hard and he was managing to provide for their family. Victoria stayed at home after the birth of their first daughter and she didn't want to go back to work anymore. Later she gave birth to another daughter and a son. When their son started going to kindergarten, Mark often told Victoria she should find a job. He didn't want her to spend the best years of her life at home cooking and cleaning the house. He had got to know her as a clever and well-educated woman, who had done better than most of her colleagues. A promising career had beckoned. She had spoken a few foreign languages and had had a good grasp of commercial law. At home, however, she could only dust off a few French and Spanish words while reading foreign-language recipes. Mark was worried about it and he was sure Victoria was unhappy about it too, at least deep down. He couldn't understand when she tried to explain to him that this was her idea of perfect bliss. He didn't believe that she could find enough satisfaction in keeping the household ticking over perfectly. He suggested he would get some domestic help so that she could work part-time at least. His wife refused though. Therefore Mark gradually gave up trying to make Victoria go back to her old way of life from before the wedding. He spent more and more time at work. He admired his female colleagues who were juggling

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Viktorie milovala rána v jejich domě. Její manžel Marek obvykle odcházel do práce časně zrána. Potom probudila jejich tři děti, udělala jim snídani a svačinu a doprovodila je do školy a do školky. Pak se vrátila domů a začala se věnovat úklidu, vaření a dalším domácím pracem. Všechno dělala s láskou. Naklizený domov a upravené, voňavé děti ji těšily. Netoužila po ničem jiném. Cítila se dokonale šťastná a byla naprosto spokojená se svým způsobem života.

Její manžel tvrdě pracoval a dařilo se mu zaopatřit rodinu. Viktorie zůstala doma po narození jejich první dcery a nechtěla se už vrátit do práce. Později se jí narodila další dcera a syn. Když jejich syn začal chodit do školky, Marek často říkal Viktorii, že by si měla najít zaměstnání. Nechtěl, aby trávila nejlepší roky svého života doma vařením a úklidem domu. Poznal ji jako chytrou a vzdělanou ženu, která předčila většinu svých kolegů. Měla před sebou slibnou kariéru. Mluvila několika cizími jazyky a dobře se vyznala v obchodním právu. Avšak doma si mohla oprášit jen několik francouzských a španělských slovíček čtením cizojazyčných receptů. Markovi to dělalo starosti a byl přesvědčen, že i Viktorii to trápí, alespoň v hloubi duše. Nechápal, když se snažila mu vysvětlit, že takhle si představuje dokonalé štěstí. Nevěřil, že může nacházet dost uspokojení v péči o dokonale fungující domácnost. Navrhoval, že sežene pomocnici v domácnosti, aby mohla pracovat alespoň na zkrácený úvazek. Jeho žena to však odmítla. Proto se Marek postupně přestal snažit přimět Viktorii, aby se vrátila ke svému dřívějšímu způsobu života před svatbou. Trávil stále víc a víc času v práci. Obdivoval své kolegyně, které se snažily vypořádat jak se svým zaměstnáním, tak i se svou domácností. Byla pravda, že jejich rodiny neměly každý den teplé jídlo a že neměly

their jobs and their households. It was true that their families didn't have hot meals every day and that they didn't have their flats spick-and-span, but Mark felt their successful careers more than made up for that.

Mark started to feel that he had nothing to say to Victoria. He loved his children but he usually got home in the evening when they were already sleeping. From time to time he thought out great entertainment and games for them, and so all his children loved him. They found him to be the most entertaining dad of all. Victoria was never jealous of their children's love for Mark. She was quite happy. In her view they were an ideal family. She believed that a woman should look after the household while a man's duty was to make his family financially secure. She knew Mark took great pains to ensure their family would be able to live comfortably. Therefore she never reproached him for spending a lot of time at work.

On that day Victoria came back home after she had taken the children to school and started doing her housework as usual. Leaning over the ironing board, it suddenly struck her that it would be nice to have another baby. 'I'm sure I would be up to it,' she thought. 'There's enough space in the house and it's not as if we're short of money either. Our little Paul is starting school next September. It would be nice to have another baby. I'd be happy to have someone to spoil again,' she thought and smiled. 'I'll have a word with Mark about it this evening,' she decided. 'I'm sure he'll agree. After all, he loves each of our children so much.'

Victoria was looking forward to the evening all day. She thought it would be very romantic. At last, when all the children had fallen asleep, she and Mark sat down over their glasses of wine. She told him about her plan to expand their family. However, Mark had quite different plans. "I'm very sorry to disappoint you, Victoria," he said. "I feel very bad about it that everything turned out so badly between us. The thing is, I've fallen in love with a colleague of mine. I can't help it. She and I have so much in common. She's an excellent lawyer and she only lives for our firm. We are totally in synch. I can't live with you any longer. I don't want to deceive you. I'll move out and I'll keep on paying you all the expenses for our children. I'll leave you the house. Our

byt jako ze škatulky, ale Marek cítil, že jejich úspěšná kariéra jim to více než vynahradí.

Marek začínal cítit, že nemá Viktorii co říci. Miloval své děti, ale obvykle se vracel domů večer, když už spaly. Občas pro ně vymyslel skvělou zábavu a hry, a tak ho všechny jeho děti milovaly. Považovaly ho za nejzábavnějšího tatínka. Viktorie nikdy nežárlila na lásku jejich dětí k Markovi. Byla úplně šťastná. Podle jejích představ byli ideální rodinou. Věřila, že žena by se měla starat o domácnost, zatímco mužovou povinností je rodinu finančně zajistit. Věděla, že Marek vynakládá velké úsilí k zabezpečení toho, aby si mohla jejich rodina pohodlně žít. Proto mu nikdy nevyčetla, že v práci tráví spoustu času.

Toho dne, když odvedla děti do školy, Viktorie se vrátila domů a začala dělat své domácí práce jako obvykle. Když se skláněla nad žehlicím prknem, náhle jí blesklo hlavou, že by bylo hezké mít další dítě. „Jsem si jistá, že bych ho zvládla,“ pomyslela si. „V domě je dost místa a nedostatkem peněz také netrpíme. Náš Pavlík začne v září chodit do školy. Bylo by hezké mít ještě jedno dítě. Byla bych šťastná, kdybych mohla zase někoho hýčkat,“ pomyslela si a usmála se. „Promluvíme si o tom s Markem dnes večer,“ rozhodla se. „Jsem si jistá, že bude souhlasit. Vždyť tolik miluje každé z našich dětí.“

Viktorie se těšila na ten večer celý den. Myslela si, že bude velmi romantický. Konečně, když všechny děti usnuly, sedla si s Markem u sklenky vína. Řekla mu o svém plánu rozšířit jejich rodinu. Avšak Marek měl zcela jiné plány. „Je mi to moc líto, že tě zklam, Viktorie,“ řekl. „Moc mě mrzí, že to mezi námi všechno dopadlo tak špatně. Jde o to, že jsem se zamiloval do jedné své kolegyně. Nemůžu si pomoci. Ona a já máme tolik společného. Je výborná právnička a žije jenom pro naši firmu. Naprosto si rozumíme. Já už s tebou nemůžu žít. Nechci tě podvádět. Odstěhuju se a dál ti budu platit všechny výlohy na naše děti. Nechám ti dům. Naše děti už nejsou malé. Jestli půjdeš do práce, budu ti taky platit

children aren't small any more. If you go to work, I'll pay for your regular house cleaning as well. She and I aren't looking to have any children," Mark was describing their future to Victoria. She was just staring at him listening to his lacerating words. Every particle of her being fought against believing what he was saying. Her dream of a big and happy family, the one in which she had lived until that very moment, shattered into tiny pieces. Mark's next words twisted the knife in her heart even more. "I'll help you to find a good job so you can put your qualifications to use. You'll see that all of us will be better off in the end. You've just been locked away at home, cut off from the world," he explained. At that moment Victoria couldn't stand listening to his words any longer. She needed to vent all her pain, disappointment and her feelings of humiliation and betrayal. "I hate you like the plague," she shouted. "How can you hurt me so much? How long have you been deceiving me while I've been living just for you and our family? How long have you been lying to me and our children? You'll regret this. I'll get even with you in the worst way. As ruthlessly as you've hurt me," she shouted and her voice was full of hate and pain. She felt the agony was too severe for her to be able to express it with any words. She had never shouted so much before. She had always been a sensible woman, who had solved all her problems calmly. However, Mark's verbal blow came like a bolt out of the blue. She was utterly shocked, totally unprepared for it and, actually, there was nothing she could do or say. He had presented her with a fait accompli. She had never dreamt about something like that, even in her worst nightmare.

Mark realized that their separation wouldn't go off without a hitch, the way he had hoped. He decided to leave that very evening. He wanted to talk to Victoria later when she was calmer. While he was packing his few necessities, Victoria was finishing up the bottle of wine. Then standing in the door, he repeated: "You'll keep the house. I'll support you financially and in other respects as well. I'll see a lot of our children. In fact, our life won't change very much," he tried to convince her.

When the door shut behind him, Victoria stood lost in thought in the silence. Her children were sleeping peacefully. The house and the children

pravidelný úklid domu. Ona a já už nechceme děti," líčil Marek Viktorii jejich budoucnost. Strnule na něho hleděla a poslouchala jeho drásající slova. Celá její bytost se bránila uvěřit tomu, co říkal. Její sen o velké a šťastné rodině, ve kterém do toho okamžiku žila, se roztříštil na malé kousky. Další Markova slova vrážela ještě víc nůž do jejího srdce. „Pomůžu ti najít dobré zaměstnání, abys mohla uplatnit svoje vzdělání. Uvidíš, že nakonec na tom budeme všichni líp. Jenom ses zavírala doma, odříznutá od světa," vysvětloval. V tu chvíli už ho Viktorie nemohla vydržet poslouchat. Potřebovala uvolnit všechnu svou bolest, zklamání a své pocity ponížení a zrady. „Nenávidím tě k smrti," křičela. „Jak mi můžeš tolik ubližovat? Jak dlouho už mě podvádíš, zatímco já žiju jenom pro tebe a naši rodinu? Jak dlouho už lžeš mně a našim dětem? To tě bude ještě mrzet. Pomstím se ti tím nejhorším způsobem. Tak nelitostně, jako tys ublížil mně," křičela a její hlas byl plný nenávisti a bolesti. Cítila, že to utrpení je příliš kruté, aby byla schopná ho nějakými slovy vyjádřit. Ještě nikdy tolik nekřičela. Vždycky byla rozumná žena, která řešila všechny svoje problémy v klidu. Avšak Markova slova ji udeřila jako blesk z jasného nebe. Byla naprosto šokovaná, absolutně na ně nebyla připravená a byla vlastně úplně bezradná. On ji postavil před hotovou věc. O něčem takovém se jí nikdy nesnilo ani v nejhorším nočním snu.

Marek si uvědomil, že jejich rozchod neproběhne tak hladce, jak doufal. Rozhodl se odejít ještě ten večer. Chtěl mluvit s Viktorií později, až bude klidnější. Zatímco si balil nejnuttnější věci, Viktorie dopíjela láhev vína. Potom, když stál ve dveřích, opakoval: „Necháš si dům. Budu vás podporovat finančně i jinak. Budu se často vídat s dětmi. Náš život se vlastně moc nemění," snažil se ji přesvědčit.

Když za ním zaklaply dveře, Viktorie zůstala v tichu pohroužená do svých myšlenek. Její děti klidně spaly. „Dům a děti jsou moje," pomyslela si. , Řekl

are mine,' she thought. 'He said it when leaving. They are only mine and they'll stay mine for ever. He's shattered my family, my happiness and my life. I don't care about any other life. The children and the house are mine, so they'll go with me. That's what he said, anyway.' She went to the kitchen wearily and, as if in a dream, she took a carefully polished knife out of the drawer. In the first children's room she stayed standing for a long time. Tears trickled down her cheeks as she was looking at her son's little face. He was smiling in his sleep. 'It'll stay like this,' it suddenly struck her. She closed her eyes firmly and stabbed several times. The boy didn't even cry out. She covered him with a small feather quilt. With her older children, she didn't stay as long. 'I must act quickly,' she said to herself. She felt that her determination was trickling away. When her three children were lying dead in their beds, Victoria walked through the house with a can of petrol. It had been stored in the garage, just in case. At the end she poured petrol over herself and sat down on the sofa soaked in the fluid. Then she threw a lit match far from her. For a while she could watch the flame getting closer to her. At least for that moment she could think of her children and the happy life that Mark had robbed her of.

When the fire brigade arrived, most of the house was already up in flames. However, the beds in the children's rooms stayed untouched. The message which Victoria had sent Mark before her death hit the nail on the head. After the disaster Mark left his friend and job and moved abroad. He knew he would be alone for ever.



to, když odcházel. Jsou jenom moje a zůstanou moje navždy. On rozbil mou rodinu, moje štěstí a můj život. Nestojím o jiný život. Děti a dům jsou moje, tak půjdou se mnou. Říkal to přece. Mátožně došla do kuchyně a jakoby ve snu vyndala ze šuplíku precizně nablýskaný nůž. V prvním dětském pokoji zůstala dlouho stát. Po tvářích jí tekly slzy, když se dívala na obličejík svého syna. Usmíval se ve spánku. ‚Tak to i zůstane,‘ náhle jí blesklo hlavou. Zavřela pevně oči a několikrát bodla. Chlapec ani nevykřikl. Přikryla ho peřinkou. U svých starších dětí nezůstala tak dlouho. ‚Musím jednat rychle,‘ řekla si pro sebe. Cítila, že její odhodlání se vytrácí. Když její tři děti ležely mrtvé ve svých postelích, Viktorie prošla dům s kanystrem benzínu. Byl připravený pro všechny případy v garáži. Nakonec polila benzínem sama sebe a sedla si na pohovku nasáklou hořlavinou. Potom odhodila zapálenou sirku daleko od sebe. Chvilí mohla sledovat plamen, který se k ní přibližoval. Alespoň na chvíli mohla ještě myslet na své děti a šťastný život, který jí Marek vzal.

Když přijeli hasiči, většina domu už byla v plamenech. Avšak postele v dětských pokojích zůstaly nedotčené. Poselství, které Viktorie poslala Markovi před svou smrtí, trefilo do černého. Po této tragédii Marek opustil svou přítelkyni i zaměstnání a odstěhoval se do ciziny. Věděl, že už navždy zůstane sám.





For a while she could watch the flame getting closer to her.

Activities:

6.1 Listen to the story and answer the following questions.

1. When did Victoria stay at home looking after her household and family?
2. What did Mark want her to do when their son started going to kindergarten?
3. What professional skills did Victoria have when Mark got to know her?
4. Was Victoria happy spending the best years of her life at home cooking and cleaning the house?
5. When did Mark give up trying to make her go back to her old way of life from before the wedding?
6. Who did Mark admire at work?
7. What was their children's attitude to Mark?
8. What did Victoria think of women's and men's duties in a family?
9. What idea did Victoria have leaning over the ironing board one day?
10. Did she believe that Mark would agree with her idea?
11. What was Mark's reply to her proposal?
12. How did Victoria feel listening to his words?
13. What did Mark decide to do after their quarrel?
14. What did Victoria do after Mark had left the house?
15. Were the beds in the children's rooms in flames when the fire brigade arrived?
16. What did Mark do after the disaster?

6.2 Here are some verbs from a paragraph that express negative emotions. Look at the sentences below and then match a verb to the correct definition.

I was looking forward to the concert very much, but at the end I **was disappointed**.

I really **felt bad about** it. I couldn't do much for her.

I hoped the situation would get better with time. It **turned out badly** though.

Jim **had deceived** me several times. I couldn't trust him any more.

Mary believed her pregnancy would make her boyfriend stay with her. However, when he had left abroad, her hopes **shattered into pieces**.

He **twisted the knife in her heart** saying he had fallen in love with a colleague of his.

She **couldn't stand** listening to his words any longer.

She said she **hated** him **like the plague**.

She **felt humiliated and betrayed**.

You **have hurt** me but **I'll get even with** you.

He started **to treat** her **ruthlessly** after their wedding.

She started **to regret** marrying him.

- a) to disappoint
 - b) to feel bad about sth
 - c) to turn out badly
 - d) to deceive
 - e) to shatter into pieces
 - f) to twist the knife in sb's heart
 - g) can't stand
 - h) to hate sb like the plague
 - i) to humiliate and betray sb
 - j) to hurt sb
 - k) to get even with sb
 - l) to treat sb ruthlessly
 - m) to regret sth
-
1. to affect someone's feelings deeply
 2. to be sorry about something
 3. to take a violent dislike to someone
 4. to do somebody wrong
 5. to fail to meet someone's expectations
 6. to destroy something completely
 7. to humble and double-cross somebody
 8. to be merciless to somebody
 9. not to be able to bear something
 10. to be a fiasco
 11. to take one's revenge on somebody
 12. to be unfaithful to somebody
 13. to feel sorry about something

6.3 What do you think?

A. Do you agree with Victoria's solution? Do you think that Mark was the sole cause of their disaster? Can you find any mistakes on Victoria's part that contributed to their marital crisis? What would you advise her to do?

Write a short composition answering these questions. Explain the main reason of their crisis and think of some possible solutions for Mark and Victoria.

B. Imagine that a former colleague called Victoria just at the critical moment when she was standing alone after Mark's dramatic exit. Her colleague told her she needed to speak to her urgently because their boss had an interesting job opportunity for both of them. She asked Victoria if she could come over in an hour as she wanted to discuss some details of their potential cooperation face to face. Besides, she wanted to see her after a long time and to have a chat about the good old days. Do you think this telephone call could change the destiny of the whole family? Try the telephone conversation in pairs and think of an alternative ending of the story.

Grammar:

Study the sentences with **the phrasal verbs** once more:

*Next she **woke up** their three children, made them breakfast and a snack for break-time and saw them off to their school and kindergarten.*

*At home, however, she could only **dust off** a few French and Spanish words while reading foreign-language recipes.*

*Therefore Mark gradually **gave up** trying to make Victoria go back to her old way of life from before the wedding.*

*From time to time he **thought out** great entertainment and games for them, and so all his children loved him.*

*She knew Mark **took** great **pains** to ensure their family would be able to live comfortably.*

*'I'm sure I **would be up to it**,' she thought.*

*'I'll **have a word** with Mark about it this evening,' she decided.*

*"I'll help you to find a good job so that you can **put your qualifications to use**."*

*"I'll **get even with** you in the worst way."*

*Mark realized that their separation **wouldn't go off without a hitch**, the way he had hoped.*

*She felt that her determination **was trickling away**.*

6.4 Complete the phrasal verbs in the sentences with the correct prepositions, adverbs or nouns.

1. When did you give smoking?
2. I haven't told Linda about my plan to move abroad yet. I should have a with her about it as soon as possible.
3. My mother took great to support me at my studies.
4. I'm thinking of accepting this job. I believe I would be up it.
5. Jane made eyes at her colleague James at the party. She wanted to get even her boyfriend for his unfaithfulness.
6. Rob is a bad husband. He doesn't care anything but his hobbies.
7. "Calm down. The operation went off without a"
8. Jack's determination to become a devoted husband gradually trickled
9. I woke the children at 8 o'clock and thought some games for them.
10. I think you should dust your Italian and accept the job. It would be a pity not to put your qualifications to

Grammar:

We use **present participles** to express two things that happen at the same time or when one action happens during another action.

***Přítomné přechodníky** používáme k vyjádření dvou činností, které se dějí současně, nebo když jeden děj se odehrává během dalšího děje.*

Look at these examples:

He didn't want her to spend the best years of her life at home **cooking** and **cleaning** the house.

At home, however, she could only dust off a few French and Spanish words while **reading** foreign-language recipes.

Leaning over the ironing board, it suddenly struck her that it would be nice to have another baby.

She was just staring at him **listening to** his lacerating words.

Then **standing** in the door, he repeated: "You'll keep the house."

'He said it when **leaving**.'

In the first children's room she stayed **standing** a long time.

6.5 Join a sentence from Box A with one from Box B to make one sentence. Use an –ing clause.

A

1. George was in the pub.
2. Jane went out.
3. The Browns got home late.
4. Jim earned some extra money.
5. The old lady slipped.
6. Sue was sitting in the armchair.

B

1. They were feeling very tired.
2. She was getting off a bus.
3. He worked as a tourist guide.
4. She was reading Jack's letter.
5. She said she would be back in two hours.
6. He was drinking beer.

1. George was in the pub, drinking beer.
2.
3.
4.
5.
6.

Grammar:

We use **the past continuous** to say that somebody was doing something at a certain time or for a certain amount of time. We also use it for two different activities being done by two different people at the same time in the past. If two different activities are being done by one person at the same time, we can use the past continuous only for one of these activities. We often use **the past simple** and **the past continuous** together to say that an action happened in the middle of another one.

*Minulý průběhový čas vyjadřuje, že někdo něco dělal v určitém časovém okamžiku či po určitý čas v minulosti. Také jím vyjadřujeme, že dvě různé činnosti prováděné dvěma lidmi probíhaly v minulosti zároveň. Jestliže jsou dvě různé činnosti prováděny zároveň jednou osobou, můžeme použít minulý průběhový čas pouze pro jednu z činností. Často užíváme **minulý čas prostý a průběhový** společně, abychom vyjádřili, že jeden děj se uskutečnil v rámci jiného děje.*

Look at these examples:

Her husband worked hard and he **was managing** to provide for their family.

He admired his female colleagues who **were juggling** their jobs and their households.
 He loved his children but he usually got home in the evening when they **were** already **sleeping**.
 Victoria **was looking forward to** the evening all day.
 She **was just staring** at him listening to his lacerating words.
 Every particle of her being fought against believing what he **was saying**.
 While he **was packing** his few necessities, Victoria **was finishing up** the bottle of wine.
 Her children **were sleeping** peacefully.
 Tears trickled down her cheeks as she **was looking at** her son's little face.
 He **was smiling** in his sleep.
 She felt that her determination **was trickling away**.
 When her three children **were lying** dead in their beds, Victoria walked through the house with a can of petrol.

6.6 Put the verbs into the correct form, past continuous or past simple.

1. My mum (wait) for me when I (arrive).
2. "What (you/do) this time yesterday?" "I (work) in my office."
3. (you/sleep) when she got home yesterday?
4. Little Eve (take) another piece of cake when I (not look).
5. We (climb) the hill when the heavy rain (start).
6. Yesterday evening I (walk) along the street not far from our house when suddenly I (hear) footsteps behind me. Somebody (follow) me. I was frightened and I (start) to run.
7. While I (repair) my car, my son (play) in the garden.

Grammar:

We use **get/come to + infinitive** to say that an action developed gradually.

*Vazba **get/come to + infinitiv** vyjadřuje postupné rozvíjení děje.*

Look at this example:

He **had got to know** her as a clever and well-educated woman, who had done better than most of her colleagues.

We use **make + object + infinitive without to** in the active meaning.

*V činném významu se užívá vazba **make + předmět + infinitiv bez to**.*

Look at this example:

Therefore Mark gradually gave up trying **to make Victoria go back** to her old way of life from before the wedding.

6.7 Use the verbs in brackets to rephrase the following sentences.

1. At the beginning of their marriage Catherine didn't admit to having any problems. Later she knew her relationship to Jack wasn't very good. (realize)
2. At first Rob didn't want to take part in our wedding ceremony. But in the end he agreed. (get)
3. At first I didn't like my new colleague, Jim. But later I realized he had a very positive character. (admire)
4. When Mrs. White moved into our house, I didn't like her at all. However, with time I realized she was a likable woman. (like)
5. I didn't want to betray you. But the swine were about to shoot at me if I hadn't told them your name. (make)
6. At first Sue was quite indifferent when Richard started working for their firm. But gradually she felt she had fallen in love with him. (love)